A photograph of students in a classroom. In the foreground, a young man with curly brown hair is looking down, focused on his work. He is wearing a white jacket with green stripes on the sleeves. To his left, a young woman with long dark hair is also looking down, holding a blue pen. The background is softly blurred, showing other students and a bright, well-lit room.

HIGH QUALITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES YOU CAN TRUST

# ACCREDITATION UK HANDBOOK 2016 AND 2017

## How to use this handbook

This handbook is valid for inspections taking place in 2016 and 2017. Please contact the Accreditation Unit concerning inspections after 31 December 2017.

Any amendments to the terms and procedures set out in this handbook necessitated by, for example, change in legislation, before 31 December 2017 will be notified to all accredited providers and clearly posted on the website [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation)

There are two sections in the handbook.

### Introductory section

This part is designed to meet the needs of different readers.

Since the handbook is primarily a reference document, the introductory section is relatively brief. Cross-referencing to the main section and the website means that you can easily find and follow up information of specific interest or relevance.

**Overview** provides a general background to the Scheme for readers interested in finding out what the Scheme is and how it works.

**Becoming accredited** is for providers that are considering joining the Scheme, and want more information about the responsibilities, the costs, and the procedures involved.

**For accredited providers** is for already accredited providers, and sets out their ongoing responsibilities.

### Main section

This contains details about specific aspects of the Scheme, with further detail available on the website. There are four sub-sections:

- 1 Eligibility and application
- 2 Inspections
- 3 Accreditation
- 4 Help

### Other formats

As well as this print version, the handbook is also available on the website at [www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/accreditation\\_uk\\_handbook\\_2016-17.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/accreditation_uk_handbook_2016-17.pdf)

The website also contains electronic versions of the full range of forms required as part of the application and inspection process, along with supporting advice.

We would be grateful for your help in making this handbook as useful as possible, so please feel free to send us feedback.

**Please note:** for the purposes of the Scheme, 'the United Kingdom' shall mean the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

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## Overview

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### What is Accreditation UK?

Accreditation UK is a specialist voluntary quality assurance scheme for providers of English language teaching (ELT) services in the UK. The Scheme is open to language schools, home tuition providers, further education and higher education institutions, international study centres and independent schools.

The Scheme operates as a partnership between the British Council and English UK.

The Scheme was established in its present form in 1996 with the coming together of separate quality assurance schemes for private and state sector providers, which had been set up under the auspices of the British Council in the early 1980s.

The aim of the Scheme is to give an assurance of quality to international students who are studying or planning to study English language in the UK. This is achieved by external inspection, ensuring that providers that are accredited through the Scheme meet agreed quality standards.

These standards are agreed through consultation with accredited providers and the professional association English UK which represents them. Providers that meet Scheme standards are 'accredited by the British Council' and should advertise themselves as such using the Accreditation Scheme marque:

#### Accredited by the



#### for the teaching of English in the UK

For a full list of accredited providers, see the Scheme website.

British Council accredited providers have a continuing obligation to work to the agreed standards, and make a declaration each year that they are doing so. They are re-inspected every four years, and each year a number of accredited providers, selected at random, undergo an unannounced interim visit.

The costs of administering the Scheme are covered through an annual fee. Individual providers pay for the costs of their inspection.

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation)

[www.englishuk.com](http://www.englishuk.com)

What are the Scheme standards?  
page 5

3.1 Claiming accreditation (for alternative versions and conditions of use)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/centres](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/centres)

3.2 Between inspections

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees)

## What are the purposes of the Scheme?

The purposes of the Accreditation Scheme are to:

- develop, establish and maintain quality standards for English language provision delivered in the UK for international students
- accredit all organisations providing English language courses in the UK which meet the Scheme criteria and standards
- provide an assurance of the quality of English language providers accredited under the Scheme to international students and their advisers.

## What are the Scheme standards?

The Scheme sets overarching standards in five areas of the work of an English language provider.

### Management standard

The management of the provision will operate to the benefit of its students, in accordance with its publicity and in accordance with the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance*.

