



Handbook for inspecting colleges

May 2006

**Better
education
and care**

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Introduction

This handbook is published by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England (HMCI). It provides guidance for colleges and for inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) on the implementation of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) for Inspecting Post-16 Education and Training.¹

The handbook has two parts:

- **Part 1:** organisation and management of inspections. This contains guidance for inspectors and colleges on the preparation for, and conduct of, inspections.
- **Part 2:** guidance for inspectors and colleges on the evaluation requirements. This is guidance on how inspectors will approach judgements of the overall effectiveness of the college and of the five key questions in the CIF.

This handbook will be widely available to colleges and other organisations to ensure that colleges are well informed about the process and procedures of inspection. It seeks to balance the need for consistency in inspections with the flexibility required to respond to the individual circumstances of each college to be inspected. It should be regarded as an account of procedures normally governing inspection, rather than a set of inflexible rules.

¹ From April 2007 the Adult Learning Inspectorate and Ofsted will merge to form a single inspectorate.

Part 1. Organisation and management of inspections

Background to the inspection arrangements

Learning and Skills Act 2000

1. Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000:
 - Ofsted's remit is extended to include the inspection of all 16–19 education in colleges of further education and sixth form colleges from April 2001
 - the ALI is set up to inspect all post-16 work-based training and adult education
 - Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is responsible for the publication of inspection reports on the quality of provision in sixth form colleges and colleges of further education with 16–19 provision
 - HMCI is responsible for planning and leading joint college inspections and for the co-ordination and management of the inspection
 - area-wide inspections and other inspections may be carried out jointly by Ofsted and the ALI under the direction of HMCI.

The Children Act 2004 and joint area reviews

2. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on children's services authorities to make arrangements through which key partners, including councils, police authorities, health authorities, primary care trusts, local probation boards, Connexions services and local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) co-operate to improve the well-being of local children.
3. The Act's main provisions on inspection state that:
 - HMCI, working with other commissions and inspectorates, is to consult on and publish a framework for the inspection of children's services
 - joint area reviews, conducted under the framework by any two or more commissions and inspectorates, are to evaluate how well services, taken together, improve the well-being of children and young people in the local area.
4. The CIF states that all inspections of institutions (other than those making provision solely for adults) will contribute to the joint area reviews that will be carried out in every local authority area in England over a three year period. These reviews will evaluate the extent to which the following five outcomes for children and young people are being met:
 - being healthy
 - staying safe
 - enjoying and achieving
 - making a positive contribution
 - achieving economic well-being.
5. In judging the overall effectiveness of the college, inspectors will consider the contribution made by the college to all five outcomes, particularly the

extent to which learners are enjoying and achieving throughout their time at college. Grades will be awarded for each of the five outcomes. Grading will be a corporate decision of the full inspection team, made at the final grading meeting. The grades awarded will be recorded on the inspection database and fed back to the college at the end of the inspection. The judgements will inform the joint area review, but grades will not be published in the college inspection report.

Purposes of inspection

6. The overall aim of inspection is to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of education, training, integrated care and extended services in schools in meeting the needs of learners. The new inspection arrangements, together with other government initiatives, are intended to accelerate the pace of quality improvement in the further education sector. The main purposes of inspection are to:

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

Ofsted's role in college inspections

7. Ofsted's functions in relation to the inspection of colleges, undertaken jointly with the ALI or acting independently, include:

- managing and administering the inspection programme
- planning and leading the inspection of individual colleges
- assuring the quality of inspections and the work of inspectors
- collating inspection data to provide benchmarks for future inspections
- reporting on inspection findings, including overall effectiveness, capacity to improve, progress since the last inspection, standards achieved, quality of education and training, and quality of leadership and management, in HMCI's annual report
- carrying out annual assessment visits to all colleges
- assessing, through the programme of annual assessment visits, a college's progress with the implementation of action plans, especially in areas of provision judged to be inadequate.

8. In conjunction with the ALI, Ofsted will also:

- establish and keep under review the CIF and the handbook
- ensure that training is provided for inspectors
- secure the availability of inspectors who can take part in inspections as members of inspection teams.

9. Under race relations legislation, Ofsted and the ALI are bound by the general duty to promote race equality. They will examine and report on whether colleges are meeting their general and specific duties under the relevant legislation.

Inspection programme

10. Ofsted, in consultation with the ALI, will select colleges for inspection and decide when the inspection will take place, within the intervals for inspection specified by the secretary of state for education and skills. The views of the DfES, LSC and Jobcentre Plus will be considered when planning the programme. It is expected that almost all colleges of further education and sixth form colleges will be inspected at least once between September 2005 and the summer of 2009.

11. Inspection planning will take account of the evidence available on the quality and standards in the college so that the inspection resource is targeted to those providers where further progress in raising standards is most needed. The timing of, and resources allocated to, college inspections will be influenced by previous inspection judgements (including any that have been changed as a result of re-inspection). Recent data on learners' achievements, and information from annual assessment and any Ofsted survey visits, will also be relevant.

12. Where a college received at least a good grade for leadership and management and generally good grades for curriculum areas, the inspection will be a relatively light touch compared with the first cycle. In these colleges (referred to subsequently in this handbook as 'good' colleges), areas of learning will not normally be inspected. Colleges judged to be inadequate will be inspected within two years of the date of the previous inspection. In these colleges the inspection will include normally eight to ten curriculum areas. In other colleges (referred to as 'satisfactory') between four and six curriculum areas will normally be inspected. In small specialist colleges the number of curriculum areas inspected will be reduced to reflect the scale of provision. In a number of colleges, curriculum grades at the last inspection were largely outstanding, with leadership and management also judged to be outstanding. These colleges will not be subject to a full inspection, providing the outcomes from annual assessment visits confirm continuing high standards. It is likely that the final AAV in the current four year cycle will be extended in these colleges to provide a more comprehensive report on provision.

Common Inspection Framework (CIF)

13. College inspections will be guided by the principles set out in the revised CIF. The inspection team will be primarily involved in assessing the

effectiveness of the institution in securing the achievements of individual learners and the quality of their experiences at college. The CIF requires the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of provision, achievement and standards, the quality of provision including teaching and learning in curriculum areas and work-based contexts, and leadership and management. It also requires inspectors to judge how well the college contributes to the well-being of children.

Principles of inspection

14. The CIF sets out principles that apply to all school and college inspections, as well as all inspections carried out by, or on behalf of, the ALI. They are intended to ensure that:

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

15. The principles of inspection are that inspection of colleges will:

- have the experiences of learners, and outcomes for them, at its heart
- provide judgements about the college's contributions to outcomes for the well-being of young people, the quality and value for money of provision, the quality of its management and the prospects for improvement
- assess evidence and make judgements objectively against national standards, where applicable, and other published criteria
- be proportionate to risk and tailored to circumstances and needs
- ascertain and take into account the views of learners and, where appropriate, their parents and carers, and look to involve them in inspections in other ways
- make use, as far as possible, of the existing college documentation and avoid placing unnecessary burdens on the college
- encourage rigorous self-assessment by colleges and make use of information gathered by their processes for performance management
- evaluate the work of colleges in eliminating unlawful racial discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and encouraging good race relations
- report openly, clearly and fairly on the basis of secure evidence
- enable themes of national significance to be pursued and reported
- be designed to promote and support improvement, linking with action to follow up recommendations
- build quality assurance into inspection, respond fairly to complaints, carry out evaluation of the conduct and effectiveness of inspection and seek continually to improve it.

Code of conduct

16. Inspectors will uphold high professional standards in their work. They will ensure that college staff are treated fairly in their inspection. They will make every effort to secure the co-operation and confidence of those being inspected. They will be sensitive to the impact of the inspection on teachers

and other staff in the college. They will carry out their duties according to the requirements of the CIF and the guidance provided in this handbook. The best interests of learners will be a priority. The code of conduct set out in the CIF requires inspectors to:

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and have no connection with the college which could undermine their objectivity
- report honestly, ensuring that judgements are fair and reliable
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity
- do all they can to minimise the stress on those involved in the inspection, and act with their best interests and well-being as priorities
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those being inspected, and communicate judgements clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about individuals and their work.

Complaints about inspections

17. Occasionally colleges feel dissatisfied with an aspect of their inspection, for example the conduct of an inspector, the adequacy of inspection evidence, or the inspection report. Ofsted and the ALI's complaints procedures set out how colleges and providers can complain about their inspection and what will happen with their complaint. The complaints procedures are available on the inspectorates' websites.

18. Before making a formal complaint the college should discuss their concerns with the lead inspector (LI), with a view to resolving the issues quickly as possible while the inspection is taking place. If this does not resolve the issue the college should contact the Ofsted helpline. The LI will provide the helpline number if requested to do so.

19. If the issue remains unresolved and a formal complaint is made, the following principles will apply:

- complaints will be handled speedily, and with rigorous standards for action and keeping people informed
- the process will be consistent, treating people in similar circumstances in similar ways
- investigation of complaints will be thorough and objective
- complaints will be considered and responded to in a fair and even-handed way
- a full response will be provided which addresses all the issues raised
- confidentiality will be respected, both with regard to those who complain and those who are the subject of a complaint
- clear information will be provided on what to do if people are unhappy with the response
- complaints will be regularly monitored
- actions will be identified where necessary to secure improvements to the processes.

Guidance on dealing with whistle-blowers

20. There may be occasions when the LI is approached by an individual, often a former student, a parent, a member of staff or a governor, who wishes to provide the LI with confidential information about an aspect of the college which they claim is pertinent to the inspection.

21. If it is a complaint by an individual, the LI should enquire whether or not the individual has exhausted the college's complaints procedure. If they have, and they wish the matter to be drawn to the attention of inspectors, they should be advised that the source of the information must be shared with the college, so that the college can respond to the issues raised. If the individual wishes to proceed, the LI will ensure that the information is shared with the principal and will invite the college to respond. The LI will then consider whether the issues raised by the individual and by the college in its response are relevant to the inspection. It is not for the LI or the inspection team to deal with the complaint.

22. If the request is from an organisation, for example a trades union, then a similar approach should be adopted. The LI will not normally agree to arrange to meet with the organisation. The LI should request a written outline of the issues they wish to raise and invite the college to respond.

The conduct of college staff

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

Self-assessment and inspection

The significance of the self-assessment report

24. The self-assessment report (SAR) will provide inspectors with crucial evidence to evaluate the quality of leadership and management and the college's capacity to improve. In all inspections the SAR will help the LI to write the pre-inspection commentary. In inspections where areas of learning are

inspected, it will inform the lead inspector's selection of which areas to inspect. During the inspection, inspectors' findings will be compared with judgements in the SAR and discussed at team meetings and with the college.

Guidance on self-assessment

25. Rigorous self-assessment and effective action planning to address identified areas for improvement should be an integral part of colleges' management systems. Colleges should produce an annual self-assessment report which meets LSC and Jobcentre Plus requirements and makes graded judgements against the evaluation requirements in the CIF. It should be supported by a development plan that shows how the college will address areas for improvement and build on strengths. For internal purposes colleges may choose whatever process and model best meets their needs.

26. Ofsted and the ALI have worked with the LSC to update the advice for colleges on self-assessment. This guidance will apply to the annual SAR submitted by colleges to the LSC and used by Ofsted and the ALI when planning and carrying out inspections. The following recommendations are made:

- a SAR should be produced, aligned to the sections of the revised CIF, with each key question graded; an introduction, of no more than two pages, will describe the context of the college and the self-assessment process – larger institutions might consider producing a whole-college summary SAR
- the SAR will include judgements on all provision falling within the remits of Ofsted and the ALI
- curriculum area report sections should be aligned as closely as possible to the new areas of learning
- an appendix should contain key data, for example, current enrolments by area of learning and age; and information on learners' success
- judgements should be clearly referenced to supporting evidence
- judgements should be divided into strengths, areas for improvement and improvements since the last inspection
- there will be an agreed date for submission of the SAR
- in general there will be no requirement for colleges to update their SARs between annual submission dates; however, when notified of their inspection, colleges may choose to provide the inspection team with an updated SAR.

Making judgements about the SAR

27. The overall effectiveness section of the inspection report will indicate clearly the college's view of itself, the inspection team's judgement of the accuracy of the SAR and a brief justification of the team's findings. This key judgement will be expressed in terms of the grade descriptors used in the new four-point grading scale. This judgement will be an important factor in assessing and grading the college's capacity to make further improvements. References to the accuracy of self-assessment will also be made throughout the

remainder of the report. In addition, the leadership and management section will include an evaluation of the quality assurance process underpinning the self-assessment report.

28. As part of the process of annual assessment visits, inspectors may comment on aspects of self-assessment, but they will not revise the overall judgements about self-assessment made at the main inspection.

Inspectors and inspection teams

Training of inspectors

29. Ofsted and the ALI are jointly responsible for ensuring that inspectors are competent. Before taking part in the inspection of colleges, each inspector must satisfactorily complete a course of training specified by Ofsted. Inspectors who have been trained in the use of the new CIF will be approved to inspect 16–19 education, provision for learners over 19 years of age, college provision for learners aged 14–16 and/or the inspection of work-based learning. Members of inspection teams will collectively have the expertise and experience to examine all aspects of the provision covered by the inspection. Action will continue to be taken to increase the proportion of inspectors of minority ethnic origin. Training for inspectors will cover the responsibilities of Ofsted and the ALI with regard to the general duty to promote racial equality.

The lead inspector

30. The lead inspector (LI) manages the inspection team and is responsible for the quality of the inspection. In the case of sixth form colleges (SFCs), the LI will be from Ofsted; in the case of general further education colleges (GFEs), LIs will be allocated from both Ofsted and the ALI. On inspections the LI will be supported by an assistant LI (AsLI). It is the responsibility of the LI to:

- ensure that judgements about the college are fair and accurate, are based on secure evidence, and cover the evaluation requirements in the CIF
- ensure that key judgements are corporately agreed by the inspection team
- ensure that inspectors follow a consistent approach to collecting and recording evidence, in how they conduct themselves during the inspection and in their feedback to teachers and managers
- keep a careful check on the sampling of the college's work and the extent to which individual teachers are being observed in lessons
- monitor and, if necessary, intervene in the work of individual inspectors to ensure that the CIF is complied with and that evidence and judgements are secure
- plan the inspection and communicate the inspection plan to the college
- ensure that members of the inspection team are fully briefed before the inspection begins

- establish a programme of team meetings with clear agendas and ensure that evidence and judgements are communicated to, and shared by, all members of the team
- ensure that the principal and nominee are informed of emerging issues throughout the inspection.

31. Before the inspection the LI will prepare the pre-inspection commentary (PIC). This will draw on several sources, for example the college performance report, the previous inspection report, reports from annual assessment visits, local LSC reports and the college's self-assessment report. The LI will send the PIC to inspectors to ensure that they are fully conversant with the college's performance and other aspects of its work, prior to inspection. It will also be shared with the college. The PIC will include:

- a brief commentary on the college's characteristics and the context in which it works
- an evaluative commentary on the pre-inspection evidence
- preliminary hypotheses about the college, to be tested during the inspection.

Inspection team members

Corporate judgements

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

A flexible approach

33. The LI's deployment of the inspection team will balance the need for a consistent approach across the sector with the need to retain a flexible approach in individual colleges. The new inspection arrangements require a flexible approach since, in each college, inspection will be focused on sampling elements of provision to assess the validity of self-assessment and the effectiveness of the college.

Allocation of team roles in good colleges

34. All inspections will have a core team of four inspectors, including the LI and the AsLI. In good colleges it is likely that this will comprise the full team. In these colleges, areas of learning will not generally be subject to a separately graded curriculum inspection. However, lessons will normally be observed in all college inspections. In these colleges the purpose of lesson observation will include the verification of the college's judgements about the quality of its teaching, training and learning. Inspectors will observe lessons that may allow them to focus on a specific theme, for example the quality of key skills teaching and learning or the quality of provision and support for bilingual learners, if such a focus is indicated by the team's initial analysis of the self-assessment report. The LI will also allocate roles to ensure that basic inspection tasks are carried out, including:

- producing judgements and report sections on overall effectiveness and the five key questions
- co-ordinating evidence and judgements on matters within ALI remit
- quality assurance of, and advice on, the performance of team members
- summarising evidence on the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews

Allocation of team roles in satisfactory and inadequate colleges

35. In satisfactory and inadequate colleges areas of learning will be inspected and graded. In these colleges a typical team will consist of a core team of 4 inspectors, supported by a further 4–10 inspectors. The LI will deploy inspectors with specialist knowledge to lead area of learning inspections. The core team, in appropriate cases with the assistance of other team members, will be allocated the duties set out above and any other specific tasks necessary to test self-assessment judgements or carry out other aspects of the inspection. Core team members will also supervise area of learning inspectors and moderate their judgements.

The Provider Financial Assurance (PFA) team

36. The LSC may arrange for an assurance visit by the PFA team to the college at the time of inspection. The assurance officer will not be a member of the inspection team nor take part in team meetings or inspection feedback. The LI and the inspector responsible for inspecting leadership and management will liaise with the PFA member. Where the assurance visit does not take place at the same time as the inspection, the PFA team will provide the LI with a report summarising the most recent PFA visit to the college. The LI will ensure that the inspection team takes account of findings from the PFA in reaching its final judgements about leadership and management and the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the college. The PFA team will also be informed by inspection judgements.

The college nominee

Choice of nominee

37. Each college will be invited to nominate a senior member of staff to act as the college's main link with the inspection team. The nominee should:

- have a detailed understanding of the college's programmes and operations
- be sufficiently senior to ensure the co-operation of staff at all levels before, during and after the inspection
- have authority to carry out the role with autonomy.

Nominees' rights and duties

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

evidence base with the LI as soon as those concerns become apparent. The LI will keep both the nominee and the principal informed of developing issues and findings as the inspection proceeds. The nominee should respect the same conventions of confidentiality as all team members. The nominee's rights and duties include:

- providing information to the LI and AsLI to enable them to plan the inspection
- attending all team meetings, including final meetings to moderate judgements; however, nominees may not participate in discussions that are directly related to grading
- briefing college staff about inspection arrangements
- co-ordinating feedback arrangements, both during and after the inspection
- liaising with the LI over the team's use of college facilities, for example photocopiers and base rooms
- ensuring that staff are available for meetings as scheduled and that the necessary documents are available for inspectors.

Planning the inspection

Timing and level of inspections

39. The expectation is that almost all colleges will be inspected at least once between 2005 and 2009. The timing and level of an inspection will depend mainly on:

- the date of the college's last inspection or re-inspection
- the quality of provision and standards of performance, as reflected in the grades achieved at the last inspection, and the college's performance since that time
- other information resulting from annual assessment visits
- advice from the local or national LSC.

Notification of inspection

40. Colleges will normally receive 3–4 working weeks' notice of their inspection. This will include notification of the scope of the inspection. This will be determined by Ofsted. Paragraphs 48–49 refer to the use of the extended period prior to the main inspection week.

Areas of learning

41. When areas of learning are inspected in satisfactory and inadequate colleges, the choice of areas to inspect is a matter for the inspectorates. In satisfactory colleges the number of areas will normally be between four and six, depending on the size of the college. For inadequate colleges the range is between eight and ten.

42. In general, areas of learning for inspection will be identified according to the 15 new Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) sector and subject areas or an appropriate sub-division of those areas. Inspectors may combine

two or more areas of learning under one grade. They may also combine appropriate sub-areas within any one of the 15 areas of learning. Note that in sector and subject area 14, inspection grades will normally be awarded for one or more of the following aspects: literacy and numeracy; English Spoken as Other Language (ESOL); Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (SLDD). Where an inadequate college is being re-inspected, the sample of areas of learning will include some of the previously unsatisfactory provision. In choosing which areas of learning to inspect, inspectors will also take into account:

- the college's internal structure
- the college's SAR grades
- the views of the local managing inspector and/or the inspector responsible for the annual assessment visits
- the reports of annual assessment visits
- the range of provision so that, where possible, a balance is achieved across types of provision and age groups
- any apparent mismatch between performance data and college SAR judgements.

