

# Handbook for inspecting work-related and adult community learning

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This handbook provides guidance on inspection for inspectors and will be of use to providers of work-based learning, of adult and community learning, of provision funded by the Department of Work and Pensions, of learndirect provision, of nextstep provision, and of provision funded by the European Social Fund. There are separate handbooks for inspecting colleges and for judicial services.

To find your way around this long document easily, hover over the appropriate section in the contents pages, hold down to the Control key and click to follow the link.

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**Age group:** post-16

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**Published:** June 2007

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**Reference no:** 070077

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Published June 2007

Reference no. 070077

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## Introduction

This handbook is published by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI). It provides guidance on inspection for inspectors and will be of use to providers of work-based learning, of adult and community learning, of provision funded by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), of learndirect provision, of nextstep provision, and of European Social Fund (ESF) funded provision. There are separate handbooks for inspecting colleges and for judicial services.

The handbook is in two parts:

- **Part 1:** contains guidance for inspectors and providers on the preparation for, and conduct of, inspections.
- **Part 2:** contains guidance on how inspectors will approach judgements on the overall effectiveness of the provider and of the five key questions in the Common Inspection Framework (CIF). Each of the following inspection contexts has its own separate detailed guidance: work-based learning, adult and community learning, New Deal prime contracts funded by the DWP's, Workstep programmes, Employment Zone providers, learndirect provision, nextstep contracts, and ESF provision.

This handbook seeks to balance the need for consistency in inspections with the flexibility required to respond to the individual circumstances of each provider to be inspected. It should be regarded as an account of procedures normally governing inspection, rather than a set of inflexible rules.

## Part 1. Organisation and management of inspections

### 1 Background to the inspection arrangements

#### Education and Inspections Act 2006

1. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 created a new single inspectorate for children, young people and adult learners entitled the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. In addition to Ofsted's responsibilities set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and some newly designated responsibilities, the reconfigured inspectorate takes on the inspection remit which was formerly the responsibility of the Adult Learning Inspectorate, the Commission for Social Care Inspection's local authority inspection functions relating to services for children, and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service inspection elements of HM Inspectorate of Court Administration.

#### The Children Act 2004 and joint area reviews

2. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on children's services authorities to make arrangements through which key partners work collaboratively to improve the well-being of local children. Joint area reviews, led by Ofsted, evaluate how well services, taken together, improve the well-being of children and young people in the local area.
3. The Common Inspection Framework (CIF) states that, where relevant, inspections of individual providers will contribute to joint area reviews. Reviews evaluate the extent to which the following five outcomes for children and young people are being met:
  1. being healthy
  2. staying safe
  3. enjoying and achieving
  4. making a positive contribution
  5. achieving economic well-being.
4. Where the work of a provider includes provision for young people up to the age of 19, or those up to the age of 25 who are vulnerable through the residential nature of their provision, or because they are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged, inspectors will evaluate the quality of the provision in relation to the five outcomes.

#### Purposes of inspection

5. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Ofsted to carry out its work in ways which will encourage providers to improve, to become more user-focused, and to be efficient and effective. Inspection arrangements, together with other

government initiatives, are intended to accelerate the pace of quality improvement in the learning and skills sector. The main purposes of inspection are to:

- give an independent public account of the quality of education and training, the standards achieved and the efficiency with which resources are managed
- help bring about improvement by identifying strengths and areas for improvement, highlighting good practice and judging what steps need to be taken to improve provision further
- keep the Secretaries of State for Education and Skills and for Work and Pensions, and the Learning and Skills Council for England informed about the quality and standards of education and training
- promote a culture of self-assessment among providers, leading to continuous improvement or maintenance of very high quality and standards
- make judgements that inform joint area reviews of children's services in the local area.

### **Inspection programme**

6. Ofsted will select providers for inspection and decide when the inspection will take place, within the intervals for inspection specified by the Secretaries of State for Education and Skills and for Work and Pensions. The views of the DfES, LSC and DWP will be considered when planning the programme.
7. The size and frequency of inspection will vary according to risk. More resources will be targeted at underperforming providers. Risk will be determined by the outcomes from the previous inspection (including any that have been changed as a result of reinspection). Recent data on learners' success rates, information from monitoring visits, from local and regional link inspectors, and from survey visits, will also be used. Where providers have developed provision in new areas and/or where learner numbers have substantially increased, the level of inspection resource might be higher than that suggested by an analysis of previous inspection grades.

### **Multi-remit inspections**

8. In order to reduce the instances of providers being subject to a number of separate inspections and to ensure inspection resources are deployed efficiently, all government funded education and training which falls under the remit of the Learning and Skills Directorate will be inspected at the same time. In the case of local authorities, this might include the inspection of work-based learning alongside their provision in adult and community learning. The only exception to this is Workstep provision which will continue to be inspected separately until the current cycle of Workstep inspections has been completed.

### **Inspection of large providers**

9. Where a provider has contracts in several LSC areas and/or more than one DWP procurement unit, the lead inspector (LI) will ascertain which region or unit has lead responsibility for the provision. Representatives from the relevant funding bodies will be invited to the planning meeting. The planning of the inspection may require several meetings and inspection may take place nationally. Teams will normally be brought together at the end of the inspection to confirm and present their findings. Inspection will report on significant regional variations in the quality of provision.

### **Inspection of small providers**

10. The inspection will be tailored to the needs of the provision. Clusters of small providers with fewer than 20 learners may be inspected together.

### **Inspection of work carried out under subcontract from another provider**

11. The scope of each provider's inspection will normally include relevant work carried out under subcontractual arrangements as well as that which is part of the provider's direct contract with a funding organisation.

### **Inspection of work subcontracted to other providers**

12. If the inspected provider subcontracts work to others, careful consideration will be given to how, and whether, the work of subcontractors should be included in the inspection. During the main contract holder's inspection, attention will focus on the ways in which the main contractor assures itself of the quality of its subcontractors' work.
13. If a subcontractor also holds a direct contract with a funding organisation and will be inspected in its own right, every effort will be made to minimise the impact of any other inspection on its work. Where a subcontractor provides the whole of the learning programme for a group or groups of learners and also holds a direct contract with a funding organisation, its work will be excluded from the main provider's inspection and included in the subcontractor's own inspection. Where a subcontractor provides some elements of a learning programme such as assessment and verification, and also has a direct contract with a funding organisation, these elements are in the scope of the main provider's inspection. In this case the inspection team will not directly observe learning provided by such subcontractors, but may arrange interviews with staff or learners involved. These will be kept to a minimum, particularly if the subcontractor has recently been inspected in its own right. Data relating to the success rates of learners and evidence drawn from recent inspections of the subcontractor will be considered.



14. Where a subcontractor does not have a direct contract with a funding organisation and is not due to be inspected in its own right under the arrangements for the inspection of consortium members, the learning it provides should be fully incorporated in the inspection of the main provider.

### **Naming of subcontractors in inspection reports**

15. For the purposes of transparency and accountability, significant subcontracting arrangements will be clearly set out in inspection reports. Where one provider subcontracts work to another, the names of the subcontractors will be included in the provider's inspection report. Where one provider (the subcontractor) delivers work under subcontract on behalf of another, the name of the contract holder should be included in the subcontractor's inspection report.

### **Arrangements for the inspection of subcontractors in DWP funded provision**

16. The DWP has recently made major changes to the contractual arrangements for its provision. All New Deal mainstream provision is now contracted to a single prime contractor operating in a defined geographical area. Prime contractors manage the provision and subcontract to other providers the delivery of the various components of the programme. During this period of transition to new contracting arrangements, where a subcontracted partner has not yet been subject to its own cycle two inspection or will no longer qualify for their own inspection, lead inspectors will determine whether it would be appropriate to inspect the subcontracted provision at the same time as the prime contractor's provision. Where the subcontracted partner has already been inspected, the lead inspector may arrange interviews with key managers and staff and evaluate the prime contractor's quality review arrangements for subcontracted partners.

### **Common Inspection Framework (CIF)**

17. Inspections will be guided by the principles set out in the CIF ([www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications)). The inspection team will be primarily involved in assessing the effectiveness of the provider in securing the achievements of individual learners and the quality of their learning experience. The CIF requires the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of provision, achievement and standards, the quality of provision including teaching and learning in sector subject areas and work-based and community contexts, and leadership and management. It also requires inspectors, where appropriate, to judge how the provider contributes to the well-being of young people and vulnerable adults up to the age of 25.

### **Principles of inspection**

18. The CIF sets out principles that apply to all inspections. They are intended to ensure that:

- the findings of inspections are valid
- the findings of inspections contribute to improvement
- the process of inspection promotes inclusion
- inspections are carried out openly with those being inspected.

Further details relating to these principles can be found in the CIF.

## 2 Inspectors and inspection teams

### Training of inspectors

19. All inspectors will have to demonstrate that they are competent and have up-to-date and relevant experience and expertise in the areas they are inspecting. Where there are changes to inspection methodology, inspectors will be trained to ensure they are well versed in the new approaches being taken. Inspection teams will have the expertise and experience appropriate to the provision they are inspecting. In the rare circumstances where no trained inspector with the required specialist knowledge is available, a specialist adviser will work alongside a trained inspector.

### The lead inspector

20. The lead inspector (LI) manages the inspection team and is responsible for the quality of the inspection. On most inspections the LI will be supported by an assistant LI (AsLI). It is the responsibility of the LI to:
  - plan the inspection and communicate the inspection plan to the provider
  - ensure that members of the inspection team are fully briefed before the inspection begins
  - conduct a health and safety risk assessment and inform the team of any findings
  - establish a programme of team meetings with clear agendas and ensure that evidence and judgements are communicated to, and shared by, all members of the team
  - ensure that inspectors follow a consistent approach to collecting and recording evidence, in how they conduct themselves during the inspection and in their feedback to staff and managers
  - ensure that the nominee is informed of emerging issues throughout the inspection
  - keep a careful check on the sampling of the provider's work and the extent to which individual tutors, trainers and assessors are being observed in sessions, conducting assessments and progress reviews
  - monitor and, if necessary, intervene in the work of individual inspectors to ensure that the CIF is complied with and that evidence and judgements are secure
  - ensure that judgements about the provider are fair and accurate, are based on secure evidence, and cover the evaluation requirements in the CIF

- ensure that key judgements are corporately agreed by the inspection team
- manage the arrangements for feedback.

### **Inspection team members**

21. The LI's deployment of the inspection team will balance the need for a consistent approach across the learning and skills sector with the need to retain a flexible approach in the inspection of individual providers and inspection contexts. Inspection arrangements require a flexible approach since, for each provider, inspection will be focused on sampling elements of provision to assess the validity of self-assessment and the effectiveness of the provider.

### **Allocation of team roles**

22. The LI will allocate roles to ensure that basic inspection tasks are carried out, including:
- producing judgements and report sections on overall effectiveness and the five key questions
  - sector subject area inspection
  - quality assurance of, and advice on, the performance of team members
  - where relevant, summarising evidence on the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews.

### **Corporate judgements**

23. All key judgements, specifically judgements which are denoted by a grade or grade descriptor, are corporate judgements of the inspection team that will be determined or are confirmed at the final grading meeting.

### **The provider's nominee**

24. Each provider will be invited to nominate a senior member of staff to act as the provider's main link with the inspection team. The nominee should:
- have a detailed understanding of the provider's programmes and operations
  - be sufficiently senior to ensure the cooperation of staff at all levels before, during and after the inspection
  - have authority to carry out the role with autonomy.

Ofsted will arrange occasional briefing events for nominees to help them prepare for inspection.

25. Inspectors will use the nominee's knowledge to help plan their schedule of meetings and their inspection of the provider's documentation. The LI will ensure that the nominee has the opportunity to hear the evidence on which inspectors have based their judgements. The nominee should raise any concerns about the evidence base with the LI as soon as those concerns

become apparent. The LI will keep the nominee and the provider's chief executive informed of developing issues and findings as the inspection proceeds. The nominee should respect the same conventions of confidentiality as all team members. The nominee's rights and duties include:

- providing information to the lead inspector (LI) and AsLI to enable them to plan the inspection
- ensuring the LI is briefed on health and safety matters for all sites to be visited by inspectors
- attending all team meetings; however, nominees may not participate in discussions that are directly related to grading
- briefing staff and others, such as board members, trustees, employers, workplace supervisors and subcontracted partners, about inspection arrangements
- coordinating feedback arrangements, both during and after the inspection
- liaising with the LI over the team's use of the provider's facilities, for example photocopiers and base rooms
- ensuring that staff, workplace supervisors, employers and external partners are available for meetings as scheduled and that the necessary documents are available for inspectors.

### **Role of observers**

26. The role of every person present at an inspection should be made clear to the nominee. By agreement with the provider, Ofsted may wish to arrange for an observer to attend an inspection. An observer must not take any part in the inspection, either by collecting evidence, giving comments or making judgements.

## **3 Planning the inspection**

### **Notification of inspection**

27. The inspection programme is planned on a termly basis. Individual providers are selected for inspection by Ofsted following consultation with funding bodies. Providers normally receive between one to three months' notification of their inspection. On notification, providers are given information about forthcoming preparation for inspection events and how to access support materials, such as the inspection toolkit, available on the Ofsted website. An inspection can only be deferred if, in Ofsted's judgement, to proceed would be detrimental to learners or where there are other serious operational reasons for doing so. Where a provider wishes to request a deferment of their inspection, they must first write to Ofsted outlining their reasons with a written letter of support from the funding body.

## Preparation for the inspection

28. Prior to the inspection, the LI and the AsLI will ensure that they are well informed about the provider. They will use, among other things:
- previous inspection or reinspection reports
  - reports from monitoring visits
  - LSC and other funding body provider reviews
  - where available, learner recruitment data and success rates for the last three years
  - the self-assessment report
  - the development plan
  - details of current enrolments by sector subject area (SSA), type of programme and mode of attendance
  - information held on the LSC's provider gateway
  - information on the provider's website.

## Provider performance report (PPR) and summary enrolment data form

29. For work-based learning providers, the provider performance report gives a summary of the main characteristics of learners on programme, together with data on learners' performance and retention on accredited programmes produced from the provider's Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns. Where available, performance data is compared with national averages. The PPR is produced by Ofsted and posted by the LSC on their provider gateway intranet. The LI will analyse the PPR data to identify trends in learners' success rates.
30. Providers of adult and community learning will be asked, prior to their inspection, to complete a learner number form which records a range of information about enrolments on courses and the demographic profile of learners. At the planning meeting the LI and the provider will agree what other locally held key performance data should be made available to the inspection team prior to, or at the beginning of, the inspection. This would normally include data on retention, success and progression rates.

## Sector subject areas

31. When sector subject areas are individually inspected, the choice and number of areas to inspect is a matter for the inspectorate. In general, areas selected for inspection will be identified according to the 15 Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) sector and subject areas or an appropriate sub-division of those areas, designated by the QCA as 'second tier'. Note that in sector and subject area 14, Preparation for Life and Work, inspection grades may be awarded for one or more of the following aspects: literacy and numeracy; English for speakers of other languages; independent living and leisure skills; or preparation for work. In adult and community learning inspections, inspection

grades may also be awarded for community learning, community development, or family learning.

32. In choosing which sector subject areas to inspect, inspectors will take into account:
- the provider's mission, operational context and internal structure
  - the provider's SAR grades
  - information from the local link inspector responsible for the most recent monitoring visit
  - the previous full inspection report and the reports of monitoring visits
  - the range of provision so that, where possible, a balance is achieved across types of provision and age groups
  - any apparent mismatch between performance data and the provider's SAR judgements.
33. Sector subject areas or sub areas with fewer than 10 learners are not normally inspected except in providers whose total cohorts of learners do not exceed 10. Types of provision which are rarely seen may be inspected in order to contribute to the Chief Inspector's annual report.

### **Centres of Vocational Excellence**

34. The work of a provider's Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) will be evaluated by the leadership and management inspector in terms of its contribution to employer engagement and the skills strategy. A CoVE will be individually inspected only where the sector subject area, or sub area, with which it is linked, has been selected for inspection. The CoVE will not be separately graded unless it comprises the entire provision in the sector subject area.

### **The planning meeting**

35. The LI will contact the provider to confirm the dates of the inspection and will normally arrange a meeting with the provider's chief executive or other senior manager and the nominee to discuss and plan the inspection as soon as possible thereafter. The planning meeting will normally be held four to eight weeks before the inspection. The LI will notify the local LSC and/or DWP of the dates of the inspection and invite them to send a representative to the planning meeting. The provider may invite additional staff if they have a role in planning the inspection. The LI will confirm the arrangements for the inspection by letter or email to the nominee and senior manager.

### **The pre-inspection agenda for discussion with the provider**

36. The provider will be sent an agenda prior to the planning meeting. The meeting will be chaired by the LI. By exception, if no meeting is held, the agenda items

will be discussed on the telephone or by email. The agenda will normally include notification and/or discussion of:

- sector subject areas or sub areas to be inspected (where applicable) and in each case the numbers in learning at the time of the inspection and their geographical distribution
- consideration of the value of, and scope for, inspecting aspects of provision during the period leading up to the main inspection week
- areas of interest or concern to the provider that can be accommodated within the overall inspection schedule
- inspection team members and their responsibilities, and arrangements to provide the nominee with the professional profiles of inspectors
- the role of the nominee
- inspection week meetings with managers, staff, and groups of learners
- arrangements for workplace visits and visits to provision in the community
- arrangements to gather the views of employers, external partners and where relevant, parents
- key issues arising from any pre-inspection documents, in particular the Provider Performance Report, the LSC briefing and learners' success data
- information required by inspectors prior to the inspection
- documentation to be provided in the base room
- domestic arrangements, for example about base rooms, refreshments and car parking
- health and safety of inspectors
- feedback, evaluation and reporting arrangements.

37. The provider is asked to inform the LI as soon as possible if the inclusion of any member of the inspection team raises a conflict of interest or other concern. Ofsted has the final decision on the composition of the inspection team.

### **Information required by inspectors prior to the inspection**

38. Inspectors will seek to keep requests for pre-inspection information and documents to a realistic minimum. To reduce the burden on providers, LSC and other funding bodies, contract managers may be asked for information, for example on performance against targets, contribution to the skills strategy and learners' destinations. Providers may wish to prepare a brief update to their self-assessment report (SAR) for inspectors. Documents should not be written specifically for the inspection. Generally providers will be asked to make available:
- a list of all government funded programmes and, in the case of private training providers, the proportion of the business this accounts for
  - the numbers of learners enrolled on each programme, including subcontracted provision, learners' place of employment and planned end dates

- a draft schedule of meetings for the inspectors reporting on leadership and management and other key questions
- details of the management structure of the provider (with names).

### **Pre-inspection commentary**

39. The LI will use the pre-inspection evidence listed above and the relevant performance reports to prepare the pre-inspection commentary (PIC). This will form the basis of the initial team briefing and be used by members of the team, together with the pre-inspection evidence, to prepare for the inspection. The provider will receive a copy of the PIC prior to the inspection. The PIC ensures that inspectors are fully conversant with the provider's performance and other aspects of its work. The PIC may highlight key issues that team members may be required to focus on and report to the team. It includes:

- comments on the provider's main characteristics
- an evaluation of the pre-inspection evidence
- notification of the scope of the inspection including a rationale for the SSAs selected
- preliminary hypotheses about the provider, to be tested during the inspection. In situations where the provider has not been previously subject to an inspection and no reports are available, preliminary hypotheses will be based on other sources of information, such as the self-assessment report and performance data.

### **Information required by inspectors in the base room**

40. Providers will be asked to make only the key documents available to inspectors for the start of the inspection, preferably in a base room. An index or guide should be available to inform inspectors of the location of other evidence for them to access or request during the course of the inspection. This evidence should support the judgements in the SAR, and could usefully be cross-referenced to the SAR and the CIF key questions. The evidence should consist of working documents, not information prepared specifically for the inspection. The evidence may include some of the following depending on the context in which the provider operates:

- complete and up-to-date data on enrolments and learners' success rates
- list of work placements and employers
- course timetables or a schedule of off-the-job training, assessments and progress reviews
- self-assessment report and any updated report
- development plan, operating statements, sector subject area plans, staff development plans and action plans arising from inspection, programme review or self-assessment



- minutes from meetings of committees such as the senior management team, local authority-elected members' scrutiny committee, corporation or trustees
- details of staff qualifications and experience and of staff development activity over the last two years
- reports from internal and external verifiers
- evidence of external links with schools, colleges, training providers, community organisations, and employers
- samples of learners' records, including records of individual progress reviews and learning plans
- samples of learners' assessed work
- any other documents the provider wishes to be considered.

### **Inspection activity prior to the main inspection week**

41. In some providers it may be necessary to use the period after notification of inspection to inspect activities that cannot easily be accommodated within a single week. Inspection activities will include observation of learning and/or training and interviews with managers, employers, learners and any other relevant individuals or groups. These activities will be kept to a realistic minimum and they will be scheduled as close as possible to the main inspection week. Individual inspectors will provide feedback to tutors, assessors and managers in the normal way and the LI or AsLI will keep the nominee informed about inspectors' findings and judgements. They will feed back summary judgements at the end of the inspection activity occurring before the main inspection week.

### **Work-based learning inspections**

42. The LI will select a sample of work-based learners to be interviewed, learning venues or workplaces to visit, and portfolios to examine. There is no formula to determine the minimum size of the sample. The sample will be representative of the range of programmes in the sector subject areas selected for inspection, the demographic profile of learners, their time in learning and place of employment.
43. The LI will ask the nominee to arrange a schedule of workplace visits for the inspection team. Inspectors will interview the learners selected by the LI, and their supervisors and employers. If learners who have been included in the sample are not available at the time of the inspection, the LI will agree with the nominee alternative learners to be interviewed. Where appropriate, arrangements may also be made to conduct interviews with learners and employers by telephone.
44. Depending on the activities taking place during the period of the inspection, inspectors will observe a selection of induction sessions, off and on-the-job group training sessions, workplace assessments and progress reviews.

Observations will follow the same principles as those outlined below for learning session observations.

## **4 Self-assessment and inspection**

### **The significance of the self-assessment report**

45. The SAR will provide inspectors with crucial evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management and the provider's capacity to improve. In all inspections the SAR will help the LI to write the pre-inspection commentary. In inspections where SSAs are inspected, it will inform the lead inspector's selection of which areas to inspect and grade. During the inspection, inspectors' findings will be compared with judgements in the SAR and discussed at team meetings and with the provider.

### **Guidance on the self-assessment report**

46. Rigorous self-assessment and effective action planning to address identified areas for improvement should be an integral part of providers' management systems. Providers should produce an annual self-assessment report which meets any LSC and DWP requirements and makes graded judgements against the evaluation requirements in the CIF. It should be supported by a development plan that shows how the provider will address areas for improvement and build on strengths. For internal purposes providers may choose whatever process and model best meets their needs.
47. Ofsted will be working with the LSC to update the advice for providers on self-assessment in line with the requirements for Framework for Excellence as well as the CIF. This guidance will apply to the annual SAR submitted by providers to the LSC and other funding bodies and used by Ofsted when planning and carrying out inspections. Until new advice is produced, the following guidance currently applies:
  - a SAR should be produced, aligned to the sections of the CIF, with each key question graded; an introduction will describe the context of the provider and the self-assessment process – larger providers might consider producing a whole-provider summary SAR
  - the SAR will include judgements on all provision falling within the remits of Ofsted inspection
  - the SAR may also include, if the provider so chooses, an assessment of the components of the provision which are not supported by government funding, but they must be clearly identified as such
  - sector area report sections should be aligned as closely as possible to the sector subject areas

- an appendix should contain key data, for example, current enrolments by sector subject area, type of programme and age; and information on learners' success rates, including any differences between groups of learners.
- judgements should be clearly referenced to supporting evidence
- judgements should be divided into strengths, areas for improvement and improvements since the last inspection
- there will be an agreed date for submission of the SAR
- in general there will be no requirement for providers to update their SARs between annual submission dates; however, when notified of their inspection, providers may choose to prepare an updated SAR for the inspection team.

### **Making judgements about the SAR**

48. The overall effectiveness section of the inspection report will indicate clearly the provider's view of itself, the inspection team's judgement on the accuracy of the SAR and a brief justification of the team's findings. This key judgement will be an important factor in assessing and grading the provider's capacity to make further improvements. References to the accuracy of self-assessment will also be made throughout the remainder of the report. In addition, the leadership and management section will include an evaluation of the quality assurance process underpinning the self-assessment report.

## **5 The inspection**

### **Inspection activities**

49. New inspection arrangements were introduced in work-based learning and college inspections in 2005, and in adult community learning and Jobcentre Plus, now DWP, inspections in 2006. These involve a different approach to the collection of evidence to support judgements. Much greater onus is placed upon the provider to demonstrate the validity of the judgements in its SAR and its capacity to improve. This involves inspectors consulting with the provider on where critical evidence may be found that will support its conclusions. Inspection activities will change and develop during the week as new evidence becomes available. If it begins to become clear that the evidence does not support claims in the SAR, the issue will be discussed with the provider at an early stage and the provider may be asked to provide further evidence to support its view. It is the responsibility of the provider to provide the inspection team with sufficient information on which to base their judgement. However, if evidence comes to light after the inspection week, but before the publication of the report, HMCI reserves the right to revisit the provider to decide whether the team's judgements should be reconsidered in the light of the new information. The same code of practice and principles of inspection will apply to the revisit as applied to the original inspection.