### Resources and environment standard

The learning resources and environment will support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and will offer an appropriate professional environment for staff.

### Teaching and learning standard

Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements of the Scheme.

### Welfare and student services standard

The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities, will be met; any accommodation provided will be suitable and the management of the accommodation systems will work to the benefit of students.

### Care of under 18s standard

There will be appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.

## What are the benefits of accreditation?

### Benefits to accredited providers

- A visible and explicit commitment to meeting and maintaining quality standards through the use of the 'accredited by the British Council' marque.
- Opportunities for improvement in services through regular inspection and through the sharing of best practice.
- Eligibility to enrol visa students on a short-term study visa, up to six months for under 18s and up to 11 months for students aged 18 and over (English language only), and incidental study up to 30 days for those on a standard visitor visa.
- Promotion in overseas markets by:
  - the extensive network of British Council offices in over 100 countries
  - the work of British Council ELT promotion staff in the UK and overseas
  - inclusion in the Education UK website – the principal international student recruitment portal.

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

2.2 Inspection criteria

2.1 Legal and regulatory compliance

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application)

[www.educationuk.org/english](http://www.educationuk.org/english)

# Overview

- Inclusion in the list of accredited providers on the British Council website and agent resource pack.
- Access to market reports, events and tendering opportunities limited to accredited providers.
- Eligibility for English UK membership.

## Benefits to students

- Students studying with accredited providers are assured of a level of service defined by the section standards of the Scheme. These cover **Management, Resources and environment, Teaching and learning, Welfare and student services** and **Care of under 18s**.
- Students can get redress through an agreed complaints procedure if these standards are not met.
- Alternative courses can be arranged at no additional cost for students affected by the sudden closure of an accredited provider.

## How is accreditation awarded?

Accreditation is awarded on the basis of an inspection. The purpose of the inspection is to verify that the ELT provision is being carried out in accordance with the agreed standards and criteria.

At the end of the inspection, inspectors provide initial oral feedback to the provider. A report is then written, using a pro forma report template.

The report is submitted to, and moderated by, the Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee (ASAC), who recommend to the Executive Board one of the following:

### For new applicants

- accreditation
- withholding of accreditation.

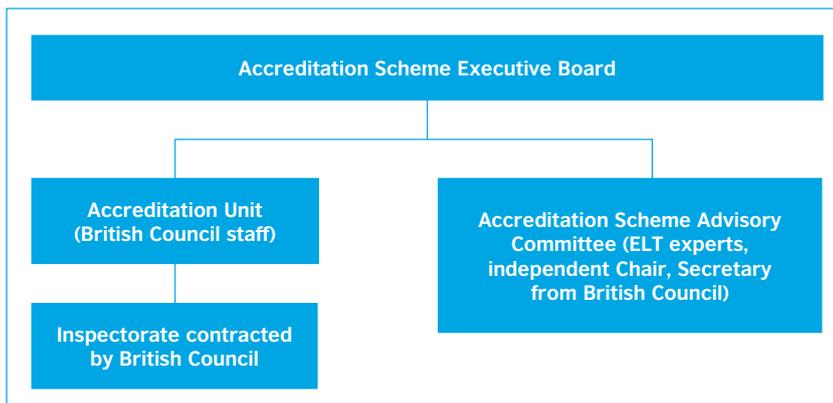
### For already accredited providers

- continued accreditation
- placing accreditation under review pending rectification of particular weaknesses identified in the report
- withdrawal of accreditation.

After the report has been moderated, it is sent to the provider. Reports on accredited providers, including those where accreditation is placed under review, will be published on the British Council website.

Providers may appeal against a refusal to grant or continue accreditation.

## Who's who in the Scheme?



[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/centres](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/centres)

[www.englishuk.com](http://www.englishuk.com)

2.2 Inspection criteria

3.5 Complaints against accredited providers

3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund

2.3 Inspection process

2.2 Inspection criteria

2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

2.5 Follow-up action

3.1 Claiming accreditation

2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures

### Accreditation Scheme Executive Board

The Accreditation Scheme Executive Board (EB) is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Scheme. The Board comprises three British Council and three English UK members. The role of Chair of the Board alternates between the British Council and English UK; Manager Accreditation UK, British Council, is Secretary to the Board. The current members of the EB are listed on the website. The Board will consult with wider stakeholders to contribute to the development of the Scheme.

### Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee

The Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee (ASAC) moderates reports from inspectors, and recommends to the Executive Board that accreditation should be awarded, continued or withdrawn. Members of the ASAC include individuals from accredited ELT providers from both state and private sectors, as well as individual experts in the fields of ELT, student welfare and educational evaluation. The current members of the ASAC are listed on the website.

### British Council

As well as being a partner in the Scheme, the British Council is responsible for the management and administration of the Scheme. This is carried out by the Accreditation Unit in the Manchester office. The British Council logo is incorporated in the Accreditation Scheme marque:

Accredited by the



for the teaching  
of English in the UK

### English UK

English UK is a partner in the Scheme and is the national association of accredited language centres. English UK has 467 member centres (in November 2015) in private schools, educational trusts and charities, further education colleges and universities.

### Accredited providers

Both private and state sector providers of ELT courses in the UK can apply for accreditation. Accredited providers have input to the management and development of the Scheme communicated to the Board through English UK or the Accreditation Unit.

### Inspectors

Inspectors are senior ELT professionals, appointed to the panel of inspectors by the EB and contracted by the British Council.

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

[www.englishuk.com](http://www.englishuk.com)

1.1 Eligibility

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

## Becoming accredited

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### What are your responsibilities?

Accredited providers are expected to:

- operate within the law at all times and in all aspects of business and provision
- operate within the spirit of the Scheme
- maintain a high level of service to international students and their representatives in line with Scheme standards
- contribute to the high reputation of UK English language teaching
- promote and protect the good name of Accreditation UK
- share responsibility for providing alternative English language courses, at no additional cost, to students affected by the sudden closure of a local accredited provider.

Accredited providers are required to act within the law at all times. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, business and financial dealings, safeguarding, health and safety, immigration and any relevant regulatory requirements. Providers are also required to operate with high standards of educational practice. Providers in the private sector will need to demonstrate, on initial application and from time to time thereafter, that any person (owner/proprietor, director/chief executive officer, head of school/principal) with effective or day-to-day control of the organisation in the UK is a 'fit and proper person', as defined by the Accreditation Scheme.

Accredited providers are expected to make every effort to conduct themselves with integrity and to high professional standards, particularly in dealings with the Scheme, the Scheme's representatives, with their staff and students, and with other ELT providers.

To be accredited you must therefore ensure that students using your services receive the level of professional and personal care which they are entitled to expect from an accredited provider. This means that all aspects of your work must be conducted in accordance with Scheme standards and criteria.

You must follow the formal requirements of the Scheme, adhering to the procedures contained in this handbook. You must make the annual returns required by the Scheme, pay the annual fee, and undergo inspection and re-inspection as required.

3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund

2.2 Inspection criteria

2.3 Inspection process

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees)

You must also support the provisions of the Scheme in investigating and dealing with any complaints that may be made about your provision by students or their representatives.

## Who is eligible?

### Eligible providers

ELT providers from both the private and state sector are eligible for accreditation subject to meeting certain criteria. These include the length of time the provider has been operating, and the precise type of work carried out.

### Eligible provision

Only provision taking place in the UK is eligible. This includes all types of ELT provision with the exception of teacher training courses leading to certification.

## What is the accreditation process?

A summary of the process by which eligible providers can become accredited is given on page 11. The following stages are involved:

- information gathering and preparation
- application and scrutiny
- compilation of inspection documentation
- inspection
- results and report
- follow-up.

### Scope of accreditation

Your accreditation must include all the eligible provision that you offer. Accordingly, it must all be included in the accreditation process and in each inspection of your provision.

### Inspection procedures

You will find the requirements in terms of the frequency of inspection, and the procedures for the inspection of different types of provider in [2.3 Inspection process](#).

