

# GUIDANCE FOR INSPECTORS



## HOW WE INSPECT IN INDEPENDENT SPECIALIST COLLEGES

FOR PILOT INSPECTIONS IN 2024

This document is also  
available in Welsh

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

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## Introduction

### Estyn's vision

Estyn's vision is to improve the quality of education and training and outcomes for all learners in Wales. Our mission is to support education and training providers to develop a self-improving and learning culture through our advice, inspection and capacity building.

### Purpose of the guidance handbook 'How we inspect'

This handbook sets out our approach to inspecting independent specialist colleges from 2024. These are the providers registered as independent special post-16 institutions with Welsh Government. It explains **how** we inspect. The guidance is essential reading for reporting inspectors and all other members of the inspection team. It may also be useful for providers to support their understanding of the inspection mind-set and methodologies.

The guidance should be read alongside 'What we inspect' guidance in independent specialist colleges, which outlines the inspection framework. Providers can use this guidance to see how inspections work and to help them in strengthening their own self-evaluation and improvement processes.

Where the inspection identifies practice worth sharing, inspectors will share this practice through cameos within the provider's report. Where the inspection identifies important concerns in relation to learning and teaching, well-being, support and guidance and leading and improving, we will follow up at the next monitoring visit.

There is further information about inspections on our website [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales)

### Legal basis for the inspection of independent specialist colleges

Once commenced<sup>1</sup>, section 57 of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act requires the Chief Inspector to report on:

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

The Act also outlines Estyn's right of entry and access to premises and information to enable it to carry out such functions. It also states that it is an offence intentionally to obstruct HMCI (and inspectors deployed by HMCI) in the exercise of functions in relation to inspection.

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<sup>1</sup> Until commencement of the quality provisions in this Act, the legal basis for inspection will be section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000

## Policy background

While not governed directly by the following policies and conventions, the guidance handbook takes account of the following:

- the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015  
<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act>
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the Welsh Government in 2004 as the basis for policy-making for children and young people  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>
- the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018  
<https://gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-and-education-tribunal-wales-act>

Programme for Government priorities – including:

- Young Person’s Guarantee: <https://www.gov.wales/young-persons-guarantee-html>
- Race Equality Action Plan: <https://www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan>
- LGBTQ+ Action Plan: <https://www.gov.wales/lgbtq-action-plan-wales>
- Cymraeg 2050 Action Plan: <https://gov.wales/cymraeg-2050-our-plan-2021-2026-html>

## Arrangements for engagement with providers

### Introduction

This section applies across the breadth of Estyn’s engagement with providers. We expect all inspectors, including those contracted to Estyn and those working as peer inspectors, to adhere to these principles.

### Context

This guidance relates to the core inspection of each independent specialist college that takes place during the inspection cycle<sup>2</sup>. In addition, Estyn also regularly inspects aspects of this provision through monitoring visits to provide advice to Welsh Government to support the maintenance of their list of providers. This guidance also explains the arrangements for these monitoring visits.

### Thematic reports

Each year, the Welsh Government asks Estyn to produce national reports on a range of themes. Estyn will typically visit a sample of providers or survey all providers as part of this work. The visits result in oral feedback and national reports that feature summaries of the effective practice of individual providers in the form of cameos and case studies where relevant.

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<sup>2</sup> From 2024 onwards, the inspection interval cycle will revert to six years; as outlined in the Inspection of education and training (Wales) regulations 2024, once commenced.

## Overview of engagement with independent specialist colleges

### Initial registration of a new independent specialist college

- Registration inspection to advise the Welsh Government on the proposed provision by the college
- There is no published report for this visit

### Changes to arrangements

- Welsh Government may request Estyn to complete a visit and provide advice where a provider seeks to make changes to arrangements related to their registration
- There is no published report for this visit

### Core Inspection

- A full inspection focussing on the three inspection areas
- There is a published report for this visit

### Monitoring Visit

- Monitoring visit to review the college's strengths, areas for development and progress against recommendations left at the last inspection or visit
- There is a published report for this visit

## Principles of our work

We expect our inspectors to work according to a number of key principles. They:

- take a learner-centred approach to any activity and engagement
- always focus strongly on the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning
- focus each activity on the specific provider and adapt our approaches accordingly
- use a range of tailored methodologies and approaches to evaluate the breadth of the provider's work robustly and fairly
- adopt a constructive approach that makes the interaction with the provider a professional learning experience for their staff