50. Inspectors will work as a team to evaluate the five key questions, the overall effectiveness of the provider and the quality of provision in the SSAs selected for inspection. They will, where appropriate:
- observe teaching, training, learning and assessment taking place on the provider's premises and elsewhere, for example in workplace settings
  - visit community-based provision, such as venues hosting adult and community learning courses or learndirect outreach centres
  - visit subcontractors to interview key staff
  - evaluate data on the demographic profile of learners recruited on to specific programmes, their success rates, attendance and progression
  - evaluate a sample of learners' current and recent work, including practical work
  - talk with learners, teaching staff, managers, employers and workplace supervisors, key partners and other stakeholders, and, where appropriate, parents and local authority-elected members
  - evaluate the impact of key documents, including plans, policies, procedures and tutors' records on learners' progress.
51. Where there are young people up to the age of 19 and/or vulnerable adults up to age of 25, a member of the inspection team will be allocated responsibility for gathering evidence on the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews of children's services.

## Inspection team meetings

### *Pattern of meetings*

52. The LI will decide the pattern of meetings for the inspection week. The pattern is likely to vary according to the scope and context of the inspection. In addition to formal team meetings, the LI will normally meet with the nominee each day to discuss emerging findings. The nominee is expected to attend all team meetings.
53. For illustration, a programme of meetings in a provider where SSAs are inspected might include:

Time		Main purpose
am	Day 1	Initial team briefing
pm	Day 1	Inspectors' progress reports – initial findings
pm	Day 2	Inspectors' progress reports – emerging judgements
pm	Day 3	Presentation of draft final inspection judgements
am	Day 4	Grading meeting
am	Day 4	Feedback on sector areas and on key findings

### *Initial meeting*

54. The team, including the nominee, will meet for an initial briefing on the first day of the inspection. The LI will ensure that inspectors are aware of:
- their responsibilities and expected standards of conduct
  - the context in which the provider works and the performance of its learners
  - the key issues to be covered during the inspection
  - any issues raised by the provider
  - administrative arrangements.
55. For inspections conducted over a longer period of time and where team members are geographically widely dispersed, the LI will need to ensure that all inspectors are appropriately briefed, as far as possible, at the point when they first join the inspection.

### *Progress report meetings*

56. At the meetings on the first, second and third day, each inspector will give a brief account of their emerging findings. The nominee and other inspection team members will have the opportunity for questions and comments.

### *Moderation meetings*

57. In larger inspections, the LI may choose to hold moderation meetings to review the findings of SSA inspectors. During moderation, the individuals responsible for inspecting SSAs will individually meet with the LI, AsLI or other moderating inspectors and the nominee to discuss their findings, judgements and proposed grade. The nominee may not participate in parts of the discussion that are directly related to grading.

### *Grading meeting*

58. The purpose of the final team meeting on the last day of the inspection is to arrive at accurate and secure corporate judgements about the provider. In particular, the meeting will enable the team to arrive at an overall view of quality and standards and the provider's effectiveness in meeting the education and training needs of its learners.
59. Some inspectors might join the inspection briefly, for example to inspect a sector subject area, and will not attend the final grading meeting. A meeting to agree their grade will be held before they leave. This should include the sector subject area inspector, the LI, the nominee and, where possible, the AsLI.

### *End of inspection feedback meeting*

60. At the end of the inspection the inspection team will provide feedback to senior managers. The provider should invite a representative from the LSC and/or the

DWP, if their work has been inspected, to attend this meeting. The nominee may also choose to invite representatives from other key partners, elected members and trustees to the feedback meeting.

61. Where SSAs have been inspected, the inspector in charge of each area will feed back the grade and the key strengths and areas for improvement. Strengths comprise features of the provision that are above and beyond what is expected and lead to a more than satisfactory experience for learners. Areas for improvement comprise aspects that are below what is expected and lead to a less than satisfactory experience for learners. Inspectors will also briefly outline the main findings under leadership and management and confirm the full range of grades that will be published in the report, the judgement of adequacy and key judgements denoted in the report by a grade descriptor. Where relevant, feedback will be given on the team's judgements in relation to the five outcomes for children and young people.

### **Observing learning activities**

62. In providers where SSAs are inspected the main purposes of the observations of learning activities are:
  - to check the provider's self-assessment of the quality of teaching and learning
  - to arrive at an independent judgement of the quality of aspects of teaching and learning.
63. In SSA inspections, the focus of session observations will include a judgement about the standards reached by learners, as well as their progress and the quality of teaching and learning.
64. Observations will be conducted in a way that minimises disruption to teaching and learning. Inspectors will not take part in learning activities. However, when suitable opportunities arise, inspectors may talk informally with learners or look at their work. The sessions observed will be part of the provider's normal programme of work. When they enter a classroom or training area, inspectors will ask the tutor or trainer for the register, the session plan and any supporting material. They may ask for information that enables learners of different age-groups or programme type to be identified. They will make written notes during the observation and provide brief feedback afterwards.
65. Only sessions in which learning takes place will be graded. The sample of sessions may include group or individual activities, on-the-job or off-the-job training sessions, practical demonstrations, learning taking place in resource areas or in the workplace and in community settings, fieldwork and educational visits, tutorials, enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Where sufficient planned learning activities take place, inspectors will not give the provider advance notice of the sessions that they will observe. However, where learning

takes place on an employer's premises, the visit will be pre-planned. Inspectors may stay for the whole or part of a session. They will spend enough time in sessions to enable them to make valid and reliable judgements on standards, teaching and learning. Normally this will not be less than 30 minutes. Each session observed will be graded on the four point scale. Inspectors will not participate in the learning or assessment process and are expected to remain as unobtrusive as possible. Where inspectors observe unsafe or dangerous practice, they will use their professional judgement about the appropriate degree of intervention to make.

66. In some cases, the purpose of session observations may be to test specific hypotheses rather than sample a representative cross section of sessions. Some sessions may be observed by inspectors who are not specialists in that particular sector subject area. In these circumstances, a generic judgment which focuses on learners' progress is likely to be made. Inspectors may also plan a series of short visits to a range of sessions to explore a particular theme. The purpose of such observations will be made clear to the provider's nominee. Visits of this nature will not be graded.
67. Most inspections will normally include some direct observation of teaching and learning, although the degree to which this will constitute the primary source of inspection evidence will vary, depending on the inspection context. Some types of provision afford fewer opportunities to observe learning directly, in which case greater emphasis will be placed on other first hand evidence such as the observation of learners carrying out practical activities, interviews with learners and the examination of their work.

### **Joint observations of learning activities**

68. Joint observations of sessions, involving an inspector and a member of the provider's staff, may take place as part of an evaluation of the accuracy of a provider's internal session observation scheme. Joint observations will only be undertaken with the prior consent of the tutors being observed. Where appropriate, the inspector will also observe the feedback given by the observer to the tutor. The inspector will not feed back their findings arising from the observation to the tutor, but they will discuss the perceived strengths and weaknesses with the provider's observer, and reflect on the accuracy of the judgements made by the observer.

### **Evaluation of learners' written and practical work**

69. The scrutiny of written and practical work provides essential evidence of learners' progress. Depending on the inspection context and the specific objectives of learners' programmes, inspectors will evaluate such aspects as:
  - in work-based learning: the development of learners' vocational skills and their relevance to the programme of learning, learners' current employment and future career development

- in DWP funded provision: the development of participants' employability and job seeking skills and their preparedness to find and sustain employment
- in provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: the acquisition of skills to promote independent living and, where appropriate, progression to further study and / or employment
- in adult and community learning: the development and broadening of knowledge, cultural understanding and practical skills in areas studied out of personal interest; the acquisition of skills to promote active citizenship and participation in community development; and the development of personal skills
- in all inspection contexts: the development of learners' skills in literacy, numeracy and language.

70. Where SSAs are inspected, the sample of assessed work should include:

- work of at least three learners on each programme being inspected
- work that is of above average, average and below average standard
- work of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, where appropriate.

71. The provider should make available portfolios of written work and, where appropriate, evidence of learners' work in other forms such as artefacts, photographic records or evidence stored digitally. Assessment records, individual learning plans and progress reviews should be provided for those learners whose work is sampled. Inspectors may also look at learners' files and portfolios when they observe sessions, assessments and reviews.

### **Analysis and evaluation of learners' performance data**

72. Inspectors' analysis and evaluation of performance data will also provide vital evidence of standards. Inspectors will look at data for learners who have completed their programmes in the last three years. They will give more weight to the most recent years and to programmes that are currently operating. Where appropriate, they will look at retention rates for existing learners and at the results of any external tests, the progress made by learners in completing units of programmes, and other course work. The relative success rates of learners from different groups will be analysed. This analysis will include gender, disability, and ethnicity. Inspectors will also look at value-added data, where available. The effectiveness of systems to recognise and record progress and achievement in non-accredited learning (RARPA) will be evaluated and outcomes analysed.

### **Discussions with learners**

73. Discussions with learners provide evidence about what they know, understand and can do and to their personal development. It helps inspectors to establish



their progress and whether they are achieving as well as they might. Discussions may take place with individuals or with groups. Inspectors will seek to establish learners' views of the provider and the extent to which they feel that they are effectively guided, supported, and challenged. Discussion topics might include:

- recruitment and selection procedures
- organisation and effectiveness of the induction programme
- perceptions of the quality of pastoral support and guidance (including matters relating to equality of opportunity and respect for different cultures, religions, and communities)
- aspects of programme management and assessment including quality of teaching
- relevance of the programme to the vocational or community setting
- opportunities to influence the programme (for example, focus groups, perception surveys)
- enrichment opportunities
- understanding of anti-bullying and harassment procedures
- guidance on progression to or within employment or to further/higher education and training
- summary strengths and areas for improvement in provision
- the opportunity to make any other points that learners consider relevant.

### **Discussions with managers, staff and others involved in the provider's work**

74. Discussions with managers and teaching staff provide important evidence of roles and responsibilities, procedures and policies. They clarify how and why decisions are taken and how the impact of those decisions is evaluated. Inspectors may also meet, where appropriate, elected members, employers and representatives of other organisations that work in partnership with the provider.
75. The LI and the nominee will plan meetings with managers and with staff who have responsibility for the SSAs which are being inspected. Meetings may also be requested with other managers, support staff and visiting specialists, for example careers advisers. Inspectors will try to avoid calling meetings at short notice. The following principles apply to all meetings:
- inspectors will introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the meeting
  - inspectors will be sensitive to the needs of those with any disability so that they can play a full part in the meeting
  - the length of meetings will be agreed in advance; normally meetings will not exceed one hour
  - inspectors will offer the opportunity for those attending the meeting to ask questions and make points

- when providing feedback, inspectors will not attribute comments made in meetings to specific individuals.

### **General points about feedback**

76. The outcomes of inspection remain provisional until publication of the report. Inspectors' findings are confidential to the staff of the provider and the relevant funding bodies until the report is published. The purpose of feedback is to report and confirm inspectors' findings and judgements. Feedback arrangements may vary according to the inspection context and scope of the inspection. Whatever the circumstances, inspectors will present their findings in a way that:

- is well structured and clear
- is sensitive to the feelings of those receiving the feedback
- provides well-chosen examples
- allows opportunities for discussion and clarification of inspectors' findings
- emphasises, with supporting evidence, what has been done well and what could be improved, without offering detailed advice on matters which are the provider's responsibility.

### **Feedback to tutors, trainers and assessors**

77. Confidential oral feedback will be offered to every tutor, trainer and assessor observed, normally at the end of the observation. Sometimes feedback may be provided later in the day if more convenient or appropriate. The objective is to let the member of staff know what went well, what was less successful and what could be done more effectively; it will not include grades or grade descriptors. Inspectors will identify key strengths and areas for improvement and give reasons for their judgements. They will not comment on every aspect of the lesson or assessment, but their general conclusions may be illustrated with specific examples. Areas for improvement will be linked to their effects on learning, and will be attributed to the nature of the teaching rather than to the teacher, and to assessment practice rather than to the assessor.

### **Inspection grades**

78. All grades determined by the inspection team at the final grading meeting are provisional and remain so until the report is published. The main business of the meeting is:

- agreeing the grades for SSAs (where applicable)
- awarding overall grades for achievement and standards (key question 1), the quality of provision (key questions 2–4), and leadership and management (key question 5) with a contributory grade for equality of opportunity
- agreeing the provider's main strengths and areas for improvement

- agreeing a representative selection of learners' views
- grading the overall effectiveness of the provider, which determines the adequacy judgement
- awarding a sub-grade denoting the provider's capacity to improve and agreeing the team's judgement on the rigour and accuracy of the self-assessment process
- completing the inspection record of the main findings form with:
  - grades for key questions 2, 3, and 4
  - grades for each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question.

79. In multi-remit inspections, a separate grade for each remit will be awarded for achievement and standards, quality of provision, leadership and management, leading to an overall grade for each of these three aspects. There will be one overall grade for overall effectiveness with contributory grades for each remit.

### **SSA grades**

80. Grades for sector subject areas will primarily reflect learners' achievements and the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning in these areas. Each sector subject area inspector will also investigate key questions 3 to 5. Their findings in relation to these three key questions will influence the grade for the sector subject area, but will have less significance than inspectors' judgements on key questions 1 and 2.

### **Making judgements about the rigour and accuracy of the self-assessment process**

81. The inspection team will consider the following:
- how inclusive the process is (involvement of staff, consultation with learners, contributions from subcontractors and other external partners)
  - how well data are used to make appropriate judgements about success rates, course completion and job outcomes
  - the regularity of the process in identifying strengths and areas for improvement in a timely way
  - how self-critical and accurate the process is
  - the extent to which the report is comprehensive
  - whether the strengths and areas for improvement in the report have a significant impact on learners or are superficial.

### **Making judgements about the provider's capacity to make further improvements**

82. This judgement will be based on the past and current position of the provider, rather than making predictions about what might happen in the future. Where the provider has been previously inspected, the judgement will take into account the effectiveness of any steps which the provider has taken to improve

quality and raise standards since the last inspection. The inspection team will consider the following:

- trends over time in success rates
- the inspection grade profile when compared with previous published reports (where applicable)
- the extent to which the provider has addressed the areas for improvement identified in the provider's previous inspection report (where applicable)
- the effectiveness of the provider's self-assessment report and development plans over time in addressing areas for improvement they have identified themselves.

### **Adequacy of provision**

83. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires inspectors to come to a judgement as to whether the education or training provided is of a quality adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. A provider will be judged to be inadequate if it is awarded a grade 4 for overall effectiveness. A provider which is at least satisfactory in its overall effectiveness will not be judged to be inadequate overall.
84. The judgement of overall effectiveness is not merely an average of the three CIF aspect grades (achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management). Similarly, it is not linked in a formulaic way to grades awarded to sector subject areas. A large provider that is judged to be inadequate in one or two sector subject areas may be judged to be satisfactory overall. Inspectors' obligations to take into account all circumstances may result in a grade for overall effectiveness that is higher or lower than the average of the three CIF aspect grades and/or the sector subject area grades. However, inspectors will be guided by the following.
- A provider will normally only be awarded an overall grade 1 where none of the CIF aspect grades are less than 2, and where there are more grade 1s than grade 2s.
  - A provider that is judged to be at least satisfactory overall in (a) achievement and standards, (b) the quality of provision and (c) leadership and management should be judged to be at least satisfactory in overall effectiveness.
  - A provider where the quality of provision is judged to be inadequate will normally be judged to be inadequate in its overall effectiveness.
  - A provider where both achievements and standards and leadership and management are judged to be inadequate will be judged to be inadequate in its overall effectiveness. Where only one of these is judged to be inadequate the team will normally consider the provision to be inadequate. However, the team will consider the impact of the inadequacy on the

experience of the learners and any significant evidence of improvement in considering whether a judgement of inadequacy is appropriate.

### **What happens after the inspection**

85. Shortly after the inspection the draft report and RMF will be shared with the provider to enable the accuracy of factual information to be checked. The final report will normally be published within six working weeks from the end of the inspection.
86. The provider is expected to prepare an action plan in response to the inspection findings. The plan must focus on action the provider will take to address those aspects of provision identified in the summary section of the report entitled 'Areas for improvement', together with the areas for improvement listed for each sector subject area. Managers should agree the action plan and send copies to their LSC contact and/or DWP contract manager. Action plans will vary to suit the provider, but should indicate:
  - the actions to be taken to address each area for improvement
  - the person responsible for each action
  - realistic target dates for completion of each action
  - the intended outcome of each action
  - criteria for evaluating the extent to which outcomes have been achieved.
87. The updated plan, demonstrating those actions completed and the resulting improvements in provision, is likely to be an important source of evidence at the subsequent monitoring visit.

## **6 Records of inspection evidence**

88. Evidence forms, inspection records and judgement recording forms are confidential to Ofsted. Ofsted will not collect data on individuals which would be personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Judgement recording form and record of main findings**

89. A judgement recording form (JRF) will be completed for each sector subject area that is inspected. In addition, a recording of main findings (RMF) will provide a full summary record of all of grades awarded (except individual session observation grades). RMF grades are agreed by the team at the final team meeting and all RMF grades will be shared with the provider. A copy of the RMF will be sent to the provider along with the inspection report, following moderation. The RMF will record grades for:
  - overall effectiveness
  - capacity to improve

- achievement and standards, the quality of education and training, and leadership and management with a contributory grade for equality of opportunity;
- in multi-remit inspections sub-grades may be awarded under these three headings for, for example, different aspects of the provider's work, such as work-based learning and learndirect
- each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question
- each SSA inspected.

## Inspection record

90. The inspection record (IR) is a working document kept by each inspector, summarising their main judgements and sources of evidence as the inspection progresses. They will normally be updated on a daily basis to provide an evidence trail and used as the basis for feedback at team meetings. The record of inspection findings will summarise judgments about each key question. Where relevant, a separate IR will be kept for judgements on the five outcomes related to joint area reviews. Judgements will be cross-referenced to evidence forms. Inspectors for SSAs will also compile a learners' achievements table which will indicate success rates for courses in the SSA inspected.

## Evidence form

91. The evidence form is used to record all first-hand evidence, including session observations, observations of workplace assessments and progress reviews, records of discussions with staff and learners, document reviews and other evidence that arises from an inspector's observation of the work of the provider, its staff and learners, employers and external partners. It informs inspectors' entries in their inspection records.

# 7 Inspection report

## Report structure

92. Published reports will include judgements about the provider as a whole as well as judgements about individual sector subject areas when they are inspected. Inspectors will seek to achieve an appropriate balance between reporting on the provision for different age ranges of learners and types of programme with reference to the themes and aspects identified in the PIC. Reports will have eight parts, as follows:

### *(i) Background information about the provider*

93. This includes a brief explanation of the nature of the provider, its working context, the range of learners it serves and what the provider sees as its main aims. It also includes a brief explanation of the scope of the inspection.

*(ii) Summary of grades awarded*

*(iii) Overall judgements*

94. This part includes sections on:

- the effectiveness of the provider, which will include the judgement on equality of opportunity; if the provider is judged to be inadequate, a statement to this effect will be included in this section
- the provider's capacity to improve, which will comment on the effectiveness of quality improvement procedures and the accuracy of the self-assessment report
- the effectiveness of steps taken to secure improvement since the last inspection.

*(iv) Key strengths and areas for improvement*

*(v) Main findings*

95. This part of the report will have three sections:

- achievement and standards, summarising the team's findings on key question 1.
- quality of provision, summarising the team's findings on key questions 2, 3 and 4. In inspections where no sector subject areas are inspected all judgements about teaching and learning will be included in this part of the report.
- leadership and management, summarising the team's judgement on key question 5, including a contributory grade for equality of opportunity.

All three sections will include references to the accuracy of self-assessment.

*(vi) Learners' views*

96. A representative summary of learners' views will be presented which clearly identifies the features of the provision learners liked and those aspects which learners think could be improved.

*(vii) Sector subject area reports*

97. When sector subject areas are inspected, each report will include:

- a grade and grade descriptor
- a paragraph describing the scope of provision
- strengths and areas for improvement
- further paragraphs, classified under the headings of Achievement and standards, Quality of provision and Leadership and management.

Reports will make appropriate references to the accuracy of self-assessment.

*(viii) Key performance indicators*

98. Tables showing summary and, where appropriate, individual programme success rates, will be included.

**Published grades, sub-grades, and contributory grades**

99. The key published grades are for:

- effectiveness of provision
- capacity to improve
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management, with a contributory grade for equality of opportunity.

**Published judgements where a grade descriptor will be used**

100. In the published report, inspectors will make clear their judgements on:

- key questions 2, 3 and 4
- the management of support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs
- the arrangements to provide adults with appropriate information advice and guidance
- the accuracy of the self-assessment report
- the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection.

**Unpublished grades that are fed back to the provider**

101. These include the grades for each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question.

**Unpublished grades that are not fed back to the provider**

102. This only applies to lesson observation grades.

## **8 Monitoring visits (formerly quality monitoring inspections)**

### **Arrangements for monitoring visits**

103. Monitoring visits are used as a follow up to inspection to determine whether standards identified at first inspection and improvements brought about through reinspection have been maintained or improved. Visits are mainly focused on providers who are judged to be satisfactory only, and those who have achieved a satisfactory-only judgement after reinspection. The findings



from a monitoring visit may influence the timing, resourcing and focus of any future inspection.

104. The main emphasis of a monitoring visit is on assessing improvements in the quality of provision and on how effective the post-inspection development plan and any subsequent self-assessment have been in raising achievement and supporting all learners. Inspectors assess 'distance travelled' since the previous inspection but the monitoring visit does not constitute a reinspection of the provider. Monitoring visits are thematic in approach, taking their focus from areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection and also from the provider's self-assessment report. Every monitoring visit will include a core focus on achievements and standards.
105. Monitoring visits will normally be carried out by two inspectors, a lead and an assisting lead. They will take place approximately 15 months after an inspection or reinspection in which the provider has been judged satisfactory-only.
106. Prior to the monitoring visit the lead inspector will review the provider's latest self-assessment report, the post inspection action plan, up-to-date performance data, the provider's last inspection report and the most recent local LSC or other funding body provider review. The provider will not be required to present any additional data for the visit but may do so if it wishes. The provider will be invited to supply an assessment of the progress and impact of its action plan. The lead inspector will determine the themes of the visit. The provider will produce a draft programme for the visit which the lead inspector will approve prior to the visit. The programme for the visit will be confirmed to the provider by letter or email.

### **Conducting monitoring visits**

107. Monitoring visits will normally be completed within one day or, exceptionally, two days in the case of large or national providers. The format for monitoring visits will normally:
  - include meetings with key staff, learners and possibly employers to consider the impact of changes in provision or performance and review progress with post-inspection action plans
  - include consideration of issues which might affect the scope and timing of the next inspection; for example changes in provider performance, changes in management, evidence of improvement and judgements about the effectiveness of self-assessment
  - focus on a particular aspect of provision and/or issues that arise from the inspector's preparatory analysis of the self-assessment report, the post-inspection action plan and other documentation.
108. At the end of the monitoring visit inspectors will provide informal feedback to the provider. Following the visit, a letter summarising the findings will be sent

to the provider, copied to the LSC or other relevant funding body, and published on the Ofsted website.

## **Monitoring minimum levels of performance**

109. Linked to the White Paper *Further Education: Raising skills, improving life chances* commitment to eliminate failure, the LSC has defined minimum levels of performance for the FE system. If a provider of apprenticeships has less than 40% full framework completion, that SSA or framework provision will be put out to competitive tender. For providers delivering accredited FE long course provision, including those delivering adult and community learning, the minimum level of performance for success rates is set at 50%. A notice to improve will be issued to those falling below this threshold.
110. If the LSC identifies a provider that is not acting on the conditions of the Ntl, it intends to invite Ofsted to undertake either an extended monitoring visit or possibly a full inspection. Where a monitoring visit is undertaken in these circumstances, it will be enhanced by additional specialist inspectors. These inspectors will focus on the key areas of underperformance which led to the issue of the Ntl.

## **9 Arrangements for reinspections**

111. There are three types of reinspection:
- full reinspection of inadequate providers
  - partial reinspection which focuses on a provider's inadequate sector subject areas
  - partial reinspection when an aspect of the CIF relating to an aspect of provision, for example a provider's Department for Work and Pensions funded provision, is judged inadequate.

In each case the reinspection will be carried out in accordance with the CIF.

### **Full reinspection of inadequate providers**

112. Reinspection of providers judged to be inadequate will normally take place within 12 to 15 months of the date of the previous inspection. Ofsted will notify providers of the dates of their reinspections. A full reinspection will follow the usual procedures of inspection outlined in this handbook.
113. The written report of a full reinspection of an inadequate provider will follow the general structure of other published reports, including judgements on the effectiveness of actions taken since the previous inspection. The report will include a statement of whether or not the provision remains inadequate overall. Aspects of provision inspected in detail will be reported in separate sections. Sector subject areas graded 3 or better at the previous inspection that have not

been looked at in detail will be covered in the main findings section of the report.

