

Guidance for the inspection of further education institutions

from

September 2010



BUDDSODDWYR | INVESTORS
MEWN POBL | IN PEOPLE



Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community learning;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services for children and young people;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies; and
- ▲ offender learning;

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright 2010: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Contents	Page
Introduction	1
Purpose of this guidance	1
Legal basis for the inspection of further education institutions	1
Part 1: Carrying out inspections	2
Introduction	2
Principles of inspection	2
Code of conduct for inspectors	2
Expectations of providers	3
Health and safety	3
Responding to a safeguarding allegation	4
Approach to inspection	4
The inspection team	5
Contacting the provider before the inspection	5
Planning the inspection and preparing the team	6
During the inspection	6
After the inspection	9
Meeting statutory requirements	10
Assuring the quality of inspections	11
Part 2: Writing the report	12
Context	12
Summary	12
Judgement descriptions	13
Judging key questions and quality indicators	13
Recommendations	14
Key questions and quality indicators	15
Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	15
Key Question 2: How good is provision?	20
Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	29
Annexes	
1 The common inspection framework	
2 Sources of evidence	
3 Regulations and guidance	
4 Learner survey	
5 Learners with additional learning needs	
6 Guidance on the use of data in further education institutions	
7 Guidance on follow-up activity	
8 Inspection of specialist colleges	

Introduction

Purpose of this guidance

This guidance sets out the way the inspectorate will inspect further education institutions for the six-year inspection cycle from 2010. It will be reviewed during 2012-2013 in preparation for the second half of the inspection cycle.

The purposes of inspection are to:

- provide accountability to the users of services and other stakeholders through our public reporting on providers;
- promote improvement in education and training; and
- inform the development of national policy by Welsh Assembly Government.

The inspectorate conducts a core inspection for all providers in each sector of education and training. This guidance explains how we will carry out core inspections. Where the inspection identifies a concern in relation to standards, quality of education and training or leadership and management, then the inspectorate will conduct follow-up activity with the provider. This guidance contains information about follow-up activity in Annex 7.

This guidance has two parts that are about:

- carrying out inspection; and
- making judgements.

Colleges can use this guidance to see how inspections work and to help them in carrying out their own self-assessment. In addition, colleges can use the inspectorate's self-assessment guidance that is aligned with the Quality and Effectiveness Framework (QEF).

Further information and guidance about inspections can be found on the inspectorate's website www.estyn.gov.uk.

Legal basis for the inspection of further education institutions

In the post-16 sector, the Learning and Skills Act (2000) requires the Chief Inspector to report on:

- the quality of the education and training provided;
- the standards achieved by those receiving education and training; and
- whether the financial resources made available to those providing education and training are managed efficiently and used to provide value for money.

This guidance interprets these areas in more detail.

Part 1: Carrying out inspections

Introduction

This section is set out in a way that reflects the sequence of work before, during and after a core inspection.

The reporting inspector is responsible for the conduct and management of the inspection, and for the inspection report. While this guidance focuses mainly on the role of the reporting inspector, all team members must comply with the same inspection requirements.

Principles of inspection

Inspectors will:

- ensure that inspection is of high quality and responsive to the needs of all learners;
- ensure that judgements are secure, reliable, valid and based on first-hand evidence;
- involve colleges fully in the inspection process, including the use of nominees;
- use the college's self-assessment report as the starting point for the inspection and to identify key issues for investigation in order to make judgements on the validity of its findings;
- include peer inspectors in the inspection process;
- keep to a minimum any requirements for documentation and preparation by the college;
- gain the learners' perspective and that of other stakeholders;
- apply the principle of equality for Welsh and English to all our inspection work, providing bilingual services whenever they are appropriate; and
- be constructive in identifying and supporting colleges with important areas for improvement.

Code of conduct for inspectors

Inspectors should uphold the highest possible standards in their work. All inspectors have to meet the standards in the Estyn's code of conduct. When conducting the inspection, inspectors will:

- carry out their work with integrity, courtesy and due sensitivity;
- evaluate the work of the provider objectively;
- report honestly, fairly and impartially;
- communicate clearly and openly;
- act in the best interests of learners; and
- respect the confidentiality of all information received during the course of their work.

It is important that inspectors judge the effectiveness of provision and leadership on their contribution to outcomes and not on the basis of any preferences for particular methods. The key to the judgement is whether the methods and organisation are fit for the purpose of achieving high standards of work of all learners.

You should be aware that requests for disclosure of information may be made for details contained in inspection evidence, letters and e-mails. All information (written or electronic) should be recorded in a way that is fit for the public domain.

Expectations of providers

In order that inspection and regulation are constructive and beneficial, it is important that inspectors and providers establish and maintain a professional working environment based on mutual courtesy, respect and professional behaviour. Inspectors are expected to uphold Estyn's Code of Conduct but we also expect providers to:

- be courteous and professional;
- apply their own codes of conduct in their dealings with inspectors;
- enable inspectors to conduct their inspection in an open and honest way;
- enable inspectors to evaluate provision objectively against the Common Inspection Framework;
- provide evidence that will enable inspectors to report honestly, fairly and reliably about their provision;
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with the reporting inspector and the inspection team;
- recognise that inspectors need to observe practice and talk to staff, learners and other stakeholders without the presence of a manager or a senior leader;
- draw any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors in a timely and suitable manner through the nominee or senior leader;
- work with inspectors to minimise disruption and stress throughout the inspection; and
- ensure the health and safety of inspectors while on their premises.

Health and safety

Inspectors will carry out inspections in accordance with the inspectorate's guidance on health and safety. If you observe anything that you think constitutes an obvious danger to the safety of staff, visitors or learners, you should alert managers at the provider being inspected. You should also notify them if less than obvious threats are noticed. In all cases you should make a separate electronic note of the threat and that managers were informed of it. This should be copied to the health and safety lead officer in the inspectorate. You should report on obvious breaches of health and safety legislation in Key Question 2.

Responding to a safeguarding allegation

If an inspector is alerted to an allegation/suspicion in respect of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, that inspector will follow the procedures as set out in Section 4 of Estyn's Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding 2009.

The reporting inspector has a crucial role in this process and is responsible for making a safeguarding referral, reporting to the inspectorate's safeguarding officer and informing the provider that a referral is being made.

As directed by the safeguarding policy and pocket guide, staff and inspectors have a duty to:

- report any concerns to the inspectorate's safeguarding officer or deputy;
- follow their instructions regarding information sharing;
- record details on the inspectorate's safeguarding log; and
- avoid investigating matters relating to safeguarding concerns.

Approach to inspection

This guidance sets out the procedures for core inspections of colleges. These inspections will be complemented by follow-up activity in those colleges that we have found, through their core inspection, to be underperforming.

The starting point for inspection is the college's assessment of its own performance, supported by relevant performance information. Inspectors will not inspect all aspects of work in depth during a core inspection. They will sample evidence to test the college's own evaluation of its work. The self-assessment report will guide how the team samples the evidence, but the main focus will always be on the standards that learners achieve.

The standards achieved by learners and the progress they make are the key measure of the quality of the education and training that they have received and of the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the college. Inspection will focus on the needs of learners and the impact that education and training have on raising standards.

We will inspect all colleges during a six-year programme of inspections.

The inspection period is normally one working week although the number of days taken up by individual inspectors will vary according to the size of the college.

Inspection reports will cover all key questions, quality indicators and aspects of the common inspection framework.

All inspections are carried out in line with our Welsh Language Scheme, available from the inspectorate's website www.estyn.gov.uk and supported by supplementary guidance on inspecting Welsh language development.

The inspection team

Inspection teams will be led by a reporting inspector (HMI or additional inspector), with other team members drawn from among HMI or additional inspectors. Additional inspectors may be on secondment or contract to the inspectorate. Inspection teams will include staff currently working in the sector (peer inspectors).

The reporting inspector manages the inspection team and the whole inspection process, and is the first point of reference for everyone involved in the inspection.

Colleges will be invited to select a senior member of staff, called the nominee, to work with the inspection team. The nominee will have sufficient seniority to act as a link between the college and the inspection team but need not be the leader of the college.

Contacting the college before the inspection

The college will receive four weeks written notice of the inspection. Following this, the inspectorate will contact the college by telephone to set up the arrangements for the inspection. During this discussion the inspectorate will:

- explain the purpose of the inspection and discuss an outline programme for the inspection;
- discuss the information required before the inspection and make the arrangements for receiving it in an electronic form if possible;
- ask if there are any issues or risks the team should be aware of and ask for a general health and safety briefing for the team at the start of the inspection;
- establish whether the college wishes to have a nominee and, if it does, agree the role of the nominee;
- arrange the availability of supporting evidence, including any samples of learners' work;
- ensure that there are agreed procedures for addressing any concerns or complaints that might arise during the course of the inspection;
- arrange for member(s) of the governing body to meet inspectors during the inspection period;
- organise any domestic arrangements, such as a base for the inspectors and parking;
- set up the arrangements for feeding back the inspection findings;
- agree the arrangements for completing post-inspection questionnaires; and
- inform the college that key matters of the arrangements will be confirmed in writing.

The inspectorate will request the following information as soon as possible:

- key background information on the college; and
- details of the college's timetables for the period of the inspection.

If the inspection is to take place early in the academic year, the inspectorate may ask for samples of learners' work from the previous year.

The inspectorate will contact the provider for the latest version of the SAR and QDP.

The inspectorate will ask the college to inform other partners and stakeholders about the inspection. The inspectorate will inform the college about the procedures for gaining the views of learners.

