



Graduate Leaders in Early Years Programme: Quality audit/monitoring process 2013-14

**Handbook for Prime Organisations,
Delivery Partners and Auditors**

October 2013

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The 2013-14 annual quality audit/monitoring process for the Graduate Leaders in Early Years programme

Introduction

1 This handbook is intended to provide information and guidance about the arrangements for the annual quality process for Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners for the academic year 2013-14. It is aimed at Prime Organisation and Delivery Partner staff as well as members of the audit/monitoring team. There is a glossary of terms in Annex J.

2 The annual quality audit/monitoring process for 2012-13 concluded in March 2013 with the submission by The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) of the Annual Overview Report to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL).

3 The findings of the annual audit/monitoring of the quality of Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) programmes carried out in 2012-13 provide a baseline against which it will be possible to monitor the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities, and the information it produces about learning opportunities.

4 There will be a transition from EYPS to Early Years Initial Teacher Training in 2013-14. QAA is responsible for the delivery of activities that will be carried out as part of the 2013-14 annual audit/monitoring of the quality of EYPS and Early Years Initial Teacher Training in 2013-14.

5 The quality audit/monitoring process in 2013-14 has been adapted in response to this transition and to incorporate visits to Delivery Partners. The process outlined below includes an annual return from each Prime Organisation and a monitoring visit, visits to two or more Delivery Partners in each consortium and an overarching thematic element.

6 Delivery Partners are to be visited in 2013-14 to triangulate the evidence presented in 2012-13 by the Prime Organisations. This is to ensure that each Prime Organisation has clear processes in place to monitor and quality assure the Delivery Partner that is visited and that the Delivery Partner is meeting performance management and quality assurance requirements.

The transition from EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status to Early Years Initial Teacher Training

7 The last recruitment to the EYPS programme was in January 2013. All candidates currently on the programme will be supported to complete their training. The new Early Years Initial Teacher Training programme will commence in September 2013 and this will be delivered by the existing training providers for this intake only.

8 The quality assurance approach in 2013-14 has been adapted in response to the transition from EYPS to Early Years Initial Teacher Training. The quality audit/monitoring process will incorporate:

- a review of some elements of the provision leading to Early Years Teacher Status
- a review of the continuing EYPS.

Overview of the annual quality audit/monitoring process

9 The overall aim of auditing the quality of provision is to provide accessible information which indicates whether Prime Organisations have in place:

- effective means of ensuring that the award of EYPS and Early Years Teacher Status is robust, rigorous and consistent in quality and standards across all pathways
- effective means of enhancing the quality of EYPS and Early Years Initial Teacher Training provision, particularly by building on information gained through monitoring, internal and external audits, and feedback from stakeholders.

10 The objectives of the annual quality audit/monitoring process for the Graduate Leaders in Early Years programme are:

- ensure that the robust and rigorous standards of EYPS and Early Years Teacher Status achievement are maintained
- ensure that the NCTL, the Department for Education, the early years sector and key stakeholders can have ready access to easily understood, reliable and meaningful public information about the extent to which the award of EYPS and Early Years Teacher Status meets national expectations in respect of accreditation standards and quality of provision
- ensure that, if the management of accreditation standards or of the quality of provision is found to be weak or seriously deficient, the process forms a basis for ensuring rapid action to improve it
- provides robust accountability for the use of public funds received by Prime Organisations.

11 Some EYPS and Early Years Initial Teacher Training provision is delivered through consortia or subcontracting arrangements. QAA is responsible for auditing all provision as part of the quality audit/monitoring process, including that delivered by Prime Organisations in collaboration with Delivery Partners. In 2012-13, the auditors did not make any visits to Delivery Partners. In subsequent years the audit/monitoring visit to the Prime Organisation will be supplemented with visits to selected Delivery Partners.

12 The annual monitoring process will vary from the process carried out in 2012-13 to include visits to Delivery Partners.

13 The process will consist of:

- an annual return
- a monitoring visit to the Prime Organisation
- visits to two or more Delivery Partners
- an overarching thematic element.

14 The annual return and the monitoring visits are an integral part of the overall audit/monitoring process; they will serve as a check on the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities, and the information it produces about learning opportunities.

15 Significant changes in circumstances, or complaints or concerns raised about the Prime Organisation, may trigger a full audit instead of a monitoring visit.

Thematic element

16 The annual return and monitoring process in 2013-14 will include a thematic element which will provide some flexibility within the audit/monitoring process to look in a timely way at issues that are of particular interest or concern for the NCTL. The thematic element of the audit/monitoring will allow auditors to explore a Prime Organisation's engagement with a particular quality assurance topic.

17 The topic for the thematic element for the 2013-14 annual return and monitoring process is the management of the EYPS and Early Years Teacher Status standards, as up to three sets of standards will be in use.

18 The annual audit/monitoring update reports will contain a summary of the findings of the thematic element of the audit.

Trainee-centred quality assurance

19 In response to the feedback received from the quality auditors following 2012-13 of the annual audit/monitoring cycle, engagement with candidates/trainees will be given greater priority in the annual return and monitoring process. This is because the best way to ensure that quality assurance really benefits the candidates/trainees is to engage them effectively in the audit/monitoring process. In 2013-14 candidates/trainees will be encouraged to take part in the audit/monitoring of their training provider by meeting with the audit/monitoring teams during the monitoring visit, and/or by submitting feedback electronically (see Annex I). If meetings are arranged with candidates/trainees, it is not necessary to distribute the email in Annex I. If needed, the timing of the email should ensure that comments will be received by QAA before the monitoring visit takes place.

The monitoring process

20 The indicative timescale for the monitoring process is set out in Annex B. A preparatory meeting will take place during the term prior to the monitoring visit. The QAA officer coordinating the annual quality audit / monitoring will visit the Prime Organisation to discuss the structure of the monitoring visits as a whole and to answer any remaining questions.

21 The meeting should involve those who are most immediately involved in the production of the annual return and, where possible, representatives of the Delivery Partners.

22 Each Prime Organisation will be asked to nominate a member of staff to act as the internal facilitator for the monitoring process. The primary function of the internal facilitator is to act as the first point of contact between the Prime Organisation and the monitoring team and QAA officer. The internal facilitator will also be expected to ensure that the Delivery Partners to be visited are fully briefed on requirements for the Delivery Partner visit. The facilitator should work closely with the Delivery Partners to make arrangements for the visit. QAA will not communicate directly with the Delivery Partners without prior agreement with the internal facilitator.

A description of the internal facilitator role, together with that for the auditors, can be found in Annex D.

23 All Prime Organisations should submit an annual return to QAA. QAA will notify Prime Organisations of the date when the annual return should be submitted.