The planning meeting

43. As soon as the college has been notified of the proposed inspection the LI and AsLI will normally arrange a meeting with the principal and the nominee to discuss and plan the inspection as soon as possible thereafter. The LI will confirm the arrangements for the inspection by letter or email to the principal.

Preparation for the inspection

44. Prior to the inspection, the LI and the AsLI will ensure that they are well informed about the college. They will use, among other things:

- previous inspection or re-inspection reports
- reports from annual assessment visits
- local LSC provider reviews
- the college performance report
- the self-assessment report
- the development plan
- learners' achievement data for the last three years
- details of current enrolments by curriculum area and mode of attendance, including learners on work-based training schemes
- the college prospectus
- the college website.

The pre-inspection agenda for discussion with the college

45. The college will be provided with an agenda prior to the meeting/discussion. By exception, if no meeting is held the agenda items will be discussed on the telephone or by email. The agenda will normally include notification and/or discussion of:

- areas of learning to be inspected (where applicable)
- inspection team members and their responsibilities

- the role of the nominee
- inspection week meetings with governors, managers, staff and groups of learners
- arrangements to gather the views of employers and parents
- arrangements to inspect work-based learning, adult and community learning, Learndirect, Jobcentre Plus, franchise provision and any other off-site provision
- arrangements for any inspection activity prior to the inspection week
- key issues arising from any pre-inspection documents, in particular the College Performance Report, the LSC briefing and learners' achievement data
- information required by inspectors prior to the inspection
- base room information required by inspectors
- domestic arrangements, for example about base rooms, refreshments and car parking
- feedback, evaluation and reporting arrangements.

Information required by inspectors prior to the inspection

46. Inspectors will seek to keep requests for pre-inspection information and documents to a realistic minimum. To reduce the burden on colleges, local LSCs may be asked for information, for example on performance against targets, contribution to the skills strategy and learners' destinations. The college may wish to prepare a brief update to their SAR for inspectors. Apart from this, documents should not be written specifically for the inspection. Generally colleges will be asked to provide:

- a list of courses with numbers enrolled on each course, including franchise provision and those on work-based learning programmes
- a draft schedule of meetings for the core team
- details of the management structure of the college (with names).

Information required by inspectors in the base room

47. Colleges will be asked to organise evidence, preferably in a base room, under the key question headings. Alternatively, an index or guide should be available to inform inspectors of the location of the evidence for them to access. This evidence should support the judgements in the SAR and could usefully be cross-referenced to the SAR. The evidence should consist of working documents, not information prepared specifically for the inspection. The evidence is likely to include some of the following:

- complete and up-to-date data on enrolments and learners' achievements
- course timetables (showing locations and staff)
- self-assessment report and any updated report
- development plan, operating statements, curriculum plans, staff development plans and action plans arising from inspection, course review or self-assessment
- minutes from meetings of committees such as the senior management team, academic board, corporation and equal opportunities committee

- key policy documents, for example on assessment, key skills, staff development and lesson observation, together with the college charter
- evidence of external links with schools and community organisations
- evidence of the effectiveness of learner support activities, for example tutorial and additional support policies, with an indication of the numbers receiving additional support, careers advice and counselling
- samples of learners' records and reports, including tutorial records and learning plans
- course review reports or course self-assessment reports
- details of the most significant resources, for example computers
- details of staff qualifications and experience and of staff development activity over the last two years
- teachers' schemes of work, planning and assessment records
- samples of learners' assessed work
- any other documents the college wishes to be considered.

Inspection activity prior to the inspection week

48. In some colleges it may be necessary to use the period after notification of inspection, and usually the week before the main inspection event, to inspect activities that cannot easily be accommodated within a single week. These are likely to include substantial new contracts for work-based learning provision, adult and community learning, Learndirect, and Jobcentre Plus. These activities fall within the remit of the ALI. Where this new provision is a direct college contract, judgements will be included in the college's inspection report. Where such provision is sub-contracted to the college, the ALI will also retain the inspection evidence and report when inspecting the contractor. Inspection activity prior to inspection week will not be carried out in good colleges.

49. Inspection activities will include observation of learning and/or training and interviews with college managers, employers, learners and any other relevant individuals or groups. These activities will be kept to a realistic minimum and they will be scheduled as close as possible to the main inspection week. Individual inspectors will provide feedback to teachers and managers in the normal way and the LI or AsLI will keep the principal and the college nominee well informed about inspectors' finding and judgements. They will feed back summary judgements at the end of the inspection activity occurring before the main inspection week.

The inspection

Inspection activities

50. The new inspection arrangements involve a fundamentally different approach to the collection of evidence to support judgements. Much greater onus is placed upon the college to demonstrate the validity of the judgements in its SAR. This involves inspectors consulting with the college on where critical evidence may be found that will support its conclusions. Inspection activities will change and develop during the week as new evidence becomes available. If

it begins to become clear that the evidence does not support claims in the SAR, the issue will be discussed with the college at an early stage and the college may be asked to provide further evidence to support its view. If evidence comes to light after the inspection week, but before the publication of the report, HMCI reserves the right to revisit the college to decide whether the team's judgements should be reconsidered in the light of the new information. The same code of practice and principles of inspection will apply to the revisit as applied to the original inspection.

51. Inspectors will work as a team to evaluate the five key questions, the overall effectiveness of the college and the quality of provision in the areas of learning selected for inspection. They will, where appropriate:

- observe teaching and learning within and outside the college, for example in the workplace
- visit community-based provision, adult and community learning, Learndirect and Jobcentre Plus venues
- evaluate data on learners' success, retention, attainment, attendance and progression
- evaluate a sample of learners' current and recent work, including practical work
- talk with learners, teaching staff, managers, governors, employers, workplace supervisors, work-placement providers and parents
- evaluate the impact of key documents, including plans, policies, procedures and teachers' records of learners' progress.

Inspection team meetings

Pattern of meetings

52. The LI will decide the pattern of meetings for the inspection week. The pattern is likely to vary according to the scope of the inspection. In addition to formal team meetings, the LI and AsLI will normally meet with the principal and the nominee each day to discuss emerging findings. The nominee is expected to attend all team meetings.

53. A programme of meetings in a college where areas of learning are inspected might include:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Main purpose</i>
1200 Monday	Initial team briefing
pm Tuesday	Inspectors' progress reports
pm Wednesday	Inspectors' progress reports
pm Thursday	Moderation meetings with individual inspectors
pm Thursday	Team meeting
am Friday	Grading meeting - team
am Friday	Feedback on areas of learning
am Friday	Feedback on key findings

Initial meeting

54. The team, including the college nominee, will meet for an initial briefing at noon on the first day of the inspection. The LI will ensure that inspectors are aware of:

- their responsibilities and expected standards of conduct
- the context in which the college works and the performance of its learners
- the key issues to be covered during the inspection
- any issues raised by the college
- administrative arrangements.

Progress report meetings

55. At the meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday each inspector will give a brief account of their emerging findings. The nominee and other inspection team members will have the opportunity for questions and comments.

Moderation meetings

56. Moderation meetings will be held to review the findings of inspectors who have looked at areas of learning. During moderation, the individuals responsible for inspecting areas of learning will individually meet with the LI, AsLI or other moderating inspectors and the college nominee to discuss their findings, judgements and proposed grade. The nominee may not participate in parts of the discussion that are directly related to grading.

Final grading meeting

57. The purpose of the final team meeting on Friday morning is to arrive at accurate and secure corporate judgements about the college. In particular, the meeting will enable the team to arrive at an overall view of quality and standards in the college and the college's effectiveness in meeting the education and training needs of its learners. All grades determined by the inspection team at the final grading meeting are provisional and remain so until the report is published. The main business of the meeting is:

- agreeing the college's main strengths and areas for improvement
- confirming the grades for areas of learning (where applicable)
- grading the overall effectiveness of the college and awarding a sub-grade denoting the college's capacity to improve; the grade for overall effectiveness determines the adequacy of the college
- awarding overall grades for achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management
- awarding sub-grades under the above three headings for different age groups or aspects of the college's work, such as work-based learning, if the quality of provision varies significantly in these areas
- completing the inspection record of the main findings form with:
 - i. grades for key questions 2, 3, and 4
 - ii. grades for each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question and

- iii. grades for each of the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews
- determining the extent to which the college is educationally and socially inclusive.

Feedback meetings

58. Where areas of learning have been inspected, the inspector in charge of each area of learning will feed back the area of learning grade and the key strengths and areas for improvement. Normally all these feedback meetings will run concurrently.

59. At the end of the inspection the LI and AsLI will provide feedback to the principal and other key individuals. Please refer to paragraph 73 for further details.

Evaluating the well-being of children

60. Team members will be allocated responsibility for gathering evidence on the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews of children's services.

61. For convenience, all guidance relating to the interpretation of five outcomes is grouped together in section B of part 2 of this handbook.

Observing lessons

62. All inspections will normally include some direct observation of teaching and learning. Some joint observations of lessons, involving an inspector and a member of the college's staff, may take place as part of a whole college evaluation of the accuracy of a college's internal lesson observation scheme (these are discussed in more detail in Annex A). In colleges where areas of learning are not graded, relatively few lessons will be observed. In some of these colleges the purpose of lesson observation may be to test specific hypotheses rather than sample a representative cross section of lessons. Consequently, it will not be appropriate to compare the resulting profile of lesson observation grades with national data about Ofsted's lesson observations. In these colleges inspectors may focus their observations on a few curriculum areas to test the validity of the college's self-assessment of teaching and learning. Some lessons are likely to be observed by inspectors who are not specialists in that particular area of learning. In these circumstances, a generic judgment which focuses on learners' progress is likely to be made. In colleges where areas of learning are inspected the main purposes of lesson observation are:

- to check the college's self-assessment of the quality of teaching and learning
- to arrive at an independent judgement of the quality of aspects of teaching and learning.

In curriculum area inspections, the focus of lesson observations will include a judgement about the standards reached by learners, as well as their progress and the quality of teaching.

63. Lesson observation will be done in a way that minimises disruption to teaching and learning. Inspectors will not take part in lessons. However, when suitable opportunities arise, inspectors may talk informally with learners or look at their work. The lessons observed will be part of the college's normal programme of work. When they enter a classroom, inspectors will ask the teacher for the register, the lesson plan and any supporting material. They may ask for information that enables learners of different age-groups or programme type to be identified. They will make written notes during the lesson and provide brief feedback afterwards.

64. The sample of lessons may include group or individual activities, tutorials, registration periods, learning taking place in resource areas or in the workplace, fieldwork and educational visits, and enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Inspectors will not give the college advance notice of the lessons that they will observe. Inspectors may stay for the whole or part of a lesson. They will spend enough time in lessons to enable them to make valid and reliable judgements on standards, teaching and learning. Normally this will not be less than 30 minutes. Each lesson observed will be graded on the new four point scale.

Evaluation of learners' written and practical work

65. The scrutiny of written and practical work provides essential evidence of learners' progress. It also provides an insight into teaching and learners' attitudes to work. It enables inspectors to evaluate the quality of teachers' setting and marking of work. Where areas of learning are inspected the sample of marked work should include:

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

The college should provide assessment records and individual learning plans for those learners whose work is sampled. Inspectors may also look at learners' files when they observe lessons.

Analysis and evaluation of learners' performance data

66. Inspectors' analysis and evaluation of performance data will also provide vital evidence of standards. Inspectors will look at data for learners who have completed their programmes in the last three years. They will give more weight to the most recent years and to courses that are currently operating. Where appropriate, they will look at retention rates for existing learners and at the results of any mid-course external tests, examinations and course work. The achievements of learners from different ethnic groups will be analysed. They will also look at value-added data, where available.

Discussions with learners

67. Discussions with learners provide evidence about what they know, understand and can do. It helps inspectors to establish their progress and whether they are achieving as well as they might do. Discussions may take place with individuals or with groups. Inspectors will seek to uncover learners' views of the college and the extent to which they feel that they are effectively guided and supported. Discussion topics might include:

- recruitment and selection procedures
- organisation and effectiveness of induction programme
- perceptions of the quality of academic and pastoral support and guidance (including matters relating to equality of opportunity and respect for different cultures and religions)
- aspects of course management and assessment including quality of teaching
- opportunities to influence the course (for example, focus groups, perception surveys)
- enrichment opportunities
- understanding of anti-bullying and harassment procedures
- guidance on progression to employment or further/higher education
- summary strengths and areas for improvement in provision.

Discussions with governors, staff and others involved in the work of the college

68. Discussions with the principal, managers and teaching staff provide important evidence of roles and responsibilities, procedures and policies. They clarify how and why decisions are taken and how the impact of those decisions is evaluated. Inspectors may also meet, where possible, employers and providers of work-based training, Learndirect, Jobcentre Plus and adult and community education. Inspectors will also expect colleges to provide evidence of their links with employers and of arrangements to gather employers' views.

69. The LI and the nominee will plan meetings with governors, managers, work-based learning providers and staff who have responsibility for the areas of learning which are being inspected. Meetings may also be requested with support staff and visiting specialists, for example careers advisers. Inspectors will try to avoid calling meetings at short notice. The following principles apply to all meetings:

- inspectors will introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the meeting
- inspectors will be sensitive to the needs of those with any disability so that they can play a full part in the meeting
- the length of meetings will be agreed in advance; normally meetings will not exceed one hour
- inspectors will offer the opportunity for those attending the meeting to ask questions and make points

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

General points about feedback

70. The outcomes of inspection remain provisional until publication of the report. Inspectors' findings are confidential to the staff of the college and its governing body until publication of the report. The purpose of feedback is to report and confirm inspectors' findings and judgements. Feedback arrangements may vary according to the scope of the inspection. Whatever the circumstances, inspectors will present their findings in a way that:

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

Feedback to teachers

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

Feedback to managers

72. Inspectors will present a clear picture of the inspection findings in each area of learning inspected. Judgements will be expressed as strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback on areas of learning will usually last no more than 20 minutes, including questions. Feedback will include:

- an overall judgement of the quality of provision in the area of learning and the provisional grade
- a summary of the evidence on which judgements are based
- judgements about levels of achievement and standards in the area of learning as a whole and, where appropriate, in individual subjects and courses
- judgements about the quality of teaching and training and the effectiveness of learning
- judgements about the effectiveness of leadership and management
- judgements about the accuracy of the self-assessment of the area of learning
- an opportunity for managers to ask questions.

Feedback to the principal, chair of governors and senior staff

73. After the final team meeting and feedback on curriculum areas has been completed, the LI, AsLI and core team will meet with the principal, the nominee and senior managers to notify them of the full range of grades that will be published in the report, the judgement of adequacy and key judgements denoted in the report by a grade descriptor. Inspectors will also briefly outline the main findings under each key question. The college should invite the chair of governors and a representative from the local LSC to this meeting. . A member of Jobcentre Plus staff should also be invited if their work has been inspected. The college will have the opportunity to check the accuracy of the complete draft report at a later date, prior to publication.

Action plans

74. Shortly after the inspection the draft report will be shared with the college to enable the accuracy of factual information to be checked. The final report will normally be published within seven working weeks from the end of the inspection. Copies will be sent to the college and the local LSC.

75. When it receives the inspection report, the college has two months to prepare an action plan in response. The plan must focus on action the college will take to address those aspects of provision identified in the section of the summary headed 'What should be improved', together with the areas for improvement listed for each curriculum area. The governors should agree the action plan and send copies to their local LSC. Action plans will vary to suit the college, but should indicate:

- the actions to be taken to address each area for improvement
- the person responsible for each action
- realistic target dates for completion of each action
- the intended outcome of each action
- criteria for evaluating the extent to which outcomes have been achieved.

The updated plan, demonstrating those actions completed and the resulting improvements in provision, is likely to be an important source of evidence at the subsequent annual assessment visit.

Records of inspection evidence

Sources of pre-inspection evidence

76. Before inspection the LI and other members of the inspection team will consider information about the college and the performance of its learners. Pre-inspection evidence is drawn from:

- the previous inspection report and action plan
- reports from annual assessment visits
- the college performance report provided by Ofsted
- additional data provided by the college on performance

- the college's self-assessment report
- discussion with senior staff on any pre-inspection visit
- briefing documents provided by the LSC.

77. Evidence obtained prior to and during the inspection will be recorded on the forms described below. The college performance report and the pre-inspection commentary are available to the college. Evidence forms, inspection records and judgement recording forms are confidential to Ofsted and the ALI. Ofsted will not collect data on individuals, which would be personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

College performance report (CPR)

78. This is a summary of the main characteristics of the college and the context in which it works, together with data on performance and retention produced from college's Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns. Performance data is compared with national benchmarks. The CPR is produced by Ofsted prior to the inspection.

Pre-inspection commentary (PIC)

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

- comments on the college's main characteristics
- an evaluation of the pre-inspection evidence
- preliminary hypotheses about the college, to be tested during the inspection.

Judgement recording form (JRF) and Record of main findings (RMF)

80. A JRF will be completed for each curriculum area that is inspected. In addition, a college RMF will provide a full summary record of all of grades awarded (except individual lesson observation grades). College RMF grades are agreed by the team at the final team meeting. All RMF grades will be shared with the college and a copy of the RMF left with the nominee and/or principal at the end of the inspection. The college RMF will record grades for:

- overall effectiveness
- capacity to improve
- achievement and standards, the quality of education and training, and leadership and management (3 grades); sub-grades may be awarded under these three headings for, for example, different age groups or aspects of the college's work, such as work-based learning
- each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question

- each of the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews
- each area of learning inspected.

Inspection record (IR)

81. These are the working documents kept by each inspector, summarising their main judgements and sources of evidence as the inspection progresses. They will normally be updated on a daily basis to provide an evidence trail. The IR will summarise judgments about each key question. A separate IR will be kept for judgements on the five outcomes related to joint area reviews. Judgements will be cross-referenced to evidence forms. Inspectors for areas of learning will also compile a learners' achievements table which will indicate a sample of success rates for courses in the curriculum area inspected.

Evidence form (EF)

82. These are used to record all first-hand evidence, including lesson observations, records of discussions with staff and learners, and other evidence that arises from an inspector's observation of the work of the college, its staff and learners. They inform inspectors' entries in their inspection records.

Inspection report

Report structure

83. Published reports will include judgements about the provider as a whole as well as judgements about individual areas of learning when they are inspected. Inspectors will seek to achieve a suitable balance between reporting on the provision for different age ranges of learners. Reports will have seven parts, as follows:

(i) Background of the organisation

(ii) Summary of grades awarded

84. This includes a brief explanation of the nature of the college and its work, the range of learners it serves and what the college sees as its main aims. It also includes a brief explanation of the scope of the inspection.

(iii) Overall judgements

85. This part includes:

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

*(iv) Key strengths and areas for improvement**(v) Main findings*

86. This part of the report will have three sections:
- Achievement and standards, summarising the team's findings on key question 1.
 - Quality of provision, summarising the team's findings on key questions 2, 3 and 4. In inspections where no areas of learning are inspected all judgements about teaching and learning will be included in this part of the report.
 - Leadership and management, summarising the team's judgement on key question 5, including judgements about the college's response to race equality and disability discrimination legislation.

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

(vi) Area of learning reports

87. When areas of learning are inspected, each report will include:
- a grade and grade descriptor
 - a paragraph describing the scope of provision
 - strengths and areas for improvement
 - further paragraphs, classified under the headings of 'Achievement and standards', 'Quality of education and training' and 'Leadership and management'.

Reports will make appropriate references to the accuracy of self-assessment, but they will not include contributory grades or tables showing learners' achievements on key courses for the past three years.