The inspection team will use the evidence from a sample of learners' responses to a questionnaire provided by Estyn. The team will also consider the most recent survey of learners' perceptions conducted by the college and/or the most recent learner voice survey conducted through DCELLS to assess the views of learners. The results of these surveys will form part of the pre-inspection evidence. However, when providers are notified of inspection we may ask a sample of learners to complete questionnaires. The results of the surveys used will form part of the pre-inspection evidence. A commentary on learner views will appear in the annex to the inspection report.

Inspectors will also carry out oral surveys during the inspection with groups of learners to gain their perspective on issues as well as to follow identified lines of enquiry.

Planning the inspection and preparing the team

Taking into account the college's self-assessment report and any information already held by the inspectorate, the reporting inspector will plan the inspection and allocate responsibilities to members of the inspection team.

The inspectorate will arrange to obtain information on the college from DCELLS.

The reporting inspector will complete a pre-inspection commentary (PIC). This will include hypotheses based on the self-assessment report and other information that inspectors will use to direct lines of enquiry during the inspection. The PIC will be available to the nominee and the inspection team on the first morning of the inspection.

Inspections involve observation of teaching, training, and work with learners. Colleges are expected to send the reporting inspector a timetable of all the planned provision they make during the inspection. This will include activities that take place off the college sites and the locations of work-based and community learners as well as any arrangements for off-the-job training. On the basis of the information received, inspectors will select a small sample of sessions to observe and to evaluate. The sample will reflect the range of the college's work and support the investigation of lines of enquiry suggested by inspectors' initial hypotheses.

During the inspection

Initial team meeting

In the initial meeting of the inspection team, there should be a health and safety briefing from the college. After that, the team should discuss the strategy for the inspection. This should start with the college's self-assessment report and the PIC.

Inspectors will sample, test and validate the evaluations made by the college. The discussions should centre on the evidence that needs to be reviewed. This will include observations, sampling learners' work and interviews with learners, staff and other stakeholders.

Gathering and reviewing inspection evidence

Inspectors will evaluate the provision and make two overall key judgements. These overall judgements will derive from the judgements made on the three key questions. Each key question is broken down into quality indicators which have a number of aspects.

The team will plan the inspection so that they can cover the aspects and pursue the identified lines of enquiry that are specific to the college.

The team will ensure that they have enough time to review the key evidence that is needed to make judgements. The team will need to ensure that it focuses on the key evidence that can be used to substantiate its judgements. The main forms of evidence are:

- information from DCELLS;
- documentary evidence, including data on learners' outcomes, performance and progress;
- observation of teaching or training sessions and other activities;
- samples of learners' work;
- the views of learners and other stakeholders; and
- discussions with staff, leaders and managers, governors and others.

Details of the main sources of evidence are included in Annex 2.

Direct observation of work will be used wherever possible to gather evidence to support judgements. Inspectors may spend between 30% and 50% of their time on the inspection in observing learning, teaching and training. Inspectors will normally spend no less than 30 minutes observing a learning activity. Inspectors will not always have opportunities to observe formal off-the-job training in work-based learning. However, they will use evidence from the observation of reviews and other assessment activities.

Inspectors may select an additional sample of learners' work to meet the needs of a particular line of enquiry.

Listening to learners is a key source of evidence of learners' achievement, attitudes and wellbeing. Discussions will provide an opportunity to explore learners' knowledge and understanding of their work, how well they feel they are being supported, and to what extent the college contributes to their wellbeing.

The learners that are to be interviewed should be selected carefully to provide evidence for particular lines of enquiry. Inspectors may request lists of learners from the college and then select those that they wish to interview. The inspection team may request lists based on various categories, for example those with additional

learning needs, Welsh speakers, adult learners, work-based learners, more able and talented learners and those from disadvantaged backgrounds and minority ethnic groups across all aspects of provision that the college makes.

Colleges should make information available to the inspection team about the standards achieved by learners, particularly the results of any initial screening tests and assessments. This will help inspectors to judge learners' progress and to come to a view about the standards learners achieve compared to their starting-points.

The team will need to consider stakeholders' views on the college and test out the validity of those views during the inspection in order to inform judgements.

It is important that the reporting inspector holds a daily meeting with the college nominee to agree new arrangements, discuss matters of concern, clarify inspection issues and obtain further information. In addition, the lead inspector will discuss emerging findings briefly with the college principal.

Recording inspection evidence

Evaluation forms should be used to record all evidence and judgements. A judgement form must be completed that summarises the evidence from the inspection. This includes observation of learning activities, discussions with learners, interviews with staff, interviews with leaders and managers, scrutiny of documentation, performance information and samples of learners' work.

Team meetings

The main purpose of team meetings is to arrive at an accurate and thoroughly tested corporate view of standards, quality and leadership. The whole inspection team will come to corporate judgements that are based upon sufficient valid and reliable evidence. Meetings will have clear agendas and there will be opportunities for inspectors to:

- test the judgements in the college's self-assessment report;
- discuss emerging issues and lines of enquiry;
- resolve pre-inspection issues and hypotheses;
- discuss any gaps in the evidence base; and
- consider main inspection findings and recommendations.

Giving feedback

At the end of an observation, inspectors should, as far as practicable, provide feedback on the work seen. It may be necessary, in some cases, to give fuller feedback at a later time and this should be arranged at the end of the session. The member of staff should be told that these are interim judgements on one aspect of the evidence. All judgements may be amended, on reflection, after scrutiny of learners' work or talking to learners, or as the result of moderation within the team. For this reason, inspectors should not discuss any levels of judgement that they may have awarded as a result of the observation.

At the end of the on-site part of the inspection, the team will provide oral feedback to leaders and managers. A representative from DCELLS may also attend. The feedback should convey the main judgements and the reasons for them. The feedback meeting provides the opportunity for leaders and managers to assimilate and to reflect on the judgements. The feedback should focus on the strengths and areas for improvement, and the factors that contribute to them. The reporting inspector should explain to the college that issues may be discussed and factual matters may be clarified, but judgements are not negotiable. There should be broad consistency between the evaluations that are fed back and what appears in the written report unless the evaluations are required to change as a result of internal moderation within the inspectorate after the on-site part of the inspection.

All the judgements that are reported during an inspection are provisional and confidential until the report is published. Provisional judgements will be shared with DCELLS.

After the inspection

Follow-up activity

During all core inspections, the inspection team will consider whether the college needs any follow-up activity. Annex 7 outlines the inspectorate's guidance on follow-up activity.

The inspection report

The reporting inspector is responsible for producing a final inspection report that is clear to a lay audience and helpful to the college. We will publish reports bilingually where this has been requested, in line with Estyn's Welsh Language Scheme. In most cases, the main body of the report will be no longer than five pages.

The structure of the inspection report is based on two overall summary judgements, three key questions and 10 quality indicators and will take the following form:

Context

Summary

- overall judgement on current performance
- overall judgement on prospects for improvement

Recommendations

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

- standards
- wellbeing

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

- learning experiences
- teaching and training
- care, support and guidance
- learning environment

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

- leadership
- improving quality
- partnership working
- resource management

Annexes

The two overall summary judgements, the judgements on the three key questions and the 10 quality indicators will be based on a four-point scale.

Excellent
Good
Adequate
Unsatisfactory

The report will be produced within statutory or agreed sector timescales. The reporting inspector will give the principal of the college a late draft report to help check the factual accuracy of the content. The college has five working days in which to consider the draft report and raise any concerns about factual accuracy.

Meeting statutory requirements

Colleges' work is governed by a range of statutory requirements. The inspectorate expects colleges to evaluate how they meet these requirements effectively through their own normal self-assessment procedures. They should indicate how well they meet these requirements in their self-assessment report. Inspectors may use the self-assessment report and other information to identify any issues in relation to how effectively a college meets their statutory requirements. Inspectors will investigate these issues further during the inspection where they are likely to have a significant impact on standards and quality.

Failure to meet statutory requirements that affect quality and standards will be reported in the text and may result in a judgement no higher than adequate for the relevant quality indicator.

Details of the relevant statutory requirements are included in Annex 3.

Assuring the quality of inspections

The inspectorate is committed to:

- effective selection, training, briefing, support and deployment of inspectors, including peer inspectors;
- effective training, briefing and support to allow the nominee to play an active role;
- regular dialogue with the head of the institution during inspection;
- criteria and recording systems that comply with the common inspection framework and guidance;
- careful review and analysis of evidence;
- unambiguous oral feedback on the summary judgements, key questions and quality indicators;
- consistently clear, accurate and well-presented reports; and
- maintaining appropriate internal moderation and quality improvement activities including monitoring inspections as appropriate.

Colleges should raise any concerns about an inspection with the reporting inspector during the inspection. Any objections to the findings of inspection should also be discussed with the reporting inspector as they arise during the inspection. The quality assurance of the inspection will always be carried out by the reporting inspector in the first instance and a sample of inspections will be quality assured by the inspectorate.

If complaints about the inspection, inspection findings or the report cannot be resolved at this informal stage, then the college should write to the inspectorate's Feedback and Complaints Manager, asking for their complaint to be considered further. A leaflet explaining the inspectorate's feedback and complaints procedure in full is available from the inspectorate's website at www.estyn.gov.uk.

Part 2: Writing the report

The guidance that follows shows how to complete the context, summary and recommendations of the report.

Context

The context section of the report should contain brief information about the college. This section should normally be agreed with the college. Where there are any disagreements about the content of this section, the reporting inspector will make the final decision about what to include in the report.

This section must include brief information on:

- the number and nature of learners;
- the location of the college sites;
- the features of the areas served by the college;
- any significant changes since the previous inspection; and
- any other relevant factors.

Summary

The summary contains the two overall judgements on the college's current performance and prospects for improvement. There should be a brief explanation of the reasons for these judgements. The summary must be consistent with the text in the body of the report and the oral feedback to the college. The supporting statements for the top two judgements need to explain briefly, in two or three sentences, why the judgements have been made.