114. Provision which was present at, but not covered by, the previous inspection may be included. Provision which is new, and was not present at the previous inspection, will not be in scope for reinspection.
115. Prior to their full reinspection, inadequate providers will normally receive at least one monitoring visit. The visit will monitor the implementation of the post inspection action plan. The visit may focus on a sector subject area or leadership and management. The provider should be clear about the focus of each visit and whether other inspectors will accompany the lead inspector. The LI will ensure that a representative of the relevant funding body is invited to the feedback given at the end of the reinspection process.

### **Reinspection of a provider's inadequate sector subject areas or aspects of provision**

116. Reinspection of inadequate sector subject areas or aspects of provision will take place as part of a monitoring visit held within 12–15 months of the previous inspection. Monitoring visits where reinspection takes place will normally be completed within two days and will involve additional specialist inspectors to accompany the lead inspector.
117. During monitoring visits where sector subject areas are reinspected inspectors will
  - assess progress against objectives set out in the post-inspection action plans for the inadequate sector subject areas
  - observe sessions and make an assessment of the quality of teaching and learning
  - evaluate performance trends in the sector subject area since the inspection
  - compare their judgements with the provider's self-assessment of the sector subject area.
118. A report will be placed on the internet which will state what has been reinspected and the grades awarded. If inadequate subject sector areas remain following a reinspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at subsequent monitoring visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be reinspected during the next full inspection.

## **10 Assuring the quality of inspections**

### **Quality assurance**

119. Ofsted reviews all inspections for which it is responsible to ensure that an inspection provides an accurate and fair picture of the provider and that it has been conducted well. As part of the process, the views of providers will be

sought to inform the evaluation. Quality assurance of inspections includes assessment of:

- the quality, standard and management of the inspection
- the competence, effectiveness and conduct of inspectors
- the quality and standard of inspection reports.

120. The LI has responsibility for the conduct of all team members during the inspection. The LI will arrange for the work of each team member to be monitored appropriately. The LI will ensure that any complaints that arise during the inspection are dealt with quickly and effectively.

121. Ofsted also carries out on-site quality assurance of a sample of inspections. Where this is the case, an assistant divisional manager (ADM) or inspector will normally join the inspection team. The main purposes of this are to:

- support and mentor the inspection team
- assure the quality of the inspection process and outcomes
- ensure the inspection is conducted to a high professional standard
- assess, through sampling, the reliability and accuracy of evidence from the team
- ensure an appropriate match of evidence to judgements and grades through attendance at moderation and team meetings
- ensure emerging and interim findings are effectively communicated to the provider
- screen and comment on the quality of draft written text through individual discussion with team members.

122. Before the visit the ADM will review the SAR, PPR and PIC to obtain background information about the provider. During the quality assurance visit the visiting ADM/inspector will:

- liaise with the LI to review the team's internal quality assurance processes
- check EFs and provide feedback to inspectors
- attend moderation and team meetings to ensure that the evidence supports judgements and grades
- ensure that the key judgements are corporate judgements that involve the whole team
- check draft text, where available, and provide feedback
- discuss the process of inspection and the emerging findings with the provider's senior manager and the nominee, resolving any problems as necessary.

123. The LI, in consultation with the ADM conducting the quality assurance visit, will aim to resolve any disagreements about process and judgements during the inspection week. In some inspections included in the sample, it may not be necessary or practicable for an ADM to make a quality assurance visit. In such

cases the ADM and the LI will communicate by telephone and (if necessary) email to review the inspection process and outcomes. In this instance, a telephone call towards the end of the inspection will also normally be made to the provider's chief executive or other senior manager to receive feedback on perceptions about the process and management of the inspection.

### **The moderation of inspection reports**

124. All inspection reports are subject to a process of moderation. Grades arrived at by inspection teams at inspection are provisional. The moderation process is designed to ensure that inspection judgements and grades are fully explained in the text of the report and that the evidence for them is sufficient. Moderation also ensures that inspection grades are consistent and in-line with those awarded for similar providers nationally. Moderation is conducted by an ADM or an experienced inspector.

### **Code of conduct**

125. Inspectors will uphold high professional standards in their work. They will ensure that a provider's staff are treated fairly in their inspection. They will make every effort to secure the cooperation and confidence of those being inspected. They will be sensitive to the impact of the inspection on tutors, trainers, assessors and other staff. They will carry out their duties according to the requirements of the CIF and the guidance provided in this handbook. The best interests of learners will be a priority. The full code of conduct is set out in the CIF.

### **The conduct of a provider's staff**

126. It is clearly important that all parties involved in inspection behave in a professional and courteous manner. There is an expectation that a provider's staff will be courteous and helpful to inspectors and other Ofsted members of staff with whom they have contact. Ofsted will not accept the abuse, harassment or intimidation of, or interference with, inspectors or support staff during the course of their legitimate work. If an incident of such behaviour occurs during an inspection the LI will seek to resolve the issue informally with the nominee. If the issue cannot be resolved in this way the LI will report the problem to an Ofsted divisional manager who will investigate the incident, and appropriate action will be taken. Any action taken will be noted in the inspection report. If the LI judges that the conduct of the nominee is unacceptable in a team meeting, it may have to be suspended and, in extreme circumstances, reconvened without the nominee present.

### **Arrangements to receive feedback from providers**

127. At the end of every inspection providers are asked to complete a survey to record their views on the conduct of the inspection. Following publication of the report, providers are asked to evaluate the usefulness of the inspection process

and of the published inspection report to quality improvement. The post inspection survey will be taken seriously and used to improve the quality of inspection to ensure it is more efficient and more effective in promoting improvement.

### **Arrangements to deal with a complaint about a provider made in confidence to the lead inspector**

128. The LI will ensure there are sufficient meetings scheduled during the inspection for learners, staff and other stakeholders to express their views on the quality of the provision. However, there may be an occasion where the LI is approached by an individual, often a former learner, a parent, a member of staff, an employer or other stakeholder, who wishes to provide the LI with confidential information about an aspect of the provider's work which they claim is pertinent to the inspection.
129. The LI should enquire whether or not the individual has exhausted the provider's complaints procedure. If they have, and they wish the matter to be drawn to the attention of inspectors, they should be advised that the source of the information must be shared with the provider, so that the provider can respond to the issues raised. If the individual wishes to proceed, the LI will ensure that the information is shared with the nominee and will invite the provider to respond. The LI will then consider whether the issues raised by the individual and by the provider in its response are relevant to the inspection. It is not for the LI or the inspection team to deal with the complaint. However, the LI will relay information to a senior manager in Ofsted where there are serious concerns, such as matters relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals or of financial irregularity.
130. If the request is received at a time other than during an inspection the learner or other stakeholder will be directed to the appropriate responsible body, for example the LSC.

### **Complaints about inspections**

131. Occasionally providers feel dissatisfied with an aspect of their inspection, for example the conduct of an inspector, the adequacy of inspection evidence, or the inspection report. Ofsted's complaints procedures set out how providers can complain about their inspection and what will happen with their complaint. The complaints procedure is available on the Ofsted website.
132. Before making a formal complaint the nominee should discuss their concerns with the LI, with a view to resolving the issues as quickly as possible while the inspection is taking place. If this does not resolve the issue the provider should contact the Ofsted helpline.

## 2.1 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for providers of work-based learning

### Introduction

133. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of work-based learning. It takes full account of national priorities. Current priorities include the government's strategies for skills development, widening participation and e-learning. The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgments are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.
134. Providers should use the Common Inspection Framework and this guidance to aid their self-assessment processes.
135. In the inspection of work-based learning, inspectors give due attention to the provisions of the Children Act 2004. Inspections may cover programmes of learning, including those with a residential element, where there are children, young people up to the age of 19, or those up to the age of 25 who are vulnerable through the residential nature of their provision, or because they are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged. In provision of this kind, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the five outcomes for children and young people are being met. The findings from these inspections will be used in Joint Area Reviews.
136. As its name suggests, work-based learning takes place mainly in the workplace. Its main aim is to enable the learner to become competent and effective in his or her occupation.
137. Inspectors:
- inspect and grade each sector subject area
  - give unpublished contributory grades for each programme, such as work-based learning for young people and Train to Gain (formerly Employer Training Pilots). These are taken into consideration when determining the overall published grade for the sector subject area
  - grade the leadership and management of the provision
  - give a contributory grade for each provider's approach to equality of opportunity
  - make judgements about the effectiveness of each establishment's information, advice and guidance services

- make judgments about the effectiveness of each provider's strategy to identify and meet learners' literacy, numeracy and language learning needs
- make a judgement on the provider's self-assessment process
- grade the overall effectiveness of the provision
- grade the provider's capacity to improve.

## Providers and programmes

- Providers of work-based learning range from private training organisations and colleges of further education to employers that train their own staff.
- Within Train to Gain, skills brokers work in partnership with employers and training providers to determine the courses to be provided and who will deliver them. Similarly, providers of information, advice and guidance such as the nextstep service may have separate contracts to deliver their services within the overall Train to Gain programme. The quality of the work of these external agencies is outside the scope of inspection of work-based learning providers, but the contribution of the learning provider to the effectiveness of partnership working is relevant.
- A provider of work-based learning that offers any other government-funded training, such as programmes funded by the Department for Work and Pensions or the European Social Fund (ESF), will have all of its provision inspected at the same time.
- Most work-based learners are employed and follow the requirements of an apprenticeship framework in a specific occupational area. Apprentices work towards a national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 2 or level 3.
- Apprenticeship frameworks also include training in key skills and a technical certificate. Many training programmes include opportunities for learners to achieve additional qualifications or units of qualifications.
- Some training programmes, such as workforce development and Train to Gain, do not involve apprenticeships; they are aimed at the achievement of an NVQ.
- The main objective of some programmes is to help learners to gain a job or progress to further training, rather than gain a qualification.
- Some programmes are designed to improve the capacity of the provider and employer base to support learning at work and the goals of the government's skills strategy. Such programmes may include the training of teachers, coaches and work-based assessors.



## Terminology

### Term used in the Common Inspection Framework

### Equivalent term in work-based learning

Learning goals	Learning goals	<p>In work-based learning, these could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ achievement of an NVQ</li> <li>■ development of key skills</li> <li>■ completion of a full apprenticeship framework</li> <li>■ completion of a technical certificate</li> <li>■ development of literacy, language or numeracy skills</li> <li>■ achievement of a skills for life qualification.</li> </ul>
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### Other terms used in work-based learning include:

Assess-train-assess	A method of delivering training which assesses learners' existing skills and knowledge, and the additional skills and knowledge that they need for a qualification or job, provides structured training to deliver these additional skills, and then re-assesses and accredits (where appropriate) these new skills. This is the preferred and expected model of delivery within Train to Gain.
Initial assessment	<p>Identification of a learner's occupational and key skills, including literacy, language and numeracy, and their competence and knowledge at the beginning of a training programme. Findings from the initial assessment should be taken into account when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ drawing up an individual learning plan</li> <li>■ setting targets</li> <li>■ determining additional support needs</li> <li>■ measuring the added value of the training.</li> </ul>
Individual learning plan	A plan specific to each learner, which sets out learning goals and how they are to be achieved. The plan covers on- and off-the-job training. It also outlines learners' support needs and how these will be met. It is reviewed and updated regularly.
On-the-job training	The part of the training that takes place at work and is given by an occupationally competent workplace supervisor. Workplace supervisors should understand the occupational standards. They are not necessarily qualified trainers.
Off-the-job training	Training that takes place away from the usual place of work, at a training centre, college, or in another part of the workplace premises. Learners gain knowledge or skills that they can use at

	work or that will help them to gain employment.
Progress review	A meeting between a learner and those responsible for his or her training. The individual's progress towards achieving learning objectives is reviewed. Targets for the next stage of the training are set.
Skills broker	An external agent who works with employers involved in Train to Gain to determine which courses will be provided. The skills brokers may also strongly influence which training provider works with which employer.
Subcontractors	Training providers or assessment centres to which training, assessment or verification are subcontracted by the organisation with the prime responsibility for training, learning and achievement.
Under-represented groups	<p>People from identifiable groups in the community, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ those from minority ethnic communities</li> <li>■ people with disabilities</li> <li>■ men or women who make up a significantly low proportion of learners in a particular occupational area.</li> </ul> <p>The degree of under-representation is measured by comparing the proportion of learners from such groups on a learning programme, with the proportion of people from these groups in the local population.</p>

## Overall effectiveness

138. How effective and efficient are the provision and any related services in meeting the full range of learners' needs and why? What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

139. Inspectors evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the provision, including any extended services, and its main strengths and weaknesses
- the capacity to make further improvements
- the effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection;

Also, where appropriate:

- the effectiveness of links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners
- the quality and standards in the foundation stage
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

The final two points do not apply to work-based learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Question 1 – How well do learners achieve?

140. In work-based learning, achievement is judged in three ways:

- the proportion of learners who complete the programme and the proportion who achieve their learning goals
- the standard of competence and skills that learners achieve at work and how that compares with the level of competence and skills they had when they started their programmes
- in Train to Gain, where training is initiated by the employer, inspectors will also assess any added value, such as more effective ways of working, that learners bring to their workplace as their learning programmes progress.

141. Quality improvement judgements will include how well providers use data to evaluate programmes and take measures to improve them. Such data includes:

- the level of framework achievement
- success rates for NVQs, key skills, technical certificates and other qualifications included in learners' programmes
- learners' attendance records
- learners' destinations on leaving the programme.

142. Equality of opportunity judgements will include how well providers use the above data to analyse the qualification success rates of different groups of learners. These will cover gender and ethnic groups and learners with disabilities.

143. Inspectors will judge the provider's ability to develop appropriate literacy, numeracy and language skills in learners to allow them to complete their main learning programmes and progress to employment or further training.

144. Inspectors evaluate:

*Learners' success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*

In work-based learning, challenging targets include:

- timely completion of apprenticeship frameworks
- timely achievement of key skills and literacy, numeracy and language skills, appropriate to the job and main qualification
- timely achievement of qualifications such as NVQs and technical certificates
- raising the attainment of learners.

Qualification success rates over time should show improvement, or be maintained at a high standard.

Qualification success rates for different groups of learners, including gender and ethnic groups, should show equally high standards of performance, or be moving towards parity.

*The standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- the level of skills and knowledge shown by learners at work
- the standard of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills, appropriate to their job and qualification level
- the standard of learners' work for their technical certificate and any other applicable qualification or training programme
- the extent to which learners' occupational and personal skills improve while they are on their training programmes.

*Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider learners' progress towards gaining:

- vocational skills
- NVQs
- key skills
- technical certificates
- improved levels of attainment in skills and knowledge
- other relevant skills and knowledge.

Learners' levels and success rates should be appropriate to their previous and potential levels of achievement. Inspectors base their judgements about learners' progress on information relating to learners' skills and knowledge at each stage of their training, by examining learning plans and records of achievement. In Train to Gain, learners' job performance may also be assessed.

*The extent to which learners enjoy their work*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider the degree to which learners show interest and participate in their learning sessions and take pride in their achievements in learning and at work. In Train to Gain, the extent to which learners apply their training in the workplace will be assessed.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The acquisition of workplace skills.

**In work-based learning this means:**

Practical skills required for the chosen job and shown in practical training sessions and at work.

	Occupational skills required by the employer or work-placement provider.
	Cognitive skills required to perform at work.
	Working safely in achieving industry-standard work and work practices.
	Other skills required by learners to work effectively in their jobs, which may include:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ –numeracy</li> <li>■ –communication</li> <li>■ –problem solving</li> <li>■ –managing own work</li> <li>■ –working effectively in teams with other people</li> </ul>
The development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the learner.	Appropriate knowledge and understanding of employment rights and responsibilities.
	Skills and knowledge required for employment and progression within the chosen occupation.
The emotional development of learners.	The extent to which learners are supported in training and pastoral terms to allow them to develop and achieve their full potential.
The behaviour of learners.	Demonstrating the behaviour required and expected by employers and off-the-job training providers.
The attendance of learners.	Punctual and regular attendance at work and at off-the-job training sessions.
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.	Appropriate knowledge of safe working practices.
Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	Every opportunity is taken to ensure that learners fully understand and apply the principles of equality and diversity in training, social and work situations.
	Learners have access to resources and facilities which provide them with the means to develop in these areas.
Whether learners make a positive contribution to the community.	The relevance and effectiveness of training programmes in preparing learners for useful work in the community. The extent to which learners apply their newly acquired or improved skills successfully in employment.

145. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of learners at work
- data specified in the guidance and forms issued by Ofsted
- numbers of learners starting and completing their programmes
- comparisons between local and national data, where available
- providers' data trends over several years
- destinations of all learners who leave before or at the end of their programmes
- learners' written and practical work, including portfolios of evidence
- interviews with learners about their achievements
- interviews with employers about the standard of learners' work
- learners' initial assessment records and individual learning plans
- records of learners' progress reviews
- records of learners' attendance
- evidence from employers about learners' progress at work during Train to Gain.

## The quality of provision

### Question 2 – How effective are teaching, training and learning?

146. This question is about:

- the effectiveness of the work-based learning process in enabling learners to acquire the competence, skills and knowledge that contribute to their learning goals
- the quality of staff, including off-the-job trainers, workplace supervisors, staff who manage and coordinate the training and those in subcontracted organisations, and how well they are deployed
- the quality of the accommodation, equipment, materials and learning resources, in the workplace and in off-the-job training locations
- how effectively learners are assessed, on entry and throughout their learning programmes.

147. Quality improvement judgements will include how well the quality of learning and assessment is monitored and the effectiveness of steps taken to improve it. Inspectors will consider providers' observations of on- and off-the job training sessions, how well learners' and trainers' evaluations of learning activities are used, and internal verification of assessments.

148. Judgements about the promotion of equality of opportunity will include how well trainers, assessors and other members of staff adapt learning activities, resources and assessments to allow all learners to participate fully and achieve their potential.

149. Inspectors will judge the ability of the provider to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and/or language skills to enable them to achieve their learning goals, and equip them for the future.

150. Inspectors evaluate:

*How well teaching and/or training and resources promote learning, address the full range of learners' needs and meet course or programme requirements*

In work-based learning inspectors consider:

- the extent to which teaching staff possess technical competence and up-to-date expertise consistent with effective teaching and assessment of the course or programme
- whether staff use appropriate methods for dealing with learners from a wide range of backgrounds and in different types of provision
- the effectiveness of on- and off-the-job teaching and training
- to what extent staff use methods and styles of teaching consistent with the aims of their programmes and learners' personal objectives
- whether tutors select and use appropriate programmes and teaching methods for learners
- whether teaching builds on existing experience and knowledge, and helps learners to extend their repertoire of learning styles
- the significance of workplace experience in developing learners' competence and confidence
- the contribution of planning and coordination of on- and off-the-job training in achieving learning aims, including how well the resources at work enable learners to achieve their qualifications
- the roles of trainers, assessors and other specialists, and whether there are enough suitably qualified and experienced staff to meet the demands of the programme and the range of learners
- whether staff challenge and inspire learners and motivate them by finding new ways for learners to look at themselves and their environment
- the extent to which staff, with learners, develop individual learning plans guided by initial assessment, which are reviewed and updated regularly, and whether learning plans reflect learners' identified learning needs, interests and aspirations, as well as their prior learning
- whether learning plans are updated to take account of learners' progress
- to what extent staff use suitable, up-to-date learning materials and equipment that are available and used at all venues

- if accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching and learning and support for learners, and whether that accommodation is conducive to learning, irrespective of whether the provider owns the building
- whether resources, including information learning technology, are used to best effect to promote learning
- to what extent learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully, and all parts of the premises are accessible to learners with restricted mobility
- to what extent additional or adapted learning and communications equipment is available for those who need it
- to what extent staff use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity and ensure that the presentation and content of materials value diversity positively
- whether learners work in a safe and healthy environment.
- within Train to Gain the extent to which training providers use methods of delivery which relate to the working environment and business needs of particular employers
- within Train to Gain, the extent to which literacy, numeracy and language training is made relevant to each employers' business, and is linked appropriately with vocational training.

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider the effectiveness of:

- initial assessment of learners' vocational skills, key skills, and literacy, numeracy and language skills and knowledge
- initial assessment in developing an individual learning plan
- assessment and review information throughout a programme, in monitoring progress and the planning of learning
- the summative assessment of knowledge and competence; judgements will be made about the suitability and thoroughness of assessment
- feedback to learners about the quality of their work and what they need to do to improve.

*The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider the effectiveness of:



- initial assessment in identifying learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs and other specific requirements, such as those for people with dyslexia
- the provider's efforts to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills to a level appropriate to the programme and learners' needs
- support for additional needs
- teaching and training methods and styles for developing these skills
- differentiated teaching and training to meet all learners' needs
- additional support at work and during on- and off-the-job training.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.

**In work-based learning this means:**

This is not applicable to work-based learning.

151. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of on- and off-the-job training and assessment
- visits to learners' workplaces
- observations and records of progress reviews
- interviews with learners about:
  - how well their training needs are met
  - what they think of their assessments
  - the quality of the feedback they receive about their progress
- interviews with trainers, assessors and internal verifiers
- interviews with workplace supervisors and employers
- individual learning and assessment plans
- on- and off-the-job training plans and session plans
- learning and assessment materials and resources, including information learning technology
- records of assessment, internal and external verification, learners' progress and achievement
- learners' assessment portfolios
- records of progress reviews
- progress review records sent to employers
- plans and materials for induction programmes
- records of communication between all those involved in training
- feedback from learners as gathered from employer/provider surveys or other sources
- staff qualifications, and staff training and development records
- visits to subcontracted training facilities
- health and safety monitoring records and training materials.

### Question 3 – How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?

152. This question is about how effective the training is in meeting the expectations of learners on work-based learning programmes so that they:

- obtain sustained employment
- begin or progress with their careers.

153. Quality improvement judgements will include how well schemes of work and information about learners' views of the programmes are used to evaluate the provision, identify good practice, and contribute to improvements.

154. Judgments about the promotion of equality of opportunity will include how socially inclusive the learning programmes are, and whether specific actions are taken to recruit from under-represented groups.

155. The provision of literacy, numeracy and/or language learning will be judged on the suitability and coherence of the provision to learners.

156. Inspectors evaluate:

*The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- whether learners have the chance to follow an appropriate range of courses or programmes
- if, where appropriate, learners can achieve suitable qualifications to enhance their career and employment prospects
- to what extent training programmes are well planned and coherent, involving activities that become progressively more complex and demanding.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- whether all eligible people, whatever their personal circumstances and background, can take part in training programmes
- the extent to which providers gather, and make effective use of, information about employers' needs and the labour market
- whether programmes meet the needs of employers in the learners' chosen occupational area
- to what extent learning programmes comply with the requirements of appropriate external agencies

- whether multi-site provision and resources are integrated effectively to provide coherent learning programmes
- how well off-the-job training complements on-the-job training and how relevant it is to learners' roles at work.
- the extent to which training providers of Train to Gain work with employers and skills brokers to assess the value of the training programmes to the business.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The extent to which employers' needs are met.

The extent to which enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement.

The extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and healthy.

**In work-based learning this means:**

Gathering and responding to information about employers' needs for learning and skills.

Engaging with employers to promote training and skills and improve participation.

Programmes of work take account of the needs of employers and local communities.

Learners get the chance to broaden their experiences through a suitable variety of enrichment activities.

Whether systems ensure that learners are in a safe working environment, and that personal protective equipment is used, and safe working practices are followed and monitored.

To what extent learners are working in an environment that complies with health and safety legislation.

Whether accommodation for off-the-job training meets health and safety requirements.

To what extent learners and staff are aware of their responsibilities for their own health and safety and that of others.

157. Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with learners about the content and context of their programmes
- interviews with employers, workplace supervisors and providers' staff
- providers' strategic and development plans
- individual learning plans
- local and national labour market information
- local and national information about employers' skills needs
- promotional literature and advice given to prospective learners

- action plans for encouraging participation by people from particular groups
- feedback from learners as gathered from employer/provider surveys or other sources
- records of communication about the coordination of on- and off-the-job training
- records of awards of certificates to learners for any additional training, particularly that provided by an employer.

#### **Question 4 – How well are learners guided and supported?**

158. This question is about the arrangements that a work-based learning provider uses to support and guide its learners. It covers:

- the quality and accuracy of guidance given to prospective learners to direct them towards the most appropriate programme and level of study. In Train to Gain, employers and skills brokers have the primary responsibility for determining the appropriate programmes
- the effectiveness of induction programmes in enabling learners to settle quickly into their programmes
- the effectiveness of support systems in maximising the learner's ability to achieve his or her learning goals, and minimising the risk of them leaving their programmes before completion.

159. Quality improvement judgements will include how well providers evaluate the pre-course guidance, induction, and additional support to identify good practice and areas for improvement.

160. Equality of opportunity judgements will include how effectively induction programmes enable learners to understand their rights and responsibilities.

161. Inspectors will judge the provision of literacy, numeracy, and/or language support on the quality and accuracy of the guidance given to learners and the quality of the support systems.