(vii) Key performance indicators

88. Tables showing summary whole college success rates will be included.

Inspection grades

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

Published grades and sub-grades

90. The key published grades are for:
- effectiveness of provision
 - capacity to improve

- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

Sub-grades may be awarded for different age groups or aspects of college provision. The decision to award a sub-grade or sub-grades will be taken during the inspection by the LI, in consultation with the team. The nominee will not be involved in this decision. In general sub-grades:

- may only be awarded under the achievement and standards, the quality of education and training, or the leadership and management sections of the report
- should only be awarded when the quality of provision varies significantly in these areas
- may be awarded to distinguish between learners aged 14–16, learners aged 16–18 and adults and by types of provision, such as work based learning
- will not necessarily be awarded in every inspection, but on some inspections it may be appropriate to award several sub-grades.

Published judgements where a grade descriptor will be used

91. In the published report, inspectors will make clear their judgements on :
- key questions 2, 3 and 4
 - the accuracy of the self-assessment report
 - the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection
 - the extent to which the college is educationally and socially inclusive
 - the extent to which the college gives value for money.

Unpublished grades that are fed back to the college

92. These include:
- grades for each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question
 - grades for each of the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews.

Unpublished grades that are not fed back to the college

93. This only applies to lesson observation grades.
94. A diagram illustrating the structure of key judgements denoted by grades and grade descriptors appears in Annex B.

Adequacy of provision

95. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires inspectors to come to a judgement as to whether the education or training provided is of a quality adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. The inspection team, at its final meeting, will make the judgement on adequacy. A college will

be judged to be inadequate if it is awarded a grade 4 for overall effectiveness. A college which is at least satisfactory in its overall effectiveness will not be judged to be inadequate overall. Paragraph 118 below provides guidance on arriving at the judgement of overall effectiveness and adequacy.

Annual assessment visits

The purposes of annual assessment visits (AAVs)

96. Each college will be allocated a local managing inspector (LMI) who will make an annual visit to the college. The main purposes are as follows.

In all colleges:

- to consider changes in the college's performance
- to consider whether such changes have been recognised in the college's self-assessment report
- to assess the impact of action plans for improvement
- to note any significant changes in provision or performance and any other issues that might influence the timing of the next inspection.

In colleges with inadequate areas of learning, or judgements of inadequacy about any other aspect of their provision:

- to cover the above four headings
- to manage re-inspection activity.

In colleges with unsatisfactory curriculum grades, the local managing inspector will normally be accompanied by specialist inspectors for the relevant areas of learning.

Preparing for AAVs

97. Dates for annual assessment visits will normally be determined by the local managing inspector. Prior to the AAV the inspector will review the SAR, the latest college action plan, up-to-date performance data, the college's last inspection report and the most recent local LSC briefing about the college. The college will not be required to present any additional data for the visit but may do so if it wishes. The college will be invited to provide an assessment of the progress and impact of its action plan. The inspector will determine the main purpose of each visit. The college will produce a programme for the visit. The inspector will approve the programme prior to the visit. The programme for the visit will be confirmed to the college by letter or email. The college will be provided with an electronic version of the inspector's Pre-Visit Analysis (PVA) one working day before the visit.

Conducting AAVs

98. AAVs will be managed by Ofsted, and individual visits will be normally be conducted by local managing inspectors who may be accompanied by one or more additional inspectors where the re-grading of unsatisfactory areas of

learning is to be considered. AAVs will normally be completed within one day, but re-grading visits will normally take 2 days. The format for AAVs that do not involve re-inspection will normally:

- include meetings with senior staff, to consider the impact of changes in provision or performance, and review progress with post-inspection action plans; the AAV might also include lesson observations, depending on the focus of the visit
- include consideration of issues which might affect the scope and timing of the next inspection; such issues may include changes in overall college performance, changes in provision, changes in senior management, previous inspection evidence, evidence of improvement and judgements about the effectiveness of self-assessment
- focus on a particular aspect of provision and/or issues that arise from the inspectors' preparatory analysis of the self-assessment report; these might include, for example, quality assurance procedures, scrutiny of the organisation and management of the college's lesson observation scheme (but not direct observation of lessons), support for learners, provision for learners aged 14–16, action taken to promote the well-being of children and young people or partnerships with employers.

99. At the end of the AAV the inspector will provide informal feedback to senior managers. Following the AAV a letter summarising the findings of the visit, and the risk assessment form completed by the inspector, will be sent to the college, copied to the ALI and the LSC. A summary of the findings will be placed on the internet (from September 2006). These arrangements apply to all AAVs, including re-inspection visits.

Re-inspection

Types of re-inspection

100. There are three types of re-inspection:

- full re-inspection of inadequate colleges
- re-inspection of unsatisfactory or inadequate areas of learning during AAVs
- re-inspection when an aspect of the CIF relating to an age group or an aspect of provision, for example work-based learning, is judged inadequate, also covered as part of the AAV.

In each case the re-inspection will be carried out under the revised CIF. This is the case even if the original inspection was carried out under the former CIF.

Full re-inspection of inadequate colleges

101. Re-inspection of colleges judged to be inadequate will normally take place within two years of the date of the previous inspection. Ofsted will notify colleges of the dates of their re-inspections. Re-inspections will normally be led by an HMI, but may be led by a full-time inspector from the ALI. A full re-inspection will follow the usual procedures for inspection.

102. The written report of a re-inspection of an inadequate college will follow the general structure of other published inspection reports, including judgements on the effectiveness of actions taken since the main inspection. The report will include a statement of whether or not the provision remains inadequate overall.

103. Prior to their full re-inspection, inadequate colleges will normally receive at least one AAV. The local managing inspector may make additional visits if it is considered necessary to do so. The AAV will be used to monitor the implementation of the post-inspection action plan. The AAV may focus on an area of learning or an unsatisfactory cross-college aspect, for example leadership and management. Where a college remains inadequate there will be no re-grading as a result of an AAV (see paragraph 105, below).

Re-inspection of unsatisfactory or inadequate areas of learning and aspects of provision

104. During AAVs, progress will be monitored in areas of learning judged to be unsatisfactory under the former CIF, or inadequate under the revised CIF. Inspectors will not necessarily look at all of the college's unsatisfactory or inadequate areas on each AAV. The areas covered will be decided by the managing inspector, based on an analysis of the SAR and the college's progress report on its action plan. The managing inspector may also decide to look at an area of learning that was not inadequate.

105. Colleges may request re-grading of inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision at any time within two years of the inspection. Ofsted will re-assess the grades at the next AAV, unless exceptional circumstances make it impracticable to do so. If the college does not request a re-grading of its inadequate areas, they will automatically be re-assessed at the second AAV following the inspection. AAVs where re-inspection takes place will normally be completed within two days and will involve additional specialist inspectors to accompany the managing inspector.

106. Following re-grading, a report will be placed on the internet which will state what has been re-inspected and the grades awarded. If inadequate areas of learning remain following a re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at AAVs, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the next full college inspection.

107. During AAVs where areas of learning are re-inspected inspectors will:

- assess progress against objectives set out in the post-inspection action plans for unsatisfactory or inadequate areas of learning
- observe lessons and make an assessment of the quality of teaching and learning
- evaluate performance trends in the area of learning since the inspection

- compare their judgements with the college's self-assessment of the area of learning.

Assuring the quality of inspections

Quality assurance

108. Ofsted reviews all inspections for which it is responsible to ensure that an inspection provides an accurate and fair picture of the college and that it has been conducted well. As part of the process, the views of colleges will be sought to inform the evaluation. Quality assurance of inspections includes assessment of:

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

109. Ofsted also carries out on-site quality assurance of a sample of inspections. Where this is the case, an HMI or an ALI inspector will normally join the inspection team. The main purposes of this are to:

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

110. Before the visit the inspector will review the SAR, CPR and PIC to obtain background information about the college. During the quality assurance visit the visiting inspector will:

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

111. The LI, or the inspector conducting the quality assurance visit, will aim to resolve any disagreements about process and judgments during the inspection week. In some inspections it may not be necessary or practicable for an inspector to make a quality assurance visit. In such cases the inspector appointed to carry out the quality assurance, and the LI, will communicate by

telephone and (if necessary) email to review the inspection process and outcomes. In this instance, a telephone call towards the end of the inspection week will also normally be made to the principal of the college, to receive feedback on perceptions of the process and management of the inspection.

Part 2. Guidance for inspectors and colleges on the application of the Common Inspection Framework

Introduction

112. Part 2 has four main sections corresponding to the four main headings in the Common Inspection Framework. These headings are:

- overall effectiveness
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management.

In addition there is a section (section B) that brings together guidance relating to the extent to which the college meets the five outcomes for children and young people that are covered in the inspection of children's services

113. Each of the five key questions is addressed in the appropriate section. For each key question, the guidance contains:

- the evaluation criteria for the key question as stated in the CIF
- a short summary of the main sources of evidence
- a section providing guidance for colleges and inspectors on the interpretation and application of the evaluation criteria; guidance is provided under sub-headings corresponding to each of the evaluation criteria
- a section on making judgements – typical characteristics of outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate provision are included to assist inspectors' judgements; *they are not intended to be definitive or exhaustive.*

Section A. Overall effectiveness

The CIF has the following evaluation questions:

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

It also states that:

inspectors should evaluate:

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

and, where appropriate:

- *the effectiveness of links with other organisations to promote the well-being of learners*
- *the quality and standards in the Foundation Stage*

- *the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form.*

The final two bullet points and the reference to 'extended services in schools' do not apply to college inspections.

Sources of evidence

114. The inspection team must reach a corporate judgement about the effectiveness of the college. In doing so, the team must take into account:

- the mission and particular characteristics of the college
- the local context in which it works
- its performance relative to similar colleges.

115. When judging overall effectiveness the main sources of evidence include:

- the main inspection judgements relating to learners' progress; the quality of educational provision, especially teaching; the quality of leadership and management; the extent of improvement since the last inspection
- the college's self-assessment report
- the views of learners, parents, staff, governors and key stakeholders
- information on the social and financial context of the college.

Interpreting the criteria

116. This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the criteria for judging the overall effectiveness of the college. Throughout the guidance on the interpretation of criteria, the term 'learner' applies to both learners aged under 19 and adult learners. Inspectors will make separate judgements about learners aged under 19 and adult learners when it is appropriate to do so.

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

Criteria for judgement

117. In evaluating the college's overall effectiveness and efficiency, inspectors will evaluate, among other things:

- the college's main strengths and weaknesses
- how well the college meets its targets, and whether they are adequately challenging
- learners' achievements over the past three years, in particular learners' success rates, retention rates and pass rates
- the progress made by learners in relation to their learning goals and prior achievements, and whether there are any differences between particular groups and courses
- the quality of teaching and whether learning is effective
- the development of learners' key skills and basic skills
- whether the provision is well matched to the needs and interests of learners, and is responsive to local circumstances and the needs of employers

- whether the college has effective links with other organisations that promote the well-being of learners
- the extent to which young people enjoy and achieve, are healthy, stay safe, make a positive contribution and develop their capacity for economic well-being
- the quality of advice and guidance in promoting learners' progression to appropriate further learning and employment
- the quality of personal and academic support
- the accuracy of the self-assessment report
- the extent to which the leaders and managers promote high standards, monitor performance and deal with any areas for improvement
- whether resources are used efficiently
- whether the college provides value for money
- the college's reputation among parents, employers and other key stakeholders.

Making judgements

118. The judgement of overall effectiveness is not merely an average of the three main overall grades (achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management). Similarly, it is not linked in a formulaic way to grades awarded to areas of learning. A college that is judged to be inadequate in one or two areas of learning may be judged to be satisfactory overall.

Inspectors' obligations to take into account all circumstances may result in a grade for overall effectiveness that is higher or lower than the average of the other three main grades and/or the area of learning grades. However inspectors will be guided by the following:

- A college will normally only be awarded an overall grade 1 where none of the other three main grades are less than 2, and where there are more grade 1s than grade 2s. The fact that there are more grade 1s than grade 2s is not a sufficient condition for the award of a grade 1 for overall effectiveness.
- A college that is judged to be at least satisfactory overall in (a) achievement and standards, (b) the quality of provision and (c) leadership and management should be judged to be at least satisfactory in overall effectiveness.
- A college where the quality of provision is judged to be inadequate will normally be judged to be inadequate in its overall effectiveness.
- A college where both achievements and standards, and leadership and management are judged to be inadequate will be judged to be inadequate in its overall effectiveness. Where only one of these is judged to be inadequate the team will normally consider the provision to be inadequate. However, the team will consider the impact of the inadequacy on the experience of the learners and any significant evidence of improvement in considering whether a judgement of inadequacy is appropriate. The following examples illustrate where a judgement of overall effectiveness might be awarded where either achievements or leadership and management are deemed inadequate:

Example 1. In this college achievements for significant groups of learners over the last three years are below national averages. However, in the judgement of the inspection team, sustainable recent improvements are the result of action by managers. These actions correlate with evidence about the quality of education for current learners which lead the inspection team to judge that the overall effectiveness of the college is satisfactory.

Example 2. In this college, both the quality of provision and achievements are at least satisfactory. However, the new management team has inherited a significant budget deficit and key policies are not yet effectively implemented. The new team has been in place too short a time to make significant progress on these issues and leadership and management are therefore judged to be inadequate. However, the inspection team had confidence in the capacity of the current management to improve the situation and, with the experience of the learners judged to be at least satisfactory, the team judged that the provision was not inadequate and that the overall effectiveness was satisfactory.

Educational and social inclusion

119. In evaluating the overall effectiveness of the college, inspectors will take into account the extent to which the college is socially and educationally inclusive. A summary judgement will be included in the summary paragraph on overall effectiveness in part B of the report. The term 'social inclusion' refers to efforts made by the college to increase access to further education and training for all members of the community, especially those who might not otherwise attend college. 'Educational inclusion' refers to efforts made to ensure that methods of teaching and training meet the diverse educational needs of all learners. In making the judgement, inspectors will focus on:

- the range of programmes, including off-site provision
- the progression routes and accreditation available at various levels
- the analysis of participation, retention and achievement by specific groups, and action taken to improve these
- the initial assessment of the learning and support needs of learners
- how well teaching and learning methods meet individual learners' needs, particularly learners who need to develop their literacy, numeracy and language skills
- how well teaching and learning materials promote equality and diversity
- the range and quality of support for learning
- the quality of personal and welfare support.

120. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about overall effectiveness:

-
- Outstanding** The college has challenging targets and makes very good progress towards meeting them. Retention rates and pass rates are well above the national average in almost all areas of learning. Virtually all learners enjoy their time at college and achieve their personal objectives. The development of their skills and knowledge is outstanding. Educational and social inclusion are excellent. The college makes a very effective contribution to the five outcomes for children and young people that are assessed in joint area reviews. Its strong links with other organisations promote the well-being of learners. Teaching and training are highly effective and the curriculum meets the needs and interests of learners and employers very well. Basic skills and key skills are effectively developed. There are very good systems to guide and support learners and to ensure their health and safety. The college is very well managed. Self-assessment, in particular the assessment of the quality of teaching, is accurate. Managers and staff closely monitor the performance of learners. Staff morale is good. Very good resources are available and used efficiently to benefit learners. The college gives very good value for money. The college is very well regarded by parents, employers and other key stakeholders.
- Good** The college generally meets its targets and makes good progress. Retention rates and pass rates are above the national average in most areas of learning. Learners make good progress relative to their qualifications and experience when they entered the college. Learners enjoy their time at college and generally achieve their personal objectives. There are good examples of educational and social inclusion. Teaching and training meets the needs and interests of most learners and employers. Basic skills and key skills are effectively developed. There are good systems to guide and support learners and to ensure their health and safety. The college is well managed. Self-assessment is used effectively to identify and tackle areas for improvement. Managers and staff monitor the performance of learners. Staff morale is good. Good resources are available and used efficiently to benefit learners. The college gives good value for money. The college is well regarded by parents, employers and other key stakeholders.
- Satisfactory** The college makes satisfactory progress towards targets that are reasonably challenging. Most learners make at least satisfactory progress in their subjects and courses and in the development of their basic skills and key skills. There may be a little under-performance and some areas of learning where learners do not develop their knowledge and skills adequately, but these are not substantial. Teaching, training and the curriculum are adequate overall, but improvement may be needed in some areas. Learners' safety and health are adequately maintained by the college and partners. Personal and academic support, advice and guidance are

appreciated by learners. It is adequate, but there is potential to improve overall support for learners. Leaders and managers identify most of the improvements needed, making steady progress in dealing with them. Self-assessment is reasonably accurate, but in a few areas inspectors may not share the college's judgements. Value for money is satisfactory. Parents, employers and other key stakeholders are satisfied with the college overall.

Inadequate

The following may indicate inadequate provision:

- the college does not meet its targets, or they are too low to be adequately challenging
- many learners do not make adequate progress and do not develop their basic and/or key skills
- teaching and/or the curriculum have significant areas for improvement that impair the progress of learners
- there is little attempt to develop educational and social inclusiveness
- support for learners is unsatisfactory
- learners' safety and health are at risk and the community involvement and well-being of young people are inadequately promoted
- leaders and managers do not give the college an adequate sense of direction
- the self-assessment report is not an accurate evaluation of the college
- the college lacks the capacity to improve
- value for money is unsatisfactory
- the college is held in low regard by parents or employers and other key stakeholders.

The capacity to make further improvements

Criteria for judgement

121. The capacity to make further improvement is primarily a judgement about aspects of leadership and management. It is a judgement about the potential to progress from the current position of the college to a much more successful position or one where very high standards are maintained.

Making judgements

122. A grade denoting the inspection team's summary judgement of the college's capacity to improve will be awarded. Inspectors will evaluate, among other things:

- the extent to which the leaders and managers can, through the self-assessment process and other elements of the quality assurance system, diagnose its strengths and areas for improvement, focus on raising standards and act effectively to bring about improvement

- whether the college's development plan and internal policies, for example on equal opportunities, provide a well-researched and realistic framework for improvement
- the extent to which college plans are consistent with local LSC objectives and are supported by the local LSC
- whether the college has appropriate teaching and support staff and other resources to carry through its plans for improvement
- whether leaders and managers have a good record of bringing about improvement through setting and meeting challenging targets
- the commitment of staff at all levels to secure real improvements, their support for college plans and their confidence in managers' ability to provide effective leadership.

123. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about the college's capacity to improve:

Outstanding	The self-assessment report is accurate, realistic and provides a clear agenda for improvement. It is a full and candid evaluation of a wide range of appropriate evidence. The leadership has aspirational, but realistic, views of what is possible and well thought-out plans. Leaders and managers inspire staff and learners to achieve challenging targets. The development plan takes an imaginative approach to raising standards, improving the quality of provision for all learners and successfully addressing the college's areas for improvement. Resources are adequate and they are closely targeted on achieving college objectives for improvement. As a result of the leaders' actions, very good improvements have been made, or high levels of success have been maintained.
Good	The self-assessment report is largely accurate and realistic. It informs the college development plan. Together these plans provide a clear and realistic agenda for improvement. The self-assessment report is a genuine evaluation of a wide range of evidence. College staff have confidence in their own ability and that of their managers to bring about the planned improvements. The local LSC also has confidence in the college. Resources are sufficient to support the planned improvements. Leaders and managers have a generally good record of setting and meeting targets, particularly targets for improved learners' achievements.
Satisfactory	The self-assessment report identifies most of the college's strengths and areas for improvement, but some minor issues may be overlooked. Parts of it may be based on superficial interpretation of, or incomplete gathering of, evidence. Managers have a reasonable understanding of how to move forward. Development plans have sufficient focus and detail to

bring about adequate improvement, and resources are used sensibly to support improvements. Managers have the support of staff. There is a shared commitment to improve the college. As a result of the leaders' and managers' actions, the college has steadily improved its performance.