For information about spot checks, supplementary visits, and interim visits, please see [2.5 Follow-up action](#) and [3.2 Between inspections](#).

## How long does it take?

The process of setting up an inspection begins two to four months in advance, so you must be sure to apply for your inspection by the deadline for the date on which you want the inspection to take place.

Inspections usually last from one to five days, depending on the size of your provision.

At the end of the inspection, the inspectors will tell you the date of the ASAC meeting at which your report will be considered (six to 14 weeks after the inspection). The ASAC meets at least six times per year. You will hear from the Accreditation Unit about the result of your inspection within five days of the ASAC meeting, and will receive your report within six weeks of the meeting.

## How much does it cost?

The basis on which inspection costs are determined and the current cost of accreditation are set out in a *Fees sheet* which is available from the Accreditation Unit and website.

When you apply for accreditation, you will have to pay:

- handbook fee (£10), or download from the website
- administration fee (£200)
- costs of the inspection (usually between £1,500 and £5,000, depending on the length of the inspection).

### 3.5 Complaints against accredited providers

#### 1.1 Eligibility

#### 1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility

#### 1.4 Applying for inspection

#### 4.3 Inspection documentation

#### 2.3 Inspection process

#### 2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

#### 2.5 Follow-up action

#### 1.3 Scope of accreditation

#### 2.3 Inspection process

#### 2.5 Follow-up action

#### 3.2 Between inspections

#### 1.4 Applying for inspection

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees)

[www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/accreditation\\_uk\\_handbook\\_2016-17.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/accreditation_uk_handbook_2016-17.pdf)

## Becoming accredited

On gaining accreditation, you will have to pay:

- annual fee (English UK members will receive a discount). Fees for newly accredited providers are calculated on a pro rata basis for the first year of accreditation
- an annual contribution to the Student Emergency Support Fund (SESF)
- costs of a spot check inspection during the first 18 months of accreditation (approximately £500).

Accredited providers pay an annual fee and SESF contribution together with the costs of re-inspection (every four years) and any spot check or supplementary visit which may be ordered by the ASAC or by the Accreditation Unit.

### How do you make your first application?

You need to complete the *First inspection application* form, and send it to the Accreditation Unit together with supporting documentation and the appropriate fee.

Please see the website for additional advice on making your first application and details of the documentation required.

An administration fee must be paid at the time of the first application.

The full cost of the inspection must be paid before an inspection can be set up.

### How do you prepare for your first inspection?

See **2.3 Inspection process** for an overview of the inspection process in terms of preparation, procedures, and outcomes. Additional advice is available on the website and at pre-inspection briefing events held regularly by the British Council.

It is important that you make sure all your colleagues are told about what will be happening during the inspection, and their own roles.

The inspectors will be looking at your provision in relation to the Scheme standards and criteria. Please make sure that all your colleagues are familiar with these as they relate to their area of work.

### How and when do you get the results of the inspection?

After their visit, the inspectors will write their report within five weeks of the inspection and submit it for consideration at the next meeting of the ASAC.

The ASAC will then make a recommendation to the Executive Board concerning your accreditation. In the case of a provider applying for initial accreditation, the ASAC will recommend either 'accreditation' or 'withholding of accreditation'.

The inspectors will tell you at the time of the inspection when they will be submitting their report and when the ASAC will be considering it. You should receive the result of your inspection within five working days of the ASAC meeting.

If you gain accreditation, you will have a spot check inspection during your first 18 months of accreditation.

It is normally recommended that providers that have failed to gain accreditation wait 12 months before seeking to be re-inspected.

### How do you give feedback, make an appeal or a complaint against the Scheme?

You can give feedback on the inspection process on the *Inspection evaluation* form.

A provider that is refused accreditation has the right to appeal against the decision. No right of appeal exists against other decisions.

