

A joint approach to accreditation, inspection and monitoring

Background and introduction

The reform of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is a fundamental part of wider educational reform in Wales. The aim of ITE accreditation is to introduce and develop a new approach to ITE in Wales and improve the quality and consistency of ITE provision. Programmes of ITE have to meet the Criteria for accreditation. They are assessed initially against the Criteria by the EWC's Initial Teacher Education Board (ITEAB).

Following accreditation, monitoring and inspection are essential components in ensuring that the programmes continue to meet The Criteria, realise the vision of ITE accreditation and reform in Wales, and deliver high levels of quality provision. The Criteria are written in such a way that compliance and quality are intertwined and therefore whilst the focus of EWC accreditation and monitoring, and Estyn inspection are different, they each will complement and inform the other.

For each ITE partnership:¹

- Estyn will ordinarily undertake one inspection during a five-year inspection cycle
- EWC will ordinarily undertake one instance of monitoring activity during a five-year accreditation period (or during an accreditation period of less than 5 years).

This paper has been developed by both Estyn and EWC to provide ITE partnerships with an overview of how both organisations will work together and with the ITE sector to support improvement and build capacity but also fulfil their legislative functions. It should be read in conjunction with [list all relevant EWC and Estyn documents]

Both organisations are committed to developing a single, coherent process that:

- avoids unnecessary burden on the partnerships
- supports improvement across the system and for individual partnerships
- embeds a culture of co-construction

Accreditation, monitoring and inspection

What we do...

Education Workforce Council

During a five-year accreditation period EWC will undertake one instance of monitoring activity. Where a partnership has more than one accredited programme running to the same accreditation cycle the visit will include monitoring for all programmes.

Estyn

Estyn will inspect each partnership once during a five-year inspection cycle.

To create space in the system and reduce the burden on ITE partnerships, Estyn will no longer carry out annual monitoring visits.

¹ Accreditation and monitoring take place at a programme level. However, where accreditation timeframes align, or wherever practical, accreditation and monitoring will take place for the partnership as a whole.

Some programmes may be accredited for a period less than 5 years. In these instances, EWC will ordinarily undertake a monitoring visit during the accredited cycle.

Upon conclusion of the monitoring visit the Committee will determine, based on the evidence gathered, whether the partnership's programme(s) continue to comply with the Accreditation Criteria and if appropriate make recommendations to support good practice.

Monitoring outcomes will be reported to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language and shared with Estyn.

If a programme is deemed compliant with the criteria following monitoring no further follow-up work will take place by EWC, unless requested by the partnership or otherwise triggered (please refer to EWC's Monitoring of Accredited Programmes of ITE Processes and Requirements).

EWC will lead on all issues of non-compliance. Where appropriate, Estyn and EWC will work together to support the partnership to make improvements.

EWC monitoring will not normally take place during the same academic year as Estyn inspection.

EWC monitoring will inform the process of reaccreditation and as a result reaccreditation will be streamlined and less burdensome than an initial accreditation.

How we do it...

The monitoring process is a constructive and developmental dialogue, which adds value to the quality of ITE, contributing to the systematic development of partnerships, and the continuous improvement of ITE programmes.

Inspections are carried out according to the guidance documents [How we Inspect in Initial Teacher Education](#) and [What we Inspect in Initial Teacher Education](#).

During all core inspections, the inspection team will consider whether the partnership needs any follow-up activity.

There are two types of follow-up activity:

- Causing significant concern and in need of re-inspection
- Enhanced Estyn engagement

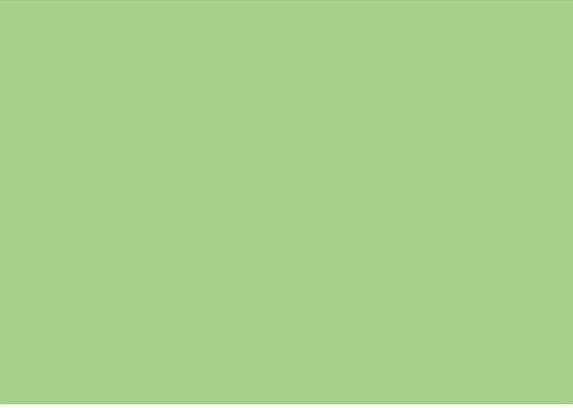
The activity involves increasing levels of intervention in proportion to need.