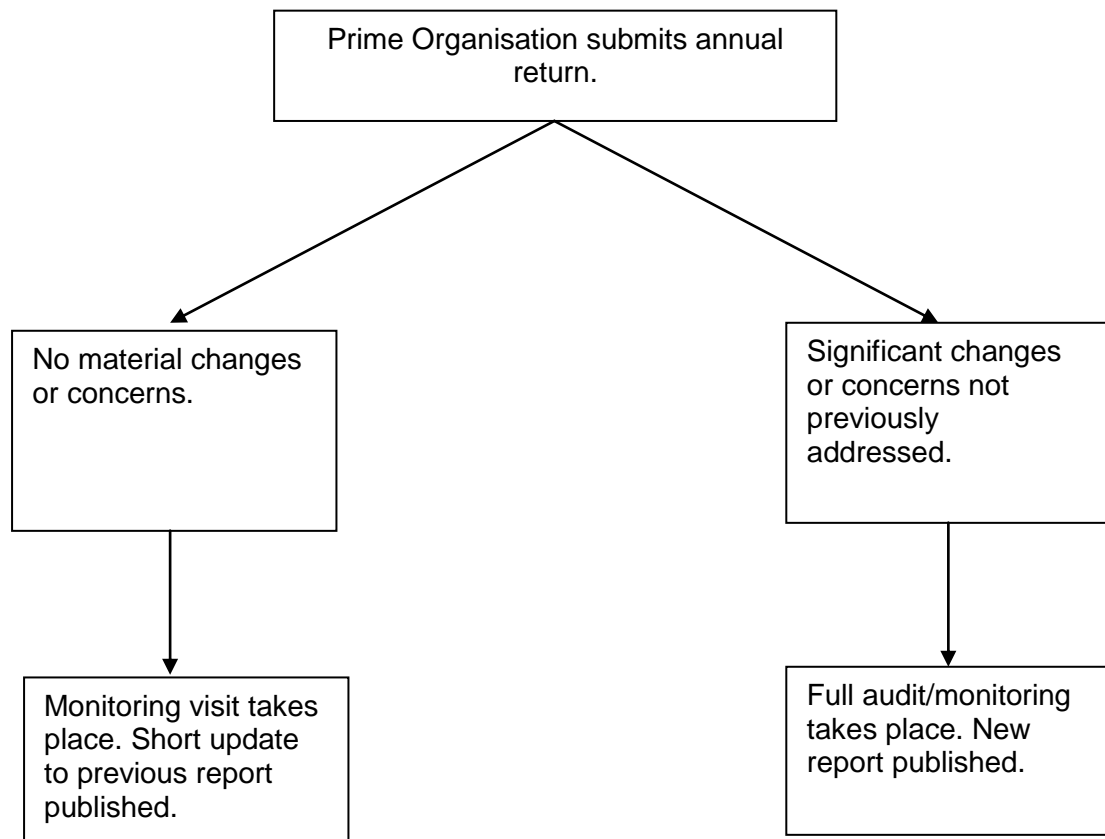
24 The annual return will consist of a brief report in a template provided by QAA (see Annex E) together with the updated action plan from the previous year's audit.

25 Based on the annual return, QAA will determine whether a short monitoring visit or a full audit/monitoring visit is necessary (see Figure 1 and paragraph 15).

26 The monitoring visit will result in a short update to the audit/monitoring report. If a full audit/monitoring takes place, a new report will be produced.

27 The flow chart in Figure 1 outlines the monitoring visit process.

Figure 1: flow chart of the monitoring process



The Prime Organisation annual return

28 Prime Organisations will be informed by QAA of the date for the submission of the annual return.

29 The annual return will consist of a brief report in a template provided by QAA (see Annex E) together with the updated action plan from the previous year's audit.

30 Annual returns should be submitted electronically to QAA. Specific details of how to submit will be sent separately to the Prime Organisation. The annual return form should be completed in full, and any evidence referred to in the annual return should be submitted at the same time.

31 The Prime Organisation is required to update QAA on:

- current programmes offered, candidate/trainee numbers and candidate/trainee profile
- actions taken to address the good practice and recommendations in the action plan, or subsequent developments
- involvement of candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes
- the systems and processes in place to manage up to three sets of standards
- outstanding or exceptional features of good practice.

32 The annual return briefing paper should contain links to key documents that provide evidence of any action taken in response to all previous good practice and recommendations.

33 In the first year following the audit, the annual return should report in detail on how the Prime Organisation has effectively implemented the action plan in response to the audit/monitoring report. Prime Organisations should supply evidence that the actions have been implemented effectively.

34 Prime Organisations should **maintain the action plan on an ongoing basis**, to ensure continual monitoring, review and enhancement of their provision. In subsequent years, the monitoring visit will assess the effectiveness of the Prime Organisation's actions to support continuous improvement. The annual return is the main mechanism by which the Prime Organisation can communicate to QAA that it is continuing to evaluate and enhance its management of standards and quality.

35 Prime Organisations should consider how their quality assurance policies and processes allow them to meet the NCTL's expectations for EYPS and Early Years Initial Teacher Training provision, as set out in the current version of the *Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)*.

36 Prime Organisations must engage candidates/trainees in their quality assurance processes. Candidates/trainees may be involved in implementing the action plan and/or in measuring the outcomes of actions taken. Prime Organisations should reflect on the effectiveness of their processes to support candidate/trainee engagement in the annual return.

37 The Prime Organisation's annual return and supporting evidence will be reviewed by a QAA officer. QAA, in consultation with NCTL, may decide that a full audit/monitoring visit is required instead of, or following, a monitoring visit if:

- there is a lack of demonstrable progress against the action plan
- QAA or NCTL has received complaints about standards or quality issues that are being investigated
- there are other serious concerns about the Prime Organisation's ability to effectively maintain standards and/or manage and enhance the quality of learning opportunities or the information the Prime Organisation produces about learning opportunities.

The Prime Organisation monitoring visit

38 The monitoring visit with the Prime Organisation will last one day, and will normally include meetings with the Prime Organisation's staff and candidates/trainees

as appropriate. Tables 1 and 2 in Annex A set out an indicative timetable for a monitoring visit. The monitoring team will normally consist of two auditors.

39 As an outcome of the annual monitoring, the audit/monitoring team will produce a short update to the existing report that will comment on:

- any changes since the last audit
- the progress that has been made against the good practice and recommendations made in the most recent QAA report for the Prime Organisation
- a conclusion on the progress made in responding to the previous audit/monitoring or monitoring visit
- the systems and processes in place to manage up to three sets of standards
- outstanding or exceptional features of good practice
- any matters that should be followed up in the next monitoring visit or audit/monitoring visit.