Overall judgement on the college's current performance

The overall judgement should be based on the judgements made on the three key questions. The greatest weight should be given to the judgement about Key Question 1.

Normally, the overall judgement should be no higher than the lowest judgement awarded to any key question. The overall judgement can be one level higher than the lowest level of judgement awarded to any key question, but the reasons for this exception must be explained clearly and fully in the report. During the process of moderating the inspection judgements, such exceptions will be carefully considered.

Overall judgement on the college's prospects for improvement

The second overall judgement represents inspectors' confidence in the college's ability to drive its own improvement in the future.

The judgement on prospects for improvement should normally relate closely to the overall judgements for the quality indicators for leadership and/or improving quality,

or to significant aspects within those quality indicators that support the overall judgement.

In coming to a judgement about the prospects for improvement, inspectors will consider whether leaders and managers have:

- the capacity and capability to make improvements and implement plans;
- a successful track record in managing change, addressing recommendations from previous inspections and securing improvements;
- clear priorities and challenging targets for improvement;
- coherent and practical plans to meet targets;
- resources to meet the identified priorities; and
- appropriate systems to review progress, identify areas for improvement and take effective action to remedy them.

Judgement descriptions

The following descriptions are intended as guidance to help inspectors to make judgements by considering the relative balance and significance of strengths and areas for improvement.

Inspectors will need to check which judgement descriptor is the best fit for any quality indicator and key question for which a judgement on the four-point scale has to be made.

Excellent – Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice

Good – Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement

Adequate – Strengths outweigh areas for improvement

Unsatisfactory – Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

Judging key questions and quality indicators

The judgement for Key Question 1 cannot be above adequate when data on completion and attainment outcomes show trends over three years at levels lower than national averages for a range of key performance indicators, taking account of the college's context.

There is a strong link between outcomes, provision and leadership and management. If leaders and managers are working effectively then this should be reflected in the provision and in the standards that learners achieve. Hence, normally, the judgement for Key Questions 2 and 3 will not be at a level higher than the judgement for Key Question 1. Where there are differences between the judgements for Key Questions 1, 2 and 3, these should be explained in the text of the report.

Normally, the overall key question judgement should reflect the judgements awarded to quality indicators within the key question and should be no more than one level higher than the lowest level awarded to any quality indicator.

If the college does not have an appropriate safeguarding policy or procedures in place, the judgement for 2.3 (care, support and guidance) should be unsatisfactory.

The judgement on resource management as a quality indicator should not normally be higher on the scale than judgements for Key Question 1, but it may be lower.

Recommendations

The recommendations should give the college clear and specific indication of the areas for improvement that it will need to address in its action plan. Inspectors should write the recommendations in order of priority. The recommendations should arise from the main judgements and should provide a clear and practicable basis on which the college can act. You must refer to any significant matters noted in the report where the college's practice does not comply with legal requirements.

Key questions and quality indicators

The 10 quality indicators used in inspections are set out below under the three key questions. For each quality indicator, there is a range of aspects. Guidance on how to inspect each quality indicator is set out under each key question.

Inspectors should provide an overall evaluation of all key questions and quality indicators and comment on all aspects. When writing reports, inspectors should take account of Estyn's writing guidance which is available on our website www.estyn.gov.uk.

Exemplification paragraphs for each good and unsatisfactory judgement illustrate each quality indicator. These paragraphs should not be used as crude checklists but as a reference to support the process of coming to a judgement. They should be used in conjunction with the judgement descriptions. Inspectors should weigh up the evidence and determine judgements on the basis of a best fit with the judgement descriptions.

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

In coming to an overall judgement for this key question, inspectors should give the greater weight to judgements about standards.

1.1 Standards

- 1.1.1 results and trends in performance compared with national averages, similar providers and prior attainment
- 1.1.2 standards of different groups of learners
- 1.1.3 achievement and progress in learning
- 1.1.4 skills
- 1.1.5 Welsh language

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

Inspectors should always consider carefully whether the overall judgement is consistent with the available data. When information on data is not reflected in inspectors' judgements in this quality indicator, the report should explain clearly why this is so.

1.1.1: results and trends in performance compared with national averages, similar providers and prior attainment

In coming to a judgement on this quality indicator, inspectors should take into account a range of data on learner performance.

In looking at information on learner performance, inspectors analyse verified data provided from LLWR including, where appropriate, benchmarking data. Inspectors analyse the data in a variety of ways in order to see how well learners complete and

attain their qualifications and awards. Inspectors will look at data outcomes over three years in order to identify trends in performance. They will also consider information on how well learners are achieving compared to their starting points and what proportion of learners are achieving higher grades.

Inspectors should use a consistent approach across FE, WBL and ACL and they should look in particular at completion, attainment and success rates. Completion rates show what proportion of learners complete the course after enrolling on it. Attainment rates show what proportion of learners gain the qualification after completing the course. Success rates show what proportion of learners gain the qualification after enrolling on the course. In the case of apprenticeships, inspectors will consider the proportion gain their full qualification framework. When evaluating standards, inspectors should place most emphasis on success rates. In WBL, inspectors will also consider carefully, the length of time it has taken learners to complete their training frameworks in relation to the time indicated in their Individual Learning Plan.

When looking at data on learner performance, inspectors consider and analyse whole-provider data, data on outcomes in each learning area, and outcomes in key or essential skills. Inspectors will also consider trends in completion of non-accredited courses, where appropriate.

Annex 6 provides guidance on the use of data in the inspection of colleges and other post-16 providers.

Inspectors should consider the rates at which learners progress:

- to and in employment;
- to higher education; and
- to higher levels of further education.

For employability training, inspectors will consider learners' progression into employment or further training.

1.1.2: standards of groups of learners

Inspectors will look at the performance of learners on different levels and types of course. They will take account of factors that may lead to variation from national averages including the backgrounds and challenges faced by different groups of learners. Inspectors may look at the relative performance of different groups of learners including:

- learners from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- learners with ALN;
- learners from different ethnic groups; and
- male and female learners.

1.1.3: achievement and progress in learning

Inspectors' evaluation of learners' achievement should be based on evidence from

lesson observation, discussions with learners and the scrutiny of written and practical work. You should evaluate how well learners recall previous learning, develop thinking skills, acquire new knowledge, understanding and skills and apply these to new situations.

You should evaluate the standard of their oral, written and practical work and how far it meets the standards of the relevant validating and awarding bodies. In workplace learning, you should evaluate the standards that learners achieve in on-the-job and off-the-job training. In all relevant areas, you should take particular care to judge the level of vocationally-related skills that learners have gained through their training. Learners in adult community learning may have achieved various awards of credit which will give indications of progress. When looking at progress on non-accredited courses, inspectors will need to consider individuals' learning plans.

1.1.4: skills

The focus of inspectors' work in looking at skills should be on the standards and progress that learners' achieve in literacy (communication), numeracy (application of number) and ICT. You should give most weight to communication skills, particularly the literacy skills of reading and writing as these underpin the language of numeracy and ICT and facilitate access to the wider curriculum. You should evaluate how well learners are developing and improving their skills on an individual basis from their individual starting points.

Care should be taken when making judgements about attainment of qualifications and credit which are below the level of the learners' ability, or below the level of literacy and numeracy qualifications that they already hold.

You should consider the interim progress learners make towards their individual targets and goals and also towards their essential skills qualifications. You should examine tracking documents and judge how well learners record their progress and attainment. You should talk to learners to assess their understanding of their skills targets, the role of the individual learning plan and the progress that they have made in skills since the start of the course. You should ask the learners for specific examples of how the new skills that they have learnt have helped them with their main subject coursework.

You should take a case study approach to evaluating the skills of learners. You should select a number of classes and examine the literacy and numeracy initial and diagnostic assessment records for that group of learners on an individual basis. This data should be assessed against the level of skills qualifications that learners are taking. You should assess if the level of qualification is high enough to challenge each individual learner while taking into account the initial assessment results and the requirements of the main course of study. In order to improve their skills learners should be working towards one level above their initial assessment result. You should follow up on individual case studies selected from the classes whose results you have scrutinised. You should evaluate the selected learners' course folders and assignments and discuss with them their understanding of the work being covered and the gains they have made.

You should judge how well the initial and diagnostic assessments results inform individual learners' targets and goals. You should judge how well these targets and goals are reflected in individual learning plans. You should judge how well learners use their individual learning plans to track their own progress and inform future targets.

Learners who receive support with literacy and numeracy and learners whose first language is not English or Welsh should be a particular focus for inspectors. You will also need to consider how well learners are applying their skill in other areas of learning and on their mainstream courses.

1.1.5: Welsh language

In coming to an overall judgement on learners' Welsh language skills, inspectors should consider what it is reasonable to expect, taking into account the linguistic background and context of the institution they are inspecting and the area it serves before coming to a corporate judgement about standards in Welsh. Inspectors will report on standards in the Welsh language where appropriate.

You should consider:

- the learners' starting points and the progress that they make in relation to this; and
- the progress of learners in relation to the aims and policy of the institution and its Welsh Language Scheme.

Inspectors should comment on the proportion of learners who obtain qualifications through the medium of Welsh, where appropriate.

Good standards

Overall, the rates at which learners complete and attain qualifications and credit are above those in similar colleges and training providers and have improved over the last three years. The rates at which learners succeed in main qualification aims are above the average and have risen in recent years. Most learners make at least the achievement and progress expected of them in relation to their previous attainment. Learners work well in lessons and in on-the-job training sessions. They develop good learning and practical skills and apply key skills well in a range of contexts. Most learners make good progress.

