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**Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response**

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<b>Pwnc / Subject:</b>	<b>Future of adult inspections – Part two</b>

**Background information about Estyn**

Estyn is the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, Estyn is independent of the Welsh Government.

Estyn's principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Estyn's remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and teacher education and training.

Estyn may give advice to the Assembly on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

This response is not confidential.

## Response

### Introduction

Estyn supports HMI Probation's move towards:

- ensuring a fair and proportionate approach to inspection diversity;
- focusing on the impact of Probation Delivery Units (PDUs) on improving progress towards outcomes; and
- engaging with people on probation to inform inspection judgements.

## Consultation questions

### **QUESTION – Is the proposed way of inspecting diversity fair and proportionate?**

The questions that the document proposes for inspectors to ask are appropriate for an inspection team to be able to consider evidence at a strategic and at a service-user level and to arrive at judgements relating to the effectiveness of a PDU's approach to responding to the diversity needs of clients.

### **QUESTION – Will the proposed way of inspecting diversity drive improvement?**

The proposed relationships between an inspection's separate rating of the quality of a PDU's approach to diversity and of its leadership will encourage leaders to address diversity at a strategic level and to evaluate the impact of related policies. The separate consideration of diversity will also emphasise the importance that inspection gives to this matter.

### **QUESTION – Will the proposed approach to measuring personalised progress against outcomes help to drive improvement?**

The proposed four key questions that will inform judgements give a clear and appropriate emphasis to improvement and to evaluating the impact of a PDU's work on outcomes.

### **QUESTION – Will the proposed standard enable us to make reasonable and defensible judgements about sufficient progress?**

The proposed questions and guidance for inspectors will provide clear evidence to inform judgements regarding progress against outcomes. It will also encourage PDUs to quantify, record and monitor progress and ensure that it can provide evidence for this in an appropriate form.

**QUESTION – Where maintaining stability is a reasonable and defensible expectation for an individual person on probation should we judge this to be sufficient or should we always expect that some progress will be made?**

There may be individual cases, particularly where the circumstances around an individual's life may be extremely chaotic, when maintaining stability could be viewed as progress. However, such a judgement should be regarded as exceptional and based on defensible evidence, in order to avoid a PDU seeing stability as a default acceptable outcome.

**QUESTION – Should we rate outcomes when we introduce the standard or should we build up some baseline data first?**

Outcomes should be rated from the outset, based on the evidence gathered within an inspection exercise. This will not prevent the benchmarking of outcomes to inform further improvement. Indeed, it will encourage PDUs to evaluate their own performance in order to inform their own improvement planning.

**QUESTION – Will our proposed approach to engaging people on probation provide a reliable basis to inform inspection judgements?**

There is a strong argument for trying a range of approaches to engage people and evaluating the effectiveness of these to make firmer decisions. A blend of approaches may be necessary to make first contact in order to ensure that a survey sample is representative of the client group in an area. Text surveys would need to take account of the fact that a high proportion of service users have limited literacy. Text surveys would also need to be tailored to clients' language preferences in order to avoid skewing results inappropriately. Strategies to facilitate face-to-face interviews on an informal or formal basis may need to put in place alongside such proposals in order to broaden the evidence basis and ensure validity of survey results. Other justice inspectorates already use blended approaches to capturing people's views, which feed into the judgement of quality and standards of provision.

Furthermore, while there is value in asking people about their opinions about services, there is also value in inviting people to give answers based on factual criteria that may be useful to inspectors.

**QUESTION – How can we maximise the engagement of people on probation with our proposed approach?**

Please see above response.