

Learning from the Ofsted Pilots

Rebecca Rhodes, Associate Director, UVAC

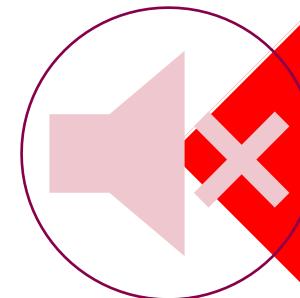
Matt Bungay – Head of Apprenticeships, City St George's University of London

Ilona New – QA Manager, Apprenticeships, City St George's University of London

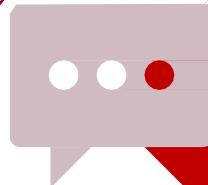
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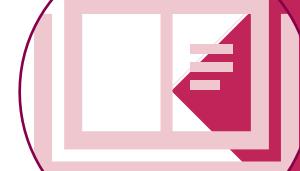
Please do just open your mic to ask a question or make a point



You are on mute at the start but can unmute yourselves at any point



All questions and Chat are seen by the organiser only



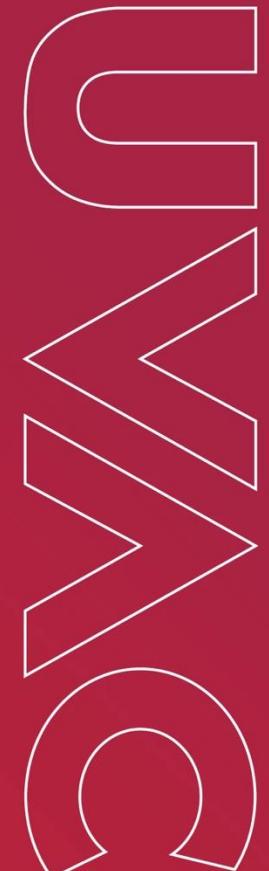
Please stay on at the end for the feedback survey



Select the Hand icon to raise your hand or hover over 'React' for other icons



Resources are available through links in the resources slide



Core Documents – in your Materials section

Guidance

Further education and skills operating guide for inspectors: for use from November 2025

Updated 5 November 2025

Applies to England

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For use on inspections from 10 November 2025.

About this page

This guidance sets out how lead inspectors ('you') and team inspectors should carry out full inspections.

Inspectors should use the guidance in this document and [the toolkit](#), along with their professional curiosity and compassion, to gather evidence to reach fair and accurate grades. They should also draw on their experience and expertise.

Information for inspectors on how to carry out monitoring visits is in our separate operating guide for monitoring visits of FE and skills providers. We will publish this in the autumn 2025.



Ofsted
raising standards
improving lives

Further education and skills inspection toolkit

This toolkit sets out the areas that will be evaluated and graded on inspections of providers of further education and skills under part 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It can also be used by leaders to support self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

Updated: 9 September 2025

Ofsted Operating guide for FE and skills inspections:

- How inspectors carry out full inspections
- what inspectors do during an inspection
- Who inspectors engage with and how
- How inspectors feed back to leaders
- How findings are reported

FE and skills Inspection Toolkit

- The standards inspectors use to evaluate provision
- Guidance on applying them across different provider types,

Core Documentation

FE and skills inspection operating guide

- A step-by-step guide for inspectors on how to inspect an FE and skills provider

FE and skills inspection toolkit

- What inspectors and providers use to discuss the quality of provision on inspection

Information about FE and skills inspections

- For provider staff and leaders, parents and carers and the wider public

FE and skills monitoring operating guide

- Guidance for inspectors on how to monitor FE and skills providers

Case Study – City, St Georges, University of London



The University of
business, practice
and the professions.

citystgeorges.ac.uk

OFSTED Pilot Inspection

**Matt Bungay – Head of
Apprenticeships**

**Ilona New – QA
Manager,
Apprenticeships**



What we will cover

- Who are we and what is our experience?
- What's changed?
- What it felt like in practice.
- What we need to do differently now?
- What did OFSTED do differently?
- Our suggested tips to be ready.

