

# Early career framework and national professional qualification inspection framework and handbook



# What is it and what does it mean for us?

- This slide deck sets out the key points contained in Ofsted's framework and handbook for inspecting lead providers of early career framework (ECF) and national professional qualification (NPQ) programmes in England. Monitoring visits will begin in Summer 2022, with full inspections taking place from Spring 2023.
  - This framework sets out the purposes and principles of inspecting lead providers and the statutory basis for doing so.
  - Lead providers are defined as providers that are funded by the DfE to provide ECF and NPQ training and professional development. Ofsted carries out ECF and NPQ inspections under Part 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
  - Under this framework, Ofsted will not inspect any schools that deliver the ECF training themselves.
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# Key points

- Principles and purpose of inspection
  - Overarching approach to inspection
  - Inspection model
  - Determining inspection frequency and timing
  - Notification of the inspection or LPMV
  - Preparation for the inspection or LPMV
  - The full inspection
  - After the full inspection
  - LPMVs
  - LPMV outcomes
  - During the LPMV
  - After the LPMV
  - Publishing the inspection report and LPMV letter
  - Quality assurance and complaints
  - What's next
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# Principles and purpose of inspection

Inspections of ECF and NPQ lead providers are based on the range of evidence available to inspectors, which they evaluate against the framework.

Ofsted's inspections of ECF training and NPQ professional development:

- Make judgements that help lead providers to learn from areas of strength and improve from areas of weakness.
  - Encourage the improvement of individual lead providers.
  - Ensure that information is available to potential early career teachers (ECTs) and NPQ participants, employers and other stakeholders about the quality of ECF training and NPQ professional development.
  - Provide information to the Secretary of State for Education and to Parliament about the work of lead providers. This information includes whether an acceptable standard of professional development is being provided, minimum standards are being met and if the use of public money is justified.
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# Overarching approach to inspection

- Inspectors must be able to form a connection between different pieces of evidence, and inspection activities are structured to allow them to do this.
  - Inspectors will not emphasise one type of evidence above others, and will not focus solely on one particular training session or on one ECT or NPQ participant.
  - Inspectors will gather evidence that is balanced and connected, and they will consider the quality of professional development and training, including how this prepares ECTs and NPQ participants to apply new knowledge to their professional practice.
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# Inspection model

- Ofsted will carry out two different types of inspection:
    - Full inspections
    - Lead provider monitoring visits (LPMVs)
  - If a provider offers both ECF and NPQ programmes, Ofsted will usually carry out full inspections in parallel, where possible. Ofsted will, however, always carry out a single LPMV for lead providers that are in their first year of operation, regardless of whether they offer both programmes.
  - For instances where lead providers are offering both ECF and NPQ programmes, there will be two lead inspectors and two separate inspection teams. The inspection activities will be carried out separately and planned by the lead inspectors.
  - Inspectors will make separate judgements about the individual programmes, and each inspection will result in its own report.
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# Determining inspection frequency and timing

Ofsted will ensure that the frequency of inspection is proportionate to the performance and circumstances of lead providers. The timing of an inspection is determined by an annual risk assessment process. Ofsted uses a broad range of indicators to select lead providers for inspection, including:

- The time since the previous inspection
  - The outcomes of the previous inspection
  - Local intelligence
  - Information from the DfE (for example, the lead provider's course arrangements, the number of participants on the courses and the views of participants on the programmes)
  - Any other significant concerns that are brought to Ofsted's attention, for example complaints about the lead provider
  - If an LPMV finds that a lead provider is not taking effective action to ensure that delivery of the programmes is of a high quality, Ofsted will normally return within a year to complete a full inspection.
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# Notification of the inspection or LPMV

- Ofsted will normally contact the lead provider's representative by telephone to announce the inspection or LPMV between 9:30am and 11:00am five working days before the inspection or visit – usually on a Monday.
  - If the representative is unavailable, Ofsted will ask to speak to the most senior staff member available. The telephone call will be followed up by a confirmatory email.
  - An inspection support administrator (ISA) will request information that the lead provider will need to provide before the inspection. They will then send the lead provider a note setting out information they will need to be aware of before the inspection.
  - A lead provider may request a deferral of its full inspection or LPMV when notified of the inspection, or to the lead inspector on the day. Normally, however, Ofsted will not normally consider deferrals received after 4:30pm on the day that the lead provider is notified.
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# Preparation for the inspection or LPMV

