

Summary of Ofsted actions following the Big Listen for FE and Skills

In response to sector feedback, significant changes are being proposed to improve inspections and better align them with diverse FE and skills provision.



This is a brief summary of some of the changes outlined by Ofsted in response to the Big Listen.

We urge you to also read the full response at

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/ofsted-big-listen



Consultation on a new Inspection Framework



A tailored framework will replace the one-size-fits-all approach, addressing the varied needs of providers, from FE colleges to apprenticeship training and prison education.

This framework will consider the age and stage of learners, as well as the specific nature of the provision.

“This means the framework needs to work as well for classroom-focused qualifications as it does for employer-led vocational and technical training.”

Ofsted will consult on the timeframe for framework reform later in the academic year – expected from January 2025.



Improved Local Contextual Understanding in Inspection:

Ofsted aims to better understand the local context in which providers operate, supported by a new Area Insights Service. This will help inspectors assess how well providers address the specific needs of their regions.



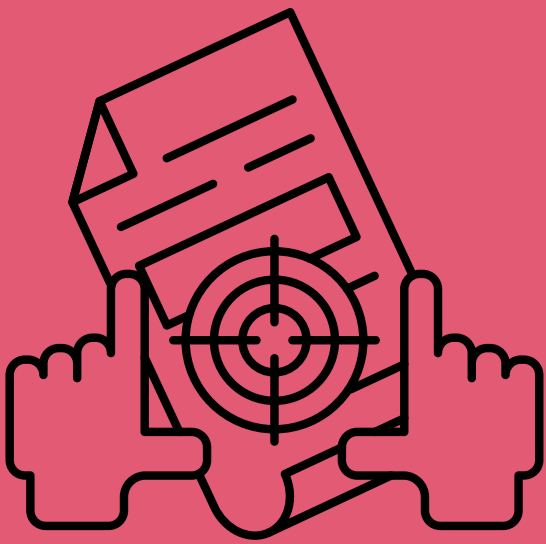
Changes to Inspection Notice Periods

A 5-day notice period has already been introduced for large and complex providers. Further consultations will ensure that notice periods and inspection team sizes are proportionate to the provider's complexity.

Ofsted Academy



Aimed at supporting a positive learning culture and embedding Ofsted's values of professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect across the organisation. The Academy will also share good practice from the sectors Ofsted inspects and make its own training materials and processes more visible. A new training initiative will be launched to enhance the recruitment and development of inspectors, ensuring they have up-to-date knowledge and expertise relevant to the FE and skills sector.



Increased scope for Ofsted?

Ofsted is advocating for legislative amendments to expand their inspection scope, particularly for part-time education for 14–16-year-olds in FE colleges and new Higher Technical Qualifications, ensuring broader accountability and safeguarding.



Focus on Young Offender Institutions (YOIs)

A recent review highlighted declining education standards in YOIs. Ofsted is pushing for improvements in YOI education, emphasizing the need for better behavioural management and educational access for these vulnerable young people.



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