Why This Matters

- Sharper focus on impact
 - Learners and apprentices at the centre
 - Less compliance, more quality
 - Greater consistency in inspector approach
 - Explicit wellbeing and inclusion expectations
 - Less tolerance for weak narratives

Institutional Context

- Wide apprenticeship portfolio
 - Central Apprenticeship Hub model
 - Complex employer and learner base
 - Planning document (presentation) to give this oversight
 - 3 planning calls before the inspection, with the Lead Inspector

Receiving the Call

- Immediate focus on quality and safeguarding
 - Leadership availability
 - Tone-setting conversation
 - Safeguarding culture tested early
 - Leadership visibility expected from day one
 - Availability and responsiveness scrutinised

Planning Sessions

- Structured and purposeful (replaced KIT meetings, and add to morning meetings)
 - Inspectors already informed
 - Professional dialogue focus
 - Lines of enquiry shaped collaboratively
 - Evidence expectations clarified early
 - Inspection plan remains flexible

Data Requested

- Progress and achievement
 - EPA readiness
 - Withdrawals and support needs
 - Data interpreted, not just presented
 - Inspectors probe anomalies and trends
 - Narrative must accompany numbers

Data During Inspection – Learning Walks (no more deep dives)

“Inclusion is the most tested of the inspection criteria”

- Live case examples
- Responsive data requests
- Triangulation with conversations with Assessors/Coaches and with Employers and Apprentices

Inclusion is key: Not just for the inspection criterion but for all criteria

Employers & Apprentices

- Achieve – progress and outcomes
- Belong – inclusion and support
- Thrive – wellbeing and safety
- Consistency across apprentice voices matters
- Employers expected to articulate impact
- Learning relevance tested strongly

Curriculum & other University Staff

- Clear curriculum intent and sequencing
- Shared ownership beyond the Hub (for CSG)
- Designed with Employer collaboration
- Support services in scope (Academic support, SEND, Wellbeing support services)

Inspection Experience

- Professional and focused
 - Evidence-led
 - Not adversarial
 - Happy to be challenged with tangible evidence-based process
 - Toolkit referenced and always open; with clear explanation to indicative grades
- Provided gaps in the toolkit that indicated what they needed to see, to achieve the expected standard and above

Judgement & Reporting

- Starting from expected standard
 - Evidence-driven outcomes
 - Clearer narrative
 - Evidence weighted over process
 - Consistency is key
 - Findings linked directly to learner experience

Key Advice

- Know your Apprentices, Employers and staff
 - Explain why, not just what
 - Use data confidently
 - Have evidence and examples (lots of them)
 - You know your provision; the inspectors are testing how well. Use examples they would not expect

What to Get Ready Now

- Clear narratives
 - Live data confidence
 - Apprentice voice
 - Employer voice
 - A well informed and transparent SAR
 - A live QIP with strategic relevance to the provision

Ofsted Readiness Checklist



▪ **ACHIEVE – Quality & Impact**

- Clear curriculum intent, sequencing and assessment logic
- Live understanding of progress, achievement and EPA readiness
- Evidence of impact on learner confidence and capability



▪ **BELONG – Inclusion & Experience**

- Apprentices can confidently explain their learning journey
- Support needs identified, reviewed and reduced appropriately
- Consistent and positive employer feedback



▪ **THRIVE – Safeguarding & Wellbeing**

- Safeguarding culture understood by all staff
- Clear escalation routes and learner confidence to raise concerns
- Staff wellbeing and professional dialogue evident



▪ **LEADERSHIP & PREPAREDNESS**

- Clear shared narrative across teams
- Confidence using live data, not just reports
- Calm, honest engagement throughout inspection
- Checklist designed for self-assessment
- Supports calm inspection culture
- Usable across academic and professional teams

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Resources & Next Steps

UVAC

Next STEPS



Webcast Link [HERE](#)

Ofsted Differences and Implications

Session Webcast [HERE](#)



Slides and Resources [HERE](#)

Ofsted FAQ published here monthly



Queries and Questions for Ofsted to:

R.Rhodes@bolton.ac.uk



Next Webinars April and July



Future UVAC Ofsted Sessions & Support

January

- FAQs with Ofsted response – updated at least monthly
- Preparation Checklist
- Send questions to R.rhodes@bolton.ac.uk

April

- Lessons Learned Webinar
- Review of Ofsted Report Themes
- Tools available in the UVAC Black Box

July

- Inspection Round up Review Webinar with Ofsted
- Tools available in the UVAC Black Box

Useful Resources & Links

- [Ofsted Education - FE& Skills Blog](#)
- [Ofsted FE & Skills FAQ](#)
- [Ofsted New framework overview for FE and Skills](#)
- [Ofsted 'Renewed Approach' to Inspection](#)
- [Ofsted 2 minute overview of the new report card](#)
- [Find an Ofsted Inspection Report](#)
- [FE Inspectors Pen Portraits](#)
- [2025 FE & Skills Inspections & Outcomes as at 31 August 2025](#)



Thank You

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