The Delivery Partner briefing paper

40 Prime Organisations will forward the QAA briefing template for Delivery Partners (see Annex F) to their respective Delivery Partners for them to complete, together with a date for submission of the return and supporting evidence to QAA.

41 Annual returns should be submitted electronically to QAA. Specific details of how to submit will be provided separately by QAA. The annual return form should be completed in full, and any evidence referred to in the annual return should be submitted at the same time.

42 Delivery Partners are encouraged to share their briefing return with their respective Prime Organisations because auditors may need to discuss the content with Prime Organisation representatives at their monitoring visit. If a Delivery Partner has concerns about sharing their briefing return with their Prime Organisation they should contact the responsible QAA officer in advance of submitting the briefing return to discuss these concerns and determine the most appropriate course of action.

43 The annual return and supporting evidence should be submitted electronically to QAA. Details will be given to Prime Organisations on how to do this when they are advised of the date for submission.

44 The Delivery Partner is required to update QAA on:

- current programmes offered, candidate/trainee numbers and candidate/trainee profile
- involvement of candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes
- processes for working with the Prime Organisation(s)
- the systems and processes in place to manage up to three sets of standards
- outstanding or exceptional features of good practice.

The Delivery Partner monitoring visit

45 The monitoring visit with the Delivery Partners will each last one day, and will normally include meetings with the Delivery Partner's staff and candidates/trainees. Staff members from the Prime Organisation **should not** be present during the Delivery Partner visit. The team will produce a commentary which will be appended to the short update to the Prime Organisation's existing report that will comment on:

- any changes since the last audit
- the communication processes the Prime Organisation has in place to ensure the dissemination of important information to the Delivery Partner
- the processes the Prime Organisation has in place to monitor and quality assure the Delivery Partner
- the systems and processes in place to manage up to three sets of standards
- any matters that should be followed up in the next monitoring visit/audit/monitoring visit.

The thematic element

46 In order to promote consistency and comparability of audit/monitoring findings, the thematic element will not contribute directly to a judgment. Instead, the audit/monitoring update report will contain a commentary on the thematic element. QAA will brief audit/monitoring team members on the approach to reviewing the thematic element in general, and any specific guidance which needs to be borne in mind for a specific theme topic.

47 As with the rest of the review process, it is envisaged that any documentation which the Prime Organisation and/or Delivery Partner might need to provide for the thematic element will be that already existing in the organisation or at the Delivery Partner. One of the aims of the thematic element is to chart the different approaches which exist in Prime Organisations and Delivery Partners in relation to the theme topic, and if necessary produce good practice guidelines which could enhance provision in that area.

48 Prime Organisations and Delivery Partners will be expected to address the theme area in the annual return. The inclusion of the theme topic in the annual return will give the organisation the opportunity to evaluate its own management in the theme area.

49 The topic for the thematic element for the 2013-14 annual return and monitoring process is the management of the standards. This has been selected as up to three sets of standards will be in use during the year 2013-14 and the NCTL need to be reassured that the appropriate standards are being utilised in the appropriate circumstances, together with information about how this is being achieved.

50 Prime Organisations and Delivery Partners are expected to provide evidence of how they are ensuring candidates/trainees are being assessed against the correct standards. This might include, but is not limited to:

- preparation for candidates/trainees to ensure they understand the standards to which they are working
- administrative arrangements for ensuring candidates are following the correct set of standards
- preparation and monitoring of Delivery Partner arrangements for managing standards
- preparation and monitoring of assessors with regard to their understanding and operation of the three sets of standards
- preparation and monitoring of mentors and settings to ensure understanding and operation of the three sets of standards.

51 Auditors will evaluate the evidence for the thematic element against the points listed in paragraph 50. They will be looking for evidence that reassures them that all candidates/trainees are following the correct set of standards. In addition they will evaluate the extent to which operational policies and procedures are robust enough to prevent candidates being assessed against the wrong standards and/or that the policies and

procedures are effective in promptly identifying candidates/trainees who may be following the wrong standards, and that prompt action is taken to rectify the situation.

Outcomes of the process

For Prime Organisations

52 QAA will provide each Prime Organisation with a short update to the audit/monitoring report. The update report reflects the headings in the quality audit/monitoring annual return.

53 Conclusions reflect the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities, and the information it produces about learning opportunities. An overall conclusion will be graded as follows:

- the Prime Organisation is **making commendable** progress
- the Prime Organisation is **making acceptable** progress
- the Prime Organisation is making progress but **further improvement is required**
- the Prime Organisation is **not making** acceptable progress.

54 The requirements for meeting each of these grades in the annual monitoring process are defined in Table 3 in Annex C.

55 Prime Organisations should engage effectively with the *Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)*, which is the reference point for all audit/monitoring and monitoring activity. They should actively engage candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes. Monitoring teams may identify good practice, or may make recommendations if Prime Organisations are not managing these responsibilities effectively.

56 Standards and quality must be maintained in order for a Prime Organisation to demonstrate they are making acceptable progress.

57 Where action plans have not been implemented fully or have not been effective in all areas, further action will be required:

- where the Prime Organisation is **making progress but further improvement is required**, a second monitoring visit will take place within **six months** of the original monitoring visit
- where the Prime Organisation is **not making acceptable progress**, a second monitoring visit will take place within **three months** of the original monitoring visit.

58 There will be no verbal feedback given by the auditors at the end of the visit as the monitoring will not be complete until all visits, including those to the Delivery Partners, have taken place. Feedback will be provided in the form of the draft report. A draft of the audit/monitoring team's findings will be sent to the Prime Organisation for comment on factual accuracy. The final update report will be shared with the NCTL.

59 Prime Organisations are to submit an updated action plan within four weeks of the visit.

For Delivery Partners

60 QAA will provide each Delivery Partner with a commentary that reflects the headings in the Delivery Partner briefing paper.

61 Although the audit/monitoring team will not be making any conclusions or judgements the commentary will, where appropriate, make recommendations for improvement. Recommendations will refer to:

- important matters that auditors believe are currently putting quality and/or standards at risk and which require urgent corrective action
(**essential** recommendations)
- matters that the auditors believe have the potential to put quality and/or standards at risk and require preventive or corrective action
(**advisable** recommendations)
- matters that the auditors believe have the potential to improve the quality of learning opportunities and/or further secure the accreditation standards of awards
(**desirable** recommendations).

62 The commentary will also highlight any examples of exceptional or outstanding practice. We define 'exceptional or outstanding practice' as practice which the auditors regard as making a particularly positive contribution to the provision of the EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status and/or Early Years Initial Teacher Training.

63 Delivery Partners should engage effectively with the *Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)*, which is the reference point for all audit/monitoring and monitoring activity. They should actively engage candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes. Monitoring teams may identify good practice, or may make recommendations if Delivery Partners are not managing these responsibilities effectively.

