



The new inspection framework:

New design with altered priorities.

Kerry Boffey



“Providers must look beyond headline changes to grasp the deeper implications of each inspection judgement.”

SESSION OVERVIEW

- Background to the inspection changes

- Grading

- Introducing the new framework

- Early findings from pilots and first inspections



FIN INFLUENCE

FIN is constantly working behind the scenes for members



The big listen



Analysis and feedback



Collaboration and open dialog with Ofsted



5-day notice period for all providers.

Ofsted engagement programme - Webinars

Monday 22 September – 11am – Adult learning programmes

Tuesday 23 September – 10.30 - SEND

Wednesday 24 September – 10am – Apprenticeship providers

Monday 29 September – 1pm – EPYP

(ITE sessions 22/9 and 6/10)



<https://www.youtube.com/user/Ofstednews/videos>

Key documents

Three key documents to be aware of:

FE and Skills
Inspection Toolkit

FE and Skills
operating guide for
inspectors

Inspection
information for FE
and Skills Providers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-toolkit-operating-guide-and-information>





Sir Martyn Oliver

“If you get it right for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, you get it right for everyone.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7c9sAoZRyE>



Fellowship Of Inspection Nominees





JUDGEMENT AREAS & GRADING

...



Grading



Whole provider



- Inclusion is now a 'stand-alone' grade.

Inclusion is woven throughout the new framework.

- Safeguarding
- Leadership and governance

Provision type



- Curriculum, teaching and training learning Text
- Contribution to meeting skills needs
- Achievement



Using the toolkit

Best FIT v Secure FIT



Needs attention	Expected standard	Strong standard

Safeguarding (met/not met)

(Whole provider level)

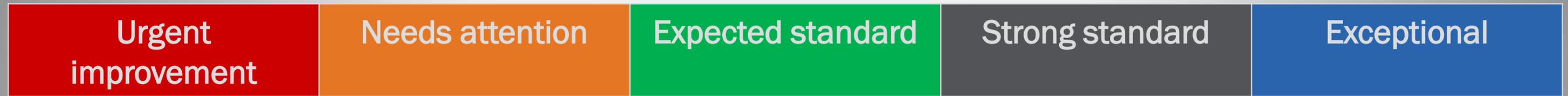


- **Culture of safety:** Safeguarding promotes a culture prioritizing learner safety and wellbeing in educational settings.
- **Policies and responsibilities:** Clear safeguarding policies and staff understanding ensure proper protection measures are in place.
- **Leadership and governance response:** Leadership is crucial in swift, proportionate responses to safeguarding concerns and issues.
- **Recruitment and training:** Consistent safer recruitment and regular safeguarding training embed safeguarding into provider ethos.
- (includes Prevent)

Framework
unwrapped
series

Inclusion

(Whole provider level)



- **Setting high expectations for all learners:** including those learners on FSM, from low-income families, those with SEND, those with EHCPs, care leavers, and those known to the youth justice system.
- **Creating respectful environments:** Providers must create environments where all learners feel respected, valued, and supported to foster inclusion.
- **Supporting diverse needs:** Curriculum and support services reflect learners' diverse needs and backgrounds to promote equity in access and outcomes.
- **Fostering inclusive culture:** Inclusion is about promoting belonging and opportunity beyond compliance through leadership and staff attitudes.

Chief HMCI
priority

Barriers

In Context:

What are the barriers for our learners?

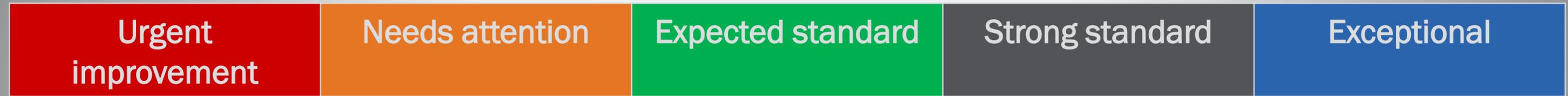
What action is being taken to address barriers?

What is the impact of our actions?