Unsatisfactory standards

The rates at which learners complete and attain qualifications and credit are below those in similar colleges and training providers. The rates at which learners succeed in main qualifications on accredited courses are unsatisfactory in comparison with the rates at which learners succeed in other colleges and have declined or remained unsatisfactory in recent years. Many learners do not make the progress expected of them in relation to their previous attainments. A significant number of learners do not engage fully in lessons. Many do not make enough progress in their studies. The standard of many learners' work does not meet the requirements of awarding bodies.

1.2 Wellbeing

1.2.1 attitudes to keeping healthy and safe

1.2.2 participation and enjoyment in learning

1.2.3 community involvement and decision-making

1.2.4 social and life skills

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

The focus in this key question is on outcomes rather than provision. Other key questions, particularly Key Question 2, should cover the college's work in promoting the wellbeing of learners.

Inspectors should try to judge as far as possible those matters over which the college has some influence. You should try to make sure that enquiries focus on the impact of the college's work in this area. Inspectors should take account of evidence from any relevant surveys of learners' views.

1.2.1: development of attitudes to keeping healthy and safe

Inspectors should consider extent to which learners feel safe from any form of physical and verbal abuse either in the college or in their place of work. You should consider if learners have a secure understanding of how they can keep healthy, including through what they eat and through physical activity.

1.2.2: participation and enjoyment in learning

When evaluating participation and enjoyment in learning you should consider attendance, behaviour and attitudes and the extent to which learners have a say in what and how they learn. You should consider attendance rates on different types and levels of courses.

When evaluating behaviour and attitudes, you should evaluate how learners show respect for their peers and demonstrate a positive attitude to their studies and work. Inspectors should also take account of the attitudes and behaviour of learners, particularly the level of enthusiasm that they demonstrate towards their own learning opportunities. In addition, you should look at learners' attitudes to learning, in particular their interest in their work, their ability to sustain concentration and how well they engage in tasks.

When evaluating what input learners have to what and how they learn, inspectors should consider:

- whether learners' views about what and how they learn are taken seriously;
- how learners discuss the topics to be covered and help to plan schemes of work and activities; and
- whether learners make choices about how and what they learn.

1.2.3: community involvement and decision-making

Inspectors should take account of the ways in which learners contribute to the college community through participation in the college's student union and other representative bodies, such as class representatives and student membership on the board of governors. You should consider the ways in which learners undertake community-based activities, for example as part of the Welsh BaccaLaureate. You should also take account of the ways in which adult learners take part in community development activities. You should consider the extent to which all learners, including those from different groups, are involved in making decisions about their life in college.

1.2.4: social and life skills

When evaluating learners' personal, social and life skills, you should consider how well learners' show respect, care and concern for others, and whether they take on responsibility for their actions and their work. In addition, you should evaluate whether learners enjoy learning and participate fully in all aspects of college life, including affecting decisions that impact on them. You should take account of learners' development of employability and citizenship skills, especially on courses designed as preparation for life and work. You should also take account of learners' development of the skills and confidence that they need to improve and to progress to the next stage of their learning.

Good levels of wellbeing

Learners feel positive about being healthy and safe in the college and in their workplace and in community settings. They attend regularly and participate well in lessons and enjoy their work. They participate in making decisions that affect their lives in college. Most learners develop their personal qualities well. Most learners show respect to their peers, teachers and trainers. They make good contributions to their college community and develop their capacity for economic and social wellbeing. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences of them. They enjoy learning and become independent thinkers with balanced views.

Unsatisfactory levels of wellbeing

Many learners do not make adequate progress in their personal development. A few learners are at risk as they do not have a positive attitude to health and safety in the college or at their workplace. A minority of learners do not show respect to their peers, teachers and trainers, attend irregularly and are frequently late. Learners often do not participate fully in lessons and training sessions and play a very limited role in the life of the college. Many learners only make slow progress in their capacity for improving their economic and social wellbeing.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

In coming to an overall judgement for this key question, inspectors should give equal weight to each quality indicator.

2.1 Learning experiences

2.1.1 meeting the needs of learners, employers/community

2.1.2 provision for skills

2.1.3 Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension

2.1.4 education for sustainable development and global citizenship

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

2.1.1: meeting the needs of learners, employers and the wider community

When evaluating the extent to which the college meets needs, inspectors should take into account the context in which the college works. This may relate to education and training provision in the local area, the socio-economic context, and the nature of employment opportunities and community needs in the area.

You should also report on provision for the wider key skills of improving own learning, working with others and problem solving.

When evaluating the appropriateness of the qualification range, inspectors should take account of the above factors and the range of the actual choice and progression opportunities that are available within the college and elsewhere. You should take account of how it balances the range of learning opportunities it offers with the need to ensure that provision is cost-effective.

Inspectors should take account of the extent to which the college's provision meets the requirements of the Learning Core and entitlements of Learning Pathways 14-19 for all learners within this age range. This includes the provision of the Welsh Baccalaureate for both full-time and work-based learners. You should take account of the provision that the college makes for learners to take part in credit-based qualifications, particularly learners on adult and community learning programmes.

You should consider whether the curriculum provides individual learning pathways with:

- a broad and balanced range of experiences;
- a combination of formal, non-formal and informal elements;
- the minimum requirements and enhancements of the Learning Core, including work-focused experience and community participation;
- the opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications;
- equal access to options that meet learners' interests, abilities and learning styles; and
- access to learner support to help overcome any barriers to learning.

You will need to consider how well the college provides effective and appropriate work-related education to prepare learners for future employment.

2.1.2: provision for skills

Inspectors should consider how well the college plans and delivers the development of learners' literacy (communication), numeracy (application of number), and ICT skills across the curriculum. You should place a stronger emphasis on literacy skills as these are essential for learners to access other areas of the curriculum.

You should evaluate how well teachers and managers:

- use the results of the initial and diagnostic assessments in planning for differentiation in all sessions across the whole curriculum;
- exploit opportunities for developing essential skills in main course sessions;
- meet learners' individual skills needs, engage their interest, develop their confidence and promote successful learning; and
- contextualise essential skills into the learners' main course or areas of interest.

You should scrutinise a sample of schemes of work and session plans to judge how well staff have embedded skills, in particular literacy skills, across all subjects. You should assess how well teachers differentiate teaching for learners at levels above and below the main session level. You should assess the extent to which the provider challenges the more able learners.

You should evaluate the impact of any policies or arrangements which aim to develop essential skills systematically over time and in broad range of contexts. You should assess the college's self-assessment report and quality development plan to evaluate the college's commitment to essential skills. You should talk to teachers to establish if the college's skills policy is shared at a whole staff level.

You should evaluate the effectiveness of strategies for developing learners' essential skills. These may include:

- embedded development of skills though main course classes where skills are taught by vocational teachers, specialist essential skills teachers or through paired or shared teaching within the learners' main course classes;
- development of skills contextualised to the learners' main course or an area of interest taught as a discrete class by either a specialist or vocational teacher; and
- separate essential skills classes taught by essential skills specialists.

You should assess how well the college monitors and evaluates essential skills data and uses the data to plan for improvement. In particular you should look for the results of initial assessment at a whole college level and the result for any re-assessment at the end of courses. You should evaluate how well the college uses this data to plan for additional support needs through learning support departments and learning assistants. You should assess the percentage of learners who have completed initial and diagnostic assessment and the strategies the college has in place for those who have not been assessed.

You should assess the extent to which the college encourages all learners to develop their skills, particularly those who have GCSE English/Welsh and mathematics and those who should be developing skills at level 3.

You should talk to learners and teachers and evaluate tracking documents, ILPs and tutorial records to evaluate how well the teachers track the progress of learners at an individual level.

In judging the quality of provision, you should take account of the support provision the college has in place for developing language skills for learners who do not have English or Welsh as a first language.

2.1.3: Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension

Inspectors should evaluate how well the college meets the needs of learners who have undertaken their education either through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in addition to extending the Welsh language skills of learners who have studied little Welsh.

Inspectors should take account of the nature and type of course being followed when evaluating the effectiveness of the college in developing learners' skills as these will vary greatly depending on the needs of the learner and the match between their needs and the type of course that they are following. Similarly, there will be considerable variation in the expectation of colleges to meet learners' Welsh language needs. Inspectors should consider the college's Welsh language scheme when coming to their judgement.

You should judge the extent to which the college promotes the development of learners' knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.

2.1.4: education for sustainable development and global citizenship

Learners should have opportunities to extend their knowledge of global citizenship and sustainable development (ESDGC), for example through the Welsh Baccalaureate or the 14-19 Learning Pathways.

Inspectors should consider the extent to which:

- the curriculum and extra-curricular activities help learners to develop the knowledge, skills and values of ESDGC; and
- the college contributes to global citizenship, for example through developing an understanding of the wider world and an appreciation of global diversity.

Good learning experiences

The college provides a good range of courses and training opportunities at levels appropriate to learners' needs in the area. Nearly all learners are able to follow courses that match their choices and needs. The college is responsive to the needs of employers and other external requirements and uses labour market information well. Many learners from groups that are under-represented in education enrol on courses provided by the college. There is a good range of enrichment activities that are accessible to all learners. The college has effective and coherent arrangements for improving the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of learners of all abilities. Most learners have good opportunities to learn about global citizenship and sustainable

development as well as to develop their knowledge of Wales and the Welsh language.

Unsatisfactory learning experiences

The college does not analyse learners and employers' and community needs systematically and as a result there is an unsatisfactory match between these needs and the range and level of courses provided by the college. The college's arrangements for improving the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of learners are limited and lack coherence. The college does not do enough to widen participation in education and many groups such as adult women returners to work do not have good enough opportunities to extend their skills, confidence and knowledge. The college does not do enough to extend learners' knowledge of global citizenship, sustainable development as well as learners' knowledge of Wales and the Welsh language. The enrichment programme covers a very limited range of activities and very few learners take part in it.