64 There will be no verbal feedback given by the auditors at the end of the visit, as the monitoring will not be complete until all visits have taken place. Feedback will be provided in the form of the draft report. A draft of the audit/monitoring team's findings will be sent to the Delivery Partner for comment on factual accuracy. The final commentary will be shared with the NCTL.

65 Delivery Partners should work with the Prime Organisations to implement any recommendations made by the audit/monitoring team.

Annex A

Table 1: Indicative timetable for a one-day monitoring visit to Prime Organisation

Time	Activity
1030	Audit/monitoring team arrives and holds first team meeting to review and confirm agenda.
1130-1300	Meeting with staff.
1300-1430	Team debriefs from staff meeting and prepares for staff meeting to discuss the theme. Includes working lunch.
1430-1515	Additional meeting time as determined in advance by auditors. This could be with candidates, assessors, mentors or an additional meeting with Prime Organisation staff.
1515-1700	Team debriefs from staff meeting and confirms they have all the evidence required to write the short update to the audit/monitoring report.
1700	Team departs.

Table 2: Indicative timetable for a one-day monitoring visit to Delivery Partners

Time	Activity
1000	Audit/monitoring team arrives and holds first team meeting to review and confirm agendas.
1130-1300	Meeting with staff.
1300-1430	Team debriefs from staff meeting and prepares for candidate/trainee meeting. Includes working lunch.
1430-1530	Meeting with candidates//trainees.
1530-1700	Team debriefs from candidate/trainee meeting and confirms they have all the evidence required to write the short update to the audit/monitoring report.
1700	Team departs.

Annex B

Table 3: Indicative timeline for the monitoring process

Time +/- visit (in weeks)	Actions required
-18 to -12 weeks	A Preparatory meeting is held to brief the Prime Organisation on the requirements and timetable for the monitoring process and visits to Delivery Partners.
-10 weeks (November 2013)	Prime Organisation submits electronic copies of the annual return and supporting evidence to QAA.
-8 weeks	QAA officer reads the annual return and determines whether a monitoring visit will take place or whether a full audit/monitoring is required. If the monitoring visit is to take place: QAA administrator confirms the audit/monitoring team to the Prime Organisation, and agrees the date of the visit.
-8 to -4 weeks	Audit/monitoring team analyses the annual return and prepares its agenda for the monitoring visit.
-4 weeks	QAA officer agrees the arrangements for the visit with the Prime Organisation and Delivery Partners.
0 weeks	The monitoring visits take place: audit/monitoring team visits the Prime Organisation and Delivery Partners, meets with staff and candidates/trainees, and considers any other evidence provided. (See Tables 1 and 2 for an indicative timetable for a monitoring visit.)
+1 weeks	Audit/monitoring team drafts the update to the report, and sends it to the QAA officer for editing.
+2 weeks	QAA officer edits the update and then sends the update to the Prime Organisation and NCTL for comment.
+4 weeks	Prime Organisation returns comments on factual accuracy to the QAA officer together with an updated action plan. QAA officer sends the action plan to the NCTL for comment. QAA officer discusses the Prime Organisation's comments regarding the update with the auditors and makes final amendments to the update.
+5 weeks	NCTL returns comments on action plan to QAA Officer. QAA officer discusses comments with Prime Organisation. Prime Organisation amends action plan in light of comments. QAA officer signs off the action plan and sends to the NCTL.

Annex C: Conclusions for the monitoring process of the Graduate Leaders in Early Years programme

Teams will draw a conclusion on the progress that has been made by the Prime Organisation against their action plan following the criteria below. Conclusions reflect the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities, and the information it produces about the learning opportunities it offers.

Table 3: Monitoring process conclusions

The Prime Organisation is making commendable progress	The Prime Organisation is making acceptable progress	The Prime Organisation is making progress but further improvement is required	The Prime Organisation is not making acceptable progress
The Prime Organisation is making commendable progress in response to the good practice and recommendations of the previous audit.	The Prime Organisation is making acceptable progress in response to the good practice and recommendations of the previous audit.	The Prime Organisation is making progress in response to the good practice and recommendations of the previous audit/monitoring but further improvement is required.	The Prime Organisation is not making acceptable progress in response to the good practice and recommendations of the previous audit.
All actions have been implemented fully and have led to improvements in the Prime Organisation's management of its EYPS/Early Years Initial Teacher Training provision	Most actions been implemented fully and have led to improvement in the Prime Organisation's management of its EYPS/Early Years Initial Teacher Training provision. Areas that have not been addressed fully do not have the potential to put standards or quality at risk.	Areas that have not been addressed fully or effectively have the potential to put standards and/or quality at risk and/or	Areas that have not been addressed fully or effectively currently put standards and/or quality at risk.
The Prime Organisation demonstrates highly effective engagement with the NCTL <i>Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i> .	The Prime Organisation demonstrates appropriate engagement with the NCTL <i>Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i> .	The Prime Organisation demonstrates insufficient engagement with the NCTL <i>Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i> .	

Annex D: The auditors and internal facilitator

Role descriptions and person specifications

Role title: lead auditor

Role purpose

The lead auditor manages the audit/monitoring visits in each of the Prime Organisations or Delivery Partners to which he/she is assigned. Key responsibilities, in addition to those of auditor, include:

- in consultation with the QAA officer, discussing and agreeing with the Prime Organisation the agenda that forms the basis of the audit/monitoring visit
- discussing and agreeing focused audit/monitoring activities with the Prime Organisation and the auditors to ensure effective use of time
- organising and coordinating audit/monitoring activities to ensure that the conclusion, recommendations and judgements are sound and evidence-based
- liaising effectively with all stakeholders through face-to-face, telephone, email and other written communications to ensure the smooth running of each audit/monitoring visit
- providing additional training for auditors, if necessary
- making effective use of QAA's secure electronic folder system throughout the audit/monitoring visit to ensure that a full evidence base is available to auditors and QAA staff in a timely manner and is archived promptly
- respecting protocols on confidentiality
- producing high-quality reports that inform all stakeholders of conclusions, recommendations and judgements, where appropriate.

Person specification

Knowledge and understanding to include:

- current or recent knowledge and understanding of current issues affecting Prime Organisations
- awareness of current higher education teaching methods and curricula
- knowledge and understanding of the assurance of standards and quality
- awareness of the role of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies in programme accreditation
- experience of liaison with senior management and a range of staff at other levels.

Skills include ability to:

- manage small teams (with experience in either higher/further education or in other employment)
- work within tight timescales and to strict deadlines
- chair meetings
- communicate effectively in face-to-face interaction
- train others in methods of work
- produce clear and succinct reports on time
- use word-processing software
- communicate electronically, including emails, attachments and the use of web mail
- be flexible and devise sound plans when situations change with little notice.

