

Initial teacher education inspections and outcomes

Methodology and quality report

Last updated:

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Introduction

This paper contains quality and methodological information relevant to Ofsted's annual release of initial teacher training inspections and outcomes data. This release can be found at the following webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/initial-teacher-education-inspections-and-outcomes>

This official statistics release reports on the outcomes of initial teacher education inspections that were completed within the academic year. This release also includes the most recent inspection outcomes for all open provision that have been inspected, as at the end of that period.

This report includes outcomes for:

1. All partnerships of programmes leading to qualified teacher status for maintained schools and academies in England,
2. All partnerships of programmes of further education teacher training validated by higher education institutions in England,
3. All partnerships of programmes leading to early years teacher status in England.

Partnerships of initial teacher education are inspected in accordance with the Education Act; several sections of the act relate to the inspection of initial teacher education. For more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-education-inspection-handbook>

The inspection framework was most recently revised on 1 September 2015. Under this framework, partnerships are judged as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.

Each provider of initial teacher education can offer training for up to four different age ranges. These are called age phase partnerships and cover:

Early Years
Primary
Secondary

Further Education

If a provider has been inspected more than once, not all age phase partnerships may be inspected each time. Statistics on most recent inspection judgements are based on the most recent judgement of each partnership, not the most recent judgement of each provider.

Since June 2014, inspections have taken place in two stages. The first stage can take place at any point during the summer term and will focus on the quality of training and observations of trainees' teaching. The second stage will occur in the autumn term following completion of the training and will focus on the quality of newly qualified teachers and / or former trainees¹ teaching. Towards the end of the second stage, the inspection team will consider the evidence available and make its final judgements.

From June 2014, an ITE partnership that has been judged as requires improvement or to be inadequate will have a single stage follow up inspection in the summer term of the same academic year as their stage two inspection. If improvement is not seen at the second inspection of primary or secondary provision, the partnership is usually subject to the withdrawal of its accreditation by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL)². No such condition exists for inspection of further education partnerships since it is not accredited by the National College for Teaching and Leadership. The full withdrawal of accreditation process is published at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-accreditation-withdrawal-process>

Relevance

Information in this release has three distinct purposes:

1. Reporting on the outcome of inspections provides trainees and prospective trainees with an expert and independent assessment of how well an ITE partnership is performing and the quality of teacher training offered.
2. The reporting on the volume and outcome of inspections allows the Department of Education (DfE), the National College for Teaching and Leadership, academics, the third sector and other interested parties to track movement in the sector and monitor the provision available at a national and local level. This accurate picture of the provision influences policy decisions and helps to ensure provision is available where it is most needed. The inspection outcomes inform the sector on

¹ The term 'former trainee' is used to describe recently trained teachers in further education colleges, FE and skills and early years settings.

² An executive agency sponsored by the Department for Education. NCTL is responsible for managing bursary and grant funding associated with initial teacher training for postgraduate and undergraduate courses.

the quality of provision available. This identifies both good practice and targets areas of weak performance. This, in turn, informs policy development within DfE and the NCTL to address issues and implement strategies to mitigate them.

3. Within the organisation, inspection profiles inform Ofsted framework development and underpin policies to improve standards.

Inspection acts in a number of ways to drive and support improvement in the ITE sector. It:

- raises expectations by setting the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of ITE partnerships
- provides challenge and the impetus to act where improvement is needed
- clearly identifies strengths and weaknesses
- recommends specific priorities for improvement for ITE partnerships and, when appropriate, checks on and promotes subsequent progress
- promotes rigour in the way that ITE partnerships evaluate their own performance, thereby enhancing their capacity to improve
- monitors the progress and performance of ITE partnerships that are not yet good, providing challenge and support to the senior leaders and managers who are responsible.

Assessment of user needs and perceptions

There was an Ofsted-wide user consultation survey in January 2012 on all Ofsted official statistics releases. A report from this consultation, and Ofsted's response, can be found at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141107042920/http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/report-responses-2012-consultation-of-ofsted-official-statistics>

Ofsted welcomes feedback about our statistical releases. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please contact: Inspectioninsight@ofsted.gov.uk

Coherence and comparability

Ofsted assumed responsibility for inspection of initial teacher education from the teacher training agency in 2002.

Ofsted has reported on inspections and inspection outcomes as official statistics since 2012³. There have been a number of framework changes since the first release of statistics and these have been reflected in the publications.