During core inspections, we expect inspectors to consider everything in the 'what' and 'how' we inspect guidance documents, but only report on the key strengths and weaknesses

In addition, our inspectors will:

- ensure that our activity and engagement is responsive to the needs of all learners
- ensure that our evaluations are secure, reliable, valid and based on first-hand evidence
- keep to a minimum any requirements for documentation and preparation by the provider

- gain the perspective of learners and other stakeholders
- apply the principle of equality for Welsh and English to all our activity

In core inspections particularly, our inspectors will:

- involve the provider fully in the inspection process, including the opportunity for the provider to select a nominee
- take suitable account of the provider's chosen improvement priorities, in addition to other key areas identified by the inspection team
- include peer inspectors in the inspection process

### Our mind-set

Estyn's approach to inspection and engagement activity is:

**Fair and impartial** – this means that we work to be independent, objective and balanced. We are robust and consistent in our work. We weigh the evidence and its significance to provide an honest, credible and accurate view of the provider's strengths and areas for improvement.

**Supportive** – we work to guide providers to implement improvements that benefit learners. We encourage innovation and recognise good intentions. We are friendly but always professional in our approach. We support educational reform. We work hard to develop meaningful relationships with providers and local and regional organisations.

**Reflective** – we are open-minded. We listen to a wide range of stakeholders and reflect on their responses. We are thoughtful, measured and careful. We plan opportunities to think carefully about the inspection findings and to discuss them with others in the team.

**Transparent** – we are well informed and communicate clearly, directly and succinctly. We use efficient and effective inspection methodologies to respond to the provider's unique situation. We plan inspection activity and report on strengths and areas for improvement in ways that reflect the particular circumstances of each individual provider. As a result, our actions promote trust and respect.

### Expectations of inspectors

Our expectations of inspectors explains how we embody our mind-set through our actions. Inspectors should uphold the highest possible standards in their work. All inspectors have to meet the expected standards of behaviour and conduct.

When conducting the inspection, inspectors will:

- be courteous and professional
- establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries when talking to both young people and adults
- carry out their work with integrity and due sensitivity
- take all reasonable steps to prevent undue anxiety and to minimise stress during inspection activity
- evaluate the work of the provider objectively\_ using clear and robust evidence
- report honestly, fairly and impartially\_ without fear or favour

- communicate clearly and openly
- act in the best interests of learners
- respect the confidentiality of all information received during the course of their work
- respond appropriately to reasonable requests

It is important that we evaluate the effectiveness of provision and leadership on their impact and not on the basis of any preferences for particular methods. The key to the evaluations is whether the methods and organisation are fit for the purpose in supporting all learners to achieve high standards and strong levels of well-being.

Inspectors should inform Estyn of any perceived or actual conflicts of interest as soon as they receive notification that they are part of the provider's inspection team.

### **Expectations of providers**

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

- be courteous and professional, treating inspectors and inspection support staff with respect
- act in the best interests of learners
- provide evidence – or access to evidence - that enables inspectors to conduct the inspection in an open, honest and objective way
- recognise that inspectors need to observe practice and to talk to staff, learners and other stakeholders without the presence of a manager or senior leader
- work with inspectors to take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption, stress and bureaucracy
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with the reporting inspector and other inspectors
- draw any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors in a timely and suitable manner through the nominee
- give due regard to the health and safety, and well-being of inspectors while on the premises
- maintain the confidentiality of meetings and inspection findings until the final publication of the report
- ensure that inspection teams have access to a private area to discuss inspection evidence and hold confidential discussions

Any CCTV and recording equipment should be brought to the attention of the team during the initial team meeting.

At the point of the inspection notification, providers should review the composition of the inspection team. It is the provider's responsibility to highlight any perceived or actual conflicts of interest prior to the start of any engagement, for example prior to their on-site inspection or visit.



## **The Welsh language**

We will carry out any engagement, including inspections, in line with our [Welsh Language Policy](#), available from our website.

## **Safeguarding, including health, safety and well-being issues**

Inspectors will carry out inspections in accordance with Estyn's guidance on inspecting safeguarding. If they observe anything that they think constitutes, in their opinion, a real risk to the safety of staff, visitors or learners, inspectors should alert managers at the provider.

If an inspector becomes aware of a safeguarding allegation/suspicion in respect of a young person or vulnerable adult, they should follow the procedures set out in the current version of '[Estyn's policy and procedures for safeguarding](#)', which is available on our website.