Role title: auditor

Role purpose

Auditors contribute to evaluating the academic standards and quality of higher education provision through a peer audit/monitoring process. They engage in a variety of activities designed to gather and analyse evidence so that they can arrive at considered conclusions, recommendations and judgements. These outcomes help the Prime Organisation being audited to prepare an action plan to further enhance EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status provision within a higher education context. Key responsibilities include:

- reading, analysing and preparing written commentaries of the self-evaluation document submitted by the Prime Organisation and any other documents sent in advance of the audit/monitoring visit
- adhering to the audit/monitoring schedule agreed between the Prime Organisation, QAA officer and lead auditor
- participating in visits to the Prime Organisation and, where appropriate, visits to delivery partners in order to gather, share, test and verify evidence
- drawing conclusions and making recommendations and judgements on the academic standards achieved and the quality of the learning opportunities provided
- recording evidence gathered from a variety of audit/monitoring activities and submitting this to the QAA secure folder in a timely fashion
- drafting sections of the report that reference evidence gathered during the audit
- respecting protocols on confidentiality
- contributing to and commenting on the audit/monitoring report, to agreed schedules and deadlines
- being available for the whole period of the audit/monitoring for which they have been selected, and committing to complete all processes of the audit/monitoring once they have embarked upon it.

Person specification

Knowledge and understanding to include:

- current or recent experience, knowledge and understanding of higher education provision
- knowledge of, and familiarity with, the Quality Code and other external reference points, such as the current edition of the *Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)*, and those of other relevant professional, statutory and regulatory bodies
- understanding of programme entry requirements and the ability to interpret progression statistics, including withdrawal, transfer and failure rates and destinations data
- familiarity with academic support strategies and the functions of academic tutorials
- experience of examining and/or verification procedures/processes (preferably including external examining or external verification).

Skills include the ability to:

- conduct meetings and interviews with staff
- conduct meetings with a range of current and former groups of candidates
- write succinctly and coherently
- meet tight timescales and deadlines
- work effectively as a member of a team
- work courteously and professionally

- maintain confidentiality
- communicate electronically, including emails, attachments and the use of web mail.

Role title: internal facilitator

Role purpose

The internal facilitator ensures the smooth running of the audit/monitoring by acting as the single point of contact between the Prime Organisation staff and the QAA officer. Key responsibilities include:

- providing effective liaison between the auditors and the Prime Organisation staff and where appropriate Delivery Partners
- ensuring that the auditors obtain accurate, timely and comprehensive information about the educational provision and the Prime Organisation context including, where appropriate, delivery partners
- helping the auditors to come to a clear and accurate understanding of the structures, policies, priorities and procedures of the Prime Organisation, and the nature of the provision under scrutiny
- ensuring that auditors are provided with appropriate evidence to allow them to reach conclusions, recommendations and judgements
- ensuring that meetings, telephone conferences, telephone calls or virtual meetings are arranged as agreed at the preparatory meeting
- bringing additional information to the attention of the auditors and correcting factual inaccuracy
- observing objectively
- communicating clearly with the auditors, Prime Organisations and Delivery Partners
- respecting protocols on confidentiality
- establishing effective relationships with the QAA officer and the auditors, as well as with the Prime Organisation and Delivery Partner staff
- participating in the Prime Organisation's preparations for the audit/monitoring visit
- attending all meetings other than those with candidates, employers and/or placement providers, or where judgements are discussed
- monitoring the pattern of audit/monitoring activities
- maintaining regular telephone and/or email contact with the lead auditor to ensure that auditors are receiving the information or documents that they need, particularly for off-site analysis.

Person specification

Knowledge and understanding to include:

- thorough knowledge of the structure, policies, priorities, procedures and practices of the Prime Organisation
- experience of quality assurance
- knowledge and understanding of Graduate Leaders in Early Years Programmes.

Skills include the ability to:

- locate cogent information
- maintain confidentiality
- deal conscientiously with detail
- make accurate records of discussions
- meet exacting timescales and deadlines
- work effectively with auditors

- continue to work effectively as part of the Prime Organisation team after audit/monitoring has been completed
- communicate electronically, using emails, attachments and web mail
- influence colleagues within their Prime Organisation and take forward the action plan.

Recruitment and training of auditors

We recruit auditors by inviting nominations from higher education institutions and providers of Graduate Leaders in Early Years Programmes, and by advertising. We train them to ensure they are capable of carrying out their duties effectively. Auditors are expected to:

- possess the knowledge and skills described in the published person specifications
- have successfully completed our training programme
- be committed to completing all aspects of an audit.

Conflicts of interest

When we allocate auditors to a Prime Organisation, we check to make sure that they do not have any conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest may include:

- they have worked for, or studied at, the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners during the last five years
- they have undertaken external examining, external moderating or consultancy work at the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners during the last three years
- they have recently made an application for a post at the Prime Organisation
- a close relative is working or studying at the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners
- the Prime Organisation is an institution where the auditor himself/herself has studied for a higher education qualification (usually but not always deemed to present a conflict of interest).

This is not an exhaustive list of the conflicts of interest that may be considered.

When we inform you of the auditors' names, we will ask if you have any objections. If you have an objection which we consider legitimate, according to the above criteria, we will appoint another auditor or auditors.

Annex E: Graduate Leaders in Early Years Programme

Quality audit process 2013-2014 annual return

Prime Organisation	
Date of submission	

Please complete this form and upload it to QAA, together with any additional documentation by **Monday November 18th 2013**.
All comments in Sections 2-8 should be supported by evidence.
Please upload all cited evidence with this form.

Section 1: Candidate/trainee data

Please list all pathways currently offered at each Delivery Partner, with the number of candidates studying on each programme.

- Graduate Practitioner Pathway (GPP)**
- Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway (UPP)**
- Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP)**
- Undergraduate Entry Pathway (UEP)**

Early Years Professional Status [insert date of intake]

Pathway	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	Total	NCTL allocation	% of allocation achieved
GPP							
UPP							
GEP							
UEP							
Total							

Early Years Initial Teacher Training - trainees recruited September 2013

Pathway	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	[insert Delivery Partner]	Total	NCTL allocation	% of allocation achieved
GPP							
UPP							
GEP							
UEP							
Total							

Please add to or adjust tables if these templates are not sufficient to demonstrate clearly your recruitment.

Section 2: Comment on any significant changes since the 2012 audit

Please provide details of any major strategic changes that have taken place since the last audit, including the following:

- percentage changes to candidate/trainee numbers
- changes to pathways offered
- changes to teaching staff
- any changes to Delivery Partners and the impact this has had for delivery
- transition from Early Years Professional Status/Early Years Teacher Status to Early Years Teacher Status
- any other matters which you consider significant.