Leadership and governance

(Whole provider level)



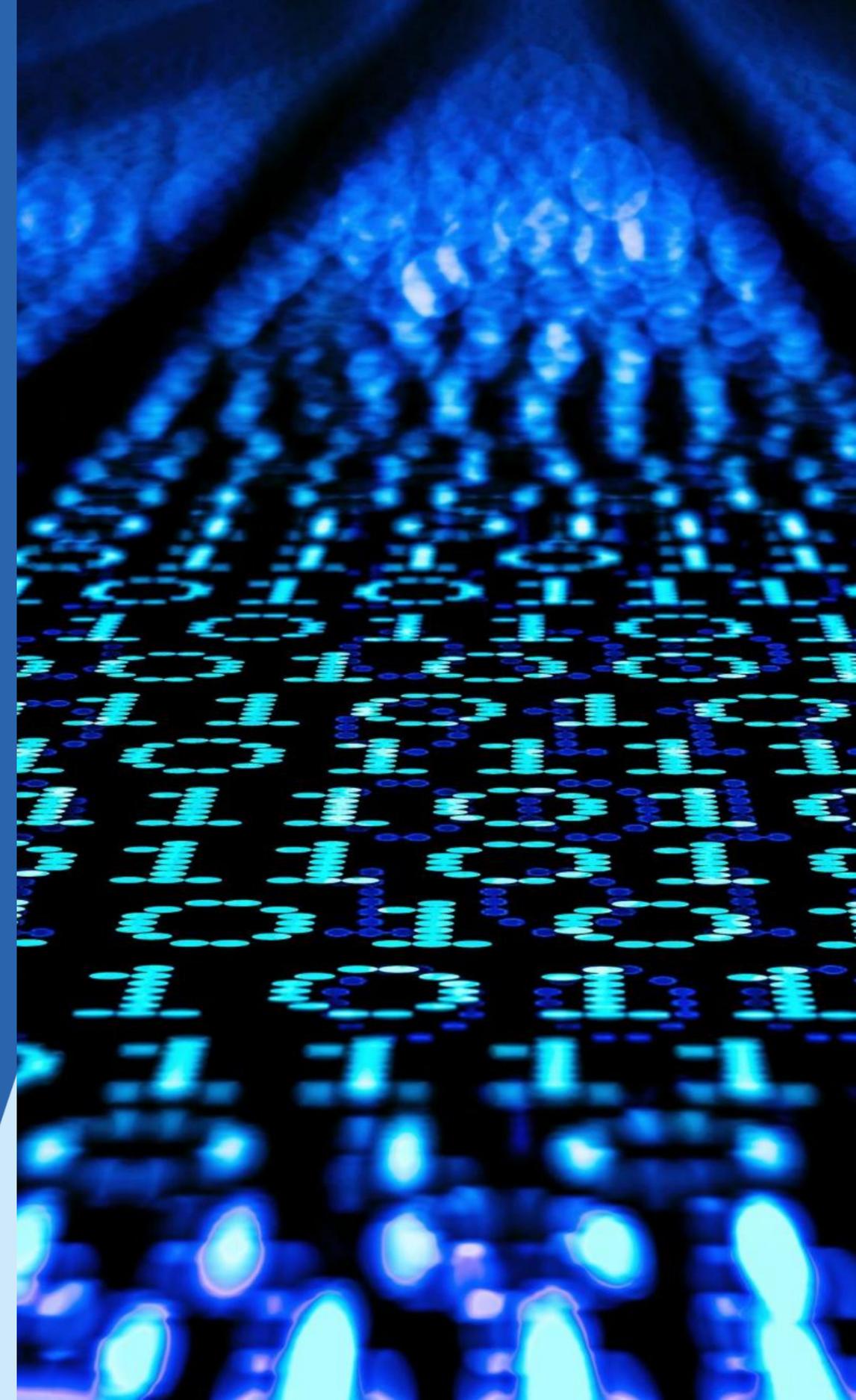
- **Clarity of vision and strategic direction from leaders:** Effective leadership establishes clear priorities and strategic direction, guiding the organisation toward its goals.
- **Inclusive culture:** Ethical decision-making forms the foundation of a positive organisational culture and governance.
- **Continuous improvement:** Using data and quality assurance processes effectively supports continuous improvement, enhancing performance.
- **Care of staff:** Management of staff workload, morale and wellbeing, and effective CPD for staff.
- **Governance oversight, challenge and accountability:** Strong governance structures ensure accountability, supporting performance through oversight mechanisms.



Data

The collection and analysis of data are going to be increasingly critical.

Knowing your numbers, taking appropriate action and evidencing through impact.



Data Quiz

▶ What proportion of your learners do not take up the additional support identified for them at initial assessment?

▶ What proportion of your learners are veterans of the armed forces?

▶ What proportion of your learners live in areas of social deprivation?

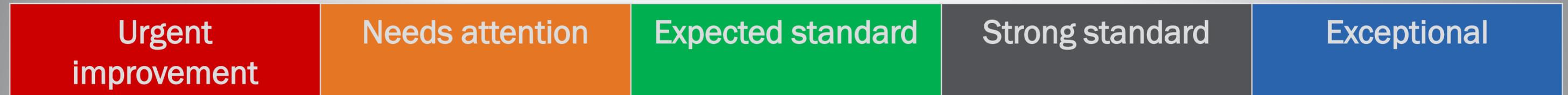
▶ What proportion of your learners are responsible for informal social care (e.g. care for older relatives/siblings)?

