

Ofsted Update On Inspection Developments Oct 2017

Inspection of apprenticeships

Ofsted will continue to inspect and grade apprenticeship provision just as before and in line with the Further education and skills inspection handbook.

But please note the following:

- Ofsted inspects apprenticeship-levy-funded apprenticeship provision as well as ESFA funded apprenticeship provision.
- Ofsted will continue to inspect apprenticeships as before whether delivered through frameworks or standards. We are keeping under review the most effective way to inspect apprenticeship training.
- We are aware that the apprenticeship levy and reforms are giving rise to a number of new apprenticeship training providers. Ofsted's policy continues to be that we will normally inspect newly funded further education and skills providers within three years and may carry out monitoring or support and challenge visits prior to a full inspection to assess risk.
- A reminder that apprentices need to develop substantive new skills. Employers and providers need to go beyond initial assessment in English and mathematics and to measure and record the occupational skills that apprentices already have as they start their apprenticeship. Apprentices then must show that they have developed substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours to prepare them properly for their chosen career.

College mergers

A number of college mergers have occurred over the past six months and more are likely to happen. Ofsted will continue to inspect colleges in accordance with the set frequencies and arrangements in the Further education and skills inspection handbook. Please note the following points.

- We are aware that there are a number of college mergers under way and inspection has regard to what stage these are at. However, until a college has reached the stage of legal merger, it remains liable to be inspected in accordance with the frequencies stated in the handbook.
- Newly merged colleges will normally receive a full inspection within three years and may be subject to monitoring visits or support and challenge visits prior to a full inspection. A newly merged college will not carry forward any inspection grades from predecessor colleges. It will have no inspection grade until after the first full inspection.
- Ofsted is in discussion with the DfE with respect to the possibility of inspecting colleges at campus level as well as corporation level.

The transfer of learners between providers: tracking them and taking account of them on inspection

We are seeing a period of considerable transfer of responsibility of provision between further education and skills providers. There are a number of cases

of transfers of learners taking place across the provider base. It is therefore worth reiterating the following principles.

- Providers will be held accountable for all of the education and training provision within their funding contracts/grants at the time of the inspection. So the inspection will cover all funded provision (including levy-funded). In the case of a college, the corporation continues to be the unit of overall accountability and inspection (and not the campus).
- Ofsted will not hold providers to account for the quality of education and training and progress of learners delivered by previous providers before the time they transferred.
- Inspectors will work with the provider to ensure that it is clear what provision has transferred, and from when. Providers need to be able to show what reasonable, proportionate and timely steps they are taking to ensure that they are delivering a good quality of education and training to those learners from that time.
- Inspectors will take account of learners' progress from the date they started with the provider being inspected. Inspectors will expect to see evidence of the provider having taken proportionate and reasonable steps to ensure good progress of all learners within the time that the provider has been responsible for those learners.

Devolution of the Adult Education Budget

We are aware of the proposals in this area in relation to combined authorities and their equivalents from 2018/19 onwards. We are working with the DfE to understand what implications this might have for inspection – if any. At this stage there is nothing that we can report.

Upcoming consultation on visits to 'requires improvement' providers

We are proposing to make some changes to how we carry out visits to providers which are judged to 'require improvement'. We are keen to know your views on this and will be consulting you about this. Please look out for our consultation document which we will send to you in the next few weeks.

Inspection of careers advice and guidance

The Technical and Further Education Act 2017, which was passed at the end of April 2017, included a requirement that Ofsted should comment on careers guidance provided for students in colleges. This would not add a great deal to our current coverage of careers advice and guidance on inspection; but we will be reviewing what limited changes we may need to make to inspection before this requirement becomes law, probably sometime in 2018.