- Inadequate The following may indicate inadequate capacity to improve:
- the self-assessment report does not identify the college's strengths and areas for improvement accurately; there is a lack of rigour in the gathering and interpretation of evidence
 - leaders and managers do not have clear priorities or well thought-out plans for improvement
 - staff lack knowledge of plans for improvement and they have little confidence in their leaders and managers
 - resources are not efficiently directed to where they are most needed
 - the college's record in setting and meeting targets for improvement is poor.

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

Criteria for judgement

124. Improvement since the last inspection is not primarily judged by a simple comparison of grades awarded at the two inspections. However, a judgement of improvement is, by definition, a judgement of distance travelled. Inspectors appreciate that different colleges face very different journeys. Inspectors will recognise that:

- the individual circumstances of each college have an impact on the college's capacity to improve
- the final few improvements to take provision from very good to outstanding are often the most difficult to achieve.

125. Individual circumstances will be taken into account. Inspectors will not disadvantage a successful college because it is already successful. Likewise, the progress made by a college facing particularly challenging circumstances will be judged in the context in which it operates.

Making judgements

126. No sub-grade is awarded for the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement since the last inspection. The text will refer to the grade descriptors to indicate the, indicating in particular the inspection team's judgement. In reaching their judgement inspectors will evaluate, among other things:

- the overall grade profile at each inspection overall quality of provision, the standard of teaching and training and the quality of leadership and management
- trends in learners' achievements

- the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvement, especially on the issues identified as requiring improvement in the last inspection
- the extent to which the college has recognised and responded to new initiatives and to the developing needs of local employers and communities.

127. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about improvement since the last inspection:

Outstanding	Particularly good leadership and management have continued to drive the college forward. Learners' achievements have improved significantly and are generally above the national average. Alternatively, improvements have contributed to the maintenance of outstanding achievements. Very good progress has been made with the issues identified at the last inspection. The college has successfully introduced measures which add significantly to learners' experience, some of which may also benefit employers and other key stakeholders. The college responds very effectively to changing local needs.
Good	Good leadership and management have led to improved achievements. These achievements may not necessarily be above the national average. Good progress has been made with the issues identified at the last inspection. The college has introduced measures that improve learners' experience, for example improved tutorial provision.
Satisfactory	Sound leadership and management have enabled the college to steadily improve learners' achievements in most areas. In a minority of areas achievements may have declined or remained stable. Reasonable progress has been made with the issues identified by the last inspection.
Inadequate	Leadership and management have been ineffective in securing adequate improvements. Insufficient progress has been made with the issues identified by the last inspection. Learners' achievements have not improved or they have declined. Nevertheless, overall achievements could be above the national average. The college has remained weak or it may merely be less successful than at the last inspection. For example a college that had very good provision in most areas of learning at the last inspection may now be only satisfactory overall.

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

128. Judgements about the effectiveness of external links will also be relevant to the inspection of leadership and management. Inspectors will focus on

whether there are appropriate and effective links with local schools, colleges, higher education institutions, employers, parents, community groups, training organisations, the local LSC, social services and other organisations concerned with the care and welfare of children and young people. The most effective links will benefit learners, for example by widening the choice of subjects, improving access for groups that are under-represented in education, or by ensuring that learners who need specialist or additional support to engage in learning are well catered for.

Section B. Outcomes for children and young people

129. The evaluation statements in the CIF broadly cover the five outcomes for children and young people that will be assessed in joint area reviews of children's services. The CIF states that all inspections of institutions (other than those making provision solely for adults) will contribute to the joint area reviews. The main purposes of joint area reviews are:

- to describe and analyse the quality of life for children and young people in each local area
- to evaluate the effectiveness of local services in improving the outcomes for children and young people.

130. The Children Act 2004 applies to all children; it also covers vulnerable adults, up to the age of 25, who may be in residential care or physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged. The inspection of children's services will focus on the provision and quality of services for the more vulnerable groups of children. There are two categories of vulnerable children defined for the purposes of children's services inspections. These are:

- children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- children and young people looked after by the local authority.

131. Issues affecting the well-being of learners have always been central to inspection judgements. They are now more significant following the Children Act 2004. Clearly it is not the sole responsibility of schools and colleges to ensure that children and young people achieve these outcomes. However, they play a part, along with other local services, in facilitating their well-being. Consequently, inspectors will evaluate and grade the extent to which the following five outcomes for children and young people up to the age of 25, are being met:

Being healthy

132. This includes enjoying a healthy lifestyle; having self-esteem; choosing not to take drugs; being physically, mentally, emotionally and sexually healthy; and being well-nourished and active. Evidence indicators include:

- promoting participation in sport, particularly by learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- discouraging smoking, drug taking and substance abuse and supporting those who wish to give up
- providing sexual health education

- encouraging and enabling learners to eat healthily and drink water at regular intervals
- helping learners to recognise signs of personal stress and develop strategies to manage it
- ensuring that staff are advised and supported in identifying and appropriately referring learners with possible physical and mental health problems
- providing appropriate support for learners who are concerned about any aspect of their health or welfare.

Staying safe

133. This includes learning how to keep safe from accidental injury, bullying, harassment, discrimination, crime, anti-social behaviour, neglect, sexual exploitation, exposure to violence and other dangers. Evidence indicators include:

- training staff to identify and manage risks
- having appropriate disaster plans
- complying with child protection legislation, in particular having designated members of staff who receive regular training in child protection and who fully understand the criteria for making and responding to child protection referrals
- undertaking Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and other vetting checks for staff who work with learners
- having clear policies on bullying and discrimination, ensuring that action is taken to combat bullying and discrimination, and providing support for the victims of bullying and discrimination.

Enjoying and achieving

134. This includes attending and enjoying college and making good progress in learning, leisure activities and personal development. Evidence indicators include:

- supporting learners with poor behaviour and attendance
- planning and monitoring learners' personal and academic development
- planning effectively to meet the needs of potentially underachieving groups
- providing for social, cultural, sporting, recreational and leisure activities
- the views of learners about whether they enjoy their time at college.

Making a positive contribution

135. This includes understanding rights and responsibilities, participating in the life of the community, developing self-confidence and enterprising behaviour, and choosing not to engage in anti-social behaviour. Evidence indicators include:

- ensuring that learners understand their rights and responsibilities
- helping learners to initiate and manage a range of organised activities at college and in the community, both by themselves and jointly with community organisations

- consulting learners about key decisions that affect them and taking account of their views.

Achieving economic well-being

136. This includes engaging in further education and training that leads to the acquisition of the skills and knowledge needed for employment, living in decent homes and communities and having access to transport. Evidence indicators include:

- helping learners to develop their self-confidence, team working skills and enterprise qualities
- securing the provision of impartial careers advice
- providing good opportunities for work experience and work-based learning
- helping learners to be financially literate.

Methodology and judgements

137. Inspectors will look at the extent to which provision leads to successful outcomes for learners. Inspectors will focus on the most important issues affecting each individual college. These will depend on the context of the college and any issues identified in the self-assessment report. Inspectors will look at documentary evidence, but they will place particular emphasis on the learners' views. They will seek quantitative data whenever possible, for example data on the level of complaints and on learners' attendance provide evidence for the 'enjoying and achieving' outcome. The team's methodology may include a small sample of case studies of vulnerable learners. In these instances, the college will be asked to identify a few vulnerable learners, make their records available and arrange a meeting between inspectors and appropriate college staff. The learners concerned may be interviewed as part of a wider group, but they will not be interviewed by themselves.

138. The five outcomes will be reported under the sections for each of the key questions as follows:

Outcomes for children	Key question
1. Being healthy	KQ4. How well are learners guided and supported?
2. Staying safe	KQ5. How effective are leadership and management?
3. Enjoying and achieving	KQ2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?
4. Making a positive contribution	KQ1. How well do learners achieve? KQ3. How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?
5. Achieving economic well-being	KQ4. How well are learners guided and supported?

Section C. Achievement and standards

Key question 1. How well do learners achieve?

The CIF states that

inspectors should evaluate:

- *learners' success in achieving challenging targets, including qualifications and learning goals, with trends over time and any significant variations between groups of learners*
- *the standards of learners' work in relation to their learning goals*
- *learners' progress relative to their prior attainment and potential, with any significant variations between groups of learners*
- *the extent to which learners enjoy their work*

and, where appropriate,

- *the acquisition of workplace skills*
- *the development of skills which contribute to the social and economic well-being of the learner*
- *the emotional development of learners*
- *the behaviour of learners*
- *the attendance of learners*
- *the extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle*
- *learners' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development*
- *whether learners make a positive contribution to the community.*

Sources of evidence

139. The main sources of evidence include:

- the college's self-assessment report
- college performance against targets
- the CPR produced by Ofsted and the Provider Performance Report produced by the ALI, which will provide information on the following:
 - i. qualification success rates, retention rates, pass rates for the college as a whole, for areas of learning, for individual qualifications and programmes and for different categories of learners
 - ii. analysis of performance compared with appropriate national benchmarking data
 - iii. value-added and distance travelled data for learners aged 16–19
 - iv. distance travelled data for adult learners on accredited courses
- class registers
- attendance rates and progression rates for the college as a whole
- performance records of individual learners, including tutorial records and reports of individuals' progress compared with targets in their individual learning plans
- judgements relating to standards made by external examiners, verifiers and moderators

- lesson observations, discussions with learners and scrutiny of learners' work, including practical work in progress and finished practical work
- for work-based learners, any workplace supervisors' or assessors' records of the acquisition of workplace skills
- any other evidence, whether or not quantifiable, that indicates learners' progress, their spiritual, moral, social, or cultural development, or their contribution to the community.

140. Colleges and inspectors are referred to the 'Coverage, methodology and definitions' guidance that accompanies the college performance report for definitions relevant to judging the performance of learners, and to guidance provided by the ALI with the Provider Performance Report.

Interpreting the criteria

141. This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the aspects of achievement highlighted in the CIF:

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

Achievements

142. Learners' achievements are judged by reference to:

- standards reached, and whether they are high enough
- the progress made by individuals and groups of learners, taking into account their prior attainment and potential
- success in achieving any other goals set out in their learning plans, such as progression to higher level courses, achievement of additional awards and progression to relevant employment.

143. For learners on foundation and intermediate courses, learners' achievements may not be wholly reflected by qualifications achieved. For example, learners taking basic skills courses may move on before they have completed the whole qualification. Progression to further study or employment may be a clearer indicator of success than examination pass rates. Learners may achieve well without necessarily securing formal qualifications.

144. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities should be challenged to progress and succeed in the same way as any other learners. Their goals may be different from other groups, but judgements about how far they have met them are arrived at in the same way. Inspectors will assess whether initial assessments and individual learning plans are realistic, suitably demanding and understood by the learners. They will judge individual learners' progress towards the objectives recorded in their plans. Records should clearly indicate the progress learners are making.

Standards

145. In making judgements about standards, inspectors will focus on:

- interpretation and judgement of learners' performance, compared to national averages, including qualification and programme success rates, pass rates, retention rates, proportions of high grades and trends; and achievement of the learning targets defined in individual learning plans
- for non-accredited courses, inspectors will assess the achievements of learners as set out through RARPA (recognising and recording progress and achievement).

Performance and targets

146. Inspectors will judge whether challenging learning goals and targets are set and achieved for the college as a whole, for curriculum areas and for individual courses. As a minimum, inspectors will look for qualification success rate, retention rate, pass rate and attendance rate targets. Inspectors will compare college performance with national averages, for the whole college, for curriculum areas and for individual subjects and courses. When making these judgements inspectors will use benchmarking data and they will take account of the context in which the college operates. Inspectors will also evaluate whether learners:

- are prepared for effective participation in the workplace and in the community
- develop the attitudes and skills necessary to maintain lifelong learning, including the capacity to work independently and collaboratively.

147. Where colleges have collaborative arrangements with other institutions, for example franchise partners or other groups in the community, inspectors will distinguish between the achievements of learners taught by the college and learners taught by the other organisation.

148. Where a significant proportion of learners do not complete their course or training programme, inspectors will investigate the reasons and will expect the college to have done so. Where appropriate, inspectors will relate success rates to, for example, punctuality and attendance, the quality of initial guidance and tutorial support, the quality of teaching, the range of programmes offered and local employment opportunities.

Performance trends

149. Inspectors will look at trends in performance and judge whether they show continuous improvement or the maintenance of very high standards. Where appropriate, the trends will be compared to the rate of improvement in the national averages. Inspectors will be aware that percentage measures can have a disproportionate impact when there are few learners. They will take care to compare like with like. For example, a significant improvement in pass rates may be the result of raised entry requirements, rather than a real improvement in the quality of learners' work. Inspectors will also evaluate:

- trends over a three-year period, placing more emphasis on recent years and less on courses that have been discontinued
- the retention of current groups of learners to gain further evidence of trends.

The performance of different groups of learners

150. Inspectors will:

- highlight variations in learners' success between different groups of learners and between subjects
- report on learners of different gender or ethnic background, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and learners who are gifted or talented.

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

151. Inspectors will judge whether the standards of learners' work meets or exceeds the levels established in examination or assessment objectives. Subject and course specifications, objectives, prescribed content and grade descriptors will help inspectors with their assessments. Inspectors will:

- evaluate the standards being reached in coursework in relation to what is expected
- highlight strengths or areas for improvement in what learners know, understand and can do; for example, in advanced work, inspectors will look for well-developed research, critical analysis and problem-solving skills
- report significant differences in the standards achieved by learners of different gender or ethnic backgrounds
- highlight variations between the standards achieved, in relation to what is expected, on particular courses
- highlight cases where the same learners achieve differing standards on different courses.

152. When inspecting vocational courses inspectors will evaluate learners' practical skills and knowledge of their occupational areas. Learners' ability to organise and complete practical tasks in lessons or in the workplace will be compared with what can be reasonably expected of learners at that stage in their course. Learners near the end of their course should be approaching commercial speeds for completion of tasks. The work they produce should be of a high standard and reflect the standards expected in their chosen industry.

Key skills

153. Inspectors will focus on the key skills of communication, application of numeracy and IT. The wider key skills of working with others, improving own learning and performance, and problem-solving may also form part of learning programmes. In their judgement of key skills achievements, inspectors will consider:

- the opportunities for learners to study and gain accreditation for key skills
- levels of attendance at key skills lessons

- the standards reached against the level specifications, based on observation and scrutiny of learners' work
- the number and proportion of learners completing key skills programmes and achieving qualifications at an appropriate level.

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

154. The new national post-16 value-added and distance travelled measures are intended to indicate whether or not learners make at least the progress expected of them. The measures compare actual levels of learners' performance with predicted levels of performance determined from their prior attainment. The measures are planned to be launched nationally by the LSC and DfES from September 2007 after being piloted and evaluated in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 academic years (the value added measures are also being piloted and evaluated in school sixth forms from Spring 2006 to Summer 2007). From September 2007, inspectors will use these new measures of success to make judgements about learners' progress. However, colleges may wish to continue to use other value-added schemes, particularly throughout the pilot period and while becoming familiar with the new national measures.

155. Learners' progress will also be judged by assessing the progress of learners in lessons, and the achievement of objectives set out in individual learning plans compared to the identification, through initial assessment, of individual learners' starting points.

Value-added measure for graded level 3 qualifications for learners aged 16–19

156. This value-added measure, developed as one of the new measures of success, will be used to measure the progress made by learners aged 16–19 on graded level 3 qualifications, including GCE, A/AS, AVCE and BTEC national diplomas. During the pilot period, inspectors will refer to value-added data provided by the college and individual learning plans to make judgements about learners' progress. When referring to data derived from college devised schemes, inspectors will take care to ensure that comparisons with national data are valid.

157. Many colleges use value-added data to set performance targets for individual learners. Inspectors will judge whether these targets are sufficiently demanding and whether learners are generally reaching them. Colleges may produce value-added data for vocational qualifications other than AVCEs. Inspectors will seek to establish the validity and reliability of such data before taking account of them in their judgements.

Distance travelled measure for learners aged 16–19

158. The distance travelled measure is relevant to non-graded level 3 qualifications, and many level 1 and 2 qualifications. The measure relates to the achievements of learners compared with the levels at which they start. A

positive distance travelled score would be indicated by progress over and above that predicted at the start of the programme.

Distance travelled measure for adults

159. At the time of writing this guidance, further development on the specification of the measure was being undertaken.

The extent to which learners enjoy their work

160. This evaluation statement is also covered in section B of this handbook.

Inspectors will take into account, for example:

- learners views, expressed in discussions with inspectors and in the results of college surveys of learners' views
- information from lessons and other activities observed by inspectors, especially observations of the behaviour of learners and of the enthusiasm with which they approach their studies
- learners' punctuality and attendance
- the effectiveness of measures that are taken to prevent or reduce learners' disaffection
- the range and take-up of opportunities for social, cultural and sporting activities, including whether there is particular encouragement for learners from all social groups to participate in these activities.

The acquisition of workplace skills

161. Achievement in work-based learning is judged in two main ways:

- the proportion of trainees who complete the programme and who achieve their learning objectives
- the level of competence and skills that the trainees achieve, both in absolute terms and compared with their levels of competence and skill at the start of the programme.

The attendance of learners

162. Inspectors' judgements will be based on:

- records of attendance in observed lessons
- analysis of registers for a period of up to three years prior to the inspection.

163. Judgements will cover both absolute levels of attendance and the extent to which attendance has improved or been maintained at a high level. As with other aspects of performance, benchmarking data will be used and, where appropriate, comparisons will be made between different groups of learners.

Learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

164. Inspectors' judgements will be based on:

- the extent to which the college encourages and supports learners' involvement in spiritual, social, cultural and charitable activities

- the extent to which the college complies with the legal requirements relating to religious education and collective worship.

Religious education and collective worship

165. The legal requirements in relation to religious education and collective worship are contained in sections 44 and 45 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended by schedule 9 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000. In the inspection of sixth form colleges of voluntary origin, the inspection team will include a member recognised by the appropriate church authority as being competent to inspect the denominational education and collective worship provided by the college, in accordance with guidelines agreed between Ofsted and the appropriate church authority. Inspectors will focus on whether the statutory requirements are met and the importance learners attach to the opportunities that are provided.

166. The remaining evaluation criteria under key question 1 are covered in section B of this handbook. They are:

- the development of skills which contribute to the economic and well being of learners
- the behaviour of learners
- the extent to which learners adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle
- whether learners make a positive contribution to the community.

Making judgements

167. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about achievement and standards:

Outstanding Standards are rising fast or have been maintained over many years, and they are well above those attained in similar colleges. Success rates, pass rates, retention rates and attendance rates are well above sector averages for both learners aged 16–18, adults and learners from different ethnic groups. Results in any key skills that are examined are also very good. Learners are well motivated, as shown in their attendance, attitudes and interest. Value-added (and distance travelled) analysis shows that virtually all learners make very good progress and reach or exceed challenging targets. The great majority of young people develop their personal qualities very well, enabling them to make very good contributions to their community and very good gains in their capacity for social and economic well-being. Learners stay safe and healthy and clearly enjoy their work at college. Rates of progression to further and higher education and employment are high. A very high proportion of modern apprentices achieve apprenticeship awards.