In all cases, inspectors should record details of the concern. They should inform the Reporting Inspector (RI) who should then contact one of Estyn's safeguarding lead officers. The lead officer will advise the RI of the next steps to take including what to record in the evidence base for the appropriate inspection area. This includes any risks relating to learners' health, safety and well-being. The officer will also advise the RI whether or not to share the concern with the college.

Where these risks are a serious concern during core inspection activity or visits, inspectors should include a short comment in the report's text and a recommendation in the report. We will send a well-being letter to the provider asking them to outline how they will address the shortcoming and would inform Welsh Government about this as well.

If an inspector identifies a site security concern, they should inform the RI. If the RI considers that the concern can be addressed quickly, they should inform the college who will be expected to provide evidence of the concern being resolved within a week.

If the concern/s is more serious and cannot be addressed quickly, the RI should inform the IC who will issue a health and safety letter to the college. It will be their responsibility to ensure that the issue/s is addressed. Welsh Government should also be informed of this. If a less significant issue is not addressed satisfactorily within a week, then this process will also apply.

## **Responding to a safeguarding allegation**

If an inspector becomes aware of a safeguarding allegation//suspicion in respect of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, they should follow the procedures as set out in the current version of '[Estyn's policy and procedures for safeguarding](#)', which is available on Estyn's website.

## Approach to inspection

The starting point for inspection is the college’s evaluation of its own performance and priorities, supported by relevant evidence. Inspectors will not inspect all aspects of work in depth during a core inspection. They will sample evidence to test the college’s own evaluation of its work.

The progress learners make from their starting-points and the standards they achieve are the key measures of the quality of the education and training they have received and of the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the college. Inspection will focus on the needs of learners, their attitudes to learning and the impact that the provision makes on supporting their progress and the standards they achieve.

We will carry out inspections in line with our Welsh Language Policy, available from our website [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales).

## The Virtual Inspection Room

We will use an electronic system, called the ‘Virtual Inspection Room’ (VIR), for managing many aspects of the inspection. It is a web-based system that allows providers to upload information before the inspection and to download guidance from us about the inspection process. The VIR is also the place where providers can access the post-inspection questionnaires (PIQs).

We ensure the security of information uploaded by subjecting the VIR to penetration testing. This testing evaluates system security. We identify and implement any actions to prevent unauthorised access. All users of Estyn’s VIR system have a username and password which are recorded and maintained securely within an active directory. The system also has features to ensure password protection including threat detection and conditional access.

## The inspection team

There are different roles within the inspection team.

Team member	Explanation	Role
Reporting inspector (RI), may also be referred to as the lead inspector	The RI for an inspection will be one of the following: HMI (His Majesty’s Inspector of Education and Training in Wales) – HMIs are appointed by the crown. They are civil servants employed directly by Estyn. AI (Additional Inspector) – AIs normally join Estyn temporarily, for example on secondment from providers.	The RI leads and manages the inspection team. They liaise with the college and the team ahead of the inspection, and quality assure their team’s work. The RI is the first point of reference for everyone during the on-site part of the inspection process.
Team inspectors (TI)	The number of team inspectors is determined by the size of the provider. Team inspectors may be HMI	Team inspectors may take responsibility for gathering evidence to inform the

	or contracted additional inspectors who have been trained by Estyn.	team’s evaluation of different aspects of the inspection. The RI directs and manages the team inspectors’ work.
Peer inspector (PI)	A peer inspector is a serving leader or manager from another provider who has completed Estyn’s PI training and assessment. All inspection teams have a peer inspector as a team member.	The PI also takes responsibility for gathering evidence to inform the team’s evaluations. They are an integral part of the inspection team. The RI directs and manages the PI’s work.
Nominee (from the provider being inspected)	We will invite providers to select a senior member of staff, called the nominee, to work with the inspection team. In practice, nearly all providers accept the invitation, but it is not a requirement. The nominee should have sufficient seniority to act as a link between the provider and the inspection team but need not be the leader of the provider.	Providers can access the guidance for nominees on preparing for the inspection from links within the initial contact form (ICF), completed by the Inspection Coordinator (IC) and available via the VIR.

We may also invite, whenever possible, an international peer inspector/reviewer from one of the education and training inspectorates in the UK, , namely ETI (Northern Ireland), Education Scotland, Ofsted, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Eire or Europe . They will be able to bring an international benchmarking perspective to the inspection, facilitate the sharing of effective practice and enable better networking of providers in Wales with their international peers.