Inspectors evaluate:

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- how well impartial guidance enables learners to choose the programme or course that is right for them
- the effectiveness of careers education and guidance in guiding learners towards appropriate employment and progression opportunities after they have completed their training – this can include job search activities

- the effectiveness of guidance about the nature of work in the learner's occupational area
- how accurately learners' individual learning needs are diagnosed
- the extent to which learners receive effective additional support throughout their training, including access to specialist support
- the extent to which the provider involves employers in the development of learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills
- how well induction programmes for on- and off-the-job training prepare learners for the demands of their programmes
- the effectiveness of procedures for recognising and managing poor punctuality, absences from training and poor performance
- the appropriateness of support arrangements, accommodation and recreational facilities for residential training programmes, those involving young people up to the age of 19, or those up to the age of 25 who are vulnerable through the residential nature of their provision, or because they are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged..

*The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and, where applicable, career progression*

162. Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with learners about the quality of care, guidance, advice and support that they receive
- individual learning plans
- interviews with training providers' staff
- interviews with employers and workplace supervisors
- observation of induction sessions and examination of induction materials and records
- observations and records of additional learning support sessions
- interviews with staff and managers about additional support
- advice and guidance materials
- promotional literature
- procedures for monitoring attendance, punctuality and performance
- appropriateness of residential accommodation and recreational facilities
- feedback from learners as gathered from employer/provider surveys or other sources
- agreements between employers and training providers

- interviews with partner organisations involved in delivering parts of the Train to Gain programme.

## Leadership and management

### Question 5 – How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

163. This question is about:

- the strategic leadership of learning, including the effect of policies
- the operational management of learning, including the quality of staff and other resources and how effectively they are used
- quality improvement arrangements
- the promotion of equality of opportunity
- strategies to identify and meet learners' literacy, numeracy and language support needs.

Inspectors evaluate:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- whether the provider has comprehensive and effective quality improvement arrangements that cover all the training, ensuring that training is never less than satisfactory and that the provision is continuously improved
- the extent to which action is taken to improve teaching, learning and assessment
- the extent to which quality improvement arrangements are systematic and take into account all relevant views
- whether staff understand and are part of the provider's quality improvement arrangements
- the extent to which the provider carries out thorough self-assessment, recognises strengths and weaknesses in training and takes appropriate action to rectify identified weaknesses
- how effectively accurate data about qualification success rates is used in the self-assessment process
- whether managers and staff can obtain accurate data about learners' performances and destinations on leaving their programmes
- if data is used effectively to plan improvements to the training process and improve the learners' experiences.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through high-quality care, education and training*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- the clarity of direction given through strategic objectives and targets that are fully understood by staff, subcontractors and work-placement providers
- the effectiveness of the provider's arrangements for developing learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills
- the extent to which the provider engages with employers and other stakeholders to help make decisions about the provision
- the extent to which the provider works in partnership with organisations who deliver other parts of the Train to Gain programme
- the effectiveness of communications between staff, with subcontractors, with employers and other external agencies
- the ability of the provider to set its own demanding targets for retention, achievement, qualification success, progression and employment without relying on those of an external body
- the extent to which all staff understand the performance targets and know what they need to do to contribute to successful programmes
- how well performance is monitored and compared with the targets
- how effective performance management, staff appraisals and reviews are in improving the quality of provision.

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider:

- how well providers and employers understand and meet their statutory obligations regarding equality
- the extent to which explicit aims and values promoting equality for all are reflected in the provider's work
- the extent to which the provider has taken specific action to promote training to groups in the community which are under-represented on training programmes
- the effectiveness of measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment, and to ensure that learners are aware of what constitutes harassment and know what to do if subjected to it
- the extent to which learners are protected from harassment and discrimination at all times, including work situations

- whether the provider has a system for dealing with harassment, and records show that this is effective
- whether the training provider and subcontractors consider complaints and grievances promptly and effectively, using procedures which are understood by all staff and learners.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that learners are well taught and protected*

In work-based learning inspectors consider:

- whether there are enough qualified and experienced teaching, training and support staff to carry out training, assessment, internal verification and, where necessary, counselling
- if all workplace supervisors have relevant, current occupational experience and are able to devote sufficient time to on-the-job training. Some will have occupational qualifications and will have been trained as assessors or internal verifiers
- whether the staff appraisal process is effective as a means of helping staff to identify their training needs and improve their performance
- to what extent the professional development of staff contributes to their effectiveness and updates their knowledge and skills.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*

In work-based learning inspectors consider:

- whether learners have access to good learning materials, equipment and facilities when they need them, and are able to use them safely on their own to make progress towards their learning goals
- the extent to which learning resources and equipment comply with health and safety requirements and industry standards
- whether the accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, training and learning, and support for learners.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

In work-based learning, inspectors consider to what extent the 'value for money' principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied in securing resources and services.



Also, where appropriate:

### **Common Inspection Framework**

How effectively links are made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services, to enhance learning and to promote well-being.

How effectively governors and other supervisory bodies discharge their responsibilities.

### **In work-based learning this means**

Appropriate partnership arrangements, formal or informal, contribute to enhancing the quality of the learning provision.

Management or other supervisory boards oversee the provider's strategic direction effectively, and monitor the quality of provision and their own performances regularly.

Priorities are supported through responsible financial management.

164. Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with staff and managers about their own development and their understanding of the organisation's quality improvement procedures and promotion of equality of opportunity
- policy and operating statements
- visits to subcontractors
- interviews with partner organisations who deliver other parts of the Train to Gain programme
- written agreements with subcontractors
- business plans
- targets for staff and monitoring of progress towards them
- staff development plans and activities, including those for equality of opportunity
- quality improvement procedures and arrangements
- self-assessment reports
- development and action plans
- management information
- arrangements for monitoring and recording learners' progress
- agendas and minutes of meetings
- procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment
- equal opportunities statistics
- complaints and appeals procedures and associated records
- interviews with learners about providers' promotion of equality of opportunity
- analyses of the cost of training
- records of learners' achievement and retention rates
- observations of on- and off-the-job training

- interviews with partners
- interviews with employers
- visits to learners' places of work to monitor service level agreements and the flow of information between providers and employers
- interviews with learners
- interviews with trainers, assessors, and internal verifiers
- staff qualifications and staff training and development records
- references to resources in the provider's business plan
- learning materials and equipment for on- and off-the-job training
- visits to subcontracted training facilities.

## 2.2 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for providers of adult and community learning

### Introduction

165. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of adult and community learning. It takes full account of national priorities. Current priorities include the government's strategies for skills development including literacy, numeracy, language and ICT skills, learning for personal and community development (PCDL), widening participation and e-learning. The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.
166. Providers should use the Common Inspection Framework and this guidance to aid their self-assessment process.
167. In the inspection of adult and community learning, inspectors give due attention where relevant to do so, to the provisions of the Children Act 2004. Inspections may cover programmes of learning, including those with a residential element, where there are children (e.g. family learning), children, young people up to the age of 19, or those up to the age of 25 who are vulnerable through the residential nature of their provision, or because they are physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged. In provision of this kind, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the five outcomes for children and young people are being met. The findings from these inspections will be used in joint area reviews.
168. Ofsted inspects all forms of adult and community learning, whether financed wholly or partly from public funds. It examines the provision by councils and community, voluntary and further education providers that falls within these two categories. In some cases, such as council-based adult education, adult learning may be only a minor part of the organisation's publicly funded activities. Inspection also covers certain aspects of those providers that are subcontracted to make provision on behalf of other organisations. Inspection includes specialist, designated organisations attended by adults, and residential adult education colleges. Where a provider offering adult and community learning has other LSC-funded contracts such as work-based learning, these would normally be inspected at the same time.
169. Adult and community learning is an umbrella term for several different types of adult learning. Providers have a variety of motivations and strategic objectives for offering courses. Individuals and groups join particular courses for a variety of reasons. Broadly speaking, adult and community learning can be categorised

using the descriptors listed under 'Terminology' in the following section. They include community learning provision, learning for personal and community development, learning for community capacity building, and family learning.

170. Inspectors:

- grade selected first and/or second tier sector subject areas (SSAs): this will include family learning and community development, where applicable
- grade the leadership and management of learning
- give a contributory grade for each provider's approach to equality of opportunity
- make judgements about each provider's strategy to identify and meet learner's literacy, numeracy, and language learning needs
- make judgements about each provider's arrangements for information, advice and guidance
- make a judgement on the provider's self-assessment process and the effectiveness of steps taken to improve since the previous inspection
- grade the overall effectiveness of the provision
- grade the provider's capacity to improve.

## Terminology

<b>Term used in the Common Inspection Framework</b>	<b>Equivalent in adult and community learning:</b>	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through learning.
Learner	Learner	Includes those in community projects as well as those on courses. Learning is planned, with intended outcomes.
	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners, or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve.
Learning goals	Learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications, or in adult learning which does not lead to external accreditation. They may be expressed in contexts outside the learning situation, such as in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goals should be

		recorded in an individual, or in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Social and economic well-being	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, a willingness to collaborate with others, and a readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

### Other terms used in adult and community learning

Skills for life	Learning where the primary intention is to improve the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and language.
Skills for work	Learning which enables people to develop the skills they need for work and which will enhance their employability.
First steps/community learning	Learning which is intended to offer learners an initial entry point for learning, from which they are actively encouraged to progress.
Skills for independent living and leisure	Learning which develops the knowledge and skills of adults who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
Learning for personal development and well-being	Learning for personal development, cultural enrichment, creative stimulation and enjoyment.
Family learning	Family learning describes a wide range of planned activities and programmes where parents, grandparents, children and carers are involved in learning. Sometimes this involves the children and adults learning together at the same time.
Community development	Community development is about the regeneration of economically disadvantaged communities by developing their social infrastructure. This is done by enabling the people who live in such communities to develop community leadership skills in order to deal with matters of community importance.
Unanticipated or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and dealing with poor health and educational under-achievement. Community

	regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved directly, or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which are initiated.
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education, and to become self-managing, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others, and make a conscious effort to do so. It involves people recognising the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good, and exercise their influence to ensure that this happens.
Non-accredited learning	Learning for which no form of accreditation exists, or is sought.
Accredited learning	Learning for which internal or external accreditation is available; in the latter case, it is learning accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and approved by the Secretary of State.
Adult and community learning provision	A term often used by providers to refer to that element of their provision which is learning without accreditation, or with internal accreditation only.
Further education provision	A term often used by providers to refer to that element of their provision which is learning with external accreditation and/or consists of qualification-based programmes.

## Overall effectiveness of the organisation

**How effective and efficient are the provision and any related services in meeting the needs of learners and why? What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?**

171. Inspectors evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the provision, including any extended services, and its main strengths and areas for improvement
- the capacity to make further improvements
- the effectiveness of any steps to promote improvement since the previous inspection.

Also, where appropriate:

- the effectiveness of links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners
- the quality and standards in the foundation stage
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

The final point does not apply to adult and community learning provision.

## Achievement and standards

### Question 1 – how well do learners achieve?

172. In adult and community learning, achievement is judged on the extent to which learners achieve one or more goals identified at the outset and/or during the course of their learning activities. These may include:

- the achievement of national qualifications
- gaining new skills, knowledge and understanding in a specific subject, to fulfil personal aspiration
- personal development and the acquisition of skills to be able to learn more effectively.

173. Achievements may be group-based, and may have a wider impact on the social and economic well-being of communities.

174. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers use data to evaluate programmes and take measures to improve them. Such data includes:

- learners' achievements of qualifications
- achievement of individual or group goals
- retention rates
- attendance records

- learners' destinations on leaving the programmes
- data that shows the effect of learning programmes on individuals and communities.

175. Equality of opportunity considerations include how well providers use the above data to analyse the success and retention rates of different groups of learners. These groups include gender and ethnic groups, and learners with disabilities.

176. Inspectors will judge the ability of the provider to give literacy, numeracy and language support throughout the provision, at appropriate levels.

177. Inspectors evaluate:

*Learners' success in achieving challenging targets including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent learners achieve planned learning outcomes, including qualifications, where applicable
- the retention rate of learners
- the extent to which learners develop group-based skills
- whether community development activities and learning have a positive effect on the social and economic well-being of an area
- trends in performance over time
- the number of learners making significant progress
- the provider's expectations of learners
- whether learners possess appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy and language skills
- to what extent learners develop the attitudes and skills to maintain lifelong learning
- how many learners progress to further training or education, paid or voluntary employment or community action, using their acquired skills and knowledge.

*The standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- the level and consistency of learning standards throughout the provision
- how well learners acquire knowledge, skills and understanding which are of value to them.



*Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent learners make the minimum expected progress
- the number of learners exceeding expected gains
- the level of progression of learners into further or higher education, employment, or other training or education, either with the same provider or elsewhere.

*The extent to which learners enjoy their work*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

*The degree to which learners show interest and participate in their learning sessions and take pride in their achievements*

Also, where appropriate:

<b>Common Inspection Framework</b>	<b>In adult and community learning this means:</b>
The acquisition of workplace skills.	Learners develop the skills they need for paid or voluntary work, which will enhance their employability.
The development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the learner.	Learners develop skills which improve their quality of life.
The emotional development of learners.	Learners develop skills and knowledge that increase their self-awareness.
The behaviour of learners.	Learners develop their self-confidence, self-esteem and attitudes towards learning.
The attendance of learners.	Learners attend punctually and regularly, and do their best to keep to the agreed pattern of study.
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.	Learners are trained to adopt safe working practices.
Learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.	Learners develop an awareness of spiritual, moral and cultural matters which are relevant to the communities in which they live.
Whether learners make a positive contribution to the community.	Learners develop the skills, knowledge, and understanding necessary for community participation and involvement.

178. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of learners and their work during learning sessions and workshops
- examples of learners' work, portfolios, displays, learning diaries and records of achievements
- retention and success rate data
- data about learners' progression rates and destinations
- discussions with tutors, learners, managers and representatives from the local community about learners' achievements and standards of work
- individual and/or collective learning agreements and plans
- planned learning outcomes for courses and learning sessions
- attendance registers
- records of learners' prior achievements, experience and qualifications
- assessment records, and internal and external verifiers' reports
- any surveys and reports which show the effect of adult and community learning on the social and economic well-being of an area.

## **The quality of provision**

### **Question 2 – how effective are teaching, training and learning?**

179. This question is about:

- the extent to which teaching, assessment and resources enable learners to improve their educational and/or personal development
- how effectively learners learn to contribute to the development of their communities, where applicable
- how well learners' additional learning and support needs are identified and met.

180. Quality improvement considerations include how well the quality of learning and assessment is monitored and the effectiveness of steps taken to improve it. This will include:

- providers' observations of learning sessions
- providers' use of learners' and tutors' evaluations of learning activities
- internal verification of assessment.

181. Equality of opportunity considerations include:

- how well the provider's staff adapt learning activities, resources and assessments to allow learners to benefit fully from the learning experience
- the relevance of learning activities to learners of different backgrounds and abilities
- to what extent teachers use materials and teaching methods that promote equality and diversity.

182. The provision of literacy, numeracy, and language support will be judged on the tutors' abilities in planning, teaching and assessing such support to the levels required by the learners.

183. Inspectors evaluate:

*How well teaching and/or training and resources promote learning, address the full range of learners' needs and meet course or programme requirements*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which teaching staff possess technical competence and up-to-date expertise at a level consistent with effective teaching and assessment of the course or programme
- whether staff use appropriate methods for dealing with learners from a wide range of backgrounds and in different types of provision
- to what extent staff use methods and styles of teaching consistent with the aims of their programmes and learners' personal objectives; the range of teaching methods to build on adults' existing experience and knowledge, helping them to extend their repertoire of learning styles
- whether staff challenge and inspire learners and motivate them by finding new ways for learners to look at themselves and their environment
- the extent to which staff, with learners, develop individual learning plans informed by initial assessment, which are reviewed and updated regularly; learning plans reflect learners' identified learning need, interests and aspirations, as well as their prior learning
- whether learning plans are updated to take account of learners' progress
- to what extent staff use suitable up-to-date learning materials and equipment that are available and used at all venues
- if accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching and learning and support for learners; whether accommodation is conducive to learning, irrespective of whether the provider owns the building
- the availability of suitable childcare arrangements
- whether learners have access to learning resources that are appropriate for effective, independent study; and that the arrangements with other organisations, such as the library service, are effective in helping learners to work on their own

- whether resources, including information learning technology (ILT), are used to best effect to promote learning, and that furniture and equipment are appropriate to learners' adult status
- to what extent learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully, and all parts of the premises are accessible to learners with restricted mobility
- to what extent additional or adapted learning and communications equipment is available to those who need it
- whether staff use materials and teaching methods that promote equality of opportunity and ensure that the presentation and content of learning materials positively value diversity.

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which assessment and recording are sensitive to the needs of individual adults, and groups, and reflect the contexts within which adults learn
- how well assessment and recording meets the needs of individual learners
- whether assessment is fair, accurate, and carried out regularly
- the extent to which initial assessment provides an accurate basis for planning an appropriate programme of work
- whether programmes of work are negotiated with learners to accurately reflect their abilities and aspirations
- the effectiveness of assessment in monitoring progress and providing learners with accurate information about their progress and development
- whether learners' achievements and learning goals are recorded and accredited
- if assessment practices and records of achievement recognise unanticipated learning outcomes
- to what extent assessment information about individual and diverse groups of learners is used in programme and course development
- whether assessment, verification and moderation follows awarding body guidelines.

*The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- how accurately individual learning needs are diagnosed and the extent to which learners' additional needs are provided for
- how appropriate the additional support is for learners on different types and lengths of courses

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.

**In adult and community learning this means:**

Providers with strategic objectives for family learning have effective arrangements for the development of parents' and carers' skills, particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy. These arrangements should encourage parents and carers to take an active role in their children's learning and development.

184. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of learning sessions, assessment and progress reviews
- interviews with learners, tutors, learning centre staff and managers about the quality of teaching, learning, and additional support
- schemes of work and lesson plans
- individual and/or group learning plans
- records of learners' progress reviews
- records of learners' work, including photographs, video tapes and journals
- analyses and summaries of learners' feedback from questionnaires
- learning facilities, including accommodation and adaptations for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- documentary evidence relating to assessment and recording of learners' progress, and the provision of additional support.

**Question 3 – how well do the programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?**

185. This question is about:

- how effectively the learning programmes take account of the needs of individuals, families, and communities, and changing social and economic factors

- quality improvement considerations include how well information about the programmes and schemes of work, and learners' feedback, are used to identify good practice and measures for improvement
- equality of opportunity considerations include the social inclusivity of the programmes and how well under-represented groups are targeted for recruitment to learning programmes.

186. The provision of literacy, numeracy, and language support will be judged on the timing and context of such provision for learners, and the coherence in planning the support.

187. Inspectors evaluate:

- The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience
- How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances

188. In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- whether learners have sufficient opportunities to study an appropriate range of courses and programmes, and achieve suitable qualifications
- the extent to which providers use appropriate methods to identify the learning needs of potential and existing learners
- whether qualifications are used to add value to learning, rather than constraining it
- how effectively the range of learning programmes and individual programmes are planned and managed, allowing learners to progress.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent the range of programmes ensures equality of access and opportunities for all learners or potential learners
- how effectively the range of programmes is designed, having in mind the ethnic background and age of the potential learner group, and local social factors such as unemployment and health
- how much consideration is given to local and national priorities
- how effectively resources are integrated and offered by multi-site providers.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

**In adult and community learning this means**

<p>The extent to which employers' needs are met.</p>	<p>Programmes of work take account of employers' needs.</p> <p>Learning makes a significant contribution to social cohesion, community well-being and the development of community infrastructures.</p>
<p>The extent to which enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievements.</p>	<p>Learners are able to broaden their experience through a suitable variety of enrichment activities. This includes celebrating their achievements through exhibitions of their work.</p> <p>Learners are able to enhance their learning by taking part in a range of activities beyond the scope of their courses.</p>
<p>The extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and healthy</p>	<p>Learners work in a safe and healthy environment</p> <p>Health and safety checks and risk assessments are carried out in all learning venues</p> <p>Tutors monitor and reinforce safe working practices, particularly on programmes involving physical activity or use of hazardous substances.</p>

189. Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with learners, tutors, support staff, programme managers and local organisations about the content, context and range of learning programmes
- documents relating to the organisation of learning programmes and projects
- work with local organisations, such as community surveys, and minutes of meetings with local agencies
- strategic and operating plans
- individual leaning plans
- analyses of learners' views about the provision
- learners' individual learning plans.

#### Question 4 – how well are learners guided and supported?

190. This question is about:

- whether learners receive the level and quality of support appropriate to their circumstances
- how well learners are supported in achieving their main learning goals.

191. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers evaluate the pre-course guidance, induction and additional support to identify good practice and areas for improvement.

192. Equality of opportunity considerations include:

- how well induction programmes enable learners to understand their rights and responsibilities
- how sensitive marketing, guidance and support are to equality of opportunity.

193. The provision for literacy, numeracy and language support will be judged on the quality and accuracy of guidance given to prospective learners, and the quality of the support systems to develop these skills in learners.

194. Inspectors evaluate:

- the care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards
- the quality, and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes and, where application, career progression.

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which introductions to programmes enable learners to settle quickly, and understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of their programmes or courses
- whether procedures and early support are available for poor punctuality, non-attendance, and poor performance by learners
- to what extent support arrangements are planned and managed coherently
- whether all learners have access to an appropriate range of support services, including those available from external agencies
- how well providers monitor learners' attendance and check that they are progressing satisfactorily.



*The quality, and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and, where applicable, career progression.*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- how effective and impartial the information, advice and guidance given to learners is in enabling them to choose the most appropriate course or programme
- to what extent pre-course guidance provides learners with information to allow them to understand the details of their learning programmes, and the resources available to them
- whether timely careers education and guidance are effective in guiding learners towards post-course opportunities
- whether effective, impartial, up-to-date information is available for learners about how to continue their learning
- to what extent guidance and support take equality of opportunity into consideration.

195. Sources of evidence include:

- observation of inductions, learning support sessions and progress reviews
- career progression and advisory sessions
- interviews with learners, tutors, mentors or counsellors, guidance workers and managers about their understanding of programme objectives, and the quality of support received by learners
- learners' plans for progressing to other learning opportunities, and using the skills they have learnt
- documents relating to learners' support, including session plans, induction programme materials, and initial assessment records
- information about the qualifications and experience of providers' staff
- learners' feedback
- information about the organisation of additional learning support
- policies relating to adults with learning difficulties or disabilities
- health and safety policies and records of health and safety monitoring.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Question 5 – how effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?**

196. This question is about:

- the strategic leadership of learning, including work with local partnerships, and the clarity with which aims and objectives are communicated to all relevant parties
- the effectiveness of the management and delivery of the provision, including the effect of policies

- how roles and responsibilities are allocated to ensure the most effective provision
- what arrangements exist to bring about improvements to the quality of teaching and learning
- how efficiently and effectively resources are used
- the provider's arrangements for promoting and ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners
- the provider's strategies to identify and meet learners' literacy, numeracy, and language support needs.

197. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent quality improvement arrangements are systematic and include the views of all learners, staff, subcontractors and partners
- how rigorous the quality assurance arrangements are
- whether the policies and procedures suit the size and nature of the provider
- whether the provider has established procedures for evaluating any subcontracted provision
- if all parties to a subcontracted provision understand their respective responsibilities within contracts and service agreements
- the extent to which staff understand and are involved in the provider's quality improvement arrangements
- the effectiveness of staff appraisals and reviews in improving the quality of provision
- whether self-assessment is rigorous enough to identify priorities and challenging targets for improvement
- whether providers plan for continuous improvement based on the strengths and weaknesses they identify.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through high-quality care, education and training*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- whether the provider gives clear direction through strategic objectives, targets and values that are understood by all relevant parties
- the extent to which providers have a clear rationale for adult and community learning provision which is understood by all relevant parties
- whether demanding and appropriate targets are set for retention, achievement and progression rates which are regularly reviewed to improve performance
- the effectiveness of the management information system

- whether the provider has effective arrangements to plan, and manage each programme in the range of programmes offered.

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent there are explicit aims and values which promote equality for all the provider's learners and staff
- how well equality of opportunity is promoted through the widening of participation, the targeting of under-represented and/or disadvantaged groups and diversity in the classroom
- to what extent learners' progress and achievements are regularly analysed to assess the effects of the provision on different groups
- the effectiveness of measures to eliminate all forms of oppressive behaviour
- whether learners understand what constitutes harassment and what to do if subjected to it
- whether the provider has up-to-date policies and procedures to deal effectively with any form of discrimination, complaints and grievances
- how well equality and diversity are promoted and reinforced for all learners and staff.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that learners are well taught and protected*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- whether there are enough teaching and support staff with suitable expertise, qualifications and experience to deliver the programmes effectively to learners
- to what extent staff understand and meet the needs of learners
- how the professional development of staff contributes to their abilities to teach and support learners
- whether staff development is available for all staff, including part-time tutors and volunteer staff
- whether staff have clear roles and responsibilities which they understand.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- to what extent suitable, up-to-date materials are available and used at all venues. This will include, where appropriate, facilities relevant to the workplace which meet current industrial standards, and specialist equipment where required
- whether furniture and equipment are suitable for adult learners
- if all accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, training, learning and attainment of skills
- whether learners work in a safe and healthy environment and follow safe working practices
- the use of thorough health and safety checks and risk assessments in all learning venues
- whether learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully in learning
- to what extent premises are accessible to all learners and meet the requirements of relevant legislation
- whether additional and/or adapted equipment is available for those learners who need it.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

In adult and community learning, inspectors consider:

- whether effective and efficient use is made of resources
- if providers analyse their revenue and costs regularly to ensure that they are operating cost-effectively and meeting targets set for income generation
- whether priorities are supported through responsible financial management
- to what extent providers make good use of finances to ensure that strategic priorities are met
- the extent of the provider's use of available funding resources, including learners' fee income
- to what extent providers have charging policies which demonstrate a commitment to widening participation, and which reflect national policies and strategies for adult and community learning
- how the 'value for money' principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied when securing resources and services
- the deployment of staff to met the needs and interests of learners;

Also, where appropriate:

### **Common Inspection Framework**

How effective are the links made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education, and any extended services to enhance learning and to promote well-being.