Good	<p>Standards are generally rising or have been maintained over several years and they are generally above those attained in similar colleges. Success rates, achievement rates, retention rates and attendance rates are generally above sector averages. Learners participate well in lessons and their behaviour is good. Learners' knowledge and skills are generally above what might typically be expected. Value-added analysis shows that most learners make better progress than their baseline performance would suggest. Most young people enjoy college, develop their personal qualities, enabling them to make good contributions to their community and in their capacity for social and economic well-being. Progression rates to employment or higher education are good. The proportion of modern apprentices achieving their awards is above the average.</p>
Satisfactory	<p>Standards are rising steadily and are broadly in line with those in similar colleges. Success rates, achievement rates and retention rates are in line with national averages. Value-added analysis indicates that most learners are making the progress predicted of them and reach targets that are adequately challenging. No group of learners underachieves significantly. Most learners attain the level expected in the key skills, where relevant. Learners are generally well motivated, as shown by their mainly satisfactory attitudes and interest, and attendance rates that are no worse than the national average. The personal development of young people is satisfactory, as is their contribution to the community and the growth in their capacity for social and economic well-being. Learners stay safe and healthy. Many learners are successful in achieving their higher education or employment goals.</p>
Inadequate	<p>The following may indicate inadequate provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="496 1429 1214 1496">• overall achievements that are low and compare unfavourably with those in similar colleges<li data-bbox="496 1503 1364 1653">• significant numbers of learners make inadequate progress in subjects, courses or areas of learning. Many of them fall short of their targets, or else reach targets that are insufficiently challenging<li data-bbox="496 1659 1353 1727">• many learners are not well motivated, which shows itself in low attendance or a poor attitude to their work<li data-bbox="496 1733 1364 1845">• underachievement by particular groups of learners, for example, gifted and talented learners, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or minority ethnic groups<li data-bbox="496 1852 1364 2002">• learners' achievements in key skills that are too low for them to cope adequately with their course, or for them to have reasonable prospects of meeting the demands of further education or employment<li data-bbox="496 2009 1331 2036">• many young people do not progress adequately in their

personal development, make little contribution to the community, and progress only slowly in their capacity for social and economic well-being.

- some learners may be at risk from inadequate health and safety arrangements
- progression rates to further learning and employment are low
- few modern apprentices complete their awards.

Section D. The quality of provision

168. The grade for the quality of provision is determined by judgements about three key questions relating to the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning; how well programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners; and how well learners are guided and supported. The overall grade is not determined by a mathematical average of these key question grades, rather inspectors will need to consider the significance of specific judgements in all three component areas in order to arrive at a holistic view of the overarching grade.

Key question 2. How effective are teaching, training and learning?

The CIF states that

inspectors should evaluate:

- *how well teaching, training and resources promote learning, address the full range of learners' needs and meet course or programme requirements*
- *the suitability and rigour of assessment in planning and monitoring learners' progress*
- *the identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs*

and, where appropriate,

- *the involvement of parents and carers in their children's learning and development.*

Sources of evidence

169. The main sources of evidence about teaching and learning include:

- aggregated college records of their own lesson observations
- college records of the observation of individual teachers
- discussions with learners, both individually and in groups; inspectors might ask learners to bring samples of work to these meetings
- inspectors' lesson observations
- discussions with teachers and managers
- scrutiny of learners' marked work and practical work
- inspection of lesson plans and schemes of work
- analysis of learners' feedback in surveys of their opinions.

170. The main sources of evidence about assessment include:

- records of initial assessment and the process of establishing learning goals
- learners' assessed written work and other assignments
- assessment policies, records and reports
- records of progress reviews with learners
- course assessment plans
- observation of assessment activities
- interviews with assessors and internal verifiers
- views of employers and parents who are supporting learners
- views of learners.

171. The main sources of evidence for the assessment of work-based learning include:

- authorised witness testimonies
- records of assessment and observation of learners' performance
- records of discussions with staff responsible for learners' performance
- learners' portfolios
- learners' responses to written and oral questioning.

172. The main sources of evidence for the inspection of Jobcentre Plus provision include:

- observation of clients during sessions, including job searching and employability training
- literacy, numeracy and language support sessions
- records of work placements
- visits to work placements
- clients' responses to activities
- records of assessment and reviews.

173. The main sources of evidence for the inspection of adult and community learning centres include:

- observation of learners during lessons and practical activities
- discussions with learners, tutors, managers and workers in the local community
- documents relating to learners' progress and achievements, including learning plans; records of individual learners' achievements; records of the accreditation of learners' prior learning and experience; learning diaries; data on, and analyses of, learners' achievements and destinations
- examples of learners' work, including exhibitions, displays or demonstrations of work
- audio, video-recording or photographic evidence of learners applying their acquired knowledge and skills
- community surveys demonstrating the impact that learning has had on quality of life and local affairs, for example the development of community groups.

Interpreting the criteria

This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the criteria for judging the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning.

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

Teaching, learning, attainment and overall judgements about the quality of lessons

174. When inspectors observe lessons they will award one grade denoting their judgement of the overall quality of the lesson. In arriving at this judgement, inspectors will consider the quality of teaching, learning and attainment. In broad terms:

- judgements of teaching focus on the role of the teacher in preparing and delivering an effective lesson
- judgements of learning focus on the progress being made by learners during that lesson
- judgements of attainment focus on the standard of work produced by learners during that lesson, judged against the standard expected of learners at that point in their course, irrespective of their starting-point.

175. Judgements about the overall quality of lessons and, where appropriate, about teaching, learning and attainment will be made:

- across the college as a whole
- for specific areas of learning, where relevant
- in individual subjects or courses
- for learners of different ages and from ethnic groups.

176. When arriving at the overall judgement of the quality of education and training, inspectors will take into account all the relevant circumstances. The quality of the lessons will be an important element in this judgment, but the judgement will not merely amount to an average of the lesson observation grades.

Sampling lessons

177. The new inspections involve fewer lesson observations, but all inspections, including inspections where area of learning grades are not awarded, will retain some direct observation of lessons. The basic purpose of lesson observation is to test the college's view of the quality of teaching as determined by its self-assessment process. Significant differences between inspectors' judgements about teaching and the college's judgements expressed in its self-assessment report will be discussed with the college.

178. In inspections where area of learning grades are not awarded, inspectors may select a sample of lessons across areas of learning that the college has assessed to be above average, average and below average. They will choose a

mix of lessons involving adults and learners aged under 19. Sampling will be influenced by learners' achievements, since achievements give a strong indication of the quality of teaching. However, inspectors will be aware of contextual factors, which might contribute to only modest progress, even when the teaching is very good. Some observations may focus on specific issues identified by inspectors or by the college in its self-assessment report. For example, inspectors might visit several lessons in different areas of learning, specifically to test the college's judgements about the effectiveness of its key skills and basic skills teaching. The college may also be invited to take part in joint lesson observations with appropriate senior managers accompanying inspectors to lessons. This will enable inspectors to assess the accuracy of the college observation system by comparing their judgements about the lesson with those of the college manager. More details about joint lesson observations are contained in annex A.

Making judgements about teaching and learning

179. In making judgements, inspectors will evaluate:

- how well teaching and training meet individuals' needs and course or programme requirements
- how well learners learn and make progress.

180. Inspectors will consider the extent to which teachers and trainers:

- show knowledge, technical competence and up-to-date expertise, at a level consistent with effective teaching, training and assessment of the course
- plan effectively with clear objectives that all learners understand
- use methods and styles of teaching and training consistent with the aims of their courses and learners' personal objectives
- challenge and inspire learners
- set, use and mark assignments and other tasks in a way that helps learners to progress
- work with learners to develop individual learning plans that are informed by initial assessment and which are reviewed and updated regularly
- promote good working relationships that foster learning
- use materials and teaching methods that are sensitive to, and promote, equality of opportunity and good race relations.

181. Good teaching enables learners to make the most of their potential and advance their knowledge, understanding and skills well beyond those they had when they started their course. Inspectors will assess, through observation and discussion with learners, the extent to which learners (irrespective of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, learning difficulty or disability):

- acquire knowledge and skills, develop ideas and increase their understanding
- become confident in what they are doing
- understand how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve

- work productively and make effective use of their time
- are interested in their work and able to sustain their concentration
- think and learn for themselves
- make use of the resources available to them, for example in libraries and ICT centres
- show determination to complete assignments on time and see problems through to resolution
- are prepared to seek help and act on advice they receive.

The quality of teaching and learning

182. Inspectors will focus on the effectiveness of the learning process. They will identify and report on teaching that works well and teaching that is ineffective. They will not be prescriptive. Colleges should not assume, for example, that lesson plans must be in a particular format, that exposition is undesirable or that lessons must include a variety of activities at all costs. It is recognised that in different hands, and with different learners, different approaches can be equally effective.

183. There is a strong relationship between thorough planning and effective teaching. Syllabuses and programme requirements should be translated into clear and comprehensive schemes of work that are understood by learners. Individual lessons should be well planned, but lesson plans should not be so inflexible that they cannot be adapted to reflect the progress of learners. When learners first arrive at college, they sometimes lack confidence in their ability to meet the new demands. This is particularly true of many adults who are returning to learning. Effective teaching is sensitive to this, helps learners to set themselves realistic targets for each stage of their work, and helps them to gain confidence.

184. Work experience often plays a significant part in vocational learning. Learners who are employed or who are based with an employer on a training programme will undertake most of their learning away from the college. How well learners learn while at work, including judgements about how effectively their progress is monitored and recorded, will be evaluated and reported on. This may involve inspectors visiting learners at their workplace and meeting with employers and work-based supervisors.

185. Inspectors of work-based learning will assess whether the work-based training and off-the-job training enables trainees to acquire the competence, skills and knowledge that comprise their learning objectives. Inspectors will take into account the extent to which teaching and training are suitable for adult learners, how they respond to teaching and whether they are capable of promoting their own learning. Both workplace and off-the-job training should be planned and co-ordinated effectively. Training plans should include objectives that are clear and understood by trainees, trainers and workplace supervisors.

Observing lessons

186. Inspectors' approaches to lesson observation will vary depending on the circumstances.

Features of good lessons that inspectors look for include:

- setting of clear objectives which are made known to the learners
- enthusiastic and interesting teaching which provides an enjoyable experience for learners
- activities that are suitable for all learners, whatever their age, ability and cultural background, and which are suitably demanding
- awareness of different individuals' needs
- effective questioning of learners to check their understanding
- learners demonstrating their achievements through improved knowledge, understanding and skills
- skilful leadership of discussions to ensure that learners' contributions are encouraged and valued
- clear explanations, particularly of the links between theoretical knowledge and its practical applications
- accurate and up-to-date technical knowledge
- sensitivity to equal opportunities issues
- clear writing on whiteboards and overhead projectors
- interesting and relevant use of ICT
- good-quality handouts that are well produced, free from errors and which contain references where appropriate
- sufficient coverage of ground in the topic
- effective management of any transition between individual and group work
- a crisp end to the lesson, summarising what has been learned and avoiding 'tailing off'.

Teaching of key skills

187. The inspection of key skills will normally be included in the inspection of individual areas of learning. Judgements about key skills will also be summarised in the main section on the overall quality of provision.

188. The development of key skills is most effective when teachers take responsibility for developing them as part of their teaching and when learners see the relevance of these skills to the courses they are studying. In the best practice, key skills teaching takes place in a variety of settings, including lessons, key skills workshops and resource centres which learners can visit as they wish and study individually or in groups.

189. To reach a judgement on the teaching and development of key skills, inspectors will assess whether:

- there is a college policy on key skills that applies to all programmes and all learners
- the strategy for implementing the policy ensures a co-ordinated approach across the college that is actively supported by senior managers

- there are systematic procedures for initial assessment, further diagnostic assessment and learning support
- key skills teaching is closely linked to learners' main programmes
- there is an appropriate range of teaching methods and modes of delivery
- there is regular monitoring and review of learners' progress
- there are effective arrangements for internal verification and moderation
- managers receive regular reports on key skills development across the college
- there are opportunities for staff development and sharing good practice.

190. In relation to specific courses, inspectors will evaluate whether:

- learners are learning the skills necessary to cope with the courses they are following
- work is being marked carefully, with correction of spelling, grammatical errors and inaccuracies in work with numbers
- ICT is used by learners as an integral part of their courses, where appropriate
- work is presented as professionally as it is reasonable to expect at the relevant stage of their course
- learners work collaboratively with their peers and others.

Teaching of practical skills

191. Inspectors may observe the teaching and learning of practical skills in many different settings, for example learning resource centres, workshops, studios, laboratories, salons, kitchens, sports halls, simulated work environments and places of employment. Inspectors may observe the start of practical lessons and return later in the lesson to assess the progress learners have made.

192. Matters that are particularly relevant to the judgement of practical lessons include:

- whether the balance between the teaching of theory and practical skills is appropriate
- whether learners have a sufficient grounding of theory before starting the relevant practical work
- the safety and suitability of the environment for the practical activity and the number of learners expected to attend
- whether the activities reflect current commercial or industrial practice
- the quality of the equipment and other learning resources
- the quality of teachers' demonstrations of practical skills
- whether learners have enough time to practise and develop their skills
- whether there is a clear distinction between practice and work for assessment
- whether teachers divide their time equitably between all individuals in the group, and are aware of individuals' progress

- whether learners are achieving appropriate standards, which should approach commercial or industrial standards, towards the end of their programmes
- whether key skills are integrated effectively with aspects of the practical work.

E-learning

193. E-learning is learning facilitated and supported through the use of ICT. It may involve the use of computers, interactive whiteboards, digital cameras, the internet, the college intranet, virtual learning environments and electronic communication tools such as email, discussion boards, chat facilities and video conferencing. E-learning should form part of the overall teaching and learning strategy for courses. There should be appropriate references to e-learning in schemes of work, lesson plans, assignments, course reviews and staff development plans. An overall strategy for e-learning should be supported by senior managers. Effective e-learning should:

- improve learners' understanding of topics or activities that are part of their academic or vocational programme
- improve their skills and their knowledge of the technology being used
- help to maintain their interest in their programme.

194. In particular, inspectors will evaluate whether:

- staff and learners have the relevant IT skills to make good use of e-learning facilities
- there are adequate resources for e-learning
- the quality and effectiveness of e-learning is well monitored
- there are appropriate opportunities for learners to use e-learning facilities outside scheduled lessons.

Adult and community learning

195. Where the college provides adult and community education this will be included in the inspection. Adult and community learning includes non-vocational and leisure learning, community development programmes and programmes aimed at achieving social integration through skills development. These programmes include family literacy, language and numeracy programmes, parenting courses and programmes for vulnerable groups, such as older people, the homeless and people with mental health difficulties. Inspectors will look at a sample of provision. They will ensure that inspection activities are suitable and sensitive to the values and purposes of the provision being inspected.

196. When judging the suitability of the range of provision, inspectors will take account of local and national strategic priorities, such as family learning.

Inspectors will also evaluate:

- the extent to which adults are gaining in knowledge and skills and growing in effectiveness as a consequence of learning; contexts for the

application of new skills and knowledge include the home, workplace and community

- the degree of success in achieving planned learning outcomes; it may not be possible to quantify some outcomes, for example the ability of learners to contribute to decision making in the community
- the personal development of the adult learners
- adult learners' development of literacy, numeracy and language skills, including their achievement of recognised qualifications.

197. Judgements about leadership and management of adult and community learning will focus on how effectively the position, rationale and management of adult and community learning support the priorities in the college's mission and development plan. Inspectors will look at how effectively the college reviews the performance of adult and community learning in relation to targets relevant to the needs and interests of adult learners. Inspectors will examine quality assurance arrangements and how well the college promotes equality and diversity through, for example, its range and location of activities. Inspectors will evaluate the quality of staff and other resources, including those in any sub-contracted organisation. An evaluation will be made of accommodation, equipment and learning resources, both in the college and other centres where programmes are taught.

Jobcentre Plus

198. Programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus will be inspected when the college is the main contractor. The programmes include, among others, New Deal for young people aged 18–24 and New Deal for people aged 25 or over. Most people who join these programmes are unemployed and many face significant barriers to getting a job. Jobcentre Plus refers clients to colleges. If clients fail to take up the offer of a New Deal programme they may lose unemployment benefit; consequently, high retention rates do not amount to a strength.

Inspectors will evaluate:

- how well provision develops clients' work-related skills and supports them into sustainable employment
- the quality of support for the development of literacy, numeracy and language skills
- whether programmes encourage a mature attitude to employment and offer the opportunity for work experience
- whether programmes provide suitable opportunities to gain qualifications
- whether skills training, when provided as an additional element to those required by Jobcentre Plus, is of good quality.

Work-based learning

199. Although there are references to the inspection of work-based learning throughout this handbook, the main guidance is set out below. Work-based learning is inspected when the college is the main contractor and the work-based learning is wholly or partly funded by the Learning and Skills Council or Jobcentre Plus. Inspection includes any providers or assessment centres to

whom the college sub-contracts work-based learning or assessment that are not likely to be inspected in their own right by the ALI. In addition, the inspection will cover any work based learning sub-contracted to the college by other providers, such as off-the-job training and assessment. Work-based learning will be inspected as an integral part of the relevant area of learning. The evaluation of work-based learning will contribute to an overall grade for the area as a whole. Contributory grades for work-based learning will no longer be awarded.

200. Sources of evidence include observation of teaching or training, visits to workplaces, observations of progress review meetings and scrutiny of progress review records. In particular inspectors will evaluate:

- how effectively programmes enable learners to become competent and effective in an occupational area by providing opportunities for on-the-job and off-the-job learning
- whether there is timely achievement of apprenticeship frameworks, key skills, language skills and NVQ qualifications
- the standards of learners' work, including the skills and knowledge demonstrated by learners in the workplace
- learners' knowledge and understanding of employment rights and of their own responsibility to work safely and responsibly
- how well initial assessment of learners' skills and knowledge is used to develop individual learning plans
- how effectively on-the-job coaching and training and off-the-job teaching and training take account of the specific needs of individuals that are set out in their individual learning plans
- the effectiveness of additional support at work and during on and off-the-job training
- whether training meets the expectations of learners in relation to opportunities to obtain employment or progress with their career
- the extent to which employers' needs are met and how enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement
- the quality of support and guidance, including impartiality of advice, the accuracy of the diagnosis of individual learning needs, the quality of additional support arrangements and the quality of induction, both in the workplace and for off-the-job training
- whether work environments are safe
- the quality of leadership and management, in particular the effectiveness of quality assurance arrangements and how well the college promotes equality and diversity in its work-based learning programmes
- the quality of staff and other resources and how effectively they are applied to the training. Staff resources include off-the-job trainers, workplace supervisors, staff who manage and coordinate the training and staff in sub-contracted organisations
- the quality of accommodation, equipment, materials and learning resources, both in the workplace and where the off-the-job training takes place.

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

Making judgements about assessment

201. In making judgements, inspectors will consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

- forms of assessment and recording are suitable for the courses and programmes being followed
- assessment is fair, accurate and carried out regularly
- initial and diagnostic assessment provides an accurate basis on which to plan an appropriate programme of work
- assessment is used to monitor progress and inform individual learners about how they are performing and how they might improve
- achievements towards learning goals and qualifications are recorded and accredited
- assessment information, including the analysis of performance of different groups of learners, is used to guide course and programme development
- assessment, verification and moderation procedures follow regulatory body requirements
- those with a legitimate interest, such as employers or parents, are clearly and regularly informed about learners' progress.

The quality of assessment

202. Regular and effective assessment helps learners to achieve their full potential. It should involve thorough identification of learning needs and additional support needs, and fairly and accurately identify what learners are doing well and what needs improvement. Learners should understand how they will be assessed and how their overall progress will be monitored. They should also be encouraged to evaluate their own performance. Discussions with learners will reveal whether they know how well they are doing and what steps they need to take to improve. Inspectors will also:

- look at teachers' written comments on learners' work
- listen to teachers' comments when work is returned to learners, when the opportunity arises
- listen to learners' views about the extent to which assessment meets their aims.