3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund

2.5 Follow-up action

2.3 Inspection process

2.5 Follow-up action

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application)

1.4 Applying for inspection

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees)

2.3 Inspection process

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support)

2.2 Inspection criteria

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

2.5 Follow-up action

2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application)

2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures

## A summary of the process

Stage	Activity	Notes	Period
<b>Information gathering and preparation</b> Keep in touch with the Accreditation Unit throughout the process, for clarification and detailed information. Read the additional guidance provided on the website. English UK provides a consultancy service to help those preparing for inspection.	Check out the website. Request a handbook (£10) or download it.	<a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation</a>	Any time. Please note that you will need a current handbook to apply.
	Sign up for a British Council promotional or pre-inspection briefing.	+44 (0)161 957 7097 <a href="mailto:accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org">accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org</a>	Promotional: to find out about the benefits of accreditation. Pre-inspection: in the year before/ of inspection.
	Read the guidance on the website which includes self-evaluation tools.	<a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support</a>	Before you apply and throughout the process.
	Look into benefits of English UK membership.		Any time. You may want to ask about services available to aspiring members.
<b>Application and scrutiny</b> We will advise you not to proceed if there are serious doubts about your provision.	Submit application forms and other documentation for scrutiny. First inspection application form.	<b>1.4 Applying for accreditation</b> <b>4.3 Inspection documentation</b> <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application</a>	By the appropriate deadline for the period you want inspection to take place (approximately two to five months before inspection).
	Pay administration fee.	<i>Fees sheet</i> – <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees</a>	On submission of application.
	Agree length and timing of inspection with Accreditation Unit.	+44 (0)161 957 7097 <a href="mailto:accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org">accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org</a>	The Unit will contact you following scrutiny of your application.
<b>Payment for inspection and compilation of inspection documentation</b>	Pay invoice for inspection.  Compile inspection documents for sending to inspectors and additional documents for reference during the inspection.	<b>4.3 Inspection documentation</b> <i>Fees sheet</i> – <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/fees</a>  <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application</a>	Before inspection is set up.  As early as you can – inspection preparation documents must reach the inspectors at least ten working days before the inspection.
<b>Inspection</b>	During the inspection.	<a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application</a>	On agreed dates (inspection normally lasts one to five days).
<b>Report</b>	Inspectors write report.		Inspectors submit their report within five weeks.
<b>Results and final report</b>	Report considered by the Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee. Recommendation made.	See website for ASAC meeting dates <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance">www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance</a>	The result of inspection is sent out immediately after the ASAC meeting. <b>2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations</b>
	Report sent to provider and published on the British Council website if accreditation has been granted.	Reports are edited by the Accreditation Unit <b>3.1 Claiming accreditation</b>	The final report is sent within six weeks of the ASAC meeting.
<b>Follow-up</b>	Submission of evidence of action regarding points to be addressed.	<b>2.5 Follow-up action</b>	If required by ASAC, by deadline specified in letter.
	Routine spot check for newly accredited providers.	<b>2.5 Follow-up action</b>	Within 18 months of gaining accreditation.
	Submission of <i>Annual declaration</i> form.	<b>3.2 Between inspections</b>	By 15 February each year.
	Submission of <i>Notification of changes</i> form.	<b>3.2 Between inspections</b>	In advance of an anticipated change, or within five working days of change.

## For accredited providers

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### What are your responsibilities?

Accredited providers are expected to:

- operate within the law at all times and in all aspects of business and provision
- operate within the spirit of the Scheme
- maintain a high level of service to international students and their representatives in line with Scheme standards
- contribute to the high reputation of UK English language teaching
- promote and protect the good name of Accreditation UK
- share responsibility for providing alternative English language courses, at no additional cost, to students affected by the sudden closure of a local accredited provider.

Accredited providers are required to act within the law at all times. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, business and financial dealings, safeguarding, health and safety, immigration and any relevant regulatory requirements. Providers are also required to operate with high standards of educational practice. Providers in the private sector will need to demonstrate, on initial application and from time to time thereafter, that any person (owner/proprietor, director/chief executive officer, head of school/principal) with effective or day-to-day control of the organisation in the UK is a 'fit and proper person', as defined by the Accreditation Scheme.

Accredited providers are expected to make every effort to conduct themselves with integrity and to high professional standards, particularly in dealings with the Scheme, the Scheme's representatives, with their staff and students, and with other ELT providers.