### Contacting the provider before a core inspection

The provider will receive 15 working days’ notice of the inspection.

Following this, the inspection co-ordinator will contact the provider by telephone to set up the arrangements for the inspection. During this discussion, the inspection co-ordinator will:

- explain the purpose of the inspection and discuss an outline programme for the inspection
- discuss the specific information required before the inspection, including the completion by the provider of a safeguarding self-evaluation form, and make the arrangements for receiving it in electronic form through the Virtual Inspection Room
- ask if there are any issues or risks the team should be aware of and ask for a general health and safety briefing for the team at the start of the inspection
- establish whether the provider wishes to have a nominee and, if it does, agree the role of the nominee and explain the process for completing the nominee guidance
- arrange a meeting at the start of the inspection with the nominee to provide a health and safety briefing for the team

- arrange a meeting at the start of the inspection for the provider to set out its priorities for improvement and its current stage of development
- provide links and guidance for the completion of online pre-inspection questionnaires for learners, staff, and governors (where appropriate)
- agree arrangements for setting up a meeting with governors (where appropriate).
- arrange the availability of supporting evidence, including samples of learners' work
- ensure that there are agreed procedures for addressing any concerns or complaints that might arise during the course of the inspection
- organise any domestic arrangements, such as a base for the inspectors, parking and internet access
- set up the arrangements for feeding back the inspection findings
- agree the arrangements for completing the post-inspection questionnaire (PIQ)
- inform the provider through the initial contact form of the key inspection arrangements

The inspection co-ordinator will request the following information from the provider through the virtual inspection room as soon as possible after the formal notification of the inspection:

- key background information on the provider
- the provider's most recent quality development plans and self-evaluation reports
- the number of learners, including those part-time and full-time learners and their location
- details of the provider's timetables for the period of the inspection
- arrange a date (as agreed with the RI) for an initial planning meeting

If the inspection is to take place early in the academic year, providers may wish to share samples of learners' work from the previous year with inspectors, if available. If providers are unable to share learners' previous work, inspectors will take this information into account when discussing work and progress with staff and learners.

When we notify providers of the inspection, they will receive information on how to conduct a confidential online survey of learners and parents. Estyn will also provide a pre-inspection online questionnaire for governors (where appropriate), and all teaching, assessment and support staff directly employed by the provider. The outcomes of the surveys will form part of the pre-inspection evidence and support inspectors to form their evaluations of the provider's work.

The team will also consider the most recent survey of learners' perceptions conducted by the provider.

During the inspection, inspectors may interview a sample of learners, teaching, assessment and learning support staff as part of their gathering of evidence.

## **Planning the inspection and preparing the team**

Taking into account the provider's identified improvement priorities and self-evaluation reports, and any information already held by Estyn such as the findings of annual link visits and thematic reviews, the reporting inspector will plan the inspection and allocate responsibilities to members of the inspection team.

Inspections involve observations of teaching and learning, including the observation of extended periods of teaching sessions and also shorter duration observations as part of learning walks. Observations of teaching and learning and scrutiny of learners' work may be conducted in-person or online as appropriate.

## **During the inspection**

### **Initial team meeting**

In the initial meeting of the inspection team, there should be a health and safety briefing from a member of the college staff. The college should provide a brief position statement on its strategic priorities and its current stage of development. After that, the team should discuss with senior leaders the improvement priorities identified by the college and the progress that it is making in its improvement work. The reporting inspector will confirm these arrangements with the college during the pre-inspection phone call.

Inspectors will sample, test and validate the college's own priorities and its evaluations of its strengths and areas for improvement and any other strengths and areas for improvement which the reporting inspector identifies. The discussions will also consider the evidence that inspectors need to review. This will include learning walks, session observations, sampling learners' written work, and interviews with learners, staff and other stakeholders.

### **Gathering and reviewing inspection evidence**

The team will plan the inspection so that they can cover the reporting requirements within the three inspection areas. The reporting inspector will plan the inspection activity flexibly, in response to the provider's bespoke, individual circumstances. This means that the activities planned in one provider may not mirror those planned in another. In addition, inspectors report 'by exception'. This means that the team will always consider everything within the inspection areas but the final report may not include every aspect of the framework.