Section 3: Update on the EYPS audit action plan

Please provide an evaluation of the impact of the actions taken in response to the good practice and recommendations from the last audit. Each good practice point or recommendation should be accounted for separately. Documentary evidence should be provided to demonstrate the achievement, success and internal evaluation of all actions taken. Please supply your updated action plan.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 4: Candidate/trainee-centred quality assurance

Prime organisations should engage candidates/trainees in their quality assurance processes. Candidates/trainees may be involved in implementing the action plan and/or in measuring the outcomes of actions taken. Please provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of your processes to support candidate/trainee engagement.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 5: Thematic element: Management of standards

The thematic element provides some flexibility in the audit process to look in a timely way at issues that are of particular concern for the NCTL. Please provide an evaluation of how you have managed the transition from the EYPS programme to the Early Years Initial Teacher Training programmes in respect of programme standards.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 6: Processes for monitoring and quality assuring Delivery Partners

A sample of two or three Delivery Partners will be visited as part of the monitoring process. The purpose is to ensure that the Prime Organisation has clear processes in place to monitor and quality assure Delivery Partners and that they are meeting performance management and quality assurance requirements. Please comment on the processes you have in place for quality assuring all of your Delivery Partners. You can use the examples of the Delivery Partners to be visited to illustrate your processes.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 7: Outstanding or exceptional practice

Please identify and explain any outstanding or exceptional practice you would like to draw to the attention of the auditors and which you consider worthy of further dissemination across the sector.

Section 8: Any other information

Please note any other information that may be relevant to the monitoring process.

Appendices

Please list all evidence appended to this document.

Annex F: Graduate Leaders in Early Years Programme

Quality audit process 2013-14 Delivery Partner briefing paper for QAA annual monitoring

Delivery Partner		Member of another consortium? Yes/No*
Prime Organisation(s)*		
Date of submission		

*If you work with more than one Prime Organisation list them all. Please be clear in the rest of this form to which Prime Organisation your text and evidence relates.

Please complete this form and upload it plus any additional documentation to QAA by **Monday November 18th 2013**.

Details of how to upload will be sent to you separately.

All comments in Sections 2-6 should be supported by evidence.

Please upload all cited evidence with this form.

Section 1: Candidate/trainee data

Please list all pathways currently offered by the Delivery Partner, with the number of candidates/trainees studying on each programme.

Graduate Practitioner Pathway (GPP)
Undergraduate Practitioner Pathway (UPP)
Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP)
Undergraduate Entry Pathway (UEP)

Early Years Professional Status currently on pathway

Pathway	NCTL allocation	Number on Pathway (and % achieved)
GPP		
UPP		
GEP		
UEP		
Total		

Early Years Initial Teacher Training - trainees recruited September 2013

Pathway	NCTL allocation	Total recruited	% of allocation achieved
GPP			
UPP			
GEP			
UEP			
Total			

Please add to or adjust tables as required to demonstrate clearly your recruitment.

Section 2: Trainee-centred quality assurance

Delivery Partners should engage candidates/trainees in their quality assurance processes. Please provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of your processes to support candidate/trainee engagement.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 3: Processes for working with your Prime Organisation(s) to monitor and quality assure Delivery Partners

Please comment on the effectiveness of processes you and your Prime Organisation have in place for:

- Communicating with the Prime Organisation to ensure that important information is disseminated to you
- Partnership working across the consortium
- Monitoring and quality assuring you as a Delivery Partner.
- Transition for Early Years Professional Status/Early Years Teacher Status to Early Years Teacher programme.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 4: Thematic element: Management of standards

The thematic element provides some flexibility in the audit process to look in a timely way at issues that are of particular concern for the NCTL. Please provide an evaluation of how the Prime Organisation has worked with you to manage the transition from the EYPS programme to the Early Years Initial Teacher Training programmes in respect of programme standards.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 5: Outstanding or exceptional practice

Please identify and explain any outstanding or exceptional practice that you would like to draw to the attention of the auditors and which you consider worthy of further dissemination across the sector.

[Type text here; expand as necessary. Please reference and append all supporting evidence.]

Section 6: Any other information

Please note any other information that may be relevant to the monitoring process.

Appendices

Please list all evidence appended to this document.

Annex G: Monitoring process report update template - Prime Organisations

[Prime Organisation name]

Report of the monitoring visit, [date]

Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the audit/monitoring team concludes that [insert formal name of Prime Organisation] has made [insert graded conclusion: commendable/acceptable/requires improvement to make acceptable/not acceptable progress].

Section 2: Changes since the 2012 audit

[Detail any changes that have taken place in the Prime Organisation since the last QAA audit, for example changes to pathways offered, changes to teaching staff, changes to Delivery Partners, transition from EYPS to Early Years Teacher Status, numbers of students, and so on.]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 200 words.]

Section 3: Update on the EYPS audit/monitoring action plan

[Evaluate the effectiveness of the Prime Organisation's actions. Have the actions been completed? Have success indicators been met? Has the Prime Organisation evaluated the effectiveness of their actions? Identify any matters to be followed up in the next monitoring visit, if applicable.]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 600 words.]

Section 4: Candidate/trainee-centred quality assurance

[How has the Prime Organisation involved candidates/trainees in quality assurance? How do staff support the involvement of candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes? What do staff see as the benefits of candidate/trainee involvement in quality assurance processes, and their contribution to quality enhancement agenda? Do the Prime Organisations have mechanisms in place for closing the feedback loop and what are they? How is the candidate/trainee contribution to quality assurance processes and the enhancement agenda at the Prime Organisation evaluated and disseminated?]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 400 words.]

Section 5: Thematic element: Management of standards

[Evaluate effectiveness of the Prime Organisation's approach to the management of up to three sets of standards. Consider the following:

- preparation for candidates/trainees to ensure they understand the standards to which they are working
- administrative arrangements for ensuring candidates are following the correct set of standards.
- preparation and monitoring of Delivery Partner arrangements for managing standards

- preparation and monitoring of assessors with regard to their understanding and operation of the three sets of standards
- preparation and monitoring of mentors and settings to ensure understanding and operation of the three sets of standards.

Section 6: Processes for monitoring and quality assuring Delivery Partners

[What processes does the Prime Organisation have in place to monitor and quality assure Delivery Partners to ensure that the Delivery Partner is meeting performance management and quality assurance requirements? How effectively does the Delivery Partner fulfil its responsibilities for the management of standards?].

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 400 words.]

Section 7: Outstanding or exceptional practice

[Highlight any examples of exceptional or outstanding practice. 'Exceptional or outstanding practice' as practice is that which the auditors regard as making a particularly positive contribution to the provision of the EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status programmes]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 200 words.]