The effectiveness with which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities.

### **In adult and community learning this means:**

Partnerships or links with other external agencies and organisations, or other internal areas of the provider, maximise opportunities and progression for all learners.

Governors, management committees, partnership boards, elected members, and other supervisory boards oversee the provider's strategic direction and regularly monitor the quality of provision.

Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with senior managers, curriculum coordinators, programme managers, elected members, tutors, learners, and representatives from partnership organisations and other stakeholders
- documents relating to the strategic and operational management of the provision, such as corporate strategies, community plans, business plans, and minutes of meetings
- management information about participation, retention and achievement rates
- equal opportunities monitoring data
- quality improvement monitoring data
- policies and procedures
- user surveys and analyses
- staff development records and curriculum vitae
- staff appraisals or performance reviews
- visits to learning venues
- examination of teaching and learning resources
- health and safety monitoring records
- self-assessment reports and development plans.

## 2.3 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for providers of Department for Work and Pensions funded New Deal prime contracts

### Introduction

198. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of DWP funded prime contractors in England. The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.
199. Prime contractors should use the Common Inspection Framework and this guidance to aid their self-assessment process.
200. Discrete inspections of prime contractors are conducted on a four-year cycle which began in April 2006. For each prime contract, inspection covers any organisation which receives funding from that prime contractor, whether it is directly funded or subcontracted.
201. The DWP funds programmes for unemployed young people aged 18–24, participants aged 25 and above, and lone parents. The emphasis is to identify participants' specific barriers to employment, help them to overcome such barriers and apply for jobs, and support them into appropriate employment. The benefits derived by participants from their employment programmes, their progression into appropriate jobs, and their overall achievements, form the basis of quality evaluation. Inspectors make judgements about the following:
- the effectiveness of the prime contractor's in-house provision
  - the effectiveness of subcontractors' provision
  - each provider's approach to equality of opportunity
  - the prime contractor's capacity for further improvement
  - the effectiveness of each prime contractor's strategy to identify and meet participants' employment-related literacy, numeracy, and language support needs
  - the overall effectiveness of the provision in meeting the participants' needs.
202. Inspectors also give a judgement on the prime contractor's self-assessment process, and give grades for key questions 1 to 4 of the Common Inspection Framework, for leadership and management.

## Terminology

Term used in the Common Inspection Framework	Equivalent term in DWP funded programmes	
Provider	Prime contractor	Any organisation holding a prime contract with the DWP and responsible for providing any type of employment training, work placement, work experience, vocational training, or job search.
Learner	Participant	An adult or young person who is receiving employment-related guidance or training on a Jobcentre Plus funded programme, including the Gateway and follow-through.
Teacher/trainer	Adviser/coach/ employment officer	A person providing employment support, guidance and advice to participants.
	Trainer	A person providing training/individual coaching to participants at work, or away from work.
	Assessor	A person assessing some participants at work or away from work.
Individual learning plan	Action plan	A written record of any interaction which lists the main points discussed, and the actions which the adviser and participant have agreed to carry out.
Learning goals	Development goals	These are specified on participants' individual action plans. Goals include targets identified to help participants enhance their employability, identify and find appropriate jobs, and fulfil their personal potential targets towards nationally recognised qualifications (approved by the DWP).
Personal and learning skills	Personal development skills	These include employability skills.

## Other terms used in DWP funded programmes

Barriers to employment	Personal or practical barriers, which hinder participants' ability or willingness to participate in employment.
Job search	Any instance of coaching/development or advice given to a participant by a provider or appointed subcontractor to help the participant gain employment.
Achievement	Inspectors will require evidence of actual achievements, such as a participant gaining employment or self-employment, taking up employment-related training, or applying for jobs. Inspectors will also consider other less quantifiable outcomes such as: increased confidence and motivation; improved communication skills; the ability to work effectively with others; regular attendance; positive attitude to work; the ability to overcome barriers to employment; awareness of opportunities/options/sources of employment; financial awareness.
Subcontractor	Any organisation subcontracted by the prime contractor to provide one or more aspects of employment programmes.
New Deal personal advisers	Staff who support and guide participants through the New Deal process.
New Deal action plan	Produced at the Gateway stage by the prime contractor and the participant. This identifies employment and development needs and agrees a way forward.
Off-the-job training	Development activities that take place away from the working environment. This may be on prime contractors', employers' or subcontractors' premises. Training involves participants developing practical, work-related skills, job-seeking skills and, where appropriate, gaining supporting knowledge.
On-the-job training	Development activities that take place at work and help participants to learn practical skills which relate to their jobs, and, where appropriate, the competences needed for vocational qualifications.



## Overall effectiveness of the organisation

203. How effective and efficient are the provision and any related services in meeting the needs of learners and why? What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

204. Inspectors evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the provision, including any subcontracted or extended services, and its main strengths and improvement points
- the capacity to make further improvements
- the effectiveness of any steps to promote improvement since the previous inspection.

Also, where appropriate:

- the effectiveness of links with other organisations to promote the well-being of participants
- the quality and standards in the foundation stage
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

The final two points do not apply to the DWP funded provision.

## Achievement and standards

### Question 1 – How well do learners achieve?

205. In DWP funded provision, achievement is judged on the tangible benefits that the prime contractor brings to its participants, in particular, the extent to which participants' progress into employment, with or without training. Inspectors will consider:

- the number of participants gaining employment
- the number of participants gaining job-related qualifications (where relevant)
- the progress made by participants since beginning their programmes.

206. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers use data to evaluate programmes and take measures to improve them.

207. Equality of opportunity considerations include the extent to which providers use data to analyse the progression into employment and overall achievement rates for different groups of participants. This includes gender, age, ethnic groups and participants with disabilities.

208. Inspectors will judge the extent to which participants are able to develop the literacy, numeracy and language skills necessary to overcome barriers to their employability and, where appropriate, achieve their agreed development goals.

209. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*Learners' success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider the number of participants:

- entering employment
- gaining job-related qualifications (where relevant)
- improving core employability skills, including literacy, numeracy and language skills, where needed.

Inspectors will also consider the extent to which participants:

- make appropriate changes in their lives
- increase self-esteem or motivation
- improve their ability to identify and overcome personal or practical barriers.

In their judgements, inspectors will consider the overlying trends in job outcomes and qualification achievement rates and whether they improve steadily over consecutive years, or remain consistently high. The results will be compared with contractual obligations and the DWP's targets. Trends in the levels of job outcomes will be compared among different groups of participants.

*The standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*

In the DWP's funded provision, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which participants are able to overcome identified barriers to employment
- the standards of participants' employability skills, including the ability to identify and work towards short- and long- term development targets to improve their prospects for employment
- the standard of participants' job-seeking skills, including their CVs, job applications and telephone and interview skills
- the extent to which participants gain the interpersonal skills necessary to secure appropriate employment
- the standard of participants' work in relation to the vocational skills and knowledge required to obtain a job.

*Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*

In DWP funded programmes, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which participants are ready for work and progress to employment and, where appropriate, continue to sustain their employment

- how well participants achieve knowledge and skills significantly above the level identified when they join the programmes
- the extent to which participants take responsibility for their own progress and follow action plans.

*The extent to which learners enjoy their work*

In Department for Work and Pensions funded programmes, inspectors consider the degree to which participants show interest in finding employment, participate in Job search and development activities and take pride in their achievements.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

**In DWP funded programmes this means:**

The acquisition of workplace skills.	Participants improve and develop appropriate employability, personal and occupational skills and knowledge to achieve appropriate employment.
The development of skills which contribute to the economic and social well-being of the learner.	Participants develop personal and social skills which will allow them to gain appropriate employment. They acquire appropriate job search skills and overcome significant barriers to employment.
The behaviour of learners.	Participants develop behaviours and attitudes which are appropriate to the type of job they are seeking.
The attendance of learners.	Participants are punctual and maintain good attendance records for work, training sessions and other appointments.
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.	Participants understand the health and safety practices and personal skills relevant to their proposed employment.
Learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.	Participants understand and apply the principles of equality of opportunity and diversity in the workplace.

210. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of initial interviews, of progress reviews, of appropriate group work, and of employment-related training

- interviews with participants, advisers, subcontractors, workplace supervisors and assessors about participants' achievements. This would include development of employability skills, and standards of work
- discussions with participants or previous participants
- documents relating to participants' progress and achievements
- participants' individual action plans
- examples of participants' work – participants' CVs and job application letters
- data concerning participants' progression to employment and achievement of qualifications and skills awards
- management information
- results and analyses of participants' satisfaction surveys or questionnaires
- participants' attendance information
- documents relating to certification
- regional and national averages, where available, for participants' achievements of jobs and qualifications.

## The quality of provision

### Question 2 – How effective are teaching, training and learning?

211. This question is about:

- how effectively prime contractors' interactions are conducted and how much benefit participants gain from them to improve their employability skills
- the extent to which the prime contractors' interactions promote and reinforce good work habits
- the extent to which participants, advisers, employers, and subcontractors are involved in reviewing participants' progress towards goals
- the extent to which advisers have the skills, knowledge, qualifications and experience to deliver training in the specialist programmes and occupational areas to a diverse range of participants
- the quality of the accommodation, equipment, facilities and sites available to participants
- the quality of the assessment of participants' development and progress
- the extent to which employment programmes are planned and managed coherently.

212. Quality improvement considerations focus on how well interactions with participants are monitored, and the effectiveness of steps taken to improve such interactions. This will include:

- prime contractors' observations of all aspects of initial assessment, action planning, participants' progress reviews and development interactions
- observations of job search training

- how effectively the provider uses evaluations of development activities by participants and staff
- internal verification of assessments, where appropriate.

213. Equality of opportunity considerations include how well staff use resources to benefit participants of varying backgrounds and abilities.

214. Inspectors will judge the extent to which staff have the ability to plan, teach and assess employment-related literacy, numeracy, and/or language support.

215. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*How well teaching and/or training and resources promote learning, address the full range of learners' needs and meet course or programme requirements*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- the quality of advisers' interactions and their relevance to participants' needs and aims
- whether advisers possess relevant qualifications and expertise
- whether advisers use appropriate methods for dealing with participants from a wide range of backgrounds and in differing circumstances
- to what extent advisers use methods and styles of interaction consistent with participants' needs and personal objectives
- whether participants have access to a good range of resources to maximise the employment and development opportunities available to them
- to what extent resources and accommodation allow all participants to participate in development activities, and all parts of the premises are accessible to participants with restricted mobility
- to what extent adapted resources and equipment are available to those who need them
- whether advisers use resources and methods that promote equality and diversity
- whether staff challenge and inspire participants and motivate them by finding new ways for participants to look at themselves and their environment
- the availability of suitable childcare arrangements
- whether resources, including information learning technologies, are used to best effect to promote individual development
- to what extent resources and accommodation allow all participants to participate fully

- whether all parts of the premises are accessible to participants with restricted mobility
- to what extent specialist or adapted resources and communications equipment is available for those who need it
- whether staff use materials and training methods that promote equality of opportunity and ensure that the presentation and content of training materials value diversity.

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- how effectively participants' needs are assessed during the Gateway and at the beginning of their programmes
- the extent to which initial assessment contributes to participants' individual action plans
- whether action plans are updated to take account of participants' progress
- the extent to which advisers, with participants, develop relevant and useful action plans which are recorded and updated appropriately
- how well advisers assess participants' individual needs and how this helps participants to progress and find employment
- whether action plans are negotiated with participants to ensure that they meet their needs and interests
- how effectively advisers monitor participants' progress against their action plans
- the extent to which assessments of participants' progress in developing skills and knowledge on and off the job are fair, accurate, and carried out regularly
- the level of involvement of participants, employers, the prime contractor, subcontractors and the Department of Work and Pensions in reviewing participants' progress towards their individual goals and employment.

*The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- the quality and effectiveness of the formal or informal assessment of participants' needs with regard to employment-related literacy, numeracy and language
- providers' arrangements for referring participants to specialist agencies, if appropriate

- how effectively prime contractors identify those participants who have particular difficulties in accessing and using their services and how effectively they resolve these difficulties
- how effectively initial assessments of participants' occupational, literacy, numeracy, language, and social skills are used to identify appropriate development programmes, and to plan and provide effective coaching and support
- the level of monitoring of participants' progress and achievements
- how effectively participants' employment-related literacy, numeracy and/or language skills are developed
- the extent to which participants with learning difficulties and disabilities have access to diagnostic testing and support
- how well adaptations are made for people with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.

**In DWP funded provision this means:**

Where participants wish to involve others in the service they receive, their wishes are respected, and all relevant people kept informed.

Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of development activities
- interviews with participants, advisers, providers' and, if appropriate, subcontractors' staff
- participants' action plans
- participants' records
- participants' evaluations
- prime contractors' facilities, accommodation and resources
- observations of on-and off-the-job training and assessment
- accommodation, training facilities and training materials provided on and off the job
- interviews with participants, advisers, subcontractors, workplace supervisors and assessors about participants' achievements
- documents relating to development and the recording of participants' progress
- individual action plans
- planning documents for the employment programmes
- initial assessment records

- progress reviews and records of participants' development and achievement
- participants' CVs and job application letters
- participants' work
- monitoring records for workplaces and subcontractors
- subcontractors' service level agreements
- staff deployment details
- staff's action plans
- records of health and safety checks
- where appropriate, internal and external verification records.

### **Question 3 – How well do the programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?**

216. This question is about:

- how effective a prime contractor's DWP funded provision is in meeting the needs and interests of participants so that they improve their employability skills and knowledge within the context of the local labour market
- the extent to which providers prepare participants to take responsibility for achieving their own employment goals
- how well the provision reflects the needs of local employers
- how effectively prime contractors take account of the needs of individuals, communities, and social and economic factors.

217. Quality improvement considerations will include how well feedback from participants, employers, subcontractors and other partners is used to identify good practice and improvement measures.

218. Equality of opportunity considerations will include:

- the extent to which the provision is socially inclusive, and ensures equality of opportunity and access for all eligible participants
- how effectively voluntary programmes are promoted to eligible participants
- how effectively prime contractors encourage participation in the employment market.

219. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- how well development and employment opportunities provide an interesting and motivating context for participants to gain useful employment



- to what extent job search activities are stimulating and meet participants' needs
- how much participants' previous employment, interests, aspirations and potential are considered when agreeing a specific DWP programme or option.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- to what extent the prime contractors take account of the local availability of employment, education and training options when designing and planning the development activities that they provide
- how much consideration is given to local and national priorities
- how well the provision meets the needs of the local labour market
- to what extent local labour market information and links with employers are used when planning and establishing programmes and options.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The extent to which employers' needs are met.

How much enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to participant's enjoyment and achievement.

The extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and healthy.

**In DWP funded provision this means:**

The prime contractor takes account of employers' needs. Development opportunities meet the needs of employers.

Participants have the opportunity to broaden their experience through a suitable range of appropriate activities.

Prime contractors carry out health and safety checks on work placements, subcontractors' support facilities and resources.

Personal counselling, support and training cover aspects of healthy living.

Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with participants, advisers, providers and, if appropriate, subcontractors' staff
- participants' action plans
- participants' records
- participants' evaluations
- work or consultation with local Jobcentre Plus, employers, prime contractors and other appropriate external agencies

- strategic and operating plans
- evaluations of interactions with participants and the use of resources for the participants
- observations of participants' workplaces, including projects
- documents relating to the organisation of programmes and projects
- programme and project reports
- records of work with local employers and other partners, and use of local labour market information.

#### **Question 4 – How well are learners guided and supported?**

220. This question is about:

- how well participants are supported in overcoming their barriers to employment and achieving their employment and personal goals
- the effectiveness with which advisers help participants to identify and remove personal and practical obstacles to employment
- how effectively the prime contractors, subcontractors and specialist agencies liaise to meet participants' individual needs
- the effectiveness of support systems in increasing participants' potential for overcoming barriers to employment and gaining useful employment
- the support, advice and guidance given to participants
- to what extent prime contractors, subcontractors, employers and participants understand the range of programmes available through the DWP.

221. Quality improvement considerations include:

- how well providers evaluate their support for participants
- how well providers identify areas for improvement and good practice in:
  - programme guidance
  - induction
  - additional support
  - advice and guidance on progression to employment.

222. Equality of opportunity considerations include:

- how well induction programmes enable participants to understand their rights and responsibilities
- judgements about whether guidance and support are sensitive to equality of opportunity.

223. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- how effectively development activities help participants to identify and overcome personal and practical obstacles to their progress
- whether all participants have access to an appropriate range of support and resources, including those available from external agencies
- to what extent arrangements for supporting participants are planned and managed coherently
- the quality of participants' induction to programmes, including information about their rights and responsibilities
- how well and sensitively participants' barriers to employment are considered
- the availability of personal counselling, mentoring and advice to participants
- the extent to which participants are given opportunities to discuss their development and any difficulties with their personal adviser
- how comprehensive, well-recorded and managed arrangements are for supporting participants
- the quality and appropriateness of supporting resources and equipment.

*The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes and, where applicable, career progression*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- how accurate, up-to-date, understandable and useful the information and advice given to participants is
- to what extent development activities take equality of opportunity into consideration
- the effectiveness of links between prime contractors and the local Department for Work and Pensions staff
- the effectiveness of advice and guidance in job search
- whether participants receive comprehensive and up-to-date information about opportunities for employment and, where appropriate, further training
- how effectively participants are given relevant, timely and objective advice about potential employment opportunities, and the skills that they require.

224. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of support activities
- interviews with participants, advisers, DWP staff, and providers' staff
- participants' action plans
- participants' records
- participants' evaluations
- the range of information available to participants
- policies relating to adults with learning difficulties or disabilities.

- observations of induction, literacy and numeracy support interventions, job search and advice and guidance sessions
- interviews with all relevant parties to establish their understanding of employment programmes, and the effectiveness of the support given
- participants' personal files
- records of support for participants
- induction programmes
- additional support materials
- organisation of individual support
- feedback from participants about the quality of support.

**Question 5 – How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?**

225. This question is about:

- the effectiveness of the management and delivery of the prime contractors' activities
- how roles and responsibilities are allocated to ensure the most effective provision
- how effectively prime contractors work with the DWP
- what arrangements there are to bring about improvements
- how well resources are used in the interest of participants and potential participants
- the provider's effectiveness in promoting and ensuring equality of opportunity to participants who are referred to them
- the strategic leadership of the prime contractors, including the impact of strategic policies at a local level
- the operational management of employment programmes, including staff deployment and the effective use of other resources
- the management of participants' experience
- the management of subcontractors
- quality improvement arrangements
- the promotion of equality and diversity
- the effectiveness of strategies to identify and meet participants' employment-related literacy, numeracy and language support needs.

226. Inspectors evaluate the following:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- to what extent quality improvement arrangements are systematic and include the views of all participants, staff, subcontractors and key organisations
- how comprehensive the quality improvement arrangements are
- how effectively managers monitor staff performance, and evaluate the quality of interactions they offer
- how effectively managers monitor the performance of subcontractors, and evaluate the quality of the interactions that they offer
- how well staff understand quality improvement arrangements
- the effectiveness of staff appraisals and reviews in improving the quality of provision
- how regularly, thoroughly and accurately prime contractors carry out self-assessment
- whether self-assessment is thorough enough to identify priorities and challenging targets for improvement within the organisation and also with subcontractors
- whether prime contractors plan for continuous improvement based on the strengths and improvement points that they identify
- the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements in maintaining and improving all aspects of employment programmes
- how well staff understand and participate in the quality improvement arrangements
- how thorough the providers' self-assessment process is, and how effective the resulting action and action plans are in resolving weaknesses and improving the provision
- the providers' ability to collect and act upon data about participants' performances and exit destinations
- how well the self-assessment process uses data about participants' progression into employment and the appropriateness of jobs.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through high-quality care, education and training*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- whether managers provide clear direction through strategic objectives, targets and values that are understood by all relevant parties
- whether managers encourage innovative working practices to help participants find and secure employment

- whether demanding and appropriate progression into employment targets are set for managers, teams, and subcontractors, and also for individual staff, which are reviewed regularly to improve performance
- the effectiveness of the management information system in identifying underperformance and/or improving the provision
- the effectiveness of communications, among staff, with subcontractors, employers and other external organisations
- the ability of local managers to set demanding targets for progression into employment and achievement
- how well staff understand performance targets and their role in achieving them
- how well performance is monitored and compared with targets
- to what extent performance management, staff appraisals and reviews improve the provision.

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- how well equality of opportunity is promoted to the participants who are referred to the prime contractor
- to what extent managers and staff demonstrate explicit aims and values which promote equality and diversity
- how effectively providers ensure that the environment in which interactions are delivered are welcoming and accessible to all
- how well advisers and other staff understand equality and diversity, and the extent to which their interaction with participants reinforces and enhances participants' understanding of their rights, and their responsibilities to others
- to what extent participants' progress is analysed regularly to assess the effects of the provision on different groups
- whether the prime contractors have up-to-date policies and procedures to deal effectively with discrimination, complaints and grievances
- the extent to which prime contractors monitor and evaluate their approach to equality and diversity and that of their subcontractors
- how well prime contractors and subcontractors understand and meet their statutory obligations for equality of opportunity
- the effectiveness of measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment
- the record of prime contractors and their subcontractors in dealing with complaints and grievances promptly and effectively.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that learners are well taught and protected*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- whether there are enough advisers, managers and support staff with suitable expertise, qualifications and experience to meet the needs of participants
- how the professional development of staff contributes to their ability to identify and meet the needs of participants
- whether staff development is available for all staff, including part-time staff – whether staff have clear roles and responsibilities which they understand
- the availability of sufficient qualified and experienced training and support staff
- the extent to which all relevant personnel have current occupational experience and up-to-date knowledge of labour market trends and job search
- the effectiveness of the staff appraisal process
- to what extent staff development contributes towards professional development and improves the performance of the programme.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- whether venues are safe and healthy, and subject to regular, thorough health and safety checks
- whether appropriate resources are readily available and used to overcome participants' barriers to employment
- whether resources and accommodation allow all participants to make full use of services
- to what extent premises are accessible to all participants and meet the requirements of relevant legislation.
- whether appropriate space is provided for sensitive and confidential interviews with participants
- how well participants are able to use learning materials, equipment and facilities safely on their own to make progress
- how well training and development resources and equipment comply with health and safety requirements and industry standards
- the appropriateness of accommodation for individual coaching and development.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

In DWP funded provision, inspectors consider:

- whether effective and efficient use is made of resources
- whether priorities are supported through responsible financial management
- to what extent providers make good use of finances to ensure that strategic priorities are met
- the deployment of staff to meet the needs of participants
- how efficiently prime contractors and subcontractors use training facilities, accommodation, equipment and staff to ensure value for money.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

How effective are the links made with other providers, services, employers, and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services to enhance learning and to promote well-being.

The effectiveness with which governors and other supervisory bodies discharge their responsibilities.

**In DWP funded provision this means:**

Partnerships, or links with employers, community organisations, external agencies or other organisations help and support participants to make the most of opportunities to move forward.

Effective links with subcontractors, the DWP, employers, voluntary and community interest groups and a range of support agencies, to provide appropriate services to participants.

Management committees and other supervisory boards oversee the provider's strategic direction and regularly monitor the quality of provision.

Senior management or other supervisory boards oversee the prime contractor's strategic direction effectively, and regularly monitor the quality of their local department of Work and Pensions funded provision and performance.

Priorities are supported through responsible financial management.

Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with managers, representatives from subcontractors, DWP, partner organisations and other stakeholders, staff and participants
- documents relating to the strategic and operational management of the provision, such as strategic plans, business plans and minutes of meetings
- management information about participants' progression into employment and achievement rates
- visits to subcontractors



- feedback from DWP external audits and accreditation visits
- quality improvement monitoring data
- records of observations of development activities
- equal opportunities monitoring data
- policies and procedures
- participant evaluations
- staff development records and curriculum vitae
- visits to employers
- self-assessment reports and action plans.
- observations of meetings, learning sessions, activities and interactions between staff, participants, subcontractors and partner organisations
- documents relating to the management of employment programmes such as contracts, policy statements and strategic and operating plans, and management information
- documents relating to quality improvement, including monitoring policies and procedures, reviews, action plans and statistics relating to performance targets
- equality of opportunity records such as publicity and marketing materials, policies and procedures, monitoring data and records of complaints and resolutions
- financial details and any evaluation of the efficiency of the use of resources.