Following notification, the lead inspector will speak to the lead provider's representative to arrange the preparatory telephone conversations. These will have two elements:

- A reflective, educationally focused conversation about the lead provider's context, strengths and challenges and, where relevant, action since the previous inspection or visit
  - Shorter inspection-planning conversations that focus on practical and logistical matters
  - In calls to ECF and NPQ lead providers, inspectors will discuss the following:
    - The team structure, including roles and responsibilities
    - How samples of different stakeholders will be selected
    - In the case of a full inspection, the focussed review methodology and which partners will form the initial focused review sample
    - The information needed by the start of the inspection or visit
    - Any planned interruptions to normal routines during the inspection or visit
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# Preparation for the inspection or LPMV

In parallel inspections\*, ECF training and NPQ professional development may be managed by a central senior leadership team or by different teams.

When they are managed by one team, the two lead inspectors may attend one initial reflective, educationally focussed conversation and then hold separate conversations with the leadership teams of specific programmes.

When they are managed by different teams, leaders can opt for two separate reflective, educationally focussed conversations, each led by the relevant lead inspector.

\* EDT will receive parallel inspections

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# The full inspection

Full inspections will usually consist of four days of activity within the same week. The size of the inspection team will vary according to a number of factors, for example the geographical reach of the delivery partners that the lead provider uses.

On the first day of inspection, inspectors will normally arrive on site between 10:30am and 12:00pm. Earlier virtual activities may be planned if they do not interfere with travel.

During the inspection, the team will:

- Gather and record evidence.
  - Visit training or professional development sessions.
  - Meet with stakeholders.
  - Meet with delivery partner staff and school-based mentors.
  - Meet with current and former participants of the programmes.
  - Engage with the lead provider's representative.
  - Conduct team meetings and reach final judgements.
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# Inspection activities

During inspections (both LPMV and full), Ofsted will:

- visit a sample of delivery partners and engage with others involved in receiving and delivering the programmes, including managers responsible for the provision, ECTs, NPQ participants, induction tutors and mentors to inform our assessment of a lead provider
  - consider a range of evidence, including: national data; discussions with leaders, managers, staff, ECTs and NPQ participants; and questionnaire responses
  - report on any failure to comply with the statutory requirements of the ECF
  - invite the lead provider's representative (the nominee) to observe inspectors' daily team meetings and final team meetings
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# Inspection activities

Ofsted will **not**:

- make judgements about individual delivery partners
  - make a direct judgement on the ECF or NPQ programmes of education
  - grade individual lessons taught by ECTs or NPQ participants, or sessions led by trainers or mentors
  - provide evidence that could be used in capability or disciplinary proceedings, or for the purposes of performance management
  - advocate a particular method of planning (including lesson planning), teaching or assessment
  - have pre-conceived expectations of what ECF and NPQ curriculum plans should look like
  - expect the ECF to be used as an assessment framework
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# Inspection activities

Ofsted does **not** require lead providers to make available to inspectors:

- evidence in any specific format, including ECF and/or NPQ curriculum planning
  - evidence for inspection beyond that set out in this handbook
  - photographic evidence of ECTs' or NPQ participants' work (although inspectors may ask to take photographs of parts of their work, which will be anonymised)
  - performance and tracking information
  - self-evaluation, other than that which is already part of the provider's usual business processes
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# Inspection activities

Ofsted does **not** specify:

- how training or professional development planning should be set out, the length of time it should take or the amount of detail it should contain (although we will expect this to be in line with the requirements set out in the lead provider's contract and signed off by the DfE)
  - how lead providers quality assure the training and professional development provided by delivery partners
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# Inspection activities

Ofsted does **not** require lead providers to:

- do additional preparatory work or ask delivery partners to do preparatory work specifically for the inspection, beyond that necessary for the smooth running of the inspection
  - use their evaluation schedule in any way to grade the training or professional development provided by delivery partners
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# The full inspection

- Each inspection ends with a final feedback meeting with the lead provider. The lead inspector must ensure that the lead provider is clear:
    - About the provisional grades awarded for each key judgement area.
    - About the key findings from the inspection, as summarised in the final summary evaluation.
    - That the grades are provisional and may be subject to change as a result of quality assurance procedures or moderation, and so must be treated as restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel.
    - That the main findings of the inspection and the main points provided orally in the feedback, subject to any change, will be referred to in the text of the report, although the text of the report may differ slightly from the oral feedback.
    - That the post-inspection survey is available for them to complete.
    - About any recommendations for improvement.
    - About the process for publication of the report.
    - How to make a complaint about the inspection.
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# After the full inspection