2.2 Teaching or training

2.2.1 range and quality of teaching/training approaches

2.2.2 assessment of and for learning

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

The focus should be on the impact of teaching/training on learning and not on the use of a particular process in isolation from its impact.

2.2.1: range and quality of teaching/training approaches

Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and training strategies but will not be prescriptive about teaching methods.

Inspectors should evaluate the extent to which teachers and trainers:

- use up-to-date subject and technical knowledge;
- have high expectations of all learners;
- plan effectively and have clear objectives for taught sessions and other learning experiences;
- use a range of teaching and training methods and resources that interest stimulate and challenge learners;
- focus appropriately on the development of learners' skills, particularly in literacy;
- are themselves good language models;
- establish good working relationships that foster learning;
- use technical and learning support staff effectively; and
- are effective in providing demanding work to meet the needs of all learners, irrespective of their ability.

Inspectors will evaluate how well work-based learners are trained at work as well as in off-the-job training.

2.2.2: assessment of and for learning

Inspectors should evaluate how well the college and teachers track and keep records on the progress of each learner and report on these clearly and usefully to parents and employers, when appropriate.

Inspectors should evaluate whether learners regularly review their own learning, understand their progress and are involved in setting their own learning targets. You should evaluate:

- how well oral feedback and marking enable learners to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve;
- the appropriateness of formative and summative assessment and its use in planning and improving learning; and
- how well learners are involved in assessing their own progress and achievements and how well they understand how to improve.

Good teaching/training

Teaching and training provide learners with appropriate challenges. Teachers and trainers match the needs of most learners well by planning experiences and activities that support learning. Lessons and learning experiences are well planned. Teachers and trainers use up-to-date subject and technical knowledge well. Most teachers and trainers use learning resources well and use assessment well to improve learners' knowledge, skills and outcomes. They keep comprehensive records of learners' achievements and provide learners with good written feedback on what they need to do to improve the standard of their work. They provide employers and parents with regular and useful reports on learners' outcomes and progress.

Unsatisfactory teaching/training

Teaching and training are often inadequate because they do not challenge and interest many of the learners. A significant minority of teachers and trainers have inadequate subject or technical knowledge for the level of the course. Many of the teachers and trainers fail to use an appropriate variety of learning methods. Often, teachers and trainers do not plan assessment well enough and do not give learners enough written or oral feedback on how to improve the standard of their work. Many teachers and trainers keep poor records of learners' assessments. Many employers and parents do not have enough information about learners' progress and outcomes.

2.3 Care, support and guidance

2.3.1 provision for health and wellbeing

2.3.2 guidance, information and specialist services

2.3.3 safeguarding arrangements

2.3.4 additional learning needs

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

The main focus in this quality indicator should be on the impact of care, support and guidance on learners' standards and wellbeing rather than on the procedures and arrangements. In particular, inspectors should evaluate how well the arrangements have a beneficial effect on vulnerable learners. In evaluating care, support and guidance, there should be a clear link to the judgements about standards and wellbeing.

2.3.1: provision for health and wellbeing

Overall, inspectors should evaluate the college's arrangements for promoting health and wellbeing. This may include the availability of healthy eating choices as well as guidance and other support that the college provides to safeguard the welfare of learners and promote their personal development.

Inspectors should report on obvious breaches of health and safety legislation under this quality indicator.

You should evaluate the college's arrangements for dealing with harassment and bullying. You should check that learners know who to approach if they have a concern.

You should judge what the college does to promote good behaviour and attendance.

2.3.2: guidance information and specialist services

Inspectors should judge the effectiveness of impartial guidance in enabling all learners to make realistic choices about their learning and their choice of courses. You should assess the access that learners have to independent advisers within the college, from learning coaches and from external agencies. You should judge the effectiveness of sources of information such as prospectuses, course leaflets and the college's website.

Inspectors should take account of the coherence and effectiveness of the provision for personal and specialist support for learners. This will include the availability and access to the services of specialist support agencies, especially for those learners who face considerable barriers to learning, including personal, financial, domestic, transport, health, housing and family care responsibilities. Part-time learners often have support needs that are often quite different from those of full-time learners, especially as many part-time learners are adults. Inspectors should remain aware of this.

2.3.3: safeguarding arrangements

The inspectorate reports on whether the arrangements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are appropriate. The inspectorate expects all colleges to comply with best practice. Reference to the legislation that covers this area is included in Annex 3.

Inspectors will need to find out whether the college has appropriate policies and procedures in place in respect of safeguarding.

A policy should set out the following:

- the named senior member of staff's responsibilities for dealing with child protection and safeguarding issues and providing advice/support to other staff;
- clear procedures that reflect current statutory guidance such as the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008; and
- arrangements for training.

If a college has appropriate policy and procedures, the report will state: 'The college has appropriate policy and procedures for safeguarding.'

If a college does not have an appropriate safeguarding policy or procedures in place, the overall judgement on 2.3 (care, support and guidance) should be unsatisfactory.

In these cases, the report will state: 'The college does not have an appropriate policy for safeguarding. Procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues are not fully developed.'

You will need to find out whether the college has in place effective recruitment, disciplinary and reporting arrangements to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers. These arrangements should meet legal requirements. There is no requirement for staff appointed prior to 2002 to have a current CRB check or for the college to carry out three-yearly checks on staff. However, inspectors should confirm that the college has carried out appropriate checks against List 99 and on written references.

2.3.4: additional learning needs

The term ALN applies to learners of all ages, adults and children, whose learning needs are additional to the majority of their peers.

See Annex 5 for further guidance.

Inspectors should evaluate the overall effectiveness of the provision that the college makes for any category of learners with additional learning needs. This is likely to include the additional support arrangements that the college makes to meet individual needs as well as providing additional learning support for learners who have been identified as needing additional support with basic skills to meet the demands of their main qualification aim.

Good care, support and guidance

All learners have good access to unbiased pre-entry information and advice. Induction programmes are tailored well to meet the needs of different groups of learners. The college identifies individuals' learning needs when they join the college and makes sure that these needs are met in a timely fashion. The college makes sure that tutorials are worthwhile and valued by learners. Learners have good

knowledge of the wider support services provided by the college and other agencies and. Learners make regular use of these services and say that they are useful. The college makes good arrangements for the support of all learners with additional learning needs. The arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of all learners are good. Learners receive good additional support.

Unsatisfactory care, support and guidance

Many learners fail to complete their courses as a result of inadequate initial guidance. The college is too slow to identify individuals' learning needs and often does not make adequate provision for learners' support needs in relation to literacy and numeracy. Many full-time learners have unsatisfactory and/or irregular tutorials and their attendance at tutorials is unsatisfactory. The college has a very limited range of support services and many learners are not aware of or do not use the support services.

2.4 Learning environment

2.4.1 ethos, equality and diversity

2.4.2 physical environment

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

2.4.1: ethos, equality and diversity

Inspectors should judge how well the college:

- establishes a college ethos that is inclusive;
- challenges all forms of discrimination or inequality for all groups who potentially could suffer lack of fair opportunities for learning and/or employment,
- offers fair access to the curriculum and challenges stereotypes in learners' choices;
- develops tolerant attitudes and makes sure that all learners and staff are free from harassment; and
- promotes the prevention and elimination of oppressive behaviour through its policies and procedures.

You should also take account of the extent to which work-based learners are protected from harassment and discrimination in their workplaces.

You should evaluate whether the college:

- has a well-understood policy that promotes equal opportunities and human rights;
- has an action plan that ensures delivery of the policy;
- provides appropriate equality training for staff; and
- monitors and addresses any related issues or complaints that arise.

2.4.2: physical environment

Inspectors should judge whether:

- there are enough resources that are matched to learners' needs;
- accommodation provides a stimulating and well-maintained learning environment to support learning, teaching and training both on the job and off the job;
- specialist accommodation and equipment is up to date; and
- accommodation in all centres used by the college is sufficient and well maintained.

Good learning environment

There are effective systems and procedures to monitor and eliminate all forms of discrimination and harassment including in the work-based learners' workplaces. Learners show a good level of knowledge and understanding of the principles underpinning equality of opportunity and diversity. The college has a good approach to social and educational inclusion. Nearly all the learning resources and accommodation are fit for purpose and accessible.

Unsatisfactory learning environment

There are inadequate systems and procedures for monitoring discrimination and harassment and the college does not keep any useful records of incidents of discriminatory behaviour. A significant minority of learners complain that they are often the victims of bullying and the college does not do enough to deal with it. Many learners are not familiar with the principles of equality of opportunity, especially in relation to workplace practices. A significant minority of the college's buildings are in an unsatisfactory state of repair and not suited to the purpose for which they are being used. A significant minority of teaching rooms in all settings do not have good enough learning resources. The learning resource centre has unsatisfactory stock and not enough computers.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

In coming to an overall judgement for this key question, inspectors should give equal weight to all quality indicators.

3.1 Leadership

3.1.1 strategic direction and the impact of leadership

3.1.2 governors or other supervisory boards

3.1.3 meeting national and local priorities

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

3.1.1: strategic direction and the impact of leadership

The main responsibility of the principal and senior management team is to make

sure that all learners get a high standard of education and training regardless of the level or area of study that they choose. You should take appropriate account of the judgements on standards achieved by learners and their wellbeing when making their judgement on leadership and management. You should consider the extent to which leaders have clear aims, strategic objectives, plans and policies that are focused on meeting learners' needs.

In evaluating the strategic direction and impact of the leadership, you should judge:

- how well roles and responsibilities are defined and whether the spans of control and lines of accountability in senior and middle management teams are viable and balanced;
- the extent to which staff understand and fulfil their roles in direct relation to specific strategic aims, plans and responsibilities;
- how effectively leaders manage their own time to prioritise activities appropriately;
- the coherence of management and committee structures;
- how effectively meetings are scheduled and run to improve the college's core business and learner performance;
- the effectiveness of leaders' use of data to monitor and challenge performance;
- how effectively leaders work with other stakeholders to promote the college's strategic direction;
- the effectiveness of communication; and
- the impact of leaders on the culture and morale of the college.