## 2.4 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for providers of Workstep programmes

### Introduction

227. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of Workstep programmes which are funded by the DWP. The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.
228. Providers should use the Common Inspection Framework and this guidance to aid their self-assessment process.
229. The DWP funds programmes for unemployed young people aged 18–24 and adults, including New Deals, programme centres, and work-based learning for adults. The emphasis is on developing participants to be ready for work, helping them to identify job vacancies and apply for jobs or, where possible, supporting them into sustained employment. Workstep is different from most of these programmes. It is a supported employment programme for people with disabilities. Supported employment programmes have existed for many years, often delivered by voluntary organisations and statutory services (particularly local authority social services departments). These programmes have concentrated on gaining and keeping employment for people with disabilities, usually through a subsidy paid to the employer. The participants often work in ‘sheltered’ workshops or factories.
230. Workstep is a modernised approach to supported employment for people whose disabilities mean that they need additional support to enable them to work. The aim is to move participants into unsupported employment where appropriate. Some participants may take part in formal training leading to a qualification, but this is not a requirement of the programme. Some participants may be given informal training. Some take part in learning programmes organised by their employers or by outside providers, most of which are directly related to their job.
231. The quality of the provision will be evaluated by considering the participants’ achievements and the benefits they derive from their involvement in the programme. Inspectors will look at how well the provider supports and develops participants; the quality of learning, where this is relevant; and the provider’s leadership and management. Support for participants will be of particular importance in Workstep.

232. Inspectors:

- give one grade for the Workstep programme
- grade the leadership and management of the provision
- give a contributory grade for each provider's approach to equality of opportunity
- make judgements about the effectiveness of each provider's strategy to identify and meet participants' literacy, numeracy, and language learning needs
- make a judgement about the provider's self-assessment process
- grade the overall effectiveness of the provision in meeting the needs of participants
- grade the provider's capacity to improve.

## Terminology

Term used in the framework	Relating the term to Workstep provision	
Provider	Programme provider	Any organisation holding a contract with the DWP for Workstep and responsible for providing the programme.
Learner	Participant.	Adult or young person who is being supported into work or is in work through a Workstep programme.
Teacher/trainer	Disability adviser/ placement officer	Member of the provider's staff who supports the participant and the employer.
	Job coach/ Job trainer	Member of the provider's staff who may work alongside the participant to teach additional job or personal skills.
	Mentor/ buddy	A work colleague who provides additional support, guidance and advice to participants throughout their time on Workstep.
Individual learning plan	Individual development plan	A plan for each participant, setting out their specific practical and personal support arrangements.
Initial assessment	Vocational profiling/ profile	An initial assessment/outline of the needs and aspirations of the participant, including an analysis of their existing skills in relation to the job opportunities available to them.
Learning targets	Development goals	These may be specified on participants' individual development plans. Many participants will not have development goals other than to acquire job-related skills.

Personal and learning skills	Personal development skills	These include employability skills and the skills needed to carry out the job.
Achievement	Progression	Movement of the participant into unsupported work.

**Other terms used include:**

Off-the-job training	Training that takes place away from work. This may be at the premises of providers or employers. The training involves participants learning practical work-related skills and gaining background knowledge to support their work, their studies towards a qualification, or their progression into a job. It could include training in literacy, numeracy and language, but only for participants who can benefit from this.
On-the-job training	Training that takes place at work, helping participants to learn practical job skills and acquire the competence they need. It may include training in literacy, numeracy and language skills or in customer care skills such as working with the public.
Disability Employment Adviser (DEA)	Person employed by the DWP to provide general advice on disability issues within a DWP district. May refer potential participants to Workstep. Confirms participants' eligibility for the programme and receives copies of their development plans. Helps with funding for specialist equipment to support employment.

**Overall effectiveness of the organisation**

233. How effective and efficient is the provision of education, training, integrated care, and any extended services in schools in meeting the needs of learners and why? What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

234. Inspectors evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the provision, including where appropriate any extended services, and its main strengths and weaknesses
- the capacity to make further improvements
- the effectiveness of any steps to promote improvement since the previous inspection.

Also, where appropriate:

- the quality and standards in the foundation stage
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

The final point does not apply to Workstep provision.

## Achievement and standards

### Question 1 – how well do learners achieve?

235. In Workstep provision, achievement is judged in several ways:

236. One important measure of success is participants' progression to unsupported employment. In the case of participants where progression is not appropriate, inspectors consider the progress they are making towards achieving their potential including progress made within supported employment. The key issues are:

- how many participants successfully achieve all the goals in their development plans?
- how many participants progress to unsupported employment?
- how much progress have individual participants made since joining Workstep?
- how much progress in relation to their development plans has been made by participants continuing from the previous scheme?

237. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers use data to evaluate programmes and take measures to improve them.

238. Equality of opportunity considerations include the extent to which providers use data to analyse the achievement and retention rates for different groups of participants. This includes gender and ethnic groups and participants with disabilities.

239. Inspectors evaluate:

*Learners' success in achieving challenging goals, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider the following:

- the proportion of participants who successfully achieve their planned development. For those who cannot progress into unsupported employment this will be measured in terms of the annual rate of achievement of development plans, taking into account any amendments following progress reviews. National trends will emerge over time and will be included as soon as they are available
- that participants do not have to follow any formal accredited training. The degree of challenge for each participant must be assessed using the development plan. Even small, incremental goals can be very challenging for some individuals. Participants may have other goals set through their employer's appraisal system or in progress reviews.

- that if participants have fluctuating or deteriorating conditions, goals may be about maintaining an existing, or even an appropriately reduced, level of performance.
- the outcomes of formal/informal training.

*The standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the standard of participants' work in relation to the vocational skills and knowledge required to carry out their job competently
- the standards of participants' employability skills, including the ability to identify and work towards short- and long- term goals to improve their prospects for sustained employment.

*Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- to what extent participants achieve knowledge and skills above the level identified when they join the programmes. Prior attainment and potential will be taken into account when assessing the progress made. Progress may be measured using a wide range of criteria
- the use of profiling or testing, for example how effectively the results of vocational profiling, basic skills screening and other diagnostic tests are used to set further development goals. In the case of participants who remain on the programme for a number of years, the records of progress reviews from previous years may be used
- that progression may include a pre-employment phase to introduce participants to new aspects of work.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The acquisition of workplace skills.

The development of skills which contribute to the economic and social well-being of the learner.

**In Workstep provision this means:**

Participants improve and develop appropriate skills and knowledge, together with employability skills, to achieve supported or unsupported employment.

Participants develop personal and social skills which allow them to maintain employment. Inspectors acknowledge work that helps participants to take their place in the community, particularly where this is of benefit

The behaviour of learners.	to them e.g. some participants with learning disabilities/difficulties. Participants develop behaviours and attitudes which are appropriate to the type of job they are doing.
The attendance of learners.	Participants are punctual and maintain good attendance records for work, training sessions and other appointments.
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.	Participants understand the health and safety practices and personal skills relevant to their proposed employment.
Learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.	Participants understand and apply the principles of equality of opportunity and diversity in the workplace.

240. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of participants at work and during progress reviews
- interviews with participants, placement officers, workplace supervisors and job coaches about participants' achievements
- documents relating to participants' progress and achievements
- participants' individual development plans
- examples of participants' work, where appropriate
- data on the number of participants who have made progress against their development plans, gained skills and progressed into unsupported employment
- data on how long participants stay on Workstep and their progress during that time
- records of achievement of any awards given by employers
- records of achievement of formal qualifications
- curriculum vitae produced by participants and examples of job application letters.

## The quality of provision

### Question 2 – how effective are teaching, training and learning?

241. This question is about:

- the effectiveness with which participants, training providers and employers plan and deliver learning and development programmes to meet participants' needs, to help participants get jobs by improving their occupational, personal and employability skills
- the extent to which staff have the skills, knowledge, qualifications and experience to deliver training to a diverse range of participants

- the quality of the accommodation, equipment, facilities and sites available to participants
  - the quality of the assessment of participants' learning and development
  - the extent to which participants, employers, training providers and personal advisers are involved in reviewing participants' progress towards goals.
242. Quality improvement considerations include how well the quality of learning is monitored and the effectiveness of improvement measures. Inspectors will look at how effectively the provider uses participants' and trainers' evaluations of learning activities.
243. Equality of opportunity considerations include how well trainers, job coaches, mentors and other members of staff adapt learning and development activities and resources to benefit participants of varying backgrounds and abilities.
244. Inspectors will consider whether participants' literacy, numeracy and language needs are met appropriately.
245. Inspectors evaluate how well teaching, training, and resources are used to meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements.
246. In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:
- how well disability advisers/placement officers etc take account of each participant's learning needs in determining the level of training and support they require in the workplace
  - whether participants understand the support they will receive
  - whether job coaches/mentors use approaches which enable participants to meet the requirements of their jobs, while taking account of their individual needs, learning styles and aspirations
  - how well job coaches/mentors stimulate participants' interest in their current job and build their confidence, enabling them either to progress to unsupported employment or to take on additional tasks, where appropriate
  - how well accommodation, equipment and resources meet programme and participants' requirements.

247. Inspectors evaluate:

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- how well staff consider participants' level of ability, the nature of their work and the effect of their disability when assessing their progress



- the extent to which assessments of participants' progress at work are fair, accurate, carried out regularly and recorded
- the level of involvement of participants, employers, training providers and other partners in reviewing participants' progress towards their individual goals and employment.

*the identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

In Workstep provision, judgements on the quality of additional support include:

- how effectively initial assessments of participants' occupational, literacy, numeracy, language and social skills are used to identify learning and work opportunities, and to plan and provide effective training and support
- how effectively participants' literacy, numeracy and/or language skills are developed
- the extent to which participants with learning difficulties and disabilities have access to diagnostic testing, accommodation, learning resources and support
- how well adaptations are made for people with learning difficulties or disabilities and whether good use is made of the Access to Work scheme.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The involvement of parents and carers in their children’s learning and development.

**In Workstep provision this means**

This is not applicable to Workstep provision.

Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of on- and off-the-job training and support, and progress review meetings
- accommodation, training facilities and equipment provided by employers and providers, including any adaptations made to assist participants with learning difficulties or disabilities
- interviews with participants, trainers, work-based supervisors and assessors
- documents relating to learning and the recording of participants’ progress
- individual development plans
- schemes of work for learning and training programmes
- records of assessment
- participants’ work records
- participants’ personal files
- monitoring records for workplaces and subcontractors
- service-level agreements
- staff qualification and deployment details
- staff development plans
- records of health and safety checks and risk assessments.

**Question 3 – how well do the programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?**

248. This question is about:

- how effective is Workstep provision in meeting the needs and interests of participants so that they can achieve sustained employment and progress to unsupported employment, if appropriate
- to what extent participants’ work meets the needs of the local labour market.

249. Quality improvement considerations include how well feedback from participants, employers and other partners are used to identify good practice and improvement measures.

250. Equality of opportunity considerations include the extent to which the provision is socially inclusive, and ensures equality of opportunity and access for all participants.

251. Literacy, numeracy and/ or language support is appropriate for the individual and clearly relates to their current and future employment needs.

252. Inspectors evaluate:

*The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- whether participants' jobs are interesting and motivating and support the achievement of employment and other goals
- to what extent participants with fluctuating or deteriorating conditions are supported so that they can stay in work
- how much participants' previous employment, interests, aspirations and potential are considered when agreeing learning opportunities
- whether all aspects of the Workstep programme, including jobsearch, preparation for unsupported employment and additional learning and development activities, are coordinated well.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- whether participants are provided with real work opportunities that meet the needs of the local labour market.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The extent to which employers' needs are met.

How much enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement.

**In Workstep provision this means:**

Learning and development opportunities meet the needs of employers. Work and projects provide participants with real work.

Participants who will benefit from the opportunity to develop social skills in community settings get the chance to do so.

253. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of participants' workplaces
- interviews with participants, disability advisers, work placement officers, mentors/job coaches and employers
- documents relating to the organisation of learning and development programmes and projects
- participants' individual development plans
- programme and project reports
- records of work with local employers and other partners, and use of local labour market information.

#### **Question 4 – how well are learners guided and supported?**

254. This question is about:

- the effectiveness of support systems in increasing participants' potential for achieving their planned objectives
- the support, advice and guidance given to participants.

255. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers identify good practice and areas for improvement in:

- induction
- additional support
- advice and guidance on progression.

256. Equality of opportunity considerations include how well providers enable participants to understand their rights and responsibilities. Judgements are also made about whether guidance and support are sensitive to equality of opportunity.

257. Inspectors evaluate:

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- how well and sensitively participants' barriers to employment are considered
- the availability of personal counselling, mentoring and advice to participants
- the extent to which participants are given opportunities to discuss their development and any difficulties with staff, mentors or job coaches
- how comprehensive, well-recorded, and well-managed arrangements are for supporting participants
- the quality and appropriateness of supporting resources and equipment.

*The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and, where applicable, career progression*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the quality of advice given to participants on Workstep and possible subsequent employment opportunities
- whether participants are given a well-planned induction to Workstep and informed of their rights and responsibilities
- the effectiveness of training in jobsearch at development planning and in-work stages
- how effectively participants are given relevant, timely and objective advice on potential employment opportunities and the skills they require.

*The extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and be healthy*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- how well training providers carry out health and safety checks on work placements, learning facilities and resources
- the extent to which personal counselling, support and training cover aspects of healthy living.

258. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of induction, literacy and numeracy support sessions, jobsearch and advisory and guidance sessions
- interviews with all relevant parties to establish their understanding of the learning programmes, and the effectiveness of the support given
- participants' personal files
- records of participant support
- induction programmes
- additional support materials
- staff profiles regarding ability to provide support
- policies for providing support to participants with learning difficulties or disabilities
- organisation of additional learning support
- feedback from participants on the quality of support.

### **Question 5 – how effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?**

259. This question is about:

- the strategic leadership of the provider, including whether its policies, strategies, values and aims are sympathetic to the core values of Workstep

- the provider's ability to make its policies and values understood and implemented by all its staff, subcontractors and employers
- the operational management of the Workstep programme, including the quality and application of staff and other resources
- quality improvement arrangements
- the promotion of equality and diversity
- strategies to identify and meet participants' literacy, numeracy and language support needs.

260. Inspectors evaluate:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements in maintaining and improving all aspects of Workstep
- the extent to which quality assurance reflects the Workstep quality standards, is systematic and include the views of all stakeholders
- how well staff understand and participate in the quality improvement arrangements
- how thorough the provider's self-assessment process is, and how effective the resulting action and development plans are in resolving weaknesses and improving the provision
- the providers' ability to collect and act upon data about participants' performance and progression
- how well the self-assessment process uses data about participants' achievements.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care, education and training*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the clarity of direction given through strategic objectives, targets and values in the business plan to all staff and subcontractors
- the effectiveness of communications among staff, with subcontractors and employers and other external organisations
- how well providers set realistic targets for achievement and progression of participants
- to what extent staff understand the performance targets and their roles in achieving them
- how well performance is monitored and evaluated

- to what extent performance management, staff appraisals and reviews improve the provision.

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- how well providers and employers understand and meet their statutory obligations for equality of opportunity
- the extent to which explicit aims and values promoting equality for all are reflected in the provider's work
- the effectiveness of measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment
- the record of providers in dealing with complaints and grievances promptly and effectively.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the access to sufficient qualified and experienced staff, including external specialists where necessary, to carry out all the roles in the Workstep programme
- the extent to which all relevant personnel have current occupational experience and up-to-date knowledge of labour market trends and jobsearch
- the effectiveness of the staff appraisal process
- to what extent staff are given development opportunities to work more effectively with participants who have different types and levels of disability and diverse needs.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which participants have access to good learning materials, equipment and facilities
- how well participants are able to use the above safely on their own to make progress
- how well learning resources and equipment comply with health and safety requirements and industry standards
- the appropriateness of accommodation for good teaching, training and learning.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

In Workstep provision, inspectors consider:

- how efficiently providers use facilities, accommodation, equipment and staff to ensure value for money
- the provider's use of 'best value' principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition in securing resources and services.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

How effective are the links made with other providers, services, employers, and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services to enhance learning.

The extent to which governors and other supervisory bodies discharge their responsibilities.

**In Workstep provision this means:**

Effective links with the DWP, employers, voluntary and community interest groups and a range of support agencies, to provide appropriate services to participants.

Management or other supervisory boards effectively oversee the provider's strategic direction, and regularly monitor the quality of their own provision.

261. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of meetings, sessions, activities and interactions between staff, participants and partner organisations
- interviews with managers and staff from all stakeholder organisations
- documents relating to the management of training such as contracts, policy statements and strategic and operating plans
- output from management information systems
- documents relating to quality improvement, including monitoring policies and procedures, reviews, action plans and statistics relating to performance targets
- equality of opportunity records such as publicity and marketing materials, policies and procedures, monitoring data and records of complaints and resolutions
- staff development plans
- financial details and any evaluation of the efficiency of the use of resources.



## 2.5 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for Employment Zones providers

262. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of Employment Zones (EZs). The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.

263. When inspecting single provider Employment Zones, inspectors:

- give a grade based on key question one to four of the Common Inspection Framework
- give a grade for leadership and management
- give a contributory grade for equality of opportunity; and
- provide a judgement about the provider's strategy to identify and meet clients' employment related literacy, numeracy and language learning needs
- provide a judgement about the provider's self-assessment process
- grade the provider's capacity to make further improvements

264. When inspecting multiple provider Employment Zones, inspectors:

- give a grade about the overall effectiveness of the zone in increasing participation in employment; and for each provider, inspectors:
- give a grade based on key question one to four of the Common Inspection Framework
- give a grade for leadership and management
- give a contributory grade for equality of opportunity;
- provide a judgement about the provider's strategy to identify and meet clients' employment related literacy, numeracy and language learning needs
- provide a judgement about each provider's self-assessment process
- grade the provider's capacity to make further improvements.

## Terminology

Term used in the Common Inspection Framework		Equivalent term in Employment Zone provision
Provider	Employment Zone provider	The organisation(s) responsible for managing the Employment Zone activities in each of the geographical regions designated by the DWP.
Sub-contractor	provider	Any organisation subcontracted by an Employment Zone provider to offer an aspect of the Employment Zone service to clients.
Learner	client	Anyone who volunteers or is mandated by the DWP to participate on an Employment Zone programme. (The majority of clients are referred by the DWP on a mandatory basis.)
Individual learning plan	action plan	A written record of any interaction which lists the main points discussed, and the actions which the adviser and client have agreed to carry out.

### Other terms used in Employment Zone provision include:

Jobsearch	Any instance of coaching/training or advice given to a client by a provider or appointed subcontractors to help the client gain sustainable employment.
Adviser, coach or personal consultant	Those employed directly by Employment Zone providers, to help clients gain sustainable employment. This may form all or part of their usual work roles.
Initial interview	An initial meeting between the client and the Employment Zone provider. During this meeting, clients receive an introduction to the Employment Zone programme (may be conducted in groups).
Stage one	A period of up to four weeks to identify clients' individual needs, including: job goals, barriers to employment, financial circumstances, skills gap, knowledge gap, and/or employment related skills for life needs. During this period, a detailed, costed action plan is drawn up for each client.
Stage two	A period of up to 26 weeks with a focus on moving clients towards gaining sustainable employment. During the period, the client has to attend the providers' premises at least once per week. During this period, the provider is responsible for the payment of Personal Jobseekers Allowances (PJSAs).
Monitoring reviews	Usually a detailed assessment of the client's performance against the agreed, costed individual action plan. Assessments may be conducted face-to-face or by telephone.

Stage three	Entry into paid employment or self-employment for a period of 13 continuous weeks. During this period, at the discretion of the provider the client may receive in-work support to ensure she/he remains in work.
Follow on stage	Clients who do not find employment at the end of stage two can volunteer for ongoing support for a further period of 22 weeks. A new, costed individual action plan is then agreed with the client. During this period, the client attends at her/his local DWP office to receive their Jobseekers allowance. If the client finds employment during this period that provider can claim this as an outcome.
Achievement	Inspectors will require evidence of actual achievement, such as a client gaining sustainable employment or self-employment, taking up employment related training, or applying for jobs. However, 'softer' outcomes such as: increased confidence and motivation; improved communication skills; ability to work effectively with others; regular attendance; positive attitude to work; ability to overcome barriers to employment; awareness of opportunities/options/sources of employment; financial awareness and achievement of employment related qualifications will also be taken into consideration.
Barriers to employment	Personal or practical barriers which hinder clients' ability or willingness to participate in employment.
Personal support	Ongoing support to help clients complete their agreed, costed individual action plans. This may include specialist support such as counselling, housing assistance, or support with debt, which providers or their subcontractor offer clients to help them overcome their barriers to employment.

## Overall effectiveness of the organisation

265. How effective and efficient are the provision and related services in meeting the full range of learners' needs and why?

266. What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

267. Inspectors evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the provision, including any extended services, and its main strengths and weaknesses
- the capacity to make further improvements
- the effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the previous inspection;

Also, where appropriate:

- the effectiveness of links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners

- the quality and standards in the foundation stage.
- the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

268. The final two points do not apply to Employment Zone provision.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Question 1 – how well do learners achieve?**

269. In Employment Zone provision, achievement is judged on the tangible benefits the Employment Zone brings to its clients, in particular the extent to which clients progress into employment with or without training.
270. Inspectors will also take into consideration, for all clients, additional positive outcomes such as clients' increased self-esteem or motivation; their ability to overcome barriers; their improved Jobsearch skills; and their development of relevant new skills.
271. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers use data to evaluate programmes and take measures to improve them. Such data includes:
- clients' progression into sustainable employment
  - achievement of individual goals
  - data that shows the effect of Employment Zone provision on individuals and groups.
272. Equality of opportunity considerations includes how well providers use the above data to analyse the participation and success rates of different groups of clients. These groups include gender and minority ethnic groups, and clients with disabilities.
273. Inspectors evaluate:

*Learners' success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- the extent to which clients enter sustainable employment
- the extent to which clients achieve work focused training
- the extent to which clients make appropriate changes in their lives
- clients' increased self-esteem or motivation
- clients' improved ability to identify and overcome personal or practical barriers
- clients' development of relevant new employment related skills

- clients' improved awareness of the options and sources of employment open to them.

*The standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how effectively advisers motivate clients to realise their potential in terms of sustainable employment or learning, such as through the acquisition of better literacy and numeracy skills, or new or improved sustainable employment related skills, qualifications or knowledge.

*Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how well clients progress from their starting point, and meet the targets set in their action plans
- the extent to which clients take responsibility for their own progress and follow action plans for themselves
- any differences in progress or achievements between different groups of learners.

*The extent to which learners enjoy their work*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- the degree to which clients show interest and participate during Employment Zone interactions, and take pride in their achievements.

Also, where appropriate:

<b>Common Inspection Framework</b>	<b>For Employment Zones providers this means:</b>
The acquisition of workplace skills.	Advisers enable clients to identify and develop skills they can take into the workplace.
The development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the learner.	Clients develop skills which help them to manage and improve the quality of their lives. Their self-esteem increases as a result of their contact with the Employment Zone provider.
The emotional development of learners.	Clients develop skills and knowledge that increase their self-awareness.
The behaviour of learners.	Clients are engaged, motivated and participate fully in Employment Zone interactions.
The attendance of learners.	Clients keep Employment Zone appointments, and are punctual.
The extent to which learners adopt	Clients' understanding of issues related to their

safe practices and a healthy lifestyle. personal well-being improves. Advisers give them information about safe working practices where appropriate.

274. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of initial interviews
- observation of progress reviews
- observation appropriate group-work
- observation of employment related training
- observation of employment related literacy, numeracy and language support sessions
- discussions with clients or previous clients
- interview with Employment Zones providers' staff
- data from the management information system
- information about clients' progress and destinations after contact with the Employment Zone provider
- results and analyses of client satisfaction surveys or questionnaires
- clients' action plans
- clients' case studies and case histories
- examples of clients' CVs or other documents produced in Employment Zone workshops or advice sessions.

## The quality of provision

### Question 2 – how effective are teaching, training and learning?

275. This question is about:

- how effectively Employment Zone interactions are conducted and how much benefit clients gain from them
- the planning and management of Employment Zone interactions, and their appropriateness to the needs of the client
- the extent to which Employment Zone interactions promote and reinforce good work habits.

276. Quality improvement considerations focus on how well interactions with clients are monitored, and the effectiveness of steps taken to improve such interactions. This will include:

- providers' observations of Employment Zone interactions
- providers' use of clients' evaluations of Employment Zone interactions.

277. Judgements about equality of opportunity considerations include:

- how effectively Employment Zone interactions meet the needs of clients from different backgrounds, and with different ability levels
- how effectively advisers promote equality and diversity during Employment Zone interactions.