- Full inspections will result in a published report for each of the ECF and NPQ contracts.
  - For all inspections, the lead inspector will be responsible for writing the inspection report and submitting the evidence to Ofsted shortly after the inspection ends.
  - The lead inspector will:
    - Ensure that the text of the report explains the judgements and reflects the evidence.
    - Ensure that the findings in the report are consistent with the feedback given to the lead provider at the end of the inspection.
    - Complete and submit the final version of the record of visits form.
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# LPMVs

- New lead providers will always receive an LPMV in their first year of operation. Inspectors will take into account that the lead provider is in the early stages of implementation.
  - From the second year of delivery onwards, lead providers will usually receive a full inspection a minimum of once every two academic years. If an LPMV finds that a lead provider is not taking effective action to ensure that the delivery of ECF and/or NPQ programmes are high quality, Ofsted will normally return to do a full inspection within a year.
  - LPMVs will primarily focus on the effectiveness of leaders and managers in delivering a high-quality training programme for participants.
  - After the initial planning call, the lead inspector will liaise with the lead provider to arrange activities. This will include selecting a sample of ECTs and mentors, or NPQ participants, for inspectors to meet and relevant leaders and stakeholders within the delivery chain.
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# LPMV outcomes

- There are two possible LPMV outcomes:
    - Leaders and managers are taking effective action to ensure that delivery of the ECF and/or NPQ programmes is of a high quality.
    - Leaders and managers are not taking effective action to ensure that delivery of the ECF and/or NPQ programmes is of a high quality.
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## During the LPMV

- LPMVs will consist of three days on site within the same week. On the first day of an LPMV, inspectors will normally arrive on site between 10:30am and 12:00pm. Earlier virtual activities may be planned as long as they do not interfere with travel.
  - The activities carried out are no different to full inspections; however, inspectors will not gather the same depth of evidence about the quality of professional development and training.
  - As with a full inspection, inspectors must be able to form a connection between different pieces of evidence.
  - The focus of the LPMV will not be on one particular training session, or on one ECT or NPQ participant; it will connect all of these pieces of evidence.
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# After the LPMV

- LPMVs will result in a published LPMV letter. The lead inspector will be responsible for writing the letter and submitting the evidence to Ofsted shortly after the LPMV ends.
  - The lead inspector will:
    - Ensure that the text of the LPMV letter explains the judgement and reflects the evidence.
    - Ensure that the findings in the LPMV letter are consistent with the feedback given to the lead provider at the end of the LPMV.
    - Complete and submit the final version of the record of visits form, which lists the providers and schools visited as part of the LPMV.
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# Publishing the inspection report and LPMV letter

- Inspection reports and LPMV letters will be quality assured before they are shared with the lead provider. The draft report is restricted and confidential and should not be shared more widely or published.
  - The lead provider will be invited to comment on the draft report or letter within 18 working days of the end of the inspection or visit. The lead provider will have five working days to inform Ofsted of any factual inaccuracies, or make any other comments about the inspection process and findings.
  - The lead provider will usually receive an electronic version of the report or letter within 30 working days of the end of the inspection or visit. In most circumstances, Ofsted will publish the final report or letter on its reports website within 38 working days.
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# Quality assurance and complaints

Ofsted monitors the quality of inspections and visits through a range of formal processes. This may involve a telephone call to the lead inspector to discuss the inspection or visit in progress, or an on-site visit. When an on-site quality assurance check is scheduled, the lead inspector will explain the purpose and format during the initial telephone conversation with the lead provider's representative.

All lead providers will be invited to take part in a post-inspection or monitoring visit survey so that Ofsted can gather their views about the quality of the inspection or visit.

Concerns should be raised with the relevant lead inspector as soon as possible, in order to resolve issues before the full inspection or LPMV is completed. Any concerns raised, and actions taken, will be recorded in the evidence.

If it is not possible to resolve concerns during the inspection or visit, or through submitting comments in response to the draft inspection report or LPMV letter, the lead provider may wish to lodge a formal complaint on receipt of the final report or letter.

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