If the inspection team has identified significant strengths in outcomes, provision or leadership and management, then Estyn will work with the partnership to share its work with other ITE partnerships.

Inspection outcomes will be reported to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language and shared with the EWC.

If ITE features in Estyn's annual remit letter from the Minister for Education and Welsh Language, Estyn will make a one-day thematic visit to some partnerships.

Estyn's work is learner focused and examines each partnership's work in practice. Estyn inspects the effectiveness of leadership, teaching and learning, and evaluates the impact of the partnership's work on the outcomes that students achieve. Estyn adopts a constructive approach that makes the interaction with the provider a professional learning



experience for their staff and the inspection team as a whole.

Inspections take account of the criteria for accreditation because these are the basis for the partnership's work. It is possible, therefore, that Estyn may find that aspects of the partnership's work do not satisfy the criteria for accreditation. In these instances, Estyn will work with the EWC to support the partnership to make improvements.

Identifying and addressing causes for concern

Accreditation, monitoring and inspection all support improvement in ITE. The EWC and Estyn are committed to celebrating and sharing effective practice. However, there may be instances where aspects of a partnership's work are identified as causing concern.

At the monitoring feedback session and during inspection feedback, both organisations will be represented. In this way, the EWC and Estyn will receive first-hand information about accreditation and inspection outcomes and emerging findings.

It should be noted that if any causes for concern are deemed to be non-compliant with the accreditation criteria, that failure to address those matters may potentially lead to the withdrawal of the accredited status of the programmes.

Non-Compliance arising from EWC monitoring

Where a partnership is deemed to be non-compliant with the Accreditation Criteria, then EWC will instigate the "Cause for Concern" process, providing a revised set of conditions and/or recommendations. In these instances, as part of the information sharing processes, the EWC will inform Estyn of the outcomes of that monitoring. EWC will ensure that the Monitoring Committee that will review and reassess the partnership will include representation from Estyn, who will act as observers during any feedback sessions. Estyn may use this process to assess whether re-inspection or enhanced Estyn engagement is required at that stage.

Causes for concern, including non-Compliance arising from Estyn inspection

On every inspection, the inspection team will consider whether the partnership is causing significant concern. This process is outlined in 'How we inspect in initial teacher education'. The partnership will send their post inspection action plan (PIAP) to Estyn within 20 working days of the publication of the report. Following receipt of the PIAP, a small team of inspectors will visit the partnership, in conjunction with representatives from EWC. The PIAP visit will usually be for one day. Inspectors will discuss the plans with the partnership. Together, we will ensure that the plans are robust enough to address the recommendations highlighted in the report as a matter of urgency.

Where Estyn identifies serious shortcomings in their evaluations and deem a partnership to be causing significant concern, there is a high likelihood that the partnership is failing to meet the accreditation Criteria. In these instances, the PIAP that is designed to meet Estyn's requirements, should also address the areas of the criteria that are non-compliant. In conjunction with the findings of Estyn, the EWC will communicate to the partnership, outlining those areas of non-compliance and specifying the conditions/recommendations to address them. Whilst there will be a requirement for a single action plan, Estyn's findings in this

instance will also cause the EWC to instigate separately their Cause for Concern' process. The Monitoring Committee will require evidence of the effectiveness and impact of the actions in addressing the compliance issue(s)/concerns in line with timescales mutually agreed between EWC and the partnership.

The EWC will arrange a return meeting of the Monitoring Committee with the partnership to assess the effectiveness of the measures put in place and determine if the relevant criteria are met. As with non-compliance arising from EWC Monitoring, this will include observation from Estyn during feedback sessions.