278. Inspectors evaluate:

*How well teaching, and/or training and resources promote learning, address the full range of learner's needs and meet course or programme requirements*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- the quality of advisers' interactions and their relevance to clients' needs and aims
- how well different types of interaction are matched to clients' requirements
- whether advisers possess relevant qualifications and expertise
- whether advisers use appropriate methods for dealing with clients from a wide range of backgrounds and in differing circumstances
- to what extent advisers use methods and styles of interaction consistent with clients' needs and personal objectives
- the extent to which advisers, with clients, develop relevant and useful action plans which are appropriately recorded and updated
- whether clients have access to a good range of resources to maximise the employment and learning opportunities available to them
- to what extent resources and accommodation allow all clients to participate in Employment Zone interactions, and all parts of the premises are accessible to clients with restricted mobility
- to what extent adapted resources and equipment are available to those who need it
- whether advisers use resources and methods that promote equality and diversity.

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how well advisers assess clients' individual needs and how this helps clients to progress and find sustainable employment
- whether action plans are negotiated with clients to ensure that they meet their needs and interests
- how effectively advisers monitor clients' progress against their action plans.

*The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- the quality and effectiveness of the formal or informal assessment of clients' needs with regard to employment related literacy, numeracy and language
- providers' arrangements for referring clients to specialist agencies, if appropriate
- how effectively Employment Zones providers identify those clients who have particular difficulties in accessing and using its services and how effectively it resolves these difficulties.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.

**For Employment Zones providers this means:**

Where clients wish to involve others in the service they receive, their wishes are respected, and all relevant people kept informed.

279. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of Employment Zone interactions (including telephone calls when appropriate)
- interviews with clients, advisers, providers' and if appropriate subcontractors' staff
- clients' action plans
- clients' records
- clients' evaluations
- Employment Zone facilities, accommodation and resources.

**Question 3 – how well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?**

280. This question is about:

- the extent to which providers prepare clients to take responsibility for achieving their own employment goals
- how well the provision reflects the needs of local employers
- how effectively Employment Zone providers take account of the needs of individuals, communities, and social and economic factors in the zone.

281. Quality improvement considerations include how well information derived from the evaluations provided by clients, staff, DWP advisers and employers are used to identify good practice and measures for improvement.

282. Equality of opportunity considerations include how effectively Employment Zones providers encourage participation in the employment market.



283. Inspectors evaluate:

*The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how well Employment Zones providers match their services to the employment status, educational background, social circumstances, geographical mobility and aspirations of groups of clients and potential clients in their area
- the extent to which advisers use appropriate methods to identify the needs of potential and existing clients.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider

- to what extent the Employment Zone providers take account of the local availability of employment, education and training options when designing and planning the Employment Zone interactions they provide
- how much consideration is given to local and national priorities.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

The extent to which employers' needs are met.

**For Employment Zones providers this means:**

The Employment Zone provider takes account of employers' needs.

Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with clients, advisers, providers' and if appropriate subcontractors' staff
- clients' action plans
- clients' records
- clients' evaluations
- work or consultation with the local office of the DWP, employers, training providers and other appropriate external agencies
- strategic and operating plans
- how use of the interactions and resources has been evaluated.

#### Question 4 – how well are learners guided and supported?

284. This question is about:

- how well clients are supported in overcoming their barriers to employment and achieving their employment and personal goals
- the effectiveness with which advisers help clients to identify and remove personal and practical obstacles to sustainable employment
- how effectively the different specialist agencies liaise to meet clients' individual needs.

285. Quality improvement considerations include how well providers evaluate their support for clients to identify good practice and areas for improvement.

286. Equality of opportunity considerations include the extent to which support for clients is sensitive to equality and diversity.

287. Inspectors evaluate:

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how effectively Employment Zone interactions help clients to identify and overcome personal and practical obstacles to their progress
- whether all clients have access to an appropriate range of support and resources including those available from external agencies
- to what extent arrangements for supporting clients are planned and managed coherently.

*The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and, where applicable, career progression*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how accurate, up-to-date, understandable and useful the information and advice given to clients is
- to what extent Employment Zone interactions take equality of opportunity into consideration
- the effectiveness of links between Employment Zones providers and the local DWP advisers.

288. Sources of evidence could include:

- observations of Employment Zone interactions
- interviews with clients, advisers, DWP staff, and providers' staff

- clients' action plans
- clients' records
- clients' evaluations
- the range of information available to clients
- information about the qualifications and experience of advisers
- policies relating to adults with learning difficulties or disabilities.

## Leadership and management

### Question 5 – how effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

289. This question is about:

- the effectiveness of the management and delivery of the Employment Zone activities
- how roles and responsibilities are allocated to ensure the most effective provision
- how effectively Employment Zones providers work with the DWP
- what arrangements there are to bring about improvements to the quality of the Employment Zone
- how well resources are used in the interest of clients and potential clients
- the provider's effectiveness in promoting and ensuring equality of opportunity to clients that are referred to them.

290. Inspectors evaluate:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- to what extent quality improvement arrangements are systematic and include the views of all clients, and providers' staff
- how comprehensive the quality improvement arrangements are
- how effectively managers monitor the performance of staff, and evaluate the quality of interactions they offer
- how well the providers' staff understand quality improvement arrangements
- the effectiveness of staff appraisals and reviews in improving the quality of provision
- how regularly, thoroughly and accurately providers carry out self-assessment
- whether self-assessment is rigorous enough to identify priorities and challenging targets for improvement
- whether providers plan for continuous improvement based on the strengths and weaknesses they identify.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through high-quality care, education and training*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- whether managers provide clear direction through strategic objectives, targets and values that are understood by all relevant parties
- whether managers encourage innovative working practices to help clients find and secure sustainable employment
- whether demanding and appropriate progression into sustainable employment targets are set for the provider as a whole, and for individual staff, which are regularly reviewed to improve performance
- the effectiveness of the management information system

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- how well equality of opportunity is promoted to the clients that are referred to the provider
- to what extent managers and staff demonstrate explicit aims and values which promote equality and diversity
- how effectively providers ensure that the environment in which interactions are delivered is welcoming and accessible to all
- how well advisers and other staff understand equality and diversity, and the extent to which their interaction with clients reinforces and enhances clients' understanding of their rights, and their responsibilities to others
- to what extent clients' progress is regularly analysed to assess the effects of provision on different groups
- whether the provider and providers have up-to-date policies and procedures to deal effectively with discrimination, complaints and grievances
- the extent to which providers monitor and evaluate their approach to equality and diversity.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that learners are well taught and protected*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- whether there are enough advisers, managers and support staff with suitable expertise, qualifications and experience to meet the needs of clients
- how the professional development of staff contributes to their ability to identify and meet the needs of clients
- whether staff development is available for all staff, including part-time staff – whether staff have clear roles and responsibilities which they understand.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- whether venues are safe and healthy, and subject to regular, thorough health and safety checks
- whether appropriate resources are readily available and used to overcome clients barriers to sustainable employment
- whether learning resources and accommodation allow all clients to make full use of Employment Zone services
- to what extent premises are accessible to all clients and meet the requirements of relevant legislation.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

In Employment Zone provision, inspectors consider:

- whether effective and efficient use is made of resources
- whether priorities are supported through responsible financial management
- to what extent providers make good use of finances to ensure that strategic priorities are met
- the deployment of staff to meet the needs of clients.

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

How effectively links are made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services to enhance learning and to promote well-being.

How effectively governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities.

**For Employment Zones providers this means:**

Partnerships, or links with employers, community organisations, external agencies or other organisations benefit clients and maximise opportunities for them to move forward.

Management committees and other supervisory boards oversee the provider's strategic direction and regularly monitor the quality of provision.

Sources of evidence could include:

- interviews with managers, representatives from the DWP, partner organisations and other stakeholders, staff and clients
- documents relating to the strategic and operational management of the provisions, such as strategic plans, business plans and minutes of meetings
- management information about retention and progression rates
- feedback from DWP external audits and accreditation visits
- quality improvement monitoring data
- records of observations of Employment Zone interactions

- equal opportunities monitoring data
- policies and procedures
- client evaluations
- staff development records and curriculum vitae
- visits to employers
- self-assessment reports and development plans.

## 2.6 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for learndirect providers

### Introduction

#### 1. Background

291. This guidance explains how the Common Inspection Framework should be applied to the inspection of **learndirect** provision. It takes full account of national priorities. Current priorities include the government's strategies for skills development, widening participation and e-learning. The guidance does not replace the Common Inspection Framework, which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The Common Inspection Framework, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors support their judgements with appropriate evidence drawn from a wide range of sources.
292. Providers should use the Common Inspection Framework and this guidance to aid their self-assessment process.

#### 2. learndirect

293. Supported online learning is the main medium for learndirect learning. It enables learning to take place away from institutions and learning centres and in venues such as the home or workplace. Ufi/learndirect makes a shared pledge to learners:
- to offer the time, place, pace and style of learning that meets learners' needs
  - to give clear information that helps learners to make the best personal choices about learning programmes and keep control of them
  - to offer courses that are relevant to learners' own work interests and that involve them in practical examples and exercises
  - to allow learners to monitor their progress and record their achievements as they go, not just at the end of a programme
  - to provide easy access to the specialist support which learners need and to put them in touch with other people studying the same topics
  - to give learners the chance to relate their learning to their own longer-term ambitions so that they can present evidence of their achievements for credit towards the widest range of nationally recognised qualifications that are relevant to the courses offered

### 3. Inspection of learndirect

294. Inspectors will judge the quality of learning provided by a learning centre and each Ufi Region on a rolling four-year basis. Inspectors will focus on learners' success and evaluate the help and support learners receive through the centre and Ufi Region and consider other support provided.
295. Each learning centre inspected will be graded and where appropriate grades will be given for sector subject areas. If it is not possible to grade individual sector subject areas an overall grade will be given. Leadership and management of the centre may be graded with a contributory grade for equality of opportunity.
296. An overall judgment on the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning centre will be informed by its capacity to both make improvements and accurately self-assess the quality of its provision.
297. The sampling of learning centres to inspect may focus on a region, provider or theme. Each year every region and the Army will be subject to a monitoring visit to assess overall performance and evaluate risk. This visit will lead to a report shared with the region. The outcome of the visit will determine the proportion of sampling within each region, and its position in the overall four-year inspection cycle.

### Terminology

298. Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the Common Inspection Framework. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to learndirect.

Single term used in the Common Inspection Framework	Relating the term to learndirect	
Provider	Learning centre	The legal organisation responsible for providing the learndirect educational service through its learning centre for publicly funded learners. Some providers may have more than one centre and operate through more than one region.
Learner	Learner	Any person who is on a learndirect course. They may access the course through a learning centre, outreach location, at home, or at work.
Teacher/Trainer	Personal and course tutors	Personal Tutor: the tutor who supports a learner through the completion of the



course, achievement of their personal learning goal and progression onto further learning. Every learner must have a personal tutor.

Course Tutor: the tutor who provides course specific learner support when necessary. All roles may be delivered in learning centres, virtually, or may be combined.

Learning goals

Learning goals

A 'Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound' ('SMART') statement a learner makes when enrolling on a course, which has been approved by their tutor and recorded on the learndirect system. This shows how a learner will recognise that the learning they have carried out on a course meets their specific learning requirements.

If the course is designated by Ufi as linked to a qualification, the personal learning goal will include achieving the relevant unit(s) of that qualification.

Achievement of the personal learning goal(s) for each course is recorded in the Learning Support Environment.

Tutors require evidence from the learner to confirm that a personal learning goal has been achieved. If the learner completes the course they receive a 'statement of completion'.

Learning outcome

A statement Ufi makes about each learndirect course to show the content of a particular section of the course. Ufi makes five to 10 statements about each course.

Learning outcomes are used to record progress towards completion of a course.

Personal and learning skills

Personal development skills

These may also include skills to enhance employability.

### Other terms used for learndirect:

Region

Ufi operates through nine regions in order to meet regional priorities, contract and support local centres in a designated geographical region which equate to LSC regions. The Army

contract is considered as the tenth region although there are significant differences in the way in which this contract is monitored and supported.

Learning centres	If they so wish, learners may follow a course using, if appropriate, the computing equipment in a learning centre. Staff at the centre will help the learner to use the equipment and other supporting material. The centres offer a different range of services and courses to the learner but all must be able to provide virtual/remote support to learners as well as a physical location.
Outreach location	<p>Some learning centres use outreach locations to reach particular groups of learners. These may be either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ temporary locations – e.g. where the learning centre uses a Church Hall in a remote rural area to deliver for a fixed period of time – up to two months.</li> <li>■ occasional outreach locations – where a facility is available for a short period each week – up to two days.</li> </ul> <p>In both cases above the Learning Provider is simply using premises other than the specified learning centre to deliver learning, in all other ways the learning should be the same as if it was in the designated learning centre. Learner support must be provided by staff employed by the learning centre and the quality of support must be consistently high no matter where the learning is delivered.</p>
Virtual learning	All learning centres must be able to provide virtual support to learners. Learners who choose to enrol/learn remotely (or virtually) must be provided with the same level of service as learners learning in the learning centre. The requirements for learner tracking and learner support are the same as other learning centres. Learners do not need to physically attend a centre.
Course	The majority of learndirect courses have notional learning times of between 10 and 30 hours. Some are short 'taster' or 'bite sized chunks' with notional learning times of one or two hours.
Learning Support Environment	Each learner has access to the Learning Support Environment (LSE) through the learndirect website. This is an ICT system which delivers online learndirect courses and provides support and tools to allow learners to interact with other learners and their tutor. All learners are required to enrol (or register) onto the LSE to commence their learning.

## Overall effectiveness

299. How effective and efficient is the provision of education, training, integrated care, and any extended services in schools in meeting the needs of learners and why? What steps need to be taken to improve the provision further?

300. To answer this question, inspectors examine how effective and efficient the provision of learning is by the learning centre, region and Ufi in meeting the needs of learners. They consider what steps should be taken to improve provision further.

301. Inspectors should evaluate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

**In learndirect this means:**

The overall effectiveness of the provision, including any extended services, and its main strengths and weaknesses.

the same – although ‘extended services’ are not applicable

The capacity to make further improvements.

the same

The effectiveness of any steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection.

the same

The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage.

not applicable

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.

not applicable

**Achievement and standards**

**1. How well do learners achieve?**

302. In learndirect inspections, achievement is evaluated in terms of how successful learndirect learners are in completing their course, achieving their personal learning goals and in improving their personal and learning skills.

303. Inspectors should evaluate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

**In learndirect this means:**

Success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups.

see the definitions above agreed between Ufi, LSC and Ofsted

The standards of learners work in relation to their learning goals.

that standards of learners’ work are consistently high and that there is a consistent standard throughout the

<p>The standards of learners work in relation to their learning goals.</p>	<p>learning centre and region(s).</p> <p>that learners' knowledge and skills are at least what might be expected based on their initial level of knowledge and skills</p>
<p>Learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, without any significant variations between groups of learners.</p>	<p>the same</p>

and the following for learners:

<b>Common Inspection Framework</b>	<b>In learndirect this means:</b>
<p>The acquisition of workplace Skills.</p>	<p>that learners are developing relevant work and/or community related skills using information technology as a medium of learning</p>
<p>The development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the learner.</p>	<p>not applicable</p>
<p>The behaviour of learners.</p>	<p>not applicable</p>
<p>The attendance of learners.</p>	<p>that learners have an agreed learning pattern which may include logging onto the learner support environment, accessing their course or visiting a centre an agreed number of times over a given period. Staff monitor learners' progress and keep in touch with learners to check that they are still learning and encourage them to complete courses by their planned end date</p>
<p>The extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle.</p>	<p>all learners are adults so the focus in learndirect is to ensure that learners are learning safely – with particular emphasis on awareness of VDU safe working practices</p>
<p>Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.</p>	<p>all learners are adults – this is not relevant to learndirect</p>

Whether learners make a positive contribution to the community.

all learners are adults– this is not relevant to learndirect

304. Suggested sources of evidence:

- observation of learners and their work, including assessed work (where relevant)
- observation of learning and reviews of progress
- observation of learning centres and other places of learning
- observation of additional support, induction, initial information, advice and guidance (including careers advice)
- interviews with learners, including virtual and remote learners
- interviews with staff including learning centre managers and course/personal tutors
- learner records, including learner tracking data
- online tutor confirmation notes
- records of learner course notes
- enrolment, completion, achievement and withdrawal data
- individual learning plans
- learner agreements
- records of initial assessment including identified additional support needs
- online and other learning materials.

## The quality of provision

### 2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?

305. To answer this question, inspectors assess the quality of learner support to ensure that learner progress is encouraged, monitored and maintained.

306. Inspectors should evaluate:

#### Common Inspection Framework

How well teaching, training and resources meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements.

The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress.

The diagnosis of, and provision

#### In learndirect this means:

that learning centre staff use methods and styles of assessment and support that are appropriate to individual learners and that enable learners to complete the learning outcomes and achieve their personal learning goals

the same

that learning centre staff use methods and styles of support that are appropriate to

for, additional learning needs.	individual learners and that enable learners to complete the learning outcomes and achieve their personal learning goals
The involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.	not applicable

307. Suggested sources of evidence:

- observation of learners and their work, including assessed work (where relevant)
- observation of learning and reviews of progress
- observation of learning centres and other places of learning
- observation of additional support, induction, initial information, advice and guidance (including careers advice)
- interviews with learners, including virtual and remote learners
- interviews with staff including learning centre managers and course/personal tutors
- learner records, including learner tracking data
- online tutor confirmation notes which may be online
- records of learner course notes
- learner agreement
- records of initial assessment including identified additional support needs
- online and other learning materials
- induction material including health and safety and equal opportunities materials
- specialist support services information.

### 3. How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners

308. To answer this question, inspectors assess how well learndirect courses meet the needs and interests of individual learners to improve their skills, knowledge and employability.

309. Inspectors should evaluate:

#### Common Inspection Framework

The extent to which programmes or activities match learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior

#### In learndirect this means:

learners have access to an appropriate range of learndirect materials (either online or offline), and that, if applicable, learners have access to information regarding

attainment and experience.	formal assessments for qualifications
How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements, and are responsive to local circumstances.	learning centre staff help learners to choose courses to improve their knowledge and skills in their chosen subjects and which could lead to further education, training or employment
The extent to which employers' needs are met.	the extent to which the learning centres are engaged in strategies of local/community workforce development (particularly in SMEs)
The extent to which enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement.	all learners are adults so this is not relevant to learndirect

#### 4. How well are learners guided and supported?

310. To answer this question, inspectors assess the quality of guidance and support learndirect learners receive on entry and during their course, including the quality of support for individual learning and personal needs.

311. Inspectors should evaluate:

**Common Inspection Framework** **In learndirect this means:**

The care, advice and guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards.	the same except that learndirect learning centres will focus on guidance and support relevant to personal development/learning.
The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and where applicable, career progression.	learners are able to make an informed course choice based on the receipt of clear and objective advice and guidance. If relevant, learning centres are able to direct learners to effective careers guidance
The extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and be healthy.	the same, but particularly the extent to which learners are given advice on the safe use of ICT equipment

312. Suggested sources of evidence:

- observation of additional support, induction, initial information, advice and guidance (including careers advice)
- interviews with learners, including virtual and remote learners
- interviews with staff including learning centre managers and course/personal tutors
- learner records, including learner tracking data
- online tutor confirmation notes
- records of learner course notes
- enrolment, completion, achievement and withdrawal data
- data relevant to equal opportunities
- individual learning plans
- learner agreement
- records of initial assessment including identified additional support needs
- online and other learning materials
- staff CVs including qualifications and experience
- staff training records

## Leadership and management

### 5. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

313. To answer this question inspectors assess the quality of leadership and management of learndirect learning centres, Ufi Regions and Ufi in relation to the delivery and improvement of high quality learning. Aspects assessed could include strategic planning, quality assurance arrangements, value for money, management board responsibilities, and the promotion of equality of opportunity.

314. Inspectors should evaluate:

<b>Common Inspection Framework</b>	<b>In learndirect this means:</b>
How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment.	the same
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential.	the same
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set a clear direction	leaders and managers set a clear direction leading to improvement through strategic



leading to improvement and promote high quality of care, education and training.	plans, staff development and quality improvement. This also includes effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment, especially via email or other online communication systems, or the inappropriate use of computing facilities
The adequacy and suitability of staff.	the same
The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation.	the same
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money.	the same
How effective are the links made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services to enhance learning.	the same, and to include how well the learning centre/s is meeting the regional and national plan.
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities.	the same where it applies to a learning centre

### 315. Suggested sources of evidence:

- observation of learning and reviews of progress
- observation of learning centres and other places of learning
- interviews with learners, including virtual and remote learners
- interviews with staff including learning centre managers and course/personal tutors
- learner records, including learner tracking data
- online tutor confirmation notes
- records of learner course notes
- enrolment, completion, achievement and withdrawal data
- data relevant to equal opportunities
- individual learning plans
- learner agreement
- records of initial assessment including identified additional support needs
- online and other learning materials
- staff CVs including qualifications and experience
- staff training records
- Ufi national and regional strategic and delivery plans

- induction material including health and safety and equal opportunities materials
- specialist support services information
- agendas and minutes of management meetings
- appeals and complaints policies, procedures and reports
- learner feedback questionnaires, surveys and analysis of responses
- self-assessment reports and resulting development plans
- equality of opportunity policies and procedures.

## 2.7 Inspection handbook: additional guidance for nextstep inspections

### Introduction

316. Part 1 of the *Handbook for inspecting work-related and adult and community learning* sets out the core principles of inspection which apply to all inspections. However, certain aspects are not applicable to the nextstep context. This additional guidance clarifies these differences. It should be read in conjunction with Part One of the handbook. This guidance is intended for readers who are broadly familiar with both general inspection methods and the nextstep context, such as nominees from nextstep contractors and inspectors who have previously mainly worked in other contexts.

### Terminology

317. Most of the inspection contexts covered by the handbook involve the provision of teaching, training, coaching or learning. The terminology it uses reflects these activities. Although nextstep services do not include these activities there are usually direct equivalents. These are summarised in the following table.

<b>Handbook terminology</b>	<b>nextstep equivalent</b>
Curriculum areas, sector subject areas, vocational areas, occupational areas, subjects	Not usually applicable, no nextstep equivalent
Education, training and learning service or provision	Information and advice service or provision
Learner	Client
Learner achievement rates, success rates	Positive outcome rates
Learner's written work	Not usually a direct nextstep equivalent, but inspectors will examine client action plans with the same rigour that learners written work is examined in other contexts
Learning session	Information or advice group work sessions
Learning session observations	Observations of advice sessions or group work sessions
Provider	nextstep contract holder (usually the main contract holder)
Provider performance report	No nextstep equivalent
Teachers, trainers, assessors	nextstep advisers

## Inspection programme, scale and scope of inspections

318. The first inspection cycle of nextstep inspection is not scheduled for completion until the end of March 2009. For the remainder of this first cycle, achievement and standards, the quality of provision and leadership and management will be inspected in full for all nextstep contractors. Inspectors will continue to:
- give a grade based on key questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the Common Inspection Framework
  - give a grade for leadership and management
  - give a contributory grade for equality of opportunity
  - give a contributory grade for quality improvement
  - provide a judgement about their degree of confidence in the contractor's self-assessment process
  - give a grade for the contractor's capacity to make further improvements
  - give a grade for the overall effectiveness of the provision.
319. The scale of service provided by different nextstep contractors is much less variable than that delivered by different providers in other inspection contexts. Consequently the size of the inspection team for nextstep inspections is less likely to fluctuate. In most circumstances, nextstep inspection teams consist of four or five inspectors, plus the nominee. nextstep inspections normally last for four days.
320. Individual inspectors may concentrate on particular aspect of the service, but the level of specialisation is much less than in other contexts. All inspectors gather evidence on all aspects of the service and there is no separate core team. There is no equivalent to the curriculum area moderation meetings used elsewhere. All the relevant issues are dealt with during daily meetings of the full inspection team.
321. A sample of subcontractors is always visited during nextstep inspections. Indeed, such visits usually provide the bulk of inspection evidence. All subcontractors are named in nextstep inspection reports. The report identifies those subcontractors visited during the inspection.

## Sampling, information required prior to the inspection

322. In most inspection contexts, inspectors choose a sample of learners to interview or classes to observe. This is not applicable to nextstep inspections. Instead, inspectors select a sample of subcontractors to visit as well as, where it exists, the contractor's own provision.
323. During such visits inspectors undertake a range of evidence gathering activities such as observing advice sessions, interviewing advisers and other staff and managers. Inspectors will interview clients and review key documents, such as client action plans and performance data. In some nextstep inspections

telephone interviews are used far more than in other inspection contexts. In addition, interviews are undertaken and documents reviewed to provide evidence that supports the reporting of leadership and management, quality improvement and equality of opportunity.

324. The lead inspector will consult with the nominee during the planning stages to decide which subcontractors the team will visit. In addition, the range of the contractor's own provision to be sampled will be agreed. Prior to the inspection, usually at the planning meeting, the lead inspector will require key information about each subcontractor to help them to make well informed decisions about who to visit. This information should include details about the scale of the subcontractors' nextstep work such as how many advice sessions they deliver in a typical week, details on the location(s) of their delivery site(s), details on the number of advisers who provide the service and information about any special services they provide or unique groups of clients they work with. Some nominees provide brief (150 words maximum) pen portraits of each subcontractor to summarise this information, but this is entirely optional.
325. For many nextstep contractors, inspection is the first time that their numerical data about positive outcome rates for clients is scrutinised in depth by an external organisation. It is vital that they provide this data in full and in advance of the inspection once notified by Ofsted. The usual deadline is six weeks before the start of the inspection week.