203. Inspectors will look for a close match between the course objectives and methods of assessing learners' progress. For example, courses that mainly use written tests to assess learners should offer learners the opportunity to develop their written skills to a level sufficient to tackle such tests. Assessment methods and recording systems within a course should be consistent. For example, one tutor should not grade assignments A, B, C and so on, if another tutor on the same course is marking assignments out of 20. Inspectors will also judge the work of internal verifiers through discussions with them, reference to college

procedures, records of internal verification and scrutiny of internally verified learners' work.

204. Inspectors will evaluate the accuracy of assessment. The marks or grades awarded should reflect fairly the quality of learners' work. In forming their judgements, inspectors will look at a range of work from learners of different abilities. For learners on NVQ programmes, assessment will be carried out in an actual workplace whenever possible, rather than a simulated one.

205. Using assessment to improve learners' performance often involves setting targets for improvement. Judgements about the effectiveness of target-setting will be made. Inspectors will assess how effectively the college's evaluation of learners' progress leads to improvements in the way courses are taught, structured and managed.

206. The assessment of work-based learners involves judgements about how effectively they are assessed on entry and throughout their training programmes. Initial assessment enables an appropriate training plan to be produced. Subsequent assessments are used to monitor learners' progress towards their learning objectives and to judge their competence and skills against national standards. Progress should be reviewed at meetings involving the person responsible for the training, the learner and the workplace supervisor. Each party should maintain records of these meetings. Actions to be completed by the next meeting should be identified. Inspectors will sample records of these meetings.

207. Inspectors will consider how effectively the knowledge and skills of adult learners are assessed on entry and whether this assessment informs individual learning plans. In appropriate cases, colleges should be able to arrange for the accreditation of adult learners' prior learning or achievement. Part-time learners' progress should be as carefully assessed as that of full-time learners.

The identification of, and provision for, additional learning needs

208. Individuals' learning needs, including their additional needs, should be accurately identified and learners should have access to effective additional support throughout their studies or training. Initial assessment should be carried out during induction and the results should be reported to learners without delay. It should identify difficulties with language, literacy or numeracy, particular problems such as dyslexia or hearing impairment or individuals who are gifted or talented. The initial assessment of literacy and numeracy should determine whether the learners have the key skills necessary for the specific demands of the course rather than simply assessing general levels of literacy and numeracy. Additional support may be provided to individuals, to whole groups or through learning workshops.

209. On joining their programme, work-based trainees should receive an assessment of their basic skills, key skills and occupational aptitude. The results

of this assessment should be taken into account when devising their individual training plans and in deciding whether trainees need additional learning support.

Making judgements about additional learning needs

210. Inspectors will assess:

- how effectively existing information is used in evaluating individuals' needs
- the effectiveness of procedures for assessing all learners at the start of their course, using methods appropriate to the level of study
- whether opportunities exist for teachers to refer learners for additional support and for the learners themselves to request such support
- whether the support is in place soon after the start of the course
- whether the analysis of the results of initial assessment is followed by discussion between learning support staff, the learner and the learner's personal tutor about the nature and level of support required
- whether suitable individual learning programmes are devised for each learner, which include clear targets for achievement
- whether the staff providing additional support have appropriate qualifications and experience
- how effectively the support and the teaching of the main programme are integrated
- whether the arrangements for learning support are free from any negative connotations on the part of learners
- whether a high proportion of learners assessed as needing support actually receive it
- whether the college has assessed the relationship between this support and the eventual success of the learners
- whether the college has analysed the take-up of learning support by different groups, and assessed its impact on different or targeted groups.

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

211. Reporting learners' progress to parents, carers or sponsoring employers is important for learners under the age of 18. Inspectors will focus on the quality and accuracy of such reports and the effectiveness of the arrangements made by colleges to communicate with parents and employers. The college should consider the views of parents and employers when it judges the effectiveness of its reporting arrangements.

Making judgements

212. There is no automatic link between the proportion of outstanding, good, satisfactory or inadequate lessons and the overall judgements about the quality of education and training or the overall effectiveness of the college. However, evidence about the overall quality of teaching will be taken into account in making these two overall judgements.

213. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about teaching, learning and assessment:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Outstanding | Teaching and training are consistently challenging for all groups of learners and activities are matched closely to learners' needs. Teaching promotes independent research, good working relationships and the productive use of learners' time. Teachers and trainers have high levels of subject and vocational expertise. Lessons are thoroughly prepared, but this does not prevent effective use of unanticipated but productive opportunities that arise in lessons. Teachers' enthusiasm and commitment inspire learners, who respond well to the challenges set for them. Their progress is considerably better than might be expected. Learning resources, such as ICT, are used very well by teachers, trainers and learners to promote effective learning. Assessment is rigorous and well organised. The outcomes are effectively used for planning future learning and training. Teachers make effective comments on learners' written work so that learners know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Learners' additional support needs are accurately assessed early in their course. These needs are addressed rapidly and sensitively. Learners put in the extra work and significant benefits result. The impact of this support is regularly assessed. Parents and employers are very well informed about learners' progress. |
| Good | Teaching and training are generally challenging and activities are matched closely to learners' needs. Well planned lessons ensure that there is productive use of learners' time. There are good working relationships between staff and learners. Teachers and trainers have good levels of subject and vocational expertise. Teachers are helpful and committed. Learners respond well to the challenges set for them. Their progress is better than might be expected. Learning resources such as ICT are used well by teachers, trainers and learners to promote learning. Assessment is well organised. The outcomes are effectively used for planning future learning and training. Teachers make relevant comments on learners' written work so that learners know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Learners' additional support needs are accurately assessed early in their course. These needs are addressed rapidly and sensitively, and most learners benefit from the support that is provided. The impact of this support is regularly assessed. Parents and employers are well informed about learners' progress. |
| Satisfactory | Most learners make the progress that should be expected of them and they are motivated to do well. Teachers and trainers |

have a sound knowledge of the curriculum and course requirements. Lessons have clear objectives and learners know what they are doing. Teachers help them to plan their time sensibly. The level of challenge is sufficient for all groups of learners and the teaching methods encourage and engage them. They respond positively and purposefully in lessons, willingly answering questions and participating in discussions. Teachers take steps to encourage them to work effectively on their own, but a few learners remain too dependent on the teacher. ICT supports independent study, which adequately complements classroom learning. Assessment is adequate for teachers and trainers to monitor learners' progress and plan their lessons and training, and learners know what to do to improve. Work is marked regularly and thoroughly, and written comments help learners to understand where they have gone wrong and what to do about it. Most learners' additional support needs are accurately assessed early in their course. Most of these learners benefit from suitable additional support. Adequate arrangements are in place to inform parents and employers about young people's progress.

Inadequate	<p>A minority of lessons observed by inspectors are judged to be good or outstanding and a significant minority are unsatisfactory. The following may indicate inadequate teaching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a significant proportion of learners do not progress well enough because teaching and training is ineffective • much teaching and training fails to capture learners' interest, and activities are not sufficiently well matched to learners' needs to provide a suitable level of challenge • some teachers' and trainers' command of the subject is inadequate for the level demanded by the course • assessment is inadequate and some learners do not know how to improve • initial assessment is inadequate for a significant number of learners and/or many learners do not receive the additional support that they have been identified as needing • many parents and employers do not have sufficient information about learners' progress.
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Key question 3. How well do programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners?

The CIF states that

inspectors should evaluate:

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

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

and, where appropriate,

- *the extent to which employers' needs are met*
- *the extent to which enrichment activities and/or extended services contribute to learners' enjoyment and achievement*
- *the extent to which the provision contributes to the learners' capacity to stay safe and healthy.*

Sources of evidence

214. Inspectors will assess the effect of the curriculum on learners. They will look at the choices learners can make and how well subject or course organisation enables them to make progress. Discussions with learners will provide evidence of how well they feel that the course meets their particular needs and aspirations. The main sources of evidence include:

- discussions with learners, parents, governors, employers, community representatives, local schools, partners, training providers and college staff
- the development plan
- college promotional literature
- individual learning plans
- findings from market research activities carried out by the college or other organisations
- local labour market information
- documentary evidence of external links.

Interpreting the criteria

This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the criteria for judging how well programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners.

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

Making judgements

215. In making judgements, inspectors will consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

- appropriate qualifications enable learners to progress to further education, higher education or employment
- the curriculum or an individual programme of work is structured to provide a coherent programme of study with a variety of interesting and useful activities
- there are clear progression opportunities within the college for full-time and part-time learners at all levels
- educationally and socially inclusive policies and practices widen participation in education, by ensuring access from groups that are under-represented in further education

- the college assesses education and training needs in its local area
- the college has productive links with local schools and employers which facilitate and encourage participation by groups who are under-represented in education
- the college provides opportunities through appropriate partnership arrangements with other providers
- work-based training meets the expectations of trainees to obtain employment and to start or develop their career.

Curriculum range

216. The range of subjects and courses should enable learners to build on what they have already achieved and experienced, as well as providing a range of choices and opportunities in new areas. Inspectors will look at the number of subjects and courses, the combinations offered, the levels of study, progression routes and timetable arrangements. They will look at arrangements for part-time programmes where many learners have family or childcare commitments. They will be aware of the issues that arise in a curriculum area attracting low numbers of learners and will examine, for example, whether:

- the provision of a particular course or a particular curriculum area is consistent with responsible management of resources across the college as a whole
- there are effective management strategies to deal with low numbers of learners, for example, by appropriate combination of groups.

Course structures

217. The degree to which a particular programme meets a learner's aspirations or potential is heavily influenced by the structure of the programme. Judgements about the structure of courses are also relevant to judgements about the leadership and management of the curriculum area. Inspectors will not prescribe models for the structure of individual courses. They will assess the effectiveness of what is done in terms of its impact on learners. Indicators of a poor course structure might include:

- a lack of coherence due to poor communication between teachers responsible for teaching different parts of the same course
- evidence that the progressive acquisition of knowledge and skills is being hampered because modules are not taught in the best order
- assignment scheduling that causes an uneven work load
- timetables that are not suitable for groups of learners with outside responsibilities, such as childcare.

218. Learners have opportunities to work on their own outside lessons, for example in resource centres and computer rooms. In relation to such opportunities, inspectors will assess:

- whether courses strike a good balance of lessons and time for learners to work on their own
- the quality of advice from teachers or personal tutors on how to make best use of that time

- whether learners use the time effectively.

Prior attainment and experience

219. Inspectors' judgement of assessment under key question 2 will cover any arrangements for the accreditation of learners' prior learning or achievement.

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

and

The extent to which employers' needs are met

Making judgements

220. In making judgements, inspectors will consider, where applicable, the extent to which:

- the college identifies and responds to local community and employer needs by offering an appropriate range of academic and vocational courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced level, including, where appropriate, provision for school pupils aged 14–16
- the college makes arrangements to use labour market information to meet the education and training needs of local employers

Responsiveness to community and employer needs

221. Inspectors will judge the responsiveness of colleges by assessing whether there are appropriate and effective links with local schools, colleges, higher education institutions, employers, parents, community groups and the local LSC. They will focus on how the arrangements benefit learners, for example by widening the choice of subjects or improving access to education both for groups that are often under-represented in education and for people living in remote areas. Inspectors will evaluate how well colleges:

- respond to government policies and initiatives for further education and skills
- identify the education and training needs of employers and learners
- match courses and other provision to the needs of the local and wider community
- deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of learners and employers
- communicate the education and training opportunities that are available
- where appropriate, ensure that provision is accessible to all learners, for example through the use of community venues or franchised provision
- make productive partnerships with schools, employers, training organisations and community groups through which the partners are appropriately involved in the design, review and evaluation of the curriculum
- evaluate the impact of provision intended to meet employers' needs.

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs)

222. CoVEs are inspected as a part of the regular programme of college inspections, provided the curriculum area linked with the CoVE is being inspected. CoVEs will be inspected in the same way as any other aspect of the provision of a curriculum area. Judgements will be based on the normal criteria found in the CIF, but inspectors will take account of the CoVE objectives. If the CoVE only provides bespoke full-cost courses for employers, the provision will not be included in the inspection. Feedback to the college on the CoVE provision will be included within the normal area of learning feedback. The CoVE will not be separately graded, unless it comprises all of the area of learning that is being inspected. The inspection report will indicate that the college has a CoVE and it will include summative evaluative judgements on the quality of the CoVE's provision.

Entry to Employment (E2E)

223. E2E forms part of the LSC's programme of work-based learning. E2E is aimed at young people aged 16–19 who are not yet ready or able to enter a modern apprenticeship programme, a level 2 programme or employment. It replaces life skills, preparatory training and NVQ level 1 work-based training. Many E2E learners are disaffected young people who have not taken part in formal education and training since leaving school. Some learners have been excluded from school. Many will have social and personal development needs, learning difficulties and disabilities, or emotional and behavioural problems. Some will simply have found transition difficult and will not be sure what to do next.

224. Colleges may be involved in E2E in several ways, including:

- holding a contract to provide the whole programme themselves
- holding a contract, but subcontracting some aspects of the work to other organisations; the college remains responsible for any subcontracted work and this falls within scope of the college inspection
- holding a contract on behalf of a local partnership or consortium of providers; in this case the college is responsible for the quality of the provision, and all the E2E work across the providers in the group is within the scope of the inspection.

225. E2E consists of three curriculum strands: vocational learning, basic and key skills, and personal and social skills. The proportion of each strand within each learner's programme will depend on individual needs. For the vocational element, learners within a single E2E cohort will normally work in different areas of learning according to their interests and aspirations. As a result, E2E does not fit neatly into a single area of learning. However, for inspection purposes, it is classified in the new Area of Learning 14 'Preparation for life and work'.

College provision for school pupils aged 14–16

226. There is an expectation that colleges will work collaboratively with other local providers to review and develop provision in the area. Consequently, many colleges work with local schools to make coherent provision for the 14–19 age group. Although the CIF relates to provision for post-16 learners, the assessment of how far programmes meet external requirements will include judgements about college provision for school pupils aged 14–16. Judgements will focus on the quality of provision the college makes for the pupils. College inspectors will not explore pupils' experience at school, which will be covered during the relevant school inspection. If inspectors observe college lessons where provision is made for 14–16 year olds, the lesson will be graded, and will contribute to the judgement of the quality of education. Where relevant, inspectors will also evaluate:

- whether the curriculum for 14–16 year olds meets their needs
- the quality of advice and guidance given to pupils
- management of the provision, in particular the management of school liaison
- how success is measured and how the provision is evaluated
- how well have staff been prepared to cater for the different age groups
- the quality and effectiveness of the teaching.

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

227. The inspection of extended services does not apply to further education and sixth form colleges. With regard to enrichment activities, inspectors will assess whether learners have the opportunity to broaden their experience and enhance their personal development through a suitable variety of activities. Enrichment opportunities will, for example, enable learners to explore personal, social and ethical issues, and take part in sports, drama or other activities. They may include citizenship, careers education and guidance, key skills development. Activities may enable learners to make a positive contribution to their community through, for example, work placements in voluntary organisations or fund raising events. Enrichment for work-based trainees will focus on their opportunities to gain additional qualifications in order to improve their employment or career prospects.

Making judgements

228. Evaluation will cover the full range of activities, including those that do not lead to accreditation. Inspectors will evaluate:

- the extent to which learners take up the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities
- the quality and impact of enrichment activities
- whether the programme of activities is responsive to interests expressed by learners

- learners' success in achieving accreditation for enrichment activities where it is available and sought
- whether timetables enable or preclude learners from involvement in enrichment activities
- the extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community.

Making judgements

229. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about how well programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners:

Outstanding	The curriculum is rich and varied, with a choice of courses that enables learners to work at different levels, progress within the college and achieve success. It is very responsive to external requirements and takes full account of the needs of learners and employers. Learners, including those with special educational needs, have good opportunities to gain qualifications that support their personal and academic progress, including key skills and basic skills qualifications. The college has very good labour market information. The college is effectively marketed and has a high profile in the local community. New courses are well researched and courses that are no longer viable are discontinued. Strong partnerships with schools, employers and community groups result in better provision for many learners. The college enrolls many learners from groups who are often under-represented in education. The college responds very effectively to government initiatives.
Good	The college offers a good range of post-16 courses at levels appropriate to learners' needs. The vast majority of learners are able to follow their choice of courses. The college is responsive to external requirements and takes account of the needs of learners and employers. Learners, including those with special educational needs, have opportunities to gain qualifications that support their personal and academic progress. The college has good labour market information and course publicity and marketing is generally effective. Partnerships with schools, employers and community groups have led to some benefits for learners. The college enrolls many learners from groups who are often under-represented in education. The college responds well to government initiatives. The enrichment programme offers a good range of activities, including sport.
Satisfactory	The curriculum is adequately matched to the needs, interests and aspirations of learners and is organised in a way that allows learners to build on what they have already done. The curriculum is generally responsive to local needs, such as those

of employers. The college has some worthwhile partnerships with schools or employers. College marketing and publicity is adequate. The ethnic profile of the student body is broadly representative of the local community. There are some examples of provision that meets the needs of groups who are often under-represented in education. The college provides a range of enrichment activities which are reasonably well attended.

Inadequate

The following may indicate that programmes and activities do not adequately meet the needs and interests of learners:

- there is an insufficient match between the curriculum and learners' or employers' needs, and plans are not in hand to remedy the situation; the content, suitability and effectiveness of the curriculum are rarely evaluated and not enough is done to make courses relevant and interesting for learners and to meet local needs
- the range of courses is too narrow to enable learners to achieve suitable qualifications or progress to other courses
- the college lacks policies or practices that effectively widen participation in education
- the curriculum lacks sensitivity to educational inclusiveness and equality of opportunity, with the result that particular groups of learners, for example, women returning to study and minority ethnic groups, are not adequately provided for
- programmes are not well structured, so a significant number of learners fail to complete their programmes
- the enrichment programme is narrow and not well attended
- partnership arrangements add very little to learners' experience at college
- policies and procedures on child protection are absent or very weak.

Key question 4. How well are learners guided and supported?

The CIF states that

inspectors should evaluate:

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

Sources of evidence

230. Inspectors will talk to individuals and groups of learners to judge how their experience at college matches their expectations based on pre-course information. Retention rates may also provide evidence for the effectiveness of pre-course advice and guidance. Management information will show how many learners transfer between courses soon after starting at college. Inspectors will assess whether this is a measure of flexibility, or an indicator of poor initial guidance. They will look at how these learners are helped to catch up.

The main sources of evidence include:

- observation of recruitment and guidance procedures, group and individual tutorials, and support lessons in literacy and numeracy
- arrangements to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- discussions with learners and work-based trainees
- discussions with support staff, personal tutors and workplace supervisors
- discussions with staff from other organisations that contribute to learners' capacity to stay safe and be healthy
- college and course information documents
- tutorial and additional support policies and procedures.

Interpreting the criteria

This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the aspects of guidance and support highlighted in the CIF.

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

Making judgements

231. In making judgements, inspectors will consider:

- the availability and quality of support on personal issues, including financial advice, childcare, personal, health and social matters
- whether support and guidance are sensitive to factors such as gender, race and ethnicity and meet the needs of individuals from sections of the community with particular needs, for example women returning to study, refugees and learners from minority ethnic groups
- actions taken to secure the safety and well being of learners
- the quality of learning support and tutorial support provided throughout learners' time at college
- whether effective procedures are in place for recognising and acting to remedy poor punctuality, non-attendance and poor performance.

232. Inspectors will assess whether support arrangements amount to a coherent service that enables learners to make progress towards their learning goals. Consequently, the overall evaluation of the quality of learning support will draw on evidence from inspectors assessing areas of learning. Support arrangements for part-time learners are likely to differ from those for full-time

learners. This may be due to their reduced time in college or the fact that many part-time groups consist only of adults. Judgements will be made about the extent to which their particular needs are met. Some adults may not wish to take advantage of personal support systems; others returning to study may lack confidence and place heavy demands on support services. Inspectors of work-based learning will focus on the arrangements that a training provider has in place to support and guide trainees, including the quality and accuracy of guidance given to prospective trainees to steer them towards the most appropriate programme and level of study.