▶ What proportion of your learners do not have level 2 English or Maths?

▶ What proportion of your learners received free school meals in the last 7 years?

Curriculum, teaching and training

(Provision level judgements)



- **Curriculum design:** Curriculum should be ambitious, well-sequenced to promote deep understanding and skill development.
- **Effective teaching methods:** Teaching must use effective approaches and industry-relevant resources to engage learners successfully.
- **Assessment and progress tracking:** Assessment practices should inform teaching and monitor learner progress to support success.
- **Staff qualifications and development:** Ongoing professional development ensures staff maintain high teaching standards and expertise.
- **Prepared for the next steps:** Learners should be ready for employment, study, training.

Contribution to meeting skills needs

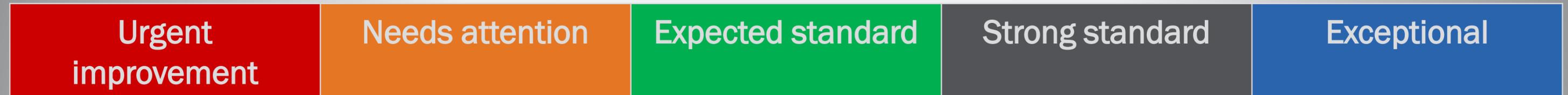
(Whole provider level – GFE, SFC, DIs only)



- **Alignment with skills priorities:** Providers align curriculum and partnerships with local and national skills priorities to meet labour market demands effectively.
- **Employer involvement:** Employers actively participate in curriculum design and delivery to ensure learners gain relevant employment skills.
- **Adaptability to labour market:** Providers demonstrate flexibility to adapt education programs to changing labour market needs and trends.
- **Community and economic impact:** Education providers contribute to economic development by addressing skills gaps and supporting community progress.

Achievement

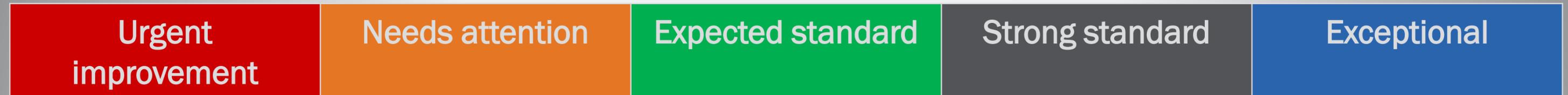
(Provision level judgements)



- **Assessment of learner outcomes:** Achievement is measured by evaluating qualifications attained and personal goals reached by learners from varied starting points.
- **Addressing achievement gaps:** Identifying and narrowing achievement gaps is critical to ensure equitable progress across diverse learner groups.
- **Skill development and progression:** Learners develop transferable and employability skills that support progression to further study, training or work.
- **Sustainability of achievement rates:** reviewed to ensure continuous improvement and sustainability of learner achievements.
- **No one left behind**

Participation and development

(Provision level judgements)



- **Learner engagement and attendance:** Positive attendance and active engagement are key indicators of effective participation in learning.
- **Development of resilience and independence:** building confidence for adulthood and employment.
- **Enrichment and extracurricular opportunities:** Enrichment activities support broader development and understanding of respectful behaviours and British values.
- **Careers guidance:** Timely and effective careers guidance prepares learners for informed, active citizenship beyond academics.

A gift!