Inspectors should consider carefully the role of the principal in setting the tone of the institution and setting high standards for staff and learners and establishing shared values.

Inspectors should consider whether leaders:

- tackle underperformance robustly; and
- use target setting to drive improvements.

Inspectors should evaluate the impact of leaders in the way they manage the performance of staff in order to help staff to improve their practice. You should also judge whether leaders and managers address issues of underperformance robustly and directly where necessary. You should judge whether performance management identifies individual and whole-college training and development needs clearly and whether these are prioritised appropriately and addressed fully. You may identify whether staff are set appropriate targets for improvement that support the delivery of strategic aims in development plans and other action plans.

3.1.2: governors or other supervisory boards

Inspectors should judge how well the governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and takes full account of relevant legislation and guidance.

You should evaluate how well governors:

- understand their roles and responsibilities;
- challenge the senior management of the college;
- set an appropriate strategic direction as well as agreeing the nature and scope of provision;
- oversee the standards and quality achieved by learners in all parts of the college; and
- oversee the college's procedures and practices in relation to complaints and appeals.

3.1.3: meeting national and local priorities

Inspectors should judge the college's response to local and national priorities for education, for example, participation in national educational initiatives. They should also take account of the responsiveness of the college to changes in local and national priorities such as:

- the Quality and Effectiveness Framework;
- 14-19 Learning Pathways;
- the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW); and
- the Transformation agenda of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Good leadership

The college principal and senior managers are generally effective in providing clear direction, vision and values and promoting high standards of behaviour that impact directly on the performance and wellbeing of learners. Staff morale is generally good and staff help to develop and own the strategic priorities of the college. They know what their roles are in improving the quality of provision that they are responsible for. The college generally meets its own performance targets. The governors are well informed about the work of the college and the challenges that it faces. They provide both challenge and support for the principal and senior managers. Lines of accountability are clear and responsibilities for management are delegated appropriately.

Unsatisfactory leadership

The principal and senior managers are not known to many of the college's staff. They distance themselves from responsibility for standards. Staff morale is unsatisfactory and the rate of staff absenteeism is high. The arrangements for communication are limited. Some curriculum areas are unsatisfactorily managed and levels of accountability are low at all levels of management. The governors attend meetings irregularly and do not provide a robust challenge to the principal and senior management. They do not identify or address issues of poor performance.

3.2 Improving quality

3.2.1 self-assessment, including listening to learners and others

3.2.2 planning and securing improvement

3.2.3 involvement in networks of professional practice

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

3.2.1: self-assessment, including listening to learners and others

Accurate and comprehensive self-assessment is at the heart of all arrangements for quality improvement. The focus of self-assessment should be on identifying priorities for improvement, monitoring provision and assessing outcomes. It is unlikely that the quality of management and leadership can be good if the college does not have effective self-assessment procedures.

Inspectors should:

- evaluate how well the college uses the outcomes of learner, employer and staff surveys to self-assess and plan for improvement;
- take account of the ways in which the college analyses and responds to any concerns raised, particularly by learners;
- assess the extent to which the college involves all staff in assessing outcomes and performance;
- evaluate the effectiveness of what the college does to improve learning experiences and outcomes;
- judge the extent to which self-assessment draws on first-hand evidence of the quality of teaching and learning;
- evaluate how well the college uses data from other providers to compare learners' outcomes through benchmarking activities;
- judge how well it compares its performance with that of similar providers in other UK countries, especially for specialist provision;
- judge how well the college's arrangements for quality improvement will be closely integrated with other arrangements for improving quality, such as the performance management of staff; and
- judge how well self-assessment is embedded in strategic planning.

Inspectors should not prescribe any one particular model of quality improvement.

3.2.2: planning and securing improvement

Inspectors should evaluate how effective the college is at improving the quality of all its work, including that delivered in partnership with other providers.

You should evaluate how well:

- the cycles of quality improvement are integrated with other planning cycles;
- the college prioritises the plans for improvement through the allocation of resources and responsibilities;

- the college sets specific and realistic timescales for bring about improvement; and
- actions taken have had a positive effect and, where relevant, have led to measurable improvements in standards.

Inspectors should also consider how the college has responded to the recommendations of the last inspection report and whether the actions taken have led to improvements in standards and quality.

3.2.3: involvement in networks of professional practice

Inspectors should judge how well colleges are actively engaged with national organisation, such as ColegauCymru/CollegesWales and the National Training Federation for Wales that involve sharing and comparing practices and data on learner outcomes as well as management practices. You may consider how the college has regard for the agreed National Occupational Standards for post-16 practitioners in Wales and ensures the active engagement of staff in increasing their professional knowledge, understanding and skills.

Taking into account your judgements under 2.2 in relation to teaching and training, you should judge the extent to which staff:

- are supported by the college to take part in continuous professional development;
- acquire new knowledge and skills to develop more effective approaches to learning, teaching and training;
- share good practice with other teachers and trainers both within and outside the college;
- reflect on their own practice; and
- ensure that their professional learning impacts on learners' achievements and wellbeing.

Colleges should also have staff and management development programmes that help staff to develop new skills and knowledge and improve their professional practice. Inspectors should include an evaluation of the appropriateness and impact of the college's programme for continuous professional development and of the arrangements for performance management and how well these motivate staff and improve their performance.

Good quality improvement

The college's systems and procedures are effective in identifying and monitoring under-performance and bringing about improvements in learner experiences and outcomes. Self assessment processes are evaluative and the judgements are a reasonable match to those of the inspection team. Targets for improved performance are used well at all levels, including for individual learners. Most staff are closely involved in the process of self-assessment and the identification of areas for improvement. The college uses evidence from surveys well to bring about improvement. Quality assurance procedures are consistently applied across all parts of the college's work.

Unsatisfactory quality improvement

The overall college performance has not improved or it has deteriorated since it was last inspected. The plans for bringing about improvement do not have a high priority amongst senior managers. Areas of the college consistently fail to improve their performance. Self-assessment processes are superficial and do not take enough account of trends in outcomes, learners' work and the progress that they make in classes and on-the-job and off-the-job training sessions. Managers do not monitor performance regularly or address issues for improvement. Target-setting is not part of the culture of the college. Staff do not evaluate their own performance well to know their own strengths and areas for development.

3.3 Partnership working

3.3.1 strategic partnerships

3.3.2 joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

3.3.1: strategic partnerships

Inspectors should evaluate how strategically the college works with its partners to improve learners' standards, wellbeing and opportunities.

Partners can include:

- the local authorities in the area that the college serves;
- secondary schools in the area;
- higher education institutions;
- local and national employers;
- other work-based learning providers;
- other colleges;
- community and voluntary groups; and
- other providers of adult and community learning.

The most significant partnership is likely to be between the local authority education service (LAES), secondary schools and colleges for the planning and provision of 14-19 education and community learning.

Inspectors should evaluate the impact of the college on these partnerships and the extent to which it takes a leading and/or strategic role in establishing a strong partnership with high levels of trust between the different providers.

3.3.2: joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance

Inspectors should evaluate the how well the college works with other partners to plan and deliver coherent programmes and choices that take full account of all learners' needs. Inspectors should judge the effectiveness of the college's contribution to the partnership's planning and quality assurance arrangements. These will include

work-based learning courses that are delivered jointly by the college and employers. You should also consider the impact of the partnership in improving outcomes for learners who take part in courses that are delivered through partnership arrangements.

Good partnership working

The college has strong and effectiveness partnership with an appropriate range of providers. They take a leading role in developing joint working practices. They work well to develop trust between the partners. They always have the best interests of all learners when considering the arrangements for partnership working. The college is open, inclusive and proactive at all levels in its approach to other partners.

Unsatisfactory partnership working

The college plays a minor role in any partnerships in the area. It has lots of contacts with external stakeholders but these are often inconsistent and are not used systematically to develop or improve partnership working. College managers frequently do not attend meetings of the partnerships and its working groups. There is a strong feeling of distrust between partners and little sharing of working practices. The college seeks to protect its current working practices and autonomy.

3.4 Resource management

3.4.1 management of staff and resources

3.4.2 value for money

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

Normally, the overall judgement on this quality indicator should be the same as the judgement for Key Question 1, but it may be lower.

When inspecting the management of resources, inspectors should judge how well the college plans and carries out effective strategies to ensure and to monitor that they manage resources well and deliver value for money.

3.4.1: management of staff and resources

Colleges are large and complex organisations with many streams of both income and expenditure. You should take account of the extent to which the college's strategic plans are soundly based on good business planning principles.

You should consider how well leaders and managers:

- manage finance and resources in ways that help the college to achieve its educational priorities;
- make sure that the college is appropriately staffed to deliver the curriculum effectively;
- deploy teaching and support staff to make best use of their time and skills;
- meet the development needs of staff, however they are identified;
- use benchmarking information to direct resources to areas where they are most

needed;

- provide the best standards of accommodation; and
- make sure that learners have access to appropriate learning resources wherever they may be studying.

3.4.2: value for money

When inspecting value for money, inspectors should judge the effectiveness of the college in achieving learner outcomes of high quality in Key Question 1. However, they should also take into account how well the provider manages its resources. If resources are poorly managed, even if outcomes are good, the overall judgement should reflect the areas for development identified.

Inspectors should evaluate:

- the effectiveness of provision in securing appropriate outcomes for learners overall;
- the extent to which the college successfully balances the effectiveness of its provision against costs, including staffing costs;
- how well providers know the costs of existing programmes and activities, keep them under review and question whether they are cost effective; and
- the extent to which it makes good use of the funding it receives.