A small team of Estyn inspectors will return to the partnership around 12-18 months following the publication of the report to carry out a re-inspection. Re-inspection focuses on the progress that the partnership has made towards meeting the recommendations identified in the inspection report.

With all causes for concern, the EWC and Estyn will work together to carry out monitoring and re-inspection in a way that supports the partnership to make progress. These procedures will be bespoke to the partnership, depending on the nature of the causes for concern / non-compliance.

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How will our organisations share information and minimise burden on partnerships?

- The processes for identifying and addressing aspects of non-compliance are outlined above. Non-compliance is unlikely to be identified in isolation from matters of quality identified by either EWC or Estyn.
- The EWC and Estyn will hold regular strategic meetings to discuss their work in terms of the scheduling of monitoring and inspection planning to support improvement and to minimise unnecessary burden for ITE partnerships
- Formal reports or responses will be shared between the two organisations as a result of:
 - Accreditation/Reaccreditation
 - Conditions Monitoring
 - Major changes activity
 - Monitoring
 - Inspection
 - Cause for Concern process following monitoring
 - Post Inspection Action Plans
- These reports and responses may be used to inform approaches to accreditation, monitoring and inspection, within their given legislative requirements and policy approaches.
- Estyn and the EWC are committed to working together to reduce any unnecessary burden. They will work with ITE partnerships to consider how best to do this. This may include establishing an online repository to upload information that can be accessed by both organisations EWC representatives, including the chair of the ITEAB will be invited to all feedback meetings that take place during an inspection
- Estyn representatives will be invited to all feedback meetings that take place during monitoring visits.
- Estyn will provide a termly update about its work at ITE Accreditation Board meetings. These updates will include an overview of annual report messages and feedback from inspection
- Estyn does not evaluate the work of individual providers during thematic work, therefore the EWC will not receive any formal documentation at partnership level from Estyn following their thematic work. No intelligence gathered by Estyn as a result of the thematic engagement will be considered or used by EWC as part of monitoring or reaccreditation
- Estyn and the EWC will host joint stakeholder events relating to compliance and quality

Appendix 1: our statutory responsibilities

Education Workforce Council

Under the Education Workforce Council (Accreditation of Initial Teacher Training) Additional Functions) Order 2017, we have a statutory responsibility to:

- *accredit programmes of Initial Teacher Education (ITE)*
- *monitor compliance of accredited programmes against Welsh Government criteria*
- *withdraw accreditation of programmes*

The EWC's work ensures that each programme of ITE in Wales complies with accreditation criteria before commencement of the programme and throughout its period of accreditation. This means that there is a secure foundation for programmes, and that they are led, designed, delivered and further developed in accordance with the vision for ITE outlined in The Criteria.

Estyn

Under section 18C of the Education Act 1994 (inserted by paragraph 13 of Schedule 14 to the Education Act 2005), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales may inspect and report on:

- *any initial training of teachers, specialist teaching assistants, for providers; or*
- *any in-service training of such teachers or assistants, which is provided by a training provider in Wales.*

Estyn's inspection work also takes account of legislation governing the inspectorate and educational providers themselves including, for example, the Welsh Language Act.

Inspections take account of the criteria for accreditation because these are the basis for the partnership's work. It is possible, therefore, that Estyn may find that aspects of the partnership's work do not satisfy the criteria for accreditation. In these instances, Estyn will work with the EWC to support the partnership to make improvements.

All Estyn inspections accord with the [principles of inspection and the inspection mindset](#).

Appendix 2: frequently asked questions

Will the EWC and Estyn visit our partnership at the same time?

The EWC and Estyn meet frequently to discuss the scheduling of their activity so as not to place a burden on the partnership. Normally, this will mean that monitoring, accreditation (or re-accreditation) and inspection do not take place in the same year. However, there may be times when it may be appropriate to visit at the same time, and this might even reduce the burden on the partnership. This would be discussed with the partnership in these cases.