The range of services

233. College policies on support and guidance should cover all phases of learners' progress through college. Inspectors will judge how effectively these policies are reflected in operational and departmental plans. They will evaluate whether:

- an appropriate range of services is accessible to all learners, at reasonable times, wherever they are physically located
- the range of services is well known to staff and learners
- standards are high across all services and all college sites
- there are good links between teachers, personal tutors and staff who provide the support services
- staff providing support services have appropriate specialist qualifications and relevant experience
- arrangements for supporting work-based learners are comprehensive and well managed
- guidance and support are sensitive to issues of equality of opportunity and cultural diversity.

Support on personal issues

234. All learners should have an identified person, usually their personal tutor, to whom they can refer in the first instance for guidance on personal and academic matters. Such people should be trained on how to fulfil their duties. There may be a tutorial guidance manual to help them. They should know when to refer a learner for more specialist help, if necessary outside the college. Personal tutors will have less contact with part-time learners but the role is similar. There should be a reasonable relationship between the number of learners a tutor is required to support and the time available for such support to be offered.

235. Many things can pose significant obstacles to learning, including personal, financial, domestic, childcare, transport, health problems and immigration status. Colleges should have arrangements, including the provision of funds, to help learners with these issues. Inspectors will evaluate the range of services available, their level of use, and their impact on retention or achievement. The college may not be able to provide the full range of services itself, in which case it should help learners to gain access to them.

Improving punctuality and attendance

236. Regular attendance and punctuality make a significant contribution to learners' achievement. Inspectors will evaluate:

- the degree to which learners are aware of the need to attend all lessons and to be punctual
- how well punctuality and attendance are monitored, and how promptly problems are addressed
- the effectiveness of reporting systems to ensure that each learner's attendance at each subject or option, including key skills or additional learning support, is promptly reported to their personal tutor
- whether the reasons for poor punctuality or attendance are discussed with individuals and the extent to which action plans, with realistic targets for improvement, bring about changes in behaviour
- the availability and quality of professional support for learners with personal problems that affect their punctuality and attendance
- the effectiveness of policies and procedures for contacting parents or guardians of learners aged under 18.

237. Work-based trainees' punctuality, attendance and performance, both at work and at off-the-job training, should be systematically monitored and recorded. There should be clear and effective procedures to deal promptly with any trainee whose lack of punctuality, irregular attendance and poor performance gives cause for concern.

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

238. In making judgements, inspectors will consider whether:

- the quality and accessibility of information, impartial advice and guidance helps learners with their choice of programme
- induction programmes enable learners to settle into their programmes quickly, to understand their rights and responsibilities and the demands of the programme
- individual learning needs are accurately diagnosed and learners have access to effective additional support throughout their studies or training
- careers education and guidance are effective in guiding learners towards the range of opportunities available to them.

Guidance on entry

239. Information given to potential learners should be accurate, informative and visually interesting. Its presentation should suit different audiences. Presentation media might include print, audio, video and web links. It may well be appropriate to produce literature in various community languages. Links with partner schools, employers and other relevant organisations should support the supply of sufficient information to potential learners. The working relationship

with the Connexions service should be clear, helpful to learners and subject to regular reviews that include the views of learners.

240. Learners should be able to discuss their choice of course with college staff before they enrol. Some learners will take this opportunity at open days or taster days organised by the college. Full-time learners should have the opportunity for impartial advice at an interview following their application to the college. Part-time learners should have appropriate opportunities for guidance, either when they attend college to enrol or through telephone contact prior to completion of postal enrolment procedures. Guidance services should be particularly supportive of prospective learners from groups who are often under-represented in further education and learners who have a disability.

Induction programmes

241. Induction should introduce learners to the structure and demands of their programmes, enable them to find their way around the college, meet other learners and staff and understand what support services are available. Work-based trainees should be given a well-planned induction to their programme during which they are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities. Although inspectors will rarely see induction programmes at first hand, they will study the documentation given to learners and judge the effectiveness of induction by speaking to learners to assess, for example:

- learners' understanding of the demands of their course
- how well they have been introduced to the styles of teaching and learning used on their course, and to the need to develop independent study skills
- their familiarity with health and safety arrangements
- their understanding of their rights and responsibilities, set out in the charter
- their understanding of college policies on equality of opportunity and race equality.

242. Inspectors will also study any guidance given to teachers about good induction practice and evaluate the induction arrangements for learners who start their course late.

Careers education and guidance

243. Economic well being is effectively promoted when a high proportion of learners progress to suitable employment or enter higher education. High quality careers education and guidance is essential to support this objective. Inspectors will evaluate:

- whether the arrangements to help learners make decisions about their future are effective and timely
- the quality of information and guidance on educational and employment opportunities
- whether there are arrangements to ensure fair and objective references for learners

- the effectiveness of support for learners following publication of examination results
- how well destination information about previous learners is used to inform planning and practice.

Making judgements

244. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about guidance and support:

Outstanding	A strong commitment to meeting learners' needs is reflected in outstanding advice, guidance and support for all full-time and part-time learners. Information is provided in many forms and places, and learners are able to make well-informed choices about their courses. Induction enables learners to settle in quickly to their studies. Individuals' language and learning needs are accurately diagnosed and quickly met. The tutorial programme offers excellent opportunities for personal and social education. Personal tutors are skilled. They ensure that tutorial time is used effectively. Targets are set and progress is carefully monitored and recorded. There is very good communication between tutors, teachers and support staff. Attendance monitoring is rigorous. There are a full range of welfare services, including good childcare arrangements. Careers education and guidance is very well planned. The college works very well with other agencies. All forms of support are highly responsive to matters of equality and cultural diversity.
Good	Good advice and guidance ensures that learners make well-informed choices about their courses. Both full-time and part-time learners have access to good pre-entry information and advice. Induction enables most learners to settle in quickly to their studies. Most individuals' learning needs are accurately diagnosed and quickly met. The tutorial programme offers good opportunities for personal and social education. Tutorials are worthwhile and are valued by learners. Progress is carefully monitored. There is good communication between tutors, teachers and support staff. Attendance monitoring is rigorous. Careers education and guidance is well planned. There are good welfare services, including childcare arrangements. The college works well with other agencies. Support is responsive to matters of equality and cultural diversity.
Satisfactory	Initial information is clear and accessible to all learners. The quality of advice and guidance enables learners to make suitable choices in their education. Initial assessment is generally effective. Learners receive tutorial and learning

support, which meets their needs. Most learners are set clear targets and their progress towards them is adequately monitored. There are opportunities for weaker learners to obtain extra help. Those at risk of poor attendance, exclusion or dropping out are adequately supported to stay in education. There are additional sources of help and advice on financial, health and welfare matters, and assistance with childcare. The college has trained staff and sound arrangements, including child protection procedures, to ensure the safety, well-being and progress of young people.

Inadequate The following may indicate that the support offered to learners is inadequate:

- many learners change their courses soon after entry, in ways which suggest that they have been poorly advised
- many learners have poor attendance or fail to complete their courses
- guidance and support for groups of learners with particular needs, for example asylum seekers, are not effective
- learners from particular ethnic groups do not enrol on certain courses
- learning support needs are not effectively assessed, or they are assessed but not met
- many learners are unaware of the support services available
- learners do not value the tutorial support they receive
- staff providing various support services do not communicate well with each other or with tutors
- records of many learners' progress are poor
- support arrangements are not responsive to matters of equality or cultural diversity.

Section E. Leadership and management

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

The CIF states that

inspectors should evaluate:

- *how effectively performance is monitored and improved through quality assurance and self-assessment*
- *how effectively leaders and managers at all levels clearly direct improvement and promote the well-being of learners through high quality of care, education and training*
- *how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve their potential*

- *the adequacy and suitability of staff, including the effectiveness of processes for recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that learners are well taught and protected*
- *the adequacy and suitability of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation*
- *how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money*

and, where appropriate,

- *the effectiveness of the links made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services to enhance learning and promote well-being*
- *the effectiveness with which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities.*

Sources of evidence

245. The main sources of evidence include:

- the college mission statement and development plan
- college and departmental self-assessment reports and action plans
- data on the college's performance in all aspects of its work
- analyses of enrolment, retention, achievement and progression for different racial groups
- the views of learners, managers, teachers and other staff, governors, employers and other interested parties
- minutes of meetings of governors, managers, teachers and other staff
- organisation and management structures, including the corporation's committee structure
- quality assurance policies and procedures, and evidence of their implementation
- equal opportunities and race equality policies and procedures, and evidence of their implementation
- arrangements for communication with staff
- arrangements for informing governors of curriculum, quality assurance and financial issues
- information on the membership of the governing body
- moderators', verifiers' and PFA reports.

246. For judgements about the adequacy and suitability of staff, specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation, the main sources of evidence include:

- observation of classrooms, common areas and specialist facilities
- equipment inventories
- accommodation strategies and maintenance plans
- health and safety policy and procedures
- the curricula vitae of staff
- discussions with teachers and learners

- arrangements for staff appraisal and development
- information on ethnic origins of staff in comparison with those of learners
- full-time and part-time staffing levels.

Interpreting the criteria

This section provides guidance on the interpretation of the aspects of leadership and management highlighted in the CIF.

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

The principal's main responsibility

247. The main responsibility of the principal and senior management team is to ensure that all learners get very good quality education and training at the college regardless of their ability and regardless of the course they choose. It is not acceptable if the quality of learners' experience at college depends on the course or department they choose. Managers must ensure that a culture focused on providing high quality education is supported by a robust quality assurance system that is consistently followed in all curriculum areas. When evaluating how well the principal discharges this key responsibility, inspectors will look for, among other things:

- high levels of accountability
- good course review and/or self-assessment documentation
- lesson observations and staff development focused on improving teaching.

Accountability

248. Good management is closely linked to a high degree of accountability. Managers at all levels should ensure that people working to them discharge their responsibilities effectively. This is achieved through good management practice that is consistently followed in both teaching and support departments. In their evaluation of management accountability, inspectors will look for:

- explicit management responsibility for all aspects of learners' performance, in particular their pass, retention and attendance rates
- clear targets and performance indicators that are effectively used to improve achievements
- frequent and regular meeting between managers at all levels and the people they manage, to review the effectiveness of staff and the performance of learners.

Course review/self assessment

249. An effective quality assurance system has, at its heart, thorough course review or self-assessment operating at course team level. The course team should regularly review both quantitative data and qualitative information about their teaching and learners' achievements. The reviews should inform the college's self-assessment report and should lead to comprehensive action plans.

In their evaluation of course reviews or self-assessment reports, inspectors will look for:

- an accurate evaluation of learners' performance compared with targets for performance
- a full and accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, based on, among other things, the observation of teaching and learning
- realistic action plans that are promptly and effectively implemented.

The observation of teaching and learning

250. Lesson observation is integral to effective quality assurance. The lesson observation system should include graded observations of both full-time and part-time teachers who are involved in any activities that contribute to learning. These activities include, for example, the teaching of groups and individuals, tutorials for groups and individuals and the observation of trainees in the workplace. In their evaluation of the lesson observation system inspectors will look for:

- an accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in curriculum areas and across the college
- the degree to which lesson observations provide full coverage of all teaching and learning activities and all staff
- the effectiveness of action to build on identified good practice and improve the quality of teaching, particularly when an observed lesson is unsatisfactory
- strong links between lesson observations, staff appraisal and professional development.

The quality assurance system

251. An effective quality assurance system has many components. The key elements of course review and lesson observation are referred to above. Others components are set out below. If the overall system is to be effective, these components should fit together logically. They should be integrated with the college planning cycle so that the outcomes of self-assessment inform planning. The quality assurance system should be comprehensive and consistently applied in all areas of the college. Above all it should have an impact on improving learners' achievements. Inspectors will look for:

- a clear and comprehensive quality assurance policy document
- a clear statement of what learners can expect of the college
- a low level of complaints, whether there are effective systems for promptly dealing with complaints and whether learners know how to make a complaint
- effective methods for gathering, analysing and acting on the views of learners and college staff
- effective methods for implementing the recommendations of external moderators
- an effective internal verification system
- a comprehensive, accurate and timely college self-assessment report

- effective quality assurance of any partners involved in the education or training of college learners, including employers of work-based learners and work experience providers.

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

The difference between leadership and management

252. Leadership is about setting the direction of the college and establishing the culture. It is about doing the right things. Management is about systematically ensuring that day-to-day operations run smoothly and in the best interests of learners. It is about doing things right. Inspectors will distinguish between leadership and management. Where appropriate they may make judgements about the effectiveness of the principal as leader of the college. In their evaluation of leadership, inspectors will look at the degree to which the leaders:

- have a clear vision that is communicated to all staff
- have a relentless determination to improve learners' achievements
- inspire, motivate and influence staff and learners
- act as good role models for staff
- create effective teams
- are committed to running an inclusive college in which each individual matters
- produce development plans that reflect and promote the college's goals.

253. Inspectors will not prescribe any particular model of management. There are different ways in which effective management can be demonstrated and lead to success for learners. Inspectors will focus on the impact of leadership and management rather than the supporting systems and structures. In their evaluation of management, inspectors will look at the extent to which:

- managers, at all levels, undertake rigorous self-evaluation and use the findings effectively
- managers monitor performance data, review patterns and take appropriate action
- the performance management of staff, including support staff, is thorough and effective in bringing about improvement
- managers ensure that appropriate support is provided for the initial and continuing professional development of teachers and support staff
- the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff are well managed and support staff are well deployed to make teachers' work more effective
- approaches to financial and resource management help the college to achieve its educational priorities.

Judgements of leadership and management in a diverse sector

254. The further education sector includes very large, multi-site, general further education colleges that provide a wide range of opportunities for adults

and young people of all abilities. It also includes small selective sixth form colleges. Inspectors will take into account colleges' situations when arriving at judgements of leadership and management.

255. Inspectors will take a balanced approach. The key indicators of good leadership and management are the same in all colleges. These include:

- learners' overall achievements
- the overall standard of teaching and learning
- the quality of day-to-day course management
- the quality of development plans
- the promotion of equal opportunities.

256. However, inspectors will also take into account:

- the size and complexity of the college
- the catchment area and characteristics of the student body
- the overall progress made by the college under the current management team.

257. Inspectors will take into account the curriculum judgements in making their judgement of leadership and management, but they will not feel constrained to link their leadership and management grade to the area of learning grades when there is evidence that, in the circumstances, the college has made either particularly good or particularly slow progress. In the inspection of good colleges, the scrutiny and evaluation of curriculum grades in the self-assessment report will also impact on the judgement of leadership and management.

Development plan

258. The quality of the development plan, operational plans and procedures that support their production will be judged. The local LSC's view of the development plan will be considered where possible. Inspectors will evaluate:

- the clarity of the mission statement, strategic objectives and operational plans
- the extent to which governors and staff at all levels contribute to development and operational planning
- whether the mission statement, strategic objectives and operational plans are closely aligned to each other and whether they include appropriate targets, responsibilities, time-scales, costs and review arrangements
- whether the development plan takes sufficient account of the local strategy for the development of 14–19 education and the extent to which the college collaborates with other organisations to implement such a strategy
- whether benchmarking is used to set realistic targets at college and departmental level and in the evaluation the college's performance against them

- whether there are procedures for managers and governors to review and report on progress towards the objectives and targets in the development plan, including those for the initial training of teachers
- whether the college's mission and key objectives are known to and shared by all staff and, in the case of work-based learning, whether they are shared by subcontractors, employers and work-placement providers
- whether priorities are supported by responsible financial management.

College and departmental management

259. Judgements will not be based only on the work of senior managers and governors. The leadership and management of departments have a direct impact on learners' progress. The evidence and judgements made by curriculum inspectors about, for example, the department's approach to improving the quality of teaching, will inform overall judgements about leadership and management of the college.

Programme management

260. Inspectors will also assess how well individual programmes and courses are led and managed. They will look at, for example:

- the allocation of course hours and the suitability of the timetable
- the regularity and effectiveness of course team meetings
- the arrangements for induction, key skills and basic skills teaching and additional learning support
- the arrangements for course review, self-assessment and internal verification
- plans and action taken to address areas for improvement identified through self-assessment
- learners' views about the organisation and management of their course.

Management information systems

261. Effective planning and monitoring requires reliable and up-to-date management information. Inspectors will evaluate whether managers and staff have:

- good access to accurate information about learners, in particular reliable information about learners' achievements, and whether it is used effectively in monitoring performance
- accurate data on work-based trainees' performance which are used to improve training
- clear, reliable and appropriate financial information.

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

Policy and practice

262. Inspectors will look for clear statements of college values, supported by policies and measures, which demonstrate that the college welcomes and supports learners from a wide range of backgrounds, abilities and cultures.

Inspectors will not merely expect a sound policy framework; they will look for specific examples of action that has successfully promoted equality of opportunity. They will also look for:

- explicit aims, values and strategies relating to equality for all that are reflected in the college's work
- effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment
- effective procedures for dealing with, and recording information about, appeals and complaints relating to equality
- whether staff and governors demonstrate a good understanding of equal opportunities' issues and have clear responsibilities for implementing college policies
- whether provision is designed to take into account the specific needs of both genders, all ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- participation, retention and achievement rates for learners from all ethnic groups, both genders, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those receiving support for literacy, numeracy or language, together with any action taken as a result of the college's analyses of this information
- evidence of monitoring staff recruitment and career progress by ethnic group
- curriculum planning and teaching that is informed by equal opportunities principles and awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity
- surveys of learners and others involved with the college showing levels of awareness of the college's equal opportunities policy, and levels of satisfaction among all ethnic groups, both sexes and people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- how well the college responds to survey findings and other views expressed by learners from minority and other groups
- compliance with race equality, disability discrimination, child protection and any other relevant legislation.

263. Inspectors will expect similar standards from any of the college's partners. Inspectors will look at work-based learning providers' promotion of equal opportunities, in particular:

- the extent to which providers promote training for people from groups that are under-represented on training programmes
- how effectively trainees are protected from harassment and discrimination at work, including providers' procedures to deal with harassment, and records to show that these procedures are effective
- the extent to which trainees are aware of what constitutes harassment, and what they should do if they are confronted with it.

Race equality legislation

264. The college should have a race equality policy and implementation plan, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act

2000. The Act requires colleges to be proactive in their response to ethnic diversity. It imposes a general duty to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote racial equality and good relations between persons of different racial groups
- put in place inclusive literacy, numeracy and language support mechanisms to help improve standards for specific groups of learners where necessary.

265. Inspectors will look for:

- a well-considered race equality policy and implementation plan
- staff training on race relations and the college implementation plan
- consultation with staff, learners and governors about the policy
- systematic monitoring of the impact of the policy on staff and learners from different ethnic groups and the publication of the findings
- the impact of the policy on the curriculum, the tutorial programme, the college environment and on learners' progress and achievements
- sound analysis of enrolments, retention and achievement by ethnic group, with follow up targets and action plan
- sound analysis of staff by ethnic group, including applications, recruitment, promotion, appraisal outcomes and staff development
- a staff and management profile which reflects the local community and student body in terms of ethnicity and action to address discrepancies, for example the use of the national Race Equality in Employment Standards for Further Education published by the LSC
- a governing body profile which reflects the local community and student body in terms of ethnicity and action to address discrepancies
- regular reporting to governors.

Disability discrimination legislation

266. Colleges' duties are set out in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 (SENDA).

The legislation requires colleges to:

- promote non-discriminatory practice in (a) admissions and enrolments, and (b) teaching, training and learning
- anticipate the individual needs of learners and make reasonable adjustments to provide (a) appropriate and accessible facilities, aids and services, and (b) appropriate accommodation and access.