Inspectors may consider how far the college has benefited from efficiency gains due to mergers, reorganisation or collaboration arrangements.

You should state in the report that the college offers excellent, good, adequate or unsatisfactory value for money for its learners in terms of the use made of its income.

Good resource management

The college manages its resources effectively. College managers use information from benchmarking surveys well to identify opportunities to redirect resources to improve both effectiveness and efficiency. The college has well-considered and costed plans for improving the quality of its accommodation and resources. The college evaluates the effectiveness of measures that it takes to improve the performance of teachers and other staff. The rates of utilisation of teaching and other accommodation resources are good. The college provides good value for money for its learners.

Unsatisfactory resource management

The college makes very little use of benchmarking information to support its plans for improving accommodation and its use of resources. Its accommodation strategy is not a good match to its planned curriculum development. The college's staff development strategy is linked unsatisfactorily to its strategies for quality improvement and curriculum development. It does not evaluate the effectiveness of its staff development programme or how well staff are deployed. The rates of room utilisation are very varied and are often low. The college provides unsatisfactory value for money for its learners.

Annex 1: Common Inspection Framework

K Q	Quality Indicators	Aspects
1 O U T C O M E S	1.1 Standards	1.1.1 results and trends in performance compared with national averages, similar providers and prior attainment 1.1.2 standards of groups of learners 1.1.3 achievement and progress in learning 1.1.4 skills 1.1.5 Welsh language
	1.2 Wellbeing	1.2.1 attitudes to keeping healthy and safe 1.2.2 participation and enjoyment in learning 1.2.3 community involvement and decision making 1.2.4 social and life skills
2 P R O V I S I O N	2.1 Learning experiences	2.1.1 meeting the needs of learners, employers/community 2.1.2 provision for skills 2.1.3 Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension 2.1.4 education for sustainable development and global citizenship
	2.2 Teaching	2.2.1 range and quality of teaching approaches 2.2.2 assessment of and for learning
	2.3 Care, support and guidance	2.3.1 provision for health and wellbeing 2.3.2 specialist services, information and guidance 2.3.3 safeguarding arrangements 2.3.4 additional learning needs
	2.4 Learning environment	2.4.1 ethos, equality and diversity 2.1.1 physical environment
3 L E A D E R S H I P	3.1 Leadership	3.1.1 strategic direction and the impact of leadership 3.1.2 governors or other supervisory boards 3.1.3 meeting national and local priorities
	3.2 Improving quality	3.2.1 self-assessment, including listening to learners and others 3.2.2 planning and securing improvement 3.2.3 involvement in networks of professional practice
	3.3 Partnership working	3.3.1 strategic partnerships 3.3.2 joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance
	3.4 Resource management	3.4.1 management of staff and resources 3.4.2 value for money

Annex 2: Sources of evidence

The main sources of evidence relevant to key questions and quality indicators

	Key Question 1		Key Question 2				Key Question 3			
	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
Observation:										
Observation of teaching, training and learning sessions, workplace training and tutorials	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Scrutiny of learners' current and previous work, including portfolios, audio and video recordings and photographic evidence of any work done at work as well as marking, comments and follow-up work	✓	✓		✓						
Observation of recruitment, and guidance procedures			✓		✓					
The available learning resources, including library/learning resource centres on different sites. The range of an appropriate range of books, ICT resources, practical equipment and audio-visual materials to support learning, teaching and training, including specialist equipment to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓
The condition, appearance, use and fitness for purpose of accommodation on all sites where teaching, training and learning take place						✓				✓

Specialist accommodation, equipment, aids and other resources						✓				✓
Documents:										
The self-assessment report and quality development plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The most recent QEF report	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The most recent DCELLS briefing on the college	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The most recent data on outcomes from LLWR as well as more recent data as provided by the college	✓									
Data on learner retention, attainment, progression, value-added, attendance and punctuality across the college	✓	✓								
Records of diagnostic testing, the take-up of learning support and its impact	✓				✓	✓				
Arrangements to support learners with learning difficulties, and/or disabilities	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Data on learners in partnership provision, including the percentage they represent of the age cohort in the areas served by the college as well as quality improvement arrangements for the provision and the outcomes for any learners engaged in partnership provision	✓							✓		
The college's representation on boards and committees responsible for the planning and the delivery of the 14-19 local curriculum							✓	✓	✓	✓
Information about the targets for improvement set by the college	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓

Learners' and employers' views as expressed in questionnaires (or other similar documents)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategic, operational and business plans as well as policies and procedures relating to quality improvement, learner support, health and safety, diagnostic testing, equal opportunity and diversity, race equality, and the protection of children and vulnerable adults					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Management statistics and other data used for planning and monitoring provision	✓						✓	✓	✓	✓
The college's prospectuses and any other marketing materials			✓		✓	✓		✓		
Labour market information, market research and the evidence of the use made of it			✓				✓			
Documentation on links and relationships with other institutions and sub-contractors							✓	✓	✓	✓
Curriculum documentation, schemes of work and lesson plans			✓	✓			✓			
Information on staffing, including management structure, job descriptions of all grades of staff and policies and plans for staff development as well as records of CPD activities and any staff handbooks and guidance materials						✓				✓
Arrangements for performance management and records of observations of lessons and work-based training sessions				✓					✓	

Annex 3: Regulations and guidance

The documents listed below are a combination of regulations, measures and circulars and are provided as a reference for inspectors. The list is not exhaustive and it is not intended to be a checklist for inspectors to review a college. They are provided only as a resource for an inspection team should the need arise. Inspectors need to be aware that regulations and measures are statutory documents.

* All of the documents are relevant to Key Question 1 in terms of their impact on outcomes for learners.

	Key Question 1*	Key Question 2				Key Question 3			
		2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
Accessibility Plan: Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Needs and Disability Act 2001) DDA, Part IV. DDA, Part III		✓		✓	✓	✓			
Curriculum: Learning Pathways 14-19 Guidance II Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 Circular 17/2006 Collaborative Arrangements Between FE Institutions and Schools 007/2009 February 2009; Transforming Education and Training Providers in Wales: Delivering Skills that Work for Wales ISBN 978 0 7504 4787 4 Delivering Skills that Work for Wales (NEETs strategy – not yet published)		✓		✓		✓			✓
Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Needs and Disability Act 2001) DDA, Part IV. DDA, Part III.				✓	✓	✓			
Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship: A Strategy for Action 055/2008 April 2008		✓				✓			
Fire Safety Policy and Procedures: (Health and Safety at Work Act) (Fire Safety) Order 2005)				✓	✓	✓			
Freedom of Information: a college must maintain and publish a Publication Scheme (Freedom of Information Act 2000 section 19)						✓			

	Key Question 1*	Key Question 2				Key Question 3			
		2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
Governance: Government of Further Education Corporations (Wales) Regulation 2006						√			
Race Equality & Equal Opportunities: Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000				√	√	√			
Safeguarding: All Wales Child Protection Procedures; and NAW circular 34/02 'Child Protection: preventing unsuitable people from working with children and young persons in the education service'; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006: Controlled Activities Wales; In Safe Hands: implementing adult protection procedures in Wales, 2000				√		√			
Quality and Effectiveness: Quality Effectiveness Framework for post-16 learner in Wales March 2009 ISBN 978 0 7504 4928 1 The Learning Country August 2001 ISBN 0 7504 2735 3 The Learning Country: Vision into Action The Beecham Review 'Making the Connections' and 'Beyond Boundaries' Welsh Assembly Government July 2006						√	√	√	

Annex 4: Learner survey

Listening to learners is a key source of evidence of learners' achievement, attitudes and wellbeing. Inspectors will consider the outcomes of surveys of learners' views when deciding upon lines of enquiry at the pre-inspection stage. Learners' views will also influence inspectors when making evaluative judgements about how well the college meets the needs of learners.

Inspectors should include a short commentary on learner perceptions of the college. The commentary may be based on an analysis of learner perception questionnaires conducted by Estyn or on a learner survey conducted by DCELLS.

The commentary should focus in particular on learners' views about the quality of advice, support and guidance they receive, how well the teaching meets their needs and engages their interest, how much they feel their voice is heard and how it influences decision-making about their course and the college as a whole.

Annex 5: Learners with additional learning needs (ALN)

Learner and other stakeholder views are sources of evidence for all key questions. Inspectors must ensure that evaluation of the 10 quality indicators includes the achievements, attitudes and well-being of all learners, taking particular account of outcomes for learners with additional learning needs (ALN).

The term ALN applies to learners of all ages, adults and children, whose learning needs are additional to the majority of their peers. Learners with ALN include those who:

- have special educational needs;
- are disabled;
- have medical needs;
- have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and/or mental health needs;
- are more able and talented;
- are learning English as an additional language; and
- have basic skills needs.

Learners are more likely to have ALN when they also belong to vulnerable groups including:

- minority ethnic groups;
- refugees/asylum seekers;
- migrant workers;
- looked-after children;
- young parents and pregnant young women;
- young offenders;
- adults, children and families in difficult circumstances;
- learners at risk of homophobic bullying;
- young carers; and
- gypsies and travellers.

Annex 6: Guidance on the use of data in the inspection of further education institutions

Issues in inspecting the quality indicator

Inspectors should read this guidance in conjunction with the guidance on inspecting standards (1.1.1). Data is one of the contributing factors in coming to a judgement on standards.

Inspectors use a four-point indicative scale when looking at data on performance, where such data is available. The scaling shows how well the provider is performing in relation to national benchmarks:

- Excellent = 15% or more above the national comparator
- Good = 5% to 15% above the national comparator
- Adequate = 5% above to 5% below the national comparator
- Unsatisfactory = More than 5% below the national comparator

Estyn produces tables of data for inspection teams based on the most up-to-date LLWR data available. These tables focus on outcomes at the level of the whole provider and at the level of each learning area. The tables also contain relevant national comparators and colour-coded indications of where the provider performance comes on the four-point scale outlined above.