Will we lose our accreditation if Estyn or EWC judges the partnership is in need of follow-up or non-compliant?

Matters of non-compliance can be identified in two ways – either through Estyn inspection or through EWC monitoring. Where a partnership is causing significant concern and is judged to be in need of re-inspection, it is also likely not to be meeting accreditation requirements. In this case, re-inspection and EWC's procedures for addressing non-compliance with accreditation criteria will proceed in parallel. Where non-compliance is identified via Estyn inspection, EWC and Estyn will work alongside the partnership to address the non-compliance. Estyn and the EWC will require the partnership to provide an action plan to show how the partnership will address the recommendations of the inspection report, including any aspects of non-compliance. The two organisations will work together to evaluate the progress of the partnership against these aspects for improvement.

Similarly, in the event that non-compliance is demonstrated during monitoring by EWC, the EWC's procedures for addressing non-compliance with accreditation criteria will proceed. EWC will work with Estyn to ensure that both organisations are informed, and that future planning continues to minimise the burden on the partnership.

In either instance, if the partnership fails to make significant progress and compliance is not restored in line with agreed timescales, then the EWC will embark on a process to withdraw accreditation.

What happens if EWC monitoring outcomes and Estyn inspection findings contradict one another?

EWC accreditation and monitoring arrangements and Estyn inspections perform different functions and look at evidence in different ways. The EWC ensures that a programme of ITE complies with the Criteria for Accreditation before commencement and throughout the period of accreditation, and that they are led, designed and delivered in accordance with the vision for ITE outlined in the Criteria. Estyn evaluates the quality of the partnership's work in practice, and the impact of provision and leadership on students' progress and the outcomes they achieve. It is quite possible that that quality of plans, systems and structures may differ from how they are enacted and the impact that they have on students' outcomes. The former may be stronger or weaker than the latter in practice.

Why does Estyn look at compliance with the Criteria? Isn't that the job of the EWC?

Inspections take account of the criteria for accreditation because these are the basis for the partnership's work. The criteria are aligned to the vision for ITE in Wales and it is important that Estyn and the EWC align their work to meet the vision. It is possible that Estyn may find that aspects of the partnership's work do not satisfy the criteria for accreditation. In these instances, Estyn will work with the EWC to support the partnership to make improvements.

Do EWC and/or Estyn use accreditation, monitoring or inspection reports as evidence?

Estyn and the EWC will share information provided by the partnership for inspection or accreditation / monitoring, to both minimise unnecessary burden for the partnerships and to inform and drive improvements within the sector. Representatives from both EWC and Estyn will form part of the feedback sessions for accreditation, monitoring and inspection visits. Both

organisations are also informed of the outcomes of these sessions in line with our information sharing protocols. Information is shared in this way to both help improve the quality of initial teacher education provision and minimise unnecessary burden for partnerships.

If we are found to be non-compliant, will we be able to offer places to students?

The EWC and Estyn will carry out their processes to work with partnerships that are found to be non-compliant. During the period of support, where the partnership is working with the EWC's monitoring arrangements and/or Estyn's procedures for follow-up, it will usually be appropriate for the partnership to offer places to students and to continue to provide programmes. Where the partnership can satisfy the EWC that it can address the aspect of non-compliance successfully, the programme may be offered until the end of the period of accreditation. Where a partnership fails to restore compliance then this matter will be addressed as part of the process of withdrawal.

What happens if the period of accreditation runs out while the partnership is in Estyn follow-up?

A partnership would need to show that it is able to make sufficient progress against the recommendations of its inspection report before applying for re-accreditation. The EWC and Estyn will work together in these circumstances to ensure that no students are disadvantaged. In the event that a programme is deemed to be non-compliant, and a partnership is either (a) not making sufficient progress towards achieving compliance, or (b) is unable to evidence this within timeframes required for the submission of re-accredited status, it is likely that the partnership will be will be able to meet the requirements for accreditation outlined within the Criteria.

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