The main forms of evidence are:

- documentary or electronic evidence, including information on learners' performance and progress
- observation of teaching, training, assessment and other activities, including evidence gathered through learning walks
- samples of learners' work
- survey responses from learners, staff, parents and governors (where appropriate)
- discussions with learners, leaders, managers, governors (or board of directors where appropriate) and other key stakeholders

The team will use direct observation of learners' practical skills and written work wherever possible to gather evidence to support their evaluations. Inspectors may select an additional sample of learners' work if required, to support their evaluations of a specific aspect.

Inspectors will undertake a range of activities to gather evidence for their evaluation of learners' progress and the quality of the provider's provision. This may include session observations, including sampling online lessons, learning walks, where inspectors move relatively quickly through a number of teaching or training sessions looking at a specific aspect of the provision, discussions with individual teachers, about learners' progress in their training sessions and how they plan work to meet their needs.

The voice of learners is a key source of evidence for inspectors. Inspectors will speak with learners in learning sessions, in focus groups or informal settings. Conversations with learners will provide an opportunity to explore learners' perceptions of their progress and their learning experiences. It will also help inspectors to gauge how well they feel the college supports learners and contributes to their well-being.

Colleges should make information available to the inspection team about the standards and progress achieved by learners, including the results of any initial and diagnostic assessments of literacy, numeracy or digital skills, or and other assessments of additional learning needs (ALN). This will help inspectors to judge learners' progress, to come to a view about the standards learners achieve compared to their starting-points and the way teachers, use the information.

The team will need to consider stakeholders' views about the college and test out the validity of those views during the inspection.

Where the nominee is not the principal, it is important that the reporting inspector holds a brief daily meeting with the principal and nominee to clarify inspection issues and the broad, emerging findings of the inspection team.

### **Recording inspection evidence**

Inspectors will complete their forms electronically as part of Estyn's digital system for collecting, collating and recording inspection findings.

### **Team meetings**

The main purpose of team meetings is to arrive at an accurate, reliable, valid and corporate view of learning and the quality of provision and leadership. Meetings will provide opportunities for inspectors to:

- test the validity of the college's self-evaluation processes and priorities for improvement
- discuss emerging issues
- review visits to learners
- identify any gaps in the evidence base
- consider main inspection findings and any recommendations

## **Professional dialogue**

Throughout the inspection, inspectors will engage in professional dialogue with practitioners. This dialogue may include meeting with individual teachers or trainers, often in their classrooms to discuss their planning and assessment of learners' work. Inspectors may want to meet with groups of support staff, for example to understand the providers' arrangements to support learners with ALN. Inspectors may decide to meet with leaders, either individually or as a group, to understand the impact of the provider's leadership on bringing about improvements to learners' outcomes.

Professional dialogue enables inspectors to gain first-hand evidence from practitioners that can be triangulated with other sources of evidence. The dialogue will provide emerging, interim findings on aspects of the evidence base. These findings may be amended, on reflection, for example after scrutiny of learners' work or talking to learners or as the result of moderation within the team.

Normally, following a session observation, inspectors will offer a brief professional dialogue with the member of staff on the learning seen. It may be necessary, in some cases, to conduct this discussion later during the inspection.

At all times, the main focus of the discussion should be on the learners, the progress they make during the session and the standards they achieve. Inspectors should try to focus on any strengths or areas for development in relation to the specific activity seen.

Due to the nature of learning walks, and the spread of the activity across a number of activities within a relatively short period of time, inspectors will not be in a position to offer professional dialogue to individual teachers, or trainers after learning walk activity.

## **Formal feedback**

At the end of the on-site part of the inspection, the team will provide oral feedback to college leaders and governors. The college should invite representatives from the governing body (or other supervisory board) to this meeting. The feedback should focus on the main evaluations for each of the three inspection areas and the reasons for these.

The feedback meeting provides the opportunity for leaders and governors to hear and to reflect on the team's findings. The feedback should focus on the strengths and areas for improvement and the factors that contribute to them, including the recommendations. The reporting inspector should explain to the college that issues may be clarified and factual matters may be corrected. However, the purpose of the meeting is for the provider to understand rather than negotiate the inspection team's findings.

During the inspection, the team will also consider if there is any effective practice in the college that is worthy of sharing with other colleges. Where this is the case, the reporting inspector will include a cameo of this practice as part of the inspection report.