Section 8: Background to the monitoring visit

The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities, and the information it produces about learning opportunities. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the Prime Organisation of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or audit.

The monitoring visit was carried out by [insert names of auditors] on [date].

Annex H: Monitoring process report update template - Delivery Partners

[Delivery Partner name]

[Prime Organisation(s)*]

*If the Delivery Partner works with more than one Prime Organisation list them all. Please be clear in the rest of the commentary to which Prime Organisation the text relates.

Report of the monitoring visit, [date]

Section 1: Introduction

[Introduction including brief contextual information on Delivery Partner, that is: history, location, number of candidates/trainees studying on each programme]

At the time of the monitoring visit, [Delivery Partner name] offered the following pathways:

- [INSERT list of pathways and candidate/trainee numbers]

Section 2: Candidate/trainee-centred quality assurance

[How has the Delivery Partner involved candidates/trainees in quality assurance? How do staff support the involvement of candidates/trainees in quality assurance processes? What do staff see as the benefits of candidate/trainee involvement in quality assurance processes, and their contribution to quality enhancement agenda? Do the Prime Organisations have mechanisms in place for closing the feedback loop and what are they? How is the candidate/trainee contribution to quality assurance processes and the enhancement agenda at the Prime Organisation evaluated and disseminated?]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 400 words.]

Section 3: Processes for working with the Prime Organisation(s) to monitor and quality assure the Delivery Partner

[Evaluate the effectiveness of the processes in place for communicating with the Prime Organisation to ensure that important information is disseminated to the Delivery Partner. Comment on partnership working across the consortium. Comment on the effectiveness of processes in place for monitoring and quality assuring the Delivery Partner. Comment on the management of the transition for EYPS to Early Years Teacher Status]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 400 words.]

Section 4: Thematic element: Management of standards

[Evaluate effectiveness of the Delivery Partner's approach to the management of up to three sets of standards. Consider the following:

- Preparation for candidates/trainees to ensure they understand the standards to which they are working

- Administrative arrangements for ensuring candidates are following the correct set of standards.
- Support arrangements provided by the Prime Organisation for managing standards
- Preparation and monitoring of assessors with regard to their understanding and operation of the three sets of standards
- Preparation and monitoring of mentors and settings to ensure understanding and operation of the three sets of standards.

Section 5: Outstanding or exceptional practice

[Highlight any examples of exceptional or outstanding practice. 'Exceptional or outstanding practice' as practice is that which the auditors regard as making a particularly positive contribution to the provision of the EYPS and/or Early Years Initial Teacher Training]

[Add further numbered paragraphs and evaluative commentary as required. Maximum word count: 200 words.]

Section 6: Background to the monitoring visit

The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the communication processes the Prime Organisation(s) has in place to ensure the dissemination of important information to the Delivery Partner, the processes the Prime Organisation has in place to monitor and quality assure the Delivery Partner and the systems and processes in place to manage up to three sets of standards.

The monitoring visit was carried out by [insert names of auditors] on [date].

Annex I: Candidate/trainee electronic feedback

To be sent to all candidates/trainees at the Prime Organisations and Delivery Partners when it proves impossible to organise a meeting(s) with candidates/trainees.

Dear Candidate/Trainee

We are currently being audited by an organisation called the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). They will be reviewing how well we support you on your programme, from enrolment through to award and beyond.

Some candidates/trainees will be meeting with the audit/monitoring team as part of the monitoring visit on [INSERT date] but the auditors are also interested in getting views direct from individual candidates/trainees straight to them. This is a great opportunity to help us get better at what we do so please do send in your views - and doing so is easy! Just email [INSERT email for review] and provide no more than 150 words of text about what it's been like undertaking your programme with us. The email address is direct to QAA. Your views will be kept anonymous. Please do not attach anything to your message and please avoid identifying individuals by name.

So that the information you provide is most useful to the auditors, QAA has told us that they are particularly interested in hearing your evaluation of what kind of help we give you to make sure you do well on your programme, how we go about telling you what you have to do, and where you can turn for help if you have a problem. Remember, the auditors want to hear your evaluation of us and not just a description of what it's like. While there are no right or wrong answers, do try and focus on the areas that QAA have suggested so that they get a good understanding of what your learning experience is like at [INSERT name of Prime Organisation/Delivery Partner]. Try and make use of specific examples wherever you can so that they can be sure they properly understand your views.

Thanks,

Annex J: Glossary

Glossary and weblinks

Action plan	After EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit or monitoring, the Prime Organisation will be asked to develop an action plan, set out in a format provided by QAA, describing how the Prime Organisation plans to take action on the findings of the audit. The action plan forms part of the final version of the report.
Advisable recommendation	EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status reports will include recommendations about how a Prime Organisation might improve the management of its EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status provision. Recommendations are categorised according to priority. Advisable recommendations relate to matters that the audit team believes have the potential to put quality and/or standards at risk and hence require preventative corrective action.
Annual return	The annual return is an integral part of the overall monitoring process. It will serve as a check on the Prime Organisation's continuing management of standards, the management and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities and the information it produces about learning opportunities. It takes the form of a short briefing paper together with links to key documents that provide evidence of any action taken in response to all previous good practice and recommendations.
Audit	In this handbook 'audit' means EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit. EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit evaluates all aspects of the provider's management of its EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status provision and leads to judgements and a conclusion about the management of that provision within the context of the Prime Organisation's agreement with its awarding body the NCTL.
Auditor	Auditors are external peers with current or recent experience of managing, developing, delivering and/or assessing higher education in higher education institutions and/or Prime Organisations. Auditors are not employees of QAA, although they are paid for taking part in EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit. Auditors are trained specifically for the role by QAA. (See Annex D.)
Conflicts of interest	Auditors will not be eligible to be part of a team when a conflict of interest is identified. Conflicts include situations where: they have worked for, or studied at, the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners during the last five years they have undertaken external examining, external moderating or consultancy work at the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners during the last three years they have recently made an application for a post at the Prime Organisation a close relative is working or studying at the Prime Organisation or its Delivery Partners the Prime Organisation is an institution where the auditor himself/herself has studied for a higher education qualification (usually but not always deemed to present a conflict of interest).
Lead auditor	Lead auditors are contracted by QAA to manage a number of EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audits. They are selected for their experience of the management of higher education.