The tables also indicate, for the internal scrutiny of inspectors, how the provider performance ranks against other providers in Wales. Inspectors should consider the rank ordering in order to calibrate their judgements further and to guide them in identifying potential lines of enquiry for the inspection.

Inspectors may consider data on learner performance that is not captured by the LLWR. Inspectors may look at the grades awarded to learners and how these compare to national comparators. They may consider learners' achievement of credit, where this is a feature of their individual learning plans and course of study. They may consider how long it has taken learners to complete training frameworks. Inspectors may also use data provided by awarding bodies to inform their judgements, especially in relation to vocational qualifications.

Inspectors may take account of any analyses of value added performance by learners. This analysis looks at how well learners have performed compared to their starting points. This can provide important information on learner performance, especially where learners are not attaining the higher grades but nonetheless have performed very well from a low starting point.

Inspectors may also focus in more depth on a small sample of learning areas, for example three or four in a general FE college or large WBL provider, in order to pursue a specific line of enquiry. Inspectors may look carefully at the data on learner performance in these learning areas. This analysis also gives inspectors an important insight into how well the provider manages its data on learner performance.

Inspectors may look at the outcomes in the main qualifications in the sample of learning or occupational areas. They may calculate the success rates for the group of main qualifications in each of the sampled areas and compare these to the national comparators for the same group of qualifications. This provides a very useful insight into learner performance in each of the learning areas. It is also important because a large number of additional, short qualifications can skew the overall data for a learning area. FE institutions also place a great deal of emphasis on the performance of learners in their main qualification aims.

Often the very latest information on learner performance may still not be verified. In these cases, inspectors should also ask providers to provide unverified data in relation to completion, attainment and success rates. They should choose a small sample of the data and ask to see returns from examination and awarding bodies to check on the robustness of the sampled data.

Unverified data is particularly useful when looking at trends in performance and to see whether recent actions taken by the provider are bearing fruit in relation to improved learner outcomes.

Normally, inspectors should attach the greatest weight to verified data. Inspectors may, however, take account of unverified, recent data where they are able to check records from original sources, such as returns from awarding bodies.

Inspectors may also consider how well specific groups of learners perform, for example learners on long and short courses, male and female learners, full-time and part-time learners, learners from ethnic minority groups, learners from disadvantaged areas, learners at specific levels or learners following credit-based courses.

Where parts of a provider are performing very well and other parts of a provider are underperforming, inspectors should explore what the provider is doing to bring the performance of the weaker areas up to the same standard as the best.

Annex 7: Guidance on follow-up activity

Background

During all core inspections, the inspection team will consider whether the provider needs any follow-up activity. The same approach will apply to partnership inspections, with the lead partner acting as the provider.

There are four types of follow-up activity:

- 1 Excellent practice case study**
- 2 Post-16 link inspector monitoring visit**
- 3 Estyn team monitoring visit**
- 4 Re-inspection**

The first follow-up activity involves action by the provider to produce an excellent practice case study for dissemination by Estyn. The second involves a monitoring visit from the post-16 link inspector. The third is a visit from a small team of Estyn inspectors. The last involves re-inspection and subject to the outcome, referral to DCELLS for funding or contractual interventions. Apart from the good practice case study, follow-up activity involves increasing levels of intervention in proportion to need.

DCELLS will be informed of the outcomes of inspection that require either further visits by Estyn inspectors or re-inspection. DCELLS officers will be kept informed, following monitoring inspections by Estyn, of subsequent progress made by the provider and will carry out its own monitoring of providers' progress. If the prospects for improvement are unsatisfactory DCELLS will undertake its own performance monitoring and will request targeted follow-up by a post-16 link inspector. If the provider fails to submit a satisfactory action plan following receipt of an adequate or unsatisfactory overall judgement, DCELLS may take remedial action, including withdrawal of funding.

1 Excellent practice case study

If a provider gains an excellent judgement for at least one of the two overall judgements then the inspection team will have identified one or possibly more examples of excellent or sector-leading practice at the provider that warrant wider dissemination. This possibility should be discussed during team meetings, when sector-leading practice will have been a key consideration in reaching any excellent judgement.

In such cases, the reporting inspector will invite the provider to prepare a written case study of no more than 600 words, accompanied by any appropriate illustrative material if appropriate¹, describing the excellent, sector-leading practice. It should be made clear to the provider that the inspectorate reserves the right to edit the content and presentational style. The case study should describe the context and

¹ Photographic images of children and young people require the necessary clearance.

background of the best practice, the exact nature of the strategy or activity and what the impact has been on outcomes for the learners, trainees or clients. The case study must be one that can be held up as sector-leading practice to the scrutiny of other providers in the same sector or possibly other similar sectors.

The case study should be sent to Estyn within four weeks of the end of the on-site part of the inspection. The case study should be accompanied by a letter or email showing that it has been approved for use by the inspectorate and signed off by the senior leader of the provider.

The provider may at a later stage also be invited to showcase their sector-leading practice at one of Estyn's best practice conferences. The example might be disseminated through various media, including the inspectorate's website, newsletters, best practice publications for the sector, in the Annual Reports of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) and at best practice events. Case studies will normally have a publication life of three years, after which they will be removed from the Estyn website, to ensure that they remain topical and at the forefront of excellent practice.

2 Post-16 link inspector monitoring visit

The least intensive follow-up activity is required when the provider is identified as a generally good provider, but it may have a small number of specific areas for improvement that require monitoring to ensure improvement.

In such cases, the two overall judgements for the provider might be good, but a small number of key questions or quality indicators may be judged to be adequate, indicating some areas for improvement. This might include instances where there is a failure to meet statutory requirements.

If the provider is judged to require monitoring by the Estyn post-16 link inspector, the reporting inspector should tell the senior leader of the provider at the end of the core inspection that the team has reached this judgement and inform the relevant managers in the inspectorate.

3 Estyn team monitoring visit

Normally, this level of activity will be required when at least one of the overall judgements for a provider in a core inspection report is adequate, but the provider is not causing concern to the extent of requiring re-inspection at this stage.

To receive this level of follow-up activity, key questions or quality indicators would be judged to be at least adequate. It would be possible that at least some key questions and quality indicators have been judged as good. However, the provider would have some important areas for improvement that require monitoring.

If the provider is judged to require an Estyn monitoring visit, the reporting inspector should tell the senior leader of the provider at the end of the core inspection that the team has reached this judgement and inform the relevant managers in Estyn.

Subject to moderation, the inspectorate will write a letter to the provider, copied to DCELLS, identifying the areas that require improvement and explaining that a small team of Estyn inspectors will visit the provider to judge progress around a year later. If the team judges that insufficient progress has been made then the provider may be judged to require significant improvement and this might result in re-inspection.

Following the Estyn visit an unpublished letter will be written to the provider reporting on the findings of the visit. This letter will indicate prospects for improvement and this judgement will determine future follow-up activity. This letter will be copied to DCELLS.

4 Re-inspection

Normally, this level of activity will be required when at least one of the overall judgements for a provider in a core inspection report is unsatisfactory.

To receive this level of follow-up activity, one or more key questions or quality indicators would be judged to be unsatisfactory. It would be possible that at least some key questions and quality indicators have been judged as adequate. However, the provider would have important areas for improvement that require re-inspection.

If the provider is judged to require re-inspection, the reporting inspector should tell the senior leader of the provider at the end of the core inspection that the team has reached this judgement and inform the relevant managers in Estyn.

The inspectorate will write a letter to the provider, copied to DCELLS, identifying the areas that require improvement and explaining the timing of the re-inspection.

After the re-inspection, Estyn will publish a report evaluating the progress made by the provider in those areas of the original inspection judged to be unsatisfactory.

If the team judges that insufficient progress has been made at the end of a re-inspection then this will be reported to DCELLS as part of their contract management procedures. This information will be used in making decisions over continuation or withdrawal of the DCELLS contract with the provider.

Follow-up activity

The table below summarises the types of follow-up activity that may result from a core inspection. It provides a broad indication of likely outcomes in order to guide consistency across sectors. The type of follow-up needed by a particular provider will be decided on a case-by-case basis, using detailed guidance set out in the inspection handbooks for each sector. The various boundaries may need to be revised with experience.

Current Performance	Prospects	Other	Indicative outcome - Post-16
Excellent for at least one overall judgement		Where Estyn identifies the need for dissemination of sector-leading practice	Provider writes case study
Good	Good	Any key question or quality indicator adequate. Failure to meet statutory requirements that affects quality and standards	Post-16 link inspector monitoring visit
Adequate	Good or better		Estyn team monitoring visit*
Good or better	Adequate		Estyn team monitoring visit*
Adequate	Adequate	One or more quality indicators good or better	Estyn team monitoring visit*
Adequate	Adequate	Any key question unsatisfactory or one or more quality indicator unsatisfactory or all adequate	Estyn team monitoring visit*
Unsatisfactory	Adequate		Re-inspection*
Adequate	Unsatisfactory		Re-inspection*
Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory		Re-inspection*

* DCELLS informed of measures taken and of progress

Annex 8: The inspection of specialist colleges

Within the six-year inspection cycle, Estyn will organise the inspection of independent specialist colleges in Wales that provide for post-16 learners funded by DCELLS. We will inspect them using the Common Inspection Framework for further education institutions.

The independent specialist colleges commonly offer residential provision for learners with moderate to severe learning difficulties.

Where the independent specialist college also includes learners from England funded by the Learning and Skills Council, we will arrange to include inspectors from Ofsted on the inspection team.