All the evaluations reported during an inspection are provisional and subject to moderation and validation by HMCI. They are confidential to the college's staff and governors. They should not be communicated beyond this group, including via social media, until we publish the report on our website.

### **Complaints about the conduct of the inspection**

If there are any issues about the conduct of the inspection overall or the conduct of individual inspectors, then the college, through the nominee, should raise these directly, and as soon as possible, with the reporting inspector. The college should not wait until after the inspection but should raise any issues during the on-site inspection. Issues often arise due to misunderstandings, and these can usually be resolved quickly and satisfactorily in college close to the time when they occurred.

There is guidance on our complaints handling procedures on our website.

However, there are some things that we do not address through our complaints-handling procedure, for example complaints, or challenges, about evaluations or follow-up decisions made after an Estyn inspection or review. This is because, before and during an inspection, the provider has the opportunity to provide all of the evidence needed for the inspection team to reach its evaluations accurately and fairly.

## **After the inspection**

### **The inspection report**

The reporting inspector is responsible for producing a final inspection report that is clear to a lay audience and helpful to the provider.

When writing reports, inspectors should take account of Estyn's writing guidance which is available on our website [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales).

We will publish reports bilingually, where colleges have made this request, in line with Estyn's Welsh Language Policy.

We base the structure of the inspection report on a Common Inspection Framework and the report will take the following form:

#### **About the college**

#### **Overview of the main findings**

#### **Recommendations**

#### **What happens next**

#### **Main evaluations**

Inspection Area 1 - Teaching and learning

Inspection Area 2 - Well-being, care, support and guidance

Inspection Area 3 - Leading and improving



## The evidence base of the inspection

We will produce the report within statutory or agreed sector timescales.

### The factual accuracy check

Estyn will give the college a draft of the report prior to publication, to help check the factual accuracy of the content. The college will normally have five working days in which to consider the draft report and to identify any errors.

The focus of the check is on resolving any factual inaccuracies in the inspection report. It does not focus on the findings. There is further guidance for providers on the nature and scope of this check on Estyn's website.

## Assuring the quality of inspections

We are committed to:

- effective selection, training, briefing, support and deployment of inspectors, including peer inspectors and additional inspectors
- effective training, briefing and support to allow the nominee to play an active role
- regular dialogue with the nominee and principal during inspection
- criteria and recording systems that comply with inspection guidance
- careful review and analysis of evidence
- providing clear verbal feedback of the team's main findings and the detail for each inspection area
- producing accurate and well-presented reports

As part of our quality assurance procedures, we invite colleges to complete a post-inspection questionnaire (PIQ). The questionnaire will be available to colleges in the VIR. Colleges should complete the first part of the PIQ immediately after the on-site inspection and submit it electronically to Estyn through the VIR system. Colleges can complete the second part of the PIQ after the publication of the inspection report, again through the VIR system.

The reporting inspector will quality assure the inspection team's work in the first instance. We quality assure a sample of inspections through on-site visits. We assure the quality of all written inspection reports before they are published on our website. Our arrangements for ensuring the quality of inspections are available on our website [www.estyn.gov.wales](http://www.estyn.gov.wales).

## Monitoring visit arrangements

### Introduction

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

**The principles of inspection, inspection mindset, code of conduct and expectations of providers remain the same as for a core inspection.**

### **Inspection activity**

During a monitoring visit the team will focus on the college's main strengths and areas for development and the progress towards any recommendations left from the last inspection.

**Other approaches to activity on these visits, such as use of the VIR and collecting evidence are as above, in a core inspection.**

### **After the inspection**

#### **The inspection report**

The reporting inspector is responsible for producing a final inspection report that is clear to a lay audience and helpful to the provider.

When writing reports, inspectors should take account of Estyn's writing guidance, which is available on our website.

We will publish reports bilingually, where providers have made this request, in line with our Welsh Language Policy.

We base the structure of the inspection report on our inspection framework. The report will take the following form:

#### **About the Provider**

##### **Strengths**

##### **Areas for development**

##### **Progress against previous recommendations**

##### **Recommendations**

We will produce the report within statutory or agreed sector timescales.

#### **The factual accuracy check**

We will give the provider a draft of the report to help check the factual accuracy of the content. The provider will normally have five working days in which to consider the draft report and to identify any errors.

The focus of the check is on resolving any factual inaccuracies in the inspection report. It does not focus on the findings. There is further guidance for providers on the nature and scope of this check on our website.

## GET IN TOUCH

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