	<p>The lead auditor in consultation with the QAA officer manages the audit on behalf of QAA. discussing and agreeing the programme for the visit with the Prime Organisation and the rest of the EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status team; identifying the most effective way of engaging with candidates; leading the team at the visit; editing reports; responding to any comments on the reports from the Prime Organisation; and keeping in touch with the Prime Organisation. A full description of the role is given in Annex D.</p> <p>The lead auditor is the Prime Organisation's first and main point of contact during the audit/monitoring visit.</p>
Delivery Partner	An organisation contracted by the Prime Organisation to deliver EYPS or Early Years Teacher Status programmes on behalf of the Prime Organisation.
Desirable recommendation	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status reports may include recommendations about how the Prime Organisation might improve the management of its higher education provision.</p> <p>Recommendations are categorised according to priority. Desirable recommendations relate to matters that the audit team believes have the potential to enhance quality, build capacity and/or further secure standards.</p>
Essential recommendation	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status reports may include recommendations about how the Prime Organisation might improve the management of its EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status provision.</p> <p>Recommendations are categorised according to priority. Essential recommendations refer to issues that the audit team believes are currently putting quality and/or standards at risk and hence require urgent corrective action.</p>
Evidence	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit and monitoring are evidence-based processes. This means that audit teams conduct their enquiries primarily by comparing evidence about the Prime Organisation's management of its provision with its own policies and procedures, the agreements it has with the NCTL and its Delivery Partners, and against the expectations set out in the <i>NCTL Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i>.</p> <p>Evidence may be available in a wide range of formats and will vary from Prime Organisation to Prime Organisation. It is likely to include formal agreements, policies and procedures for the management of the candidate or trainee learning experience, external moderator's reports, minutes of meetings and records of moderation and assessment. This is not an exhaustive list of evidence that may be provided.</p>
Exceptional or outstanding practice	EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status reports are likely to include features of practice that the auditors consider to be exceptional or outstanding. Such features will be considered as making a positive contribution to the provision and likely to be of interest to the wider EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status sector.
Facilitator	For the audit, the Prime Organisation is invited to nominate a facilitator. The facilitator acts as a single point of contact between the Prime Organisation and the lead auditor, and through her/him the EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status team. The facilitator's responsibilities include, in

	consultation with the coordinator, ensuring that auditors have the relevant evidence to enable them to conduct the audit (including when the team is off-site), bringing additional information to the attention of the auditors and helping to clarify any matters of fact.
Monitoring process	The process will consist of an annual return, a monitoring visit to the Prime Organisation, visits to two or more Delivery Partners and an overarching thematic element.
Monitoring visit	<p>A preparatory meeting will take place during the term prior to the monitoring visit. The QAA officer will visit the Prime Organisation to discuss the structure of the monitoring visits as a whole and to answer any remaining questions.</p> <p>Each Prime Organisation will be asked to nominate a member of staff to act as the internal facilitator for the monitoring process. Their prime functions will be to act as the first point of contact between the Prime Organisation and the monitoring team and QAA officer. They will also be expected to ensure the Delivery Partners to be visited are fully briefed on the requirements for the Delivery Partner visits.</p> <p>The meeting should involve those who are most immediately involved in the productions of the annual return and where possible, representatives of the Delivery Partners.</p> <p>The visit will result in a short update to the audit/monitoring report. If a full audit/monitoring visit take place, a new report will be produced.</p>
National College for Teaching & Leadership	On 1 April, the National College merged with the Teaching Agency to become the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). The new agency has two key aims: improving the quality of the workforce and helping schools to help each other to improve.
Partnership agreement	<p>Prime Organisations have formal partnership agreements, sometimes called memoranda of understanding or memoranda of cooperation with their delivery partners.</p> <p>These agreements will be very useful to EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit or monitoring teams in identifying the parameters of each particular audit/monitoring visit, particularly with regard to setting out the responsibilities of all of the contributing partners.</p>
Peer review	EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status is a peer review process. This means that the reviews/audits are conducted by people with current or very recent experience of managing, developing, delivering and/or assessing early years education and training or higher education in institutions and/or Prime Organisations.
Preliminary meeting	Typically, six weeks before an audit or monitoring visit, there is a preliminary meeting for the visit between Prime Organisation staff, and the QAA officer. The purpose of the preparatory meeting is to develop the agenda for the visit and identify further evidence for the Prime Organisation to supply to the team, based on an analysis of the Prime Organisation's self-evaluation and the candidate submission. This meeting also gives the QAA officer the opportunity for the Prime Organisation to ask any questions.
Prime Organisation	The term 'Prime Organisation' refers to the lead university, college or other training organisation that is contracted to deliver EYPS programme. Many Prime Organisations work with partners, referred to as 'Delivery Partners' in order to deliver their NCTL contractual responsibilities.

QAA	<p>The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) was established in 1997 and is an independent body funded by subscriptions from UK universities and Prime Organisations of higher education, and through contracts with the main UK higher education funding bodies.</p> <p>QAA's mission is 'to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK higher education'. QAA does this by working with universities and other higher education Prime Organisations to define academic standards and quality, and by carrying out and publishing reviews against these benchmarks.</p>
QAA officer	<p>A QAA officer supports each EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audit or monitoring. The QAA officer's role is to ensure that the process is applied in accordance with this handbook and that the Prime Organisation meets its obligations to provide information in a timely manner. The QAA officer will attend the preparatory meeting and possibly one or more days of a visit for monitoring purposes. The QAA officer does not take part in the audit.</p>
Recommendations	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status reports will include recommendations for the Prime Organisation about how it might improve the management of its higher education provision. Recommendations are for actions categorised as essential, advisable or desirable according to priority.</p>
Reference points	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher audits and monitoring processes are guided by a main point of reference. This is the <i>Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i> published by the NCTL. When reaching decisions and making recommendations auditors will refer to this publication.</p>
Reports	<p>EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status audits and monitoring culminate in a report of the team's findings. Audit reports are published on QAA's public website.</p> <p>Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners will be invited to provide comments on a draft report and to indicate any areas that they consider incomplete or inaccurate. The coordinator will provide further guidance on the procedures for making comments on reports.</p>
Team	<p>The audit or monitoring team normally comprises the two auditors, one of whom is designated lead auditor for the purposes of communication with the Prime Organisation. However, the term 'lead' does not indicate a hierarchy.</p>
Thematic element	<p>The thematic element of the audit/monitoring will allow auditors to explore a Prime Organisation's engagement with a particular quality assurance topic.</p> <p>The update reports will contain a summary of the findings of the thematic element of the audit.</p>
Visit	<p>Each EYPS/Early Years Teacher Status monitoring visit normally takes place on one day.</p> <p>The purpose of visits is to allow the review team to scrutinise evidence on-site, meet Prime Organisation staff, candidates and other stakeholders and consider the extent of the Prime Organisation's engagement with the NCTL <i>Handbook for Early Years Teacher Status and Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) Prime Organisations and their Delivery Partners (August 2013)</i>. Indicative programmes for a monitoring visits are provided in Annex A.</p>

QAA 573 11/13

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