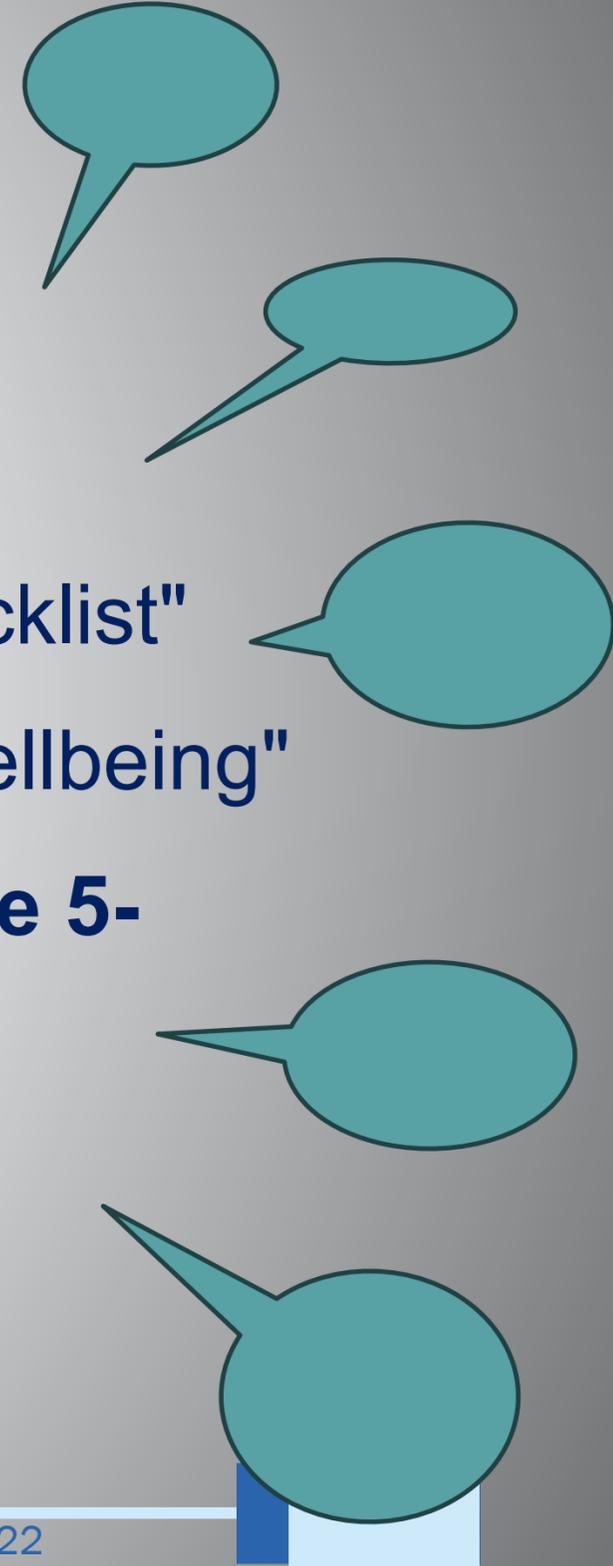


Generally

This word appears throughout the framework and toolkit.

Soundbites from Ofsted webinars

- "Taking context into account" (A new online insights platform)
- "A steady and assured start"
- "*No one left behind*"
- "A 'secure fit' approach – Ofsted are saying the toolkit is not a checklist"
- "Context; collaboration; constructive advice; continued focus on wellbeing"
- **"Leaders and governors should 'calibrate' their thinking on the 5-point scale"**
- "English, mathematics and digital skills remain a core factor of the achievement judgement as well as participation and development"



Week 1

Lessons from the field.....



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1. Inspection preparation



A100. A pre-inspection readiness check



A101. An overview guide to preparation



A102. Last-minute inspection readiness check



A103. Making the most of your role as nominee



A104. Triangulating evidence



A105. Nominee cross organisation support team



A106. Team inspection preparations



A107. Nominee PowerPoint intro presentation

Sub-folders

1. Inspection preparation
2. Managing data
3. Questions worth asking
4. Quality indicators
5. Quality Assurance
6. SAR and QIP development
7. Governance



ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Quality Review

Taking bookings for Quality Reviews against the new framework.

For a quote and scoping call, contact: info@fin-online.org.uk



Quality Review

About ALIN

The Adult Learning Improvement Network (ALIN) provides professional, up-to-date bespoke consultancy support, specialising in improving the work taking place within post-16 education providers to maximise a high-quality learner experience. Founded in 2003, the ALIN team consists of highly qualified, experienced consultants.

Who will benefit

- Independent learning providers
- GFE colleges, specialist colleges
- Higher education providers
- Employer providers
- Local authorities
- Adult and community learning providers

Our review will explore...

- 1 Achievement and Data management
- 2 Inclusion Strategy
- 3 Quality of Teaching and Curriculum
- 4 Leadership, Governance and Safeguarding
- 5 Participation and Development

What you can expect

Our highly specialised team will provide you with invaluable assessments of the quality and effectiveness of key aspects of your provision. This will help you to make the best use of your investment in quality improvement activities, support your development of an effective quality improvement plan and prepare you for external audit/inspection.

We provide an impartial, unbiased review of your provision against the EIF finalising with a written summary report highlighting areas of strength and weakness, and practical next steps.

For more information: <https://alin.org.uk/> Info@alin.org.uk

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Autumn 2025

Compliance assurance services



Winter 2026

Webinars



Winter 2026





AND FINALLY...

**Whatever you do, don't do it for inspectors,
do it for the learners!**