For inspections that took place prior to September 2012, a different framework was applicable. Only the overall effectiveness grade can be compared across frameworks.

³ Covering the 2011/12 academic year.

When this, and other changes occurred, users have been alerted via updates in the main findings document. When framework changes have meant direct comparisons have not been possible then breaks in times series have been clearly added to tables and charts and explained in the text. When methodological changes have been implemented to improve the output, guidance has been added to footnotes and the main findings document for easy access.

For the inspection outcomes aspect of this release, where statements are made about whether inspection outcomes have declined or improved, they are referring to the most recent relevant outcome and refer to overall effectiveness outcomes only.

When a provider offering primary and secondary training only has a small number of trainees, Ofsted may inspect both phases simultaneously and produce a combined judgement on the primary and secondary training. This is different from what happens in larger providers where judgements will be made separately for primary and for secondary training. These inspections are marked as 'primary / secondary'.

Data View is a web based tool that shows Ofsted inspection data in simple graphs that make the data quickly and easily accessible. Inspection outcomes data presented in the official statistics release will not match the data shown in Dataview for two reasons:

1. Dataview does not currently include the provider type 'primary/secondary' where one set of judgements applies to both primary and secondary partnerships. Such providers are included within both primary and secondary provider types and are 'double counted'. As such, aggregate figures will not exactly match those published in official statistics releases.
2. Official statistics releases use more detailed provision type breakdowns than dataview; the provision type 'ITE in FE' is included within 'higher education institution' in dataview. Hibernia College UK Limited (10275) is a 'for profit provider' but is included within 'higher education institution' in dataview.

Accuracy and reliability

Inspections outcome data are extracted from Ofsted's administrative systems. Errors in recording inspection outcomes may affect the quality of source data. A number of appropriate systems have been put in place by Ofsted to minimise the risk of reporting error:

Migration to new administrative system

Ofsted introduced a new administrative system in September 2015. A thorough check of the migration from the old administrative system to the new system was undertaken to ensure that inspection data was correct.

Inspections outcome data is extracted from Ofsted's administrative systems. Inspection outcomes are entered onto our systems by the lead inspector. As inspection reports undergo a quality assurance process, any errors are likely to be identified at this stage. In addition, a sample of the entries made onto our administrative system is checked to ensure that these match the inspection report. There is a focus on checking those entries where the risk of there being an error is highest. An example of this is where the inspection outcome awarded changes during the quality assurance process. There remains a small chance that some outcomes are entered incorrectly onto our systems.

Technical production

Technical production of the official statistics publication may also result in manual errors. A rigorous data quality assurance procedure is adopted with the aim of minimising the risk of reporting error. If an error is discovered within the document, a note is placed on the website and a corrected version of the document is uploaded as soon as possible.

More information of the issues relating to the use of administrative data is available here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-standards-for-official-statistics.

A partnership may list itself as closed but still provide training to individuals part way through the course. In other cases, trainees transfer to another provider to complete their training. In either case, the partnership is considered closed and excluded from figures even though a small number of trainees may still be receiving training from these partnerships. Closed providers do not appear in the data nor are they included in any statistics.

From 1 September 2013, the NCTL have no longer allocated places to Employment⁴ based routes into ITE (EBR): Ofsted, therefore, no longer inspects EBRs as separate partnerships. Some EBRs have become school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers, others continue to offer the Schools Direct (salaried) programme as an employment route.

⁴ As at 30 June 2017, there is only one provider operating as EBR.

Timeliness and punctuality

Data is currently published once a year and include details of inspections that have taken place and been published in the relevant period.

Data is published at 09:30 on the date pre-announced in the publication schedule: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about/statistics. Information on any delay in publication can also be found on the publication schedule.

The average production time for this release is approximately six weeks. This time includes obtaining and cleaning the data, drafting findings, quality assuring all outputs and uploading information to the gov.uk website.

Publications are announced via social media. Pre-release access is given in accordance with the pre-release to official statistics order (2008). Details of this order can be found at:

www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/legislation/pre-release-access/index.html

The two stage approach leads to the first and second stages of inspection occurring in different academic years. An inspection is only considered to be complete, and final judgements are only made after the second stage is completed. Official statistics releases therefore report on inspections which were *concluded* in the reporting year. For example, the release covering the 2015/16 academic year will report on inspections where the second stage occurred in 2015/16. Inspections with the first stage occurring in the summer term of 2015/16 will be reported in the 2016/17 release.