There is also a duty on governors to ensure an appropriate strategic response to the legislation.

267. Inspectors will make judgements about the extent to which the college is fulfilling its duties under the SENDA. They will take into account information from curriculum inspectors about, for example:

- whether learners have non-discriminatory access to courses during enrolment

- whether teaching, training and learning are designed to meet the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities
- whether learners with restricted mobility or specific physical needs have access to all facilities, accommodation and resources and whether auxiliary aids are provided where necessary.

268. Inspectors will also evaluate:

- whether the college's equal opportunities policy adequately takes account of relevant legislation
- the quality of any action plan and the progress made in its implementation
- arrangements for staff training on the legislation
- arrangements for governors to monitor and review the policy.

The extent to which the college succeeds in ensuring the safety of learners

Making judgements

269. Inspectors will assess whether:

- partnerships with other agencies involved in advice and guidance for young people and adults are effective
- the college complies with child protection legislation and procedures
- the college's response to the needs of young people in public care is appropriate.

Inspectors should also refer to the guidance in section B of this part of the handbook.

Child protection

270. Ofsted is required to inspect the extent to which colleges discharge their duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which came into force in June 2004. Section 175 provides that:

The governing body of an institution within the further education sector shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the institution are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children receiving education or training at the institution.

271. The Children Act 1989 defines a 'child' as a person under the age of 18. Every college report will include a clear judgement on how well colleges are meeting their obligations relating to child protection. Inspectors will evaluate whether colleges have appropriate policies and procedures, focusing in particular on the following:

- All colleges should have a child protection policy that is reviewed annually, is referred to in the prospectus and conforms to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) policy and guidance. The policy

should include provision for recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers and for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff.

- All colleges should have a designated senior member of staff responsible for child protection issues who coordinates action within the institution and liaises with other agencies, including the LSCB.
- Members of the governing body should receive appropriate training about child protection issues, remedy any deficiencies in child protection arrangements and liaise with other partner agencies as appropriate in the event of any allegations of abuse.
- Staff with designated responsibility for child protection should receive appropriate training.
- All colleges should be aware of the child protection procedures established by the LSCB and, where appropriate (for example for learners aged 14–16), by the local education authority. Colleges should also be aware of enrolled learners who are on the child protection register and ensure appropriate support mechanisms are in place for them.
- All colleges should have procedures (of which all staff should be aware) for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils or learners, including procedures to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse. All staff should be alert to signs of abuse.
- Colleges have a statutory duty to assist local social services departments on child protection issues.
- CRB checks should be undertaken on all members of staff before they work with young people.
- Colleges should ensure that employers taking young people on long term work experience are made aware of safeguarding issues and cooperate in putting appropriate safeguards in place.

272. There is also an expectation that colleges will adopt a broad strategy to support the needs of vulnerable young people. Inspectors will therefore also consider:

- what information the college collects about and from vulnerable learners
- what use is made of this information to protect and promote their achievements
- how this information is used to provide an appropriate curriculum and good support
- the quality of links with relevant external agencies
- how the college evaluates the success of its efforts.

Young people in public care

273. There is an increasing expectation that colleges will respond effectively to the needs of young people in care, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, through effective personal and learning support systems, links with social services and involvement in care reviews. Inspectors will also evaluate:

- whether the college has taken any effective action to encourage young people in care to remain in education after age 16

- the extent and quality of links with other relevant agencies
- the effectiveness of personal and learning support for young people in care while they are at college, in particular the college's contribution to young peoples' preparation for independent living.

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

The adequacy of staff

274. Inspectors will judge whether there are enough qualified and experienced teaching, training and support staff to match the demands of programmes and the range of learners. They will consider whether there is an appropriate balance between the proportion of teaching carried out by full-time teachers, part-time teachers and instructors. Inspectors will also look at:

- whether enough specialist teachers are available to support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and learners who need support for their literacy, numeracy and/or language development
- whether there are enough qualified and experienced staff to carry out training, assessment, internal verification and, where necessary, counselling of work-based trainees.
- whether there are sufficient administrative and clerical staff to help in the management of courses
- whether there are sufficient technical and other support staff to help learners and teachers, and to maintain resources and learning materials
- whether, in relation to work-based learning, there are enough off-the-job trainers, workplace supervisors and training co-ordinators.

The suitability of staff

275. Inspectors will evaluate:

- the extent and appropriateness of teachers' professional qualifications, training and knowledge of their subjects and courses they teach
- the proportion of teachers with teaching qualifications and the arrangements for teachers who do not have them to become qualified
- whether teachers have recent and relevant experience in industry or commerce
- whether a sufficient number of teachers have qualifications which enable them to assess learners' work on vocational programmes
- whether workplace supervisors have relevant occupational qualifications or experience, including qualifications as assessors or internal verifiers
- whether workplace supervisors are able to devote sufficient time to on-the-job training
- the arrangements for staff appraisal, mentoring and review, and for the provision of professional development which meets the identified needs of staff, and meets the college's duties under race relations, child protection and disability discrimination legislation
- the arrangements to evaluate professional development activities

- the arrangements for part-time teachers to be involved in curriculum development and management
- how the ethnic origins of staff at different levels, and carrying out different functions, compare with those of learners
- whether staff have had relevant CRB checks.

276. Professional development should enable staff to become more effective as teachers, not merely help them to gain further qualifications. In many cases, professional development should include opportunities for staff to update their experience of industry and commerce.

The recruitment and selection of staff

277. The college should have up-to-date personnel policies and procedures that comply with relevant legislation and which include appropriate checks to ensure that:

- all teaching staff have appropriate qualifications and/or experience for teaching
- no college staff have a criminal record that would preclude them from working in an organisation that provides services for children and young people.

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

Specialist equipment

278. Judgements will cover the range and quality of equipment and how well teachers use it to promote effective learning. Specialist equipment and materials should reflect, as far as possible, the standards required by industry. The college should aim to introduce learners to the latest industrial or technological developments. Inspectors will judge whether there is adequate provision of, for example:

- whiteboards, interactive whiteboards, overhead projectors and screens
- televisions, videos/DVDs, computers and other equipment in classrooms
- up-to-date specialist equipment
- modern computers with appropriate specialist software, email facilities and Internet access
- relevant up-to-date books and periodicals
- specialist equipment for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Learning resources

279. Learners should have access to learning resources that are appropriate for effective independent study. Learning resources should allow all learners to participate fully regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, learning difficulty or disability. The use of the term 'learning resource centre' (LRC) in this section also includes college libraries.

280. Work-based learners should have access to good learning materials, equipment and facilities. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities should have appropriate specially adapted learning resources. Learners whose first language is not English may need materials in their first language, especially when they first enrol at the college. Judgements will be made about the suitability, availability and use of such resources.

281. Inspectors will also evaluate:

- whether paper-based resources and computers are sufficient to support and extend learning
- whether there is enough space in the LRC, whether the layout is good and whether there are enough quiet study areas
- whether learners have an appropriate induction to the LRC
- opening hours for the LRC
- links between LRC staff and college departments
- the views of learners on the resources available to them
- whether resources are available to learners who do not attend the college, for example, distance learning learners
- whether suitable arrangements to borrow books and use computers are made for learners at each site, where a college has several sites, or where learners are predominantly work-based or in community venues.

Accommodation

282. Accommodation should provide a suitable setting for good teaching, training and learning support. The college must also ensure that all learners, including work-based learners, work in a healthy and safe environment. The accommodation should allow all learners to participate fully regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, learning difficulty or disability. Inspectors will make an overall assessment of the quality of the college environment. They will also evaluate:

- the quality, size, suitability and safety of general classrooms and specialist accommodation; furniture should be fit for purpose and its layout should be appropriate for the particular learning activity
- the suitability of refectories, reception areas, sports facilities and other common areas
- the suitability of classrooms, common areas and specialist facilities for learners who have learning difficulties or physical disabilities
- the general cleanliness and standard of maintenance of college premises
- the suitability of off-site premises such as community venues or those used for franchised provision
- action by the college to accommodate learners' cultural needs, for example the provision of prayer and washing facilities.

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

The overall judgement of value for money

283. A judgement will be made in the leadership and management section stating whether the college gives outstanding, good, satisfactory or inadequate value for money.

Criteria for judging value for money

284. Overall judgements about the college will be closely linked to the overall judgement of value for money. For example, if a college is judged to be inadequate it is likely that it will be judged to be giving inadequate value for money. The new measures of success will include more specific measures of value for money. Until this information is available, the main factors influencing the value for money judgement will be:

- the college's overall level of funding
- learners' overall achievements
- how efficiently the college uses its full-time teaching staff
- how efficiently the college uses its accommodation
- learners' attendance at lessons
- average class sizes

Inspectors may also take account of:

- the respective proportions of teachers, managers and support staff
- the quality of support for learners
- the quality of the college environment
- information on the unit cost of courses
- the local LSCs views of the value for money provided by the college.

285. Where reliable benchmarking information is available, comparisons with appropriate sector benchmarks may be used to inform the value for money judgement.

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

286. Inspectors' judgements about how far programmes are responsive to local circumstances and the extent to which employers' needs are met under key question 3 also apply to this evaluation criterion. The effectiveness of links with other organisations is also relevant to the judgement of the overall effectiveness of the college. The issues that inspectors will focus on are described in the overall effectiveness section (section A) of this handbook.

The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities

Scope and process

287. It will be appropriate to make judgements about governors in all college inspections. The inspector responsible for leadership and management may arrange to meet the chair of the corporation and a group of governors during the inspection to discuss aspects of governance. Where appropriate, this may be a joint meeting with the PFA staff member.

Judgements about governance

288. Inspectors will focus on how well the governors direct the college, measure its performance and require improvements. Inspectors will also look at:

- how well informed governors are about the college
- whether they recognise the college's and their own strengths and areas for improvement
- whether the membership reflects the gender and ethnic profile of the local community and student body
- how effectively governors address key issues facing the college, in particular the appointment and removal of senior post holders.

289. If governors take action to remove a senior post holder whose performance has been unsatisfactory, inspectors will be critical of the governors if they pay compensation to the departing post holder in circumstances where the post holder could have been removed without any legal obligation to pay compensation. This will be the case even if governors are acting within their powers and have taken legal advice.

Making judgements

290. The following characteristics illustrate judgements about leadership and management:

Outstanding Leaders and managers are very effective in providing a clear direction, promoting and achieving high standards, and in identifying and dealing with areas for improvement. Managers share a common purpose and put learners and their achievements first. They build effective teams and set demanding yet realistic targets for the college, for teaching and support teams, and for individual learners. All curriculum areas are well managed. The work of the college is thoroughly monitored and rigorously quality assured, particularly the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Staff are well informed and committed to the college's aims. Learners' achievements are high and evaluated regularly. Information on learners' progress and achievements is accurate, accessible to teachers and managers and used effectively to improve performance.

The self-assessment report is comprehensive and accurate. The college is very inclusive. The staffing, resources and accommodation are of high quality. Systems to appraise the performance of staff, identify their training needs and ensure these are met, are comprehensive and effective. Value for money is very good. Financial and other resources are effectively deployed to support educational priorities. Links with other providers, employers and other agencies contribute very strongly to the outcomes for learners and to the community. The college effectively promotes equal opportunities and fully complies with statutory requirements in relation to equality, disability and race relations in a way which has had a beneficial impact on learners. There are robust procedures for child protection to ensure the safety, well-being and progress of young people. Governors monitor the college's performance closely. The ethnic and gender profile of staff, managers and governors closely reflects that of the community and student body.

Good	Leadership and management are generally effective in providing a clear direction, promoting high standards and in identifying and dealing with areas for improvement. Target setting is well developed and generally effective in securing improvements. Curriculum areas are well managed. Staff morale is generally good. The quality assurance system is consistently applied across the college and has led to improvements in provision. Learners' achievements are at or above the national average at all levels and regularly monitored. The self-assessment report is generally comprehensive and accurate. The management information system meets the needs of managers and staff. The college is educationally and socially inclusive. Staffing, specialist resources and accommodation are adequate and used efficiently. Value for money is good. Financial and other resources are deployed to support educational priorities. Good links with other providers and employers are in place. The college promotes equal opportunities and complies effectively with statutory requirements in relation to equality, disability and race relations. There are adequate procedures for child protection to ensure the safety, well-being and progress of young people. The ethnic and gender profile of staff, managers and governors is broadly in line with that of the community student body, or good progress has been made to improve the match.
Satisfactory	Leadership and management adequately promote standards, and identify and deal with areas for improvement to secure steady improvement. The quality assurance system is generally applied across the college and has led to some improvements in

provision. Learners' achievements are satisfactory and regularly monitored. The self-assessment report is reasonably accurate. Teamwork is generally well established and the college has identified sensible objectives. Appropriate performance targets are set and normally met. The management information system meets most of the needs of managers and staff. Much of the work of the college is monitored closely. In most curriculum areas the effectiveness of teaching and learning are monitored well, and their impact on learners' progress is evaluated. The college is largely inclusive, with most learners adequately catered for. The college has appropriate policies and action plans in place to meet its statutory responsibilities with regard to equality, disability and race relations and has made reasonable progress in implementing them. The college complies with child protection legislation. Staffing, specialist resources and accommodation are adequate. The majority of staff are appraised regularly and receive training to meet their identified needs. Value for money is satisfactory. Financial and other resources adequately support educational priorities in most areas of the college. Links with other providers, employers and other agencies contribute adequately to the outcomes for learners and the community. The college takes reasonable action to promote equal opportunities. Governors are informed of the college's performance and set targets for improvement. They meet their statutory responsibilities.

Inadequate

The following may indicate inadequate provision:

- overall achievements that are significantly below national averages
- a high proportion of teaching is unsatisfactory
- unacceptably wide variations in the quality of teaching across the college
- the aims and objectives of the college are not clear
- the college consistently fails to achieve its performance targets
- leaders and managers do not effectively identify and deal with areas for improvement
- a significant number of curriculum areas are poorly managed and levels of accountability are low
- the quality assurance system has not led to improvements in learners' achievements
- the self-assessment report is incomplete or inaccurate
- the college is not inclusive, with significant numbers of learners not adequately catered for
- the promotion of equal opportunities is not given sufficient priority
- the college has made little progress in implementing its race equality policy

- the college does not comply with child protection legislation
- unsatisfactory resources reduce the quality of learning in many areas of the college
- value for money is poor
- links with other providers, employers and other agencies are weak and do not contribute adequately to outcomes for learners and the community
- there is a poor match between the ethnic and gender profile of staff, managers and governors and the community or student body and little effort has been made to improve the match.

Annex A. Summary of the main differences between the first cycle and second cycle of Ofsted and ALI college inspections

The inspection framework

The new framework has five, rather than seven, key questions with an additional requirement to assess the overall effectiveness of the college. The new framework for colleges and that for the inspection of schools are closely aligned.

The link with the inspection of children's services

The frameworks for the inspection of schools and colleges both take account of the framework for the inspection of children's services. This is reflected in the new grading arrangements.

Different levels of inspection

The size of the team and the coverage of the inspection will vary according to the track record of the college and recent information about performance. The annual assessment visits made by local managing inspectors will help to determine the timing of inspection. As a broad guide the allocation of inspectors to colleges will be:

- good colleges – 4 inspectors
- satisfactory colleges – 10 inspectors
- inadequate colleges – 12 inspectors.

Duration of inspections

All inspections will be completed within one week. However, the three weeks prior to the inspection may be used to inspect some provision falling within the ALI remit that might not have been inspected before, for example adult and community learning, substantial work-based learning, Learndirect and Jobcentre Plus provision. Additional inspectors will be allocated over and above those indicated in point 3 above.

Inspection of areas of learning

Areas of learning will not be subject to a separately graded curriculum inspection in good colleges. In other colleges a sample of between 4 and 10 areas of learning will be inspected. The number of areas of learning to be inspected will be determined by the size of the college as well as performance information. Literacy and numeracy will not be graded in every college inspection.

Self-assessment

Inspection will place more emphasis on checking the capacity of the college to accurately quality assure its provision and improve or maintain high standards.

The self-assessment report will be a key part of the evidence which inspectors will use to check the capacity for improvement. There will be a strong focus on testing the college's views of the quality of teaching. A key judgement on the college's capacity to improve, influenced by the evidence of effective self-assessment and associated improvements, will be made in the section on the overall effectiveness of the college. It will be expressed in terms of the four grade descriptors.

Grading scale

A four point grading scale will be used in all situations where grades denote summary judgements as well as where judgements are based on evidence such as lesson observations. Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 is good, grade 3 is satisfactory and grade 4 is inadequate.

Grading lessons

One grade will be awarded for each lesson observed by inspectors. The grade will reflect the overall quality of the lesson and will take into account the quality of teaching, the progress made by learners and learners' attainment. A particular focus of grading in good colleges, where lessons may be observed by a non-specialist, will be on the progress learners make.

Grades

The features of the grading structure are:

- the overall effectiveness of the college will be graded and there will be a grade denoting the college's capacity to improve
- overall grades will be awarded for:
 - a. achievement and standards
 - b. the quality of provision
 - c. leadership and management
- sub-grades may be awarded under the above three headings for different age groups or aspects of the college's work, such as work-based learning, but only if the quality of provision varies significantly in these areas
- areas of learning will be graded but there will be no contributory grades, either for work-based learning or distinct provision within an area of learning
- grades which are recorded on the inspection database will be shared with the college; these grades include all grades referred to above, plus:
 - i. grades for key question 2, the effectiveness of teaching, training and learning; key question 3, how well programmes and activities meet the needs and interest of learners; and key question 4, how well learners are guided and supported
 - ii. grades for each of the evaluation statements in the CIF under each key question
 - iii. grades for each of the five outcomes for children and young people that are evaluated in joint area reviews.

The grades described under (i), (ii) and (iii) above are not published in the inspection report.

Literacy and numeracy

A cross college grade for literacy and numeracy will not be awarded in every inspection.

Formal feedback

All feedback will take place during the inspection week. The LI will not subsequently return to the college for a formal feedback to governors, managers and the LLSC.

Period of notice

Colleges will normally be given three to four weeks notice of inspection, depending on whether the additional inspection of ALI remit work is undertaken in the week before the main inspection week.

Success rates

New measures of success, including value-added measures, will be used alongside existing success measures to inform inspectors' judgements once the new measures have been piloted and disseminated to the sector.

Data tables

Tables showing learners' achievements on key courses for the last three years will not be included in area of learning reports, but inspectors will continue to analyse evidence of learners' achievements across the provision inspected.

Lesson observations

Direct observation of lessons will normally occur in every inspection. A smaller number of lessons will be observed, compared to the last inspection cycle, and the number will vary with the level of the inspection. The purposes of lesson observation are to allow inspectors to assess the quality of teaching and learning and to test the college's view of the quality of teaching as determined by its self-assessment process.

Joint lesson observations (JLOs) may be undertaken as part of a whole college evaluation of the accuracy of a college's internal lesson observation scheme. They will not be undertaken as part of curriculum inspections or annual assessment visits. JLOs should only be undertaken with the prior consent of the teachers involved to avoid the possibility that they may be used as part of a competency procedure. Where JLOs are undertaken, the grade awarded by the inspector will not be declared to the college, rather the inspector and college manager will seek to discuss the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the lesson, after which the inspector will reflect on the accuracy of the judgements made by the college manager. In these instances, the inspector will not

feedback a summary of the lesson to the teacher, however the senior manager involved may well undertake this activity with the inspector acting as observer.

Coverage of adult community education and Learndirect

Where the college provides adult community education or Learndirect provision, these will normally be included in the inspection. The college's provision for all age groups, including 14–16 year olds, will be included.

The nominee

The nominee will attend all meetings of the inspection team including team meetings where grades are determined. However, nominees will not be allowed to participate in discussions that are directly related to grading.

Annex B. Structure of grades