## Inspection report

326. The inspection report for nextstep is briefer than in most other contexts. A summary section provides information on the background to the contractor, judgements on overall effectiveness and the provider's self assessment process, and learners' views. The main findings section of the report presents inspection findings on achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management.

## Adequacy of provision

327. As in other contexts, a nextstep contractor will be judged to be inadequate and subject to reinspection if the overall effectiveness is awarded a grade four. The following guidelines will normally be used to determine the overall effectiveness grade.
- A provider will be awarded a grade one (outstanding) for overall effectiveness if the combined grade for achievement standards and quality of provision is grade one, and the grade for leadership and management is grade one.
  - A provider will be awarded a grade two (good) for overall effectiveness if the combined grade for achievement standards and quality of provision is

grade two and the grade for leadership and management is grade two; or when either of these two grades is grade one and the other is grade two.

- A provider will be awarded grade three (satisfactory) for overall effectiveness if the combined grade for achievement standards and quality of provision is grade three, and the grade for leadership and management is grade three; or when either of these two grades is grade three and the other is not a grade four.
- A provider will be judged inadequate in its overall effectiveness if either the combined grade for achievement standards and quality of provision or the grade for leadership and management is grade four.

## 2.8 Interpreting the Common Inspection Framework: guidance for the inspection of learning funded by the European Social Fund (ESF)

### Introduction

328. This guidance explains how the *Common Inspection Framework* (CIF) should be applied to the inspection of ESF-funded learning. The guidance does not replace the *Common Inspection Framework* which remains paramount in defining the standards against which inspection judgements are made. The CIF, the guidance notes and the suggested sources of evidence do not constitute a checklist. Inspectors will support their judgements using a range of evidence drawn from appropriate sources.

### Funding for ESF provision

329. The ESF is one of four main structural funds set up to help reduce differences in living standards between the regions of the European Union (EU) by reducing unemployment, improving and developing the skills of employed people, investing in industrial or rural areas which are in decline, and investing in areas with low economic development. Money is shared out under three objectives agreed between the European Commission and the UK Government. ESF aims to make sure that support meets the most serious needs. Each ESF objective targets clearly defined policy aims, priorities and measures for support.

**Objective 1** aims to:

- develop regions which are currently under-developed. Eligible areas include Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Wales and the Valleys, and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

**Objective 2** aims to:

- renew industrial, urban, rural and fisheries areas which are in decline.

**Objective 3** covers all of Great Britain, except Objective 1 areas, and aims to:

- tackle long-term unemployment
- help young people and those at risk from not being able to find work
- improve training, education and counselling for lifelong learning
- encourage entrepreneurship and adaptability in the workplace
- promote equal opportunities and improve the role of women in the workplace.

330. ESF money is used to give financial support towards the running costs of projects run by a variety of organisations. It is estimated that £65 million each year of ESF funds is used for this purpose. Projects can include those for

training, employment, education, research and childcare. ESF also supports government programmes, including New Deal. Projects usually run for no more than 24 months, though occasionally ESF may support projects for up to 36 months. ESF pays for a proportion (usually 45 per cent) of a project's costs. The remaining amount is known as match funding. Public and private match funding can be used, but public authority money must provide at least 10 per cent of the funding in each case. In many cases match funding is provided by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), DWP or other organisations such as local authorities. Often, match funding through local authorities supports ESF programmes containing no element of training. Such programmes will fall outside the remit of inspection. Regional Government Offices (GOs) are responsible for managing ESF funding and administering payments to the regions in England and to the National Assembly in Wales.

## Inspection arrangements

331. ESF-funded training is included within the scope of inspection in cases where providers deliver these programmes as part of their contracts with the LSC and/or the DWP. In such cases ESF provision is reported on by sector subject area.
332. In addition, from April 2006 the inspection of all ESF programmes is being carried out by GO region. Four regions are being inspected during 2006–07 and the remaining five during 2007–08. Inspection will include those providers holding only ESF match-funded contracts. A representative sample of providers is selected in each region, typically around a third of those providers in scope. The selection of providers for inspection takes into consideration such factors as the numbers of learners, the duration and nature of programmes, and the policy areas covered.
333. The organisation and duration of the inspection is determined by regional factors. In most cases each provider included in the sample for a region is visited by at least two inspectors. All inspection activities within a region are normally completed within two weeks. Inspectors make judgements on each provider's overall effectiveness, leadership and management, quality improvement and equality of opportunity. Where provision is found to be inadequate, reinspection normally takes place within 12 months of the first inspection.

## Focus of inspection

334. Inspectors will focus on the five key questions in the CIF. They will expect to see evidence relating to learner outcomes including, for example, job outcomes, achievement of qualifications and personal and professional skill development ('soft' skills). Inspectors will also focus on the quality of advice and guidance given to learners. They may wish to observe teaching sessions, speak to staff, learners and workplace supervisors and look at learners' work



where appropriate. Inspectors will look at management documents, including those relating to self-assessment, quality improvement and equality of opportunity.

335. In arriving at overall judgements, account is taken of both the ESF-only providers and the findings from the inspections of other government-funded providers in the region. Inspectors consider the impact of programmes in terms of their contribution to the employment strategy and to regional development plans.
336. Inspectors evaluate the overall provision in a region in terms of how well it contributes to the region's objectives of meeting the five ESF policy fields by:
- contributing to policies to reduce unemployment through helping people back into work and supporting young people starting work for the first time
  - promoting social inclusion and equality of opportunity for everyone to access work
  - developing education and training as part of a policy for lifelong learning to enhance and sustain employability, mobility, and integration into the labour market
  - promoting a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce, fostering innovation and adaptability in work organisation, supporting entrepreneurship and employment creation, and boosting human potential in research, science and technology
  - improving the participation of women in the labour market through career development and improved access to job opportunities and to entrepreneurship.

## Terminology and abbreviations

337. The table below sets out the terms and abbreviations commonly used within the context of ESF funded programmes. Where applicable, comparison with terms used in the *Common Inspection Framework* is made.

Term or abbreviation	Meaning within ESF-funded provision:
Beneficiaries	The term used for those who benefit from ESF programmes. Corresponds to learners, clients, beneficiaries/learners etc.
CFO	The co-financing organisation. Organisation providing match funding. Often the CFO will be the DWP, local LSC, voluntary organisations, local councils, universities etc.
NAP	National Action Plan. This describes how

	the European guidelines for employment are best put into practice in England, Wales and Scotland. Unions, employers and local and regional authorities contribute to the NAP.
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund. ESF funds made available to support the employment key objectives.
PMC	Programme Monitoring Committee. Regional committees with close links to the regional GO which feed into the national committee to inform the ESF division of the National Office.
NGO	National Government Offices. These include local authorities, and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), etc.
GO	Government Office. There are nine regional GOs responsible for education and training within their regions.
Wider Financing Network Groups	Informal regional groups reporting to the GO and responsible for ensuring co-ordination of planning and delivery of co-financed programmes and identifying and sharing good practice.
DEA	Disability Employment Advisers
ILM	Intermediary Labour Market
RDA	Regional Development Agencies; non-departmental government bodies funded by central government and responsible for promoting economic growth and competitiveness within GO regions.
Objectives, policy fields and measures	The aim of ESF is to meet the three key objectives. Within these objectives are five policy fields; to combat unemployment, to promote social inclusion, to develop education and training, to promote a skilled and adaptable workforce and to improve participation of women. Each policy field is supported by a number of different measures.
EQUAL	The European Community initiative for human resources. A transnational partnership to combat all forms of exclusion, discrimination and inequality in

Soft outcomes

the job market.

These are skills relating to attitude and enthusiasm rather than ability. They include confidence, motivation, self-esteem and other measurable skills such as punctuality, attendance and appearance.

338. In the following section the numbers in brackets refer to the five policy fields.

## Achievement and standards

### 1. How well do beneficiaries/learners achieve?

339. This question examines the effectiveness of ESF providers in helping beneficiaries/learners to move forward in terms of employment, education and training. Inspection judgements are based upon the tangible benefits given to those on the programmes and on the provider's success in contributing to the region's employment plans as part of the European Employment Strategy. Judgements will be made at provider level.

340. Within the context of ESF funding, the setting of programme outcomes by different funding bodies is likely to be different for different providers. Contracts to providers are issued under one or more of the five ESF policy fields and it is therefore necessary for inspectors to identify funding body expectations for the programmes. Each programme is evaluated on its own merits in terms of how well beneficiaries/learners achieve and progress and how well the programme meets its targets.

341. Inspectors should evaluate:

*The success of beneficiaries/learners in achieving challenging targets including qualifications, where appropriate, and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of beneficiaries/learners (3, 4).*

In making judgements for ESF programmes inspectors should consider:

How well providers enable beneficiaries/learners to make significant and appropriate changes in their working lives. Examine and make judgements about the extent to which beneficiaries enter employment or training. Look at providers' performance over time, where appropriate, and compare performance between different groups. Focus on the acquisition of 'soft' skills, such as beneficiaries'/learners' increased self-esteem and motivation, their personal effectiveness and their improved awareness of the options and sources of support open to them.

When making judgements, take into consideration the ESF policy fields covered by the contract. For example, policy fields 1, 2 and 5 are likely to focus on helping disadvantaged and under-represented groups into employment. Measurement of achievement in terms of qualifications may not be appropriate and consideration of how well beneficiaries/learners acquire employability skills is likely to be more important. However, for programmes in policy field 4, it may be appropriate to make judgements on key question 1 using data on rates of retention and on achievement in terms of qualifications. It is important to make a judgement on the effectiveness of the programme to improve beneficiaries'/learners' employability, both in terms of finding and sustaining employment and being more effective at work.

*The standards of beneficiaries'/learners' work in relation to their learning goals; (3, 4)*

In making judgements for ESF programmes inspectors should consider:

How effectively providers motivate beneficiaries/learners to realise their potential in terms of employment and training. This includes the acquisition of new or improved employability skills, qualifications and increased personal effectiveness. In many cases, the standards of beneficiaries/learners' 'work' will relate to their personal effectiveness rather than measures of specific practical skills or vocational skills. Judgements may be made in terms of beneficiaries/learners' learning goals and achievement for skills for life.

If standards maintained in programmes by individual providers are at the appropriate level, and whether there is consistency in standards across the region and nationally. Consider whether beneficiaries/learners achieve and progress for all programmes and learning environments.

*Beneficiaries/learners progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of beneficiaries/learners (2, 3, 5)*

In making judgements for ESF programmes inspectors should consider:

How effective and relevant is initial assessment in setting a baseline for progression? How well do the beneficiaries/learners progress from their starting points, and how well they meet the targets set in their training plans? Examine the extent to which beneficiaries/learners take responsibility for their own progress, and how well they are supported in the development and achievement of goals.

*The extent to which beneficiaries/learners enjoy their work (2)*

In making judgements for ESF programmes inspectors should consider:

The levels of enjoyment that beneficiaries/learners experience on programmes and the impact of these on attendance and motivation. Is the work relevant for the

beneficiaries/learners in the development, progression and acquisition of new workplace skills (where appropriate)?

Also, where appropriate:

**Common Inspection Framework**

**Common Inspection Framework For ESF programmes this statement refers to:**

The acquisition of workplace skills (3, 4)

How effectively trainers enable beneficiaries/learners to acquire the practical skills and knowledge needed for sustainable employment. Whether beneficiaries/learners are being given transferable skills to enable them to be adaptable in the workplace.

The development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the beneficiaries/learners (1, 2, 5)

How well beneficiaries/learners are helped to raise their personal effectiveness through increased confidence, motivation and improved social skills. The effectiveness of programmes in providing opportunities for beneficiaries/learners to achieve their potential and gain the range of skills needed to progress at work. Whether beneficiaries'/learners' skills for life are adequately assessed and additional learning support is provided where appropriate.

The behaviour of beneficiaries/learners (1, 3, 4)

The level of beneficiaries'/learners' interest and motivation during training. Consider whether programmes provide behavioural skills which will benefit beneficiaries/learners in interviews and sustaining employment.

The attendance of beneficiaries/learners (1, 4)

How frequently beneficiaries/learners attend for training and support sessions or turn up for work.

The extent to which beneficiaries/learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle (1, 3)

How well beneficiaries/learners are trained to adopt safe working practices and whether they are taught or employed in safe and healthy environments.

Whether programmes are making a positive contribution to the community (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

The outcomes of the programmes in terms of whether they contribute to the national action plan for employment in appropriate policy fields.

342. Sources of evidence could include:

- data specified in the guidance and forms issued by Ofsted (where appropriate)

- numbers of beneficiaries/learners starting and completing their programmes
- comparisons between local and national data
- results and evaluations of beneficiaries/learners' satisfaction surveys
- beneficiaries'/learners' action plans
- beneficiaries'/learners' case studies and case histories
- destinations of all beneficiaries/learners who leave before or at the end of their programme
- observations of beneficiaries/learners at work
- beneficiaries'/learners' written and practical work, including portfolios of evidence
- interviews with beneficiaries/learners
- interviews with employers
- beneficiaries'/learners' initial assessment records (baseline position) and training plans
- records of beneficiaries'/learners' progress reviews
- records of beneficiaries'/learners' attendance

## The quality of provision

### 2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?

343. This question focuses on the appropriateness of programmes to contribute to regional policies to reduce unemployment through providing the necessary training and support to beneficiaries/learners. Consideration should be given as to how well teaching and training are developed as part of a policy for lifelong learning to improve a beneficiary/learner's chances of integrating into the workforce and sustaining employment. In some cases the development of beneficiaries/learners' employability skills is achieved, not through direct training, but by planned support and providing opportunities to gain work experience.

344. Inspectors should evaluate:

*How well teaching, training and resources are used to meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements (1, 3, 4)*

This question needs to be considered at the regional level, in terms of how well programmes are contributing to the production of a skilled and adaptable workforce, and at the beneficiary/learner's level in terms of the benefit gained by being on the programme. Benefits to the beneficiaries/learners may be seen in several ways, for example, through the gaining of work experience, qualifications and improved personal effectiveness. In some cases, programmes may focus on the development of beneficiaries'/learners' enterprise and entrepreneurship.

*The suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress (2)*

This question looks at how well the advisers assess beneficiaries'/learners' individual needs and how the findings of assessment are used to help them to plan their next steps and make progress. Inspectors should consider not only the incremental short-term goals for progress, but the relevance and realism of the longer-term employment goals for each beneficiary/learner. This question looks at the effectiveness of arrangements for monitoring the progress of beneficiaries/learners to ensure that adequate measures are in place to enable them to improve their employability.

*The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs (1, 2)*

Inspectors look at how effectively advisers take account of beneficiaries'/learners' individual needs. The question focuses on the quality and effectiveness of the formal or informal assessment of beneficiaries'/learners' needs with regard to skills for life, social skills and to identify practical issues which may inhibit progress. Arrangements for assessment may incorporate procedures for referring beneficiaries/learners to specialist agencies offering support and advice, where appropriate. It includes how effectively providers identify those beneficiaries/learners who have particular difficulties in accessing and using their services and how effectively they resolve these difficulties.

Also, where appropriate,

**Common Inspection Framework**

the involvement of outside partners, agencies and organisations (1, 2, 4)

**For ESF programmes this statement refers to:**

Inspectors may examine the effectiveness of the provider's communication with other partners, such as employers, training providers, support/advisory agencies and the extent to which confidentiality and boundaries are understood, respected and maintained.

345. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of teaching and training
- observation of progress reviews and support/advisory sessions
- interviews with beneficiaries/learners and staff individual learning/sentence plans
- training and session plans
- teaching and learning materials
- staff qualifications
- staff training and development plans
- resource lists and maintenance/development plans

- accommodation used for learning purposes
- assessed work and assessment records
- initial assessment records (baseline position)
- additional support materials
- records of beneficiaries'/learners' attendance.

### 3. How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?

346. This question examines the relevance and breadth of ESF programmes at a regional level in terms of how well provision contributes to the national action plan for employment. It also considers how well the ESF programmes meet the needs of beneficiaries/learners and their availability to different groups within the region. It considers whether the regional strategy for provision ensures it is accessible to those who need it and how effectively providers promote social inclusion and encourage participation to ensure equality of opportunity. It considers how well programmes meet the needs of women in the labour market. The question covers how well provision reflects the needs of local employers.

347. Inspectors should evaluate:

*The extent to which programmes or activities match beneficiaries'/learners' aspirations and potential, building on prior attainment and experience (1, 2, 4, 5)*

This covers how well programmes provide beneficiaries/learners with the employability skills they need to become more effective in the workplace. It considers how effective programmes are in providing motivation and challenges to enable beneficiaries/learners to achieve their goals. How well are programmes are matched to the employment status, the skills and experience, the social circumstances, the geographical mobility and aspirations of groups of beneficiaries/learners and potential beneficiaries/learners across the region. Judgements are likely to be made in terms of the matching of the programme to the skills and experience of each individual beneficiary/learner. Across programmes, beneficiaries/learners will possess a wide range of skills and experience. In some cases, programmes will focus on putting people into work for the first time or returning them to work after periods of unemployment. In other cases programme objectives will be about enabling beneficiaries/learners to advance to higher levels in employment by acquiring specialised skills or moving into new occupational areas.

*How far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances (1, 4)*

This will include consideration of how well regional and provider-led strategies take account of the local availability for employment and training when designing and planning the programmes. It will have particular relevance to assessing the effectiveness of provision in helping to reduce unemployment and shortages of skills



workers within the workforce. Judgements will be based on how well programmes provide beneficiaries/learners with opportunities to gain new skills and how they improve participation in the labour market at all levels to under-represented groups in the region.

and where appropriate:

### Common Inspection Framework

the extent to which employers' needs are met (1, 4)

the extent to which enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to beneficiaries/learners' enjoyment and achievement (3)

the extent to which the provision contributes to the beneficiaries/learners' capacity to stay safe and healthy (4)

### For ESF programmes this statement refers to:

If it is particularly relevant. Inspectors will look at how the needs of local employers are reflected in the information and advice given to clients.

This looks at the effectiveness of programmes in engaging the beneficiaries/learners and maintaining retention.

This examines how well advisers explore health or safety issues relevant to individual needs when discussing future occupations with clients. It focuses on how clearly and accurately they give advice about health and safety issues, where this is appropriate. It looks at whether individual partners' premises comply with health and safety legislation.

348. Sources of evidence could include:

- discussions with programme managers
- discussions with local training partners, employers and other external agencies
- discussions with beneficiaries/learners, those on-programme and those who have completed
- documents relating to:
  - how demographic data has been used to plan the ESF programmes
  - how employers, training providers, community representatives and other external agencies have been consulted about the design and provision of ESF programmes
- how usage rates of different programmes have been monitored and assessed
- evidence of benefits of ESF programmes to beneficiaries/learners and the region.

#### **4. How well are learners guided and supported?**

349. This question examines how effectively ESF providers meet beneficiaries'/learners' individual needs for accurate and relevant information and advice about learning and work. Inspectors look at the quality of support given to clients, during training and at work, and at how effectively the different partners liaise and work in collaboration to meet individuals' needs.

350. Inspectors should evaluate:

*The care, advice, guidance and other support provided to safeguard welfare, promote personal development and achieve high standards (1, 2, 3, 4)*

This focuses on how well the ESF provider supports beneficiaries/learners to engage in lifelong learning in order that they may enhance and sustain employability. It is about how well beneficiaries/learners are supported in gaining greater social skills personal effectiveness as well as being supported in gaining essential employability. Support arrangements should be provided to beneficiaries/learners in a manner which is appropriate to their wishes, abilities and circumstances.

*The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to learners in relation to courses and programmes, and, where applicable, career progression (1, 2, 3)*

This includes the accuracy, appropriateness and accessibility of the information and advice provided by providers. Whether or not the content up to date, understandable, useful, unbiased, impartial and relevant to the beneficiary/learner receiving it. Inspectors should consider the accessibility of the information, advice and guidance, especially to those groups under-represented in the labour market.

351. Sources of evidence could include:

- observation of advice sessions
- reviews of the range of information available in different formats
- discussion with beneficiaries/learners
- discussions with external organisations, particularly those working to help adults and young people out of unemployment, in order to overcome barriers to participation in training and work
- discussions with staff who deliver support and IAG
- documents relating to support
- evidence relating to contractors' information maintenance policies
- initial assessment and review meetings
- notes from any tutorial sessions
- evidence of support given whilst on programme
- how providers work with outside partners and agencies
- evidence of beneficiaries/learners who have benefited directly from support (for example, case histories, beneficiaries'/learners' files and records).

## **Leadership and management**

### **5. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?**

352. In answering this question, inspectors examine how well the co-financing organisations coordinate and evaluate the services provided by different providers across the region. They assess the coherence of the ESF programmes

and look in particular at how effectively the total provision meets the employment strategies for the region. They explore the arrangements to bring about improvements to the quality of the ESF programmes and the arrangements to ensure the provision is accessible to the target groups. Inspectors examine how well resources are used in the interest of beneficiaries/learners and investigate how well providers promote social inclusion and ensure equality of opportunity for all sections of the community.

353. Inspectors look at whether policies are successful in reducing unemployment and helping adults back into work and supporting young people starting work for the first time. They consider the extent to which strategies for ensuring that ESF programmes work effectively form part of a coherent policy for lifelong learning?

354. Inspectors should evaluate:

*How effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment (2, 4)*

This covers quality improvement arrangements at regional level and those in place within individual providers. It requires consideration of how well the provider monitors the performance of its programmes and how well it introduces improvements. It covers how effectively co-financing organisations monitor the quality assurance arrangements used by different partners and how well arrangements enable good practices to be shared and consolidated. It examines how regularly, thoroughly and accurately providers undertake self-assessment. It takes into account how well providers are compliant in meeting the requirements of their contracts. Consideration is also given to the effectiveness of arrangements for managing sub-contracted provision.

*How effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of beneficiaries/learners through high quality of care, education and training (1, 3, 4, 5)*

This looks at the management of the provider as a whole, how well it plans strategically and sets clear directions and objectives. Do staff have a clear understanding of what is to be achieved and their role in meeting this? Do all those involved in the delivery of programmes understand the aims of ESF, the regional employment strategy and the national plan for employment? It examines whether providers set and meet realistic and challenging targets within their contracts, and whether they set themselves challenging targets as part of quality improvement.

*How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all beneficiaries/learners achieve their potential (2, 5)*

This considers the success of the regional strategic plan and programme implementation in promoting social inclusion and equality of opportunity for every

one to access work. It considers the effectiveness of enabling beneficiaries/learners to reach their goals within the labour market, especially for under-represented groups. It considers how successful programmes are in improving the access to work for women and their advancement within the world of work. It looks at arrangements for promoting training opportunities to all sections of the community and how effective providers are at jointly tackling discrimination. It includes how well advisers and other staff understand equality and diversity, and the extent to which their interaction with beneficiaries/learners reinforces and enhances beneficiaries'/learners' understanding of equality and diversity, social inclusion and their rights and responsibilities others.

*The adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that beneficiaries/learners are well taught and protected (1, 3, 4)*

This includes the suitability of the skills, qualifications and experience of a provider's staff and its partners in the delivery of ESF programmes. It examines the provider's arrangements for staff training and development and how these are linked to staff appraisal and programme monitoring and improvement procedures.

*The adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation (1, 2, 4)*

This includes all accommodation and equipment used for the delivery of programmes and the suitability of working environments used to provide beneficiaries/learners with work experience. It covers the availability of general and specialist equipment and resources in different locations, the relevance of the equipment and resources to beneficiaries'/learners' learning needs and the availability of help or guidance for clients using the equipment. It covers the issues of health and safety, how this is maintained and how well beneficiaries/learners are informed of, and practice, healthy and safe working practices.

*How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money (3)*

Inspectors consider how well the provider deploys human and physical resources across the programme areas in meeting the needs of beneficiaries/learners. It includes the effectiveness of the co-financing organisation and the provider in determining how finances can be best used to deliver the programmes to meet their aims and objectives.

Also, where appropriate:

Common Inspection Framework	For ESF programmes this statement refers to:
How effective are the links made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of	It refers to links the contractor has with external agencies that provide complementary services. In many cases

care, education and any extended services to enhance learning (1, 2, 4)	beneficiaries/learners face multiple barriers to entering employment and training and the effectiveness of these links in helping to meet multiple needs is highly significant.
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities (1, 4)	It refers to the overall management of the provider by the co-financing organisation and how well its strategic priorities support the regional employment strategy and the national plan for employment.

355. Sources of evidence could include:

- discussions with managers
- discussions with staff delivering the service
- discussions with beneficiaries/learners, especially in matters relating to equality of opportunity and their experience of gaining knowledge of, and access to programmes
- discussion with external agencies.

356. Documents relating to:

- how the co-financing organisation and the provider monitors quality, such as policies, reports, improvement plans
- feedback from any external audits and accreditation
- notes or minutes from management and staff meetings
- how the co-financing organisation and the provider promotes equality of opportunity
- staff qualifications, skills, and experience, staff training and development plans and records
- how the co-financing organisation and the provider make decisions affecting its ESF programmes. Whether these are based on regional need, i.e. what strategic plans are in place and whether budget considerations impact on strategy?