Providers judged to require improvement or to be inadequate will have a one stage follow up inspection in the summer term of the same academic year as their stage two inspection. These inspections will therefore fall within the same reporting period as the initial two stage inspection.

Due to the timing of ITE inspections, Ofsted is able to report on inspections within the academic year before the end of that academic year. No inspections will be concluded in the summer term and so outcomes within the academic year can be finalised early, typically at the end of June. This is why Ofsted reports on most recent outcomes for all partnerships as at the end of June but reports volumes of inspection within the academic year as being between September and August.

Accessibility and clarity

Ofsted releases are published in an accessible format on the gov.uk website. The information is publicly available and there are no restrictions on access to the published data. The report includes outcomes from Ofsted inspections that have subsequently been published and accurate numbers of partnerships registered with

Ofsted. The data is aimed at keeping users informed of progress of the inspection framework and of changes in the sector.

Supporting underlying data, in an accessible format, accompanies each release. This data consists of partnership level information.

Performance, cost and respondent burden

There is no respondent burden in relation to this statistics release as data is a by-product of Ofsted's inspection process. The only cost involved is the internal resource involved in collating the release.

Confidentiality, transparency and security

Where sensitive or personal data is held by Ofsted the disclosure control processes we have in place ensure that this data is not published.

All data releases follow Ofsted's confidentiality and revisions policies which can be found in these locations: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-standards-for-official-statistics/statistical-notice-ofsted-policy-statement-on-confidentiality-and-data-access>

and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handling-and-retention-of-ofsted-inspection-evidence>

Methodology

Official statistics only include information on published inspection reports. The cut-off date for publication is chosen to allow all inspections which took place within the reporting period to be published. This cut-off date is specified in the official statistics publication.

1. Information on partnerships includes postcode, regional information and the status of which age phase partnerships are active at each partnership are taken from the annual partnership returns. This information may be subject to change.
2. From 1 September 2013, Ofsted no longer judged the Employment-based route (EBR) as a separate provision of ITE. Some Employment-based initial teacher training partnerships (EBITTs) have converted to school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) partnerships.
3. No judgements for EBR partnerships are included in the most recent inspection figures. This means EBITTs that converted to SCITTs are not included in this data unless they have been re-inspected after conversion. EBITTs which offer training in other age phases are included⁵. Further information on inspections of EBRs can be found in ITE official statistics from previous years.

⁵ For example, Kent County Council EBITT's primary/ secondary partnership was inspected in October 2014 and reported in the 2014/15 academic year statistics even though it is an employment based provider.

Glossary

Early years teacher status (EYTS)

The award that indicates whether an individual is trained to deliver the early years foundation stage.

Former trainee

This term is used to describe recently trained teachers in further education colleges, FE and skills and early years settings.

Further Education (FE) Training

Training for those entering the further education and skills sector.

Higher Education Institution (HEI)

A university or university college that provides undergraduate or postgraduate teacher training. An HEI usually offers an academic qualification that includes qualified teacher status (QTS).

Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

All programmes of teacher training that lead to qualified teacher status for state-funded schools or publicly funded teacher training for the FE sector.

Inspection judgements

Inspectors make judgements using a four-point scale:

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement ('satisfactory' under previous frameworks)
Grade 4	Inadequate
Grade 9	Not applicable, insufficient evidence or did not receive a judgement
Grade 0	Too few trainees to form a judgement

Partnership

Refers to the age phase of ITE offered by a particular provider. A single provider may be inspected and receive judgements for up to four different age phase partnerships: early years, primary, secondary and FE.

Primary Training

Training which prepares trainees to teach in at least two key stages of the primary age phase (pupils aged 11 years and under).

Primary/Secondary judgements

When a provider offering primary and secondary ITE includes a small number of trainees, Ofsted may inspect both phases of ITE simultaneously and produce a judgement on the primary and secondary training. This is different from what happens in larger providers where judgements will be made separately for primary and for secondary training.

Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)

The accreditation that enables newly qualified trainees to teach in state-maintained and special schools in England and Wales.

Secondary Training

Training which prepares trainees to teach in at least two key stages of the secondary age phase (students aged 11-18 and/or 14 -19 years).

School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)

A consortium of schools, usually in a local area or region, providing graduate training for teachers.

Teach First

A charity set up to recruit graduates and train them to teach in deprived areas.