As an accredited provider you therefore have a continuing responsibility to ensure that students using your services receive the level of professional and personal care which they are entitled to expect from an accredited provider. This means that all aspects of your work must be conducted in accordance with Scheme standards and criteria.

3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund

2.2 Inspection criteria

You must follow the formal requirements of the Scheme, adhering to the procedures contained in this handbook. You must make the annual returns required by the Scheme, pay the annual fee, and undergo inspection and re-inspection as required.

You must also support the provisions of the Scheme in investigating and dealing with any complaints that may be made about your provision by students or their representatives.

## Can accreditation be withdrawn?

There are a number of grounds on which accreditation may be withdrawn, these are detailed in [3.4 Withdrawal or withholding of accreditation](#).

## How do you show that you are accredited?

You are strongly encouraged to use the Accreditation Scheme marque in your publicity relating to eligible activities (see [Overview](#), page 4).

You may reproduce in your publicity the summary statement issued with your most recent report and publish the full report.

In order to protect the interests of accredited providers, the use of the report and summary statement, the claiming of accreditation, and the use of the marque are subject to conditions. Please help to promote the Scheme by making full and appropriate reference to your status as an accredited provider.

## Can accreditation be extended to new areas?

Accredited providers must inform the Accreditation Unit of any new provision (centres or eligible courses) they intend to run. The Unit, in consultation with the ASAC, will advise on the future inspection of additional provision (specific forms are provided for this purpose).

In some cases accreditation may be extended to include additional provision. However, if you are an accredited year-round provider and you extend your operations to include more than one seasonal centre or any additional year-round centre(s), or if you are an accredited seasonal multicentre provider and you extend your operations to include a year-round provision, then you must seek separate accreditation for the 'extension' provision.

## What do you have to do between inspections?

There are a number of formal requirements between inspections. These include making routine annual returns to the Accreditation Unit, and informing them of any major changes in your provision.

It is also your responsibility to make sure that you apply for re-inspection in time to maintain your accreditation. Inspections normally run on a four-year cycle.

## What is an interim visit?

In order to ensure that standards are maintained between inspections, each year a number of providers, chosen at random, will receive unannounced interim visits. These are carried out at the Scheme's expense.

## When and how do you apply for re-inspection?

You need to start preparing for your re-inspection well in advance.

The deadlines for applying for re-inspection are very important.

You must apply on the prescribed forms and with the prescribed supporting documentation.

### Scope of accreditation

Your accreditation includes all the eligible provision that you offer. Accordingly, it must all be included in the accreditation process and in each inspection of your provision.

Before applying for re-inspection, please review all areas of your current work to identify any changes or developments since the previous inspection. Please check carefully the types of courses you are now offering.

### 2.3 Inspection process

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal/fees)

### 3.5 Complaints against accredited providers

### 3.4 Withdrawal or withholding of accreditation

### 3.1 Claiming accreditation

### 3.2 Between inspections

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)

### 1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility

### 3.3 Extension of accreditation

### 3.2 Between inspections

### 1.4 Applying for inspection

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)

### 3.2 Between inspections

### 1.4 Applying for inspection

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)

### 4.3 Inspection documentation

### 1.1 Eligibility

### 1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility

### 1.3 Scope of accreditation

For accredited providers

## Inspection procedures

You will find the requirements in terms of the frequency of inspection, and the procedures for the inspection of different types of provider, in [2.3 Inspection process](#).

For information about spot checks, supplementary visits, and interim visits, please see [2.5 Follow-up action](#) and [3.2 Between inspections](#).

## How do you prepare for re-inspection?

See [2.3 Inspection process](#) for an overview of the inspection process in terms of preparation, procedures, and outcomes. Additional advice is available on the website and at pre-inspection briefing events held regularly by the British Council.

It is important that you make sure all your colleagues are told about what will be happening during the inspection, and their own roles.

The inspectors will be looking at your provision in relation to the Scheme standards and criteria. Please make sure that all your colleagues are familiar with these as they relate to their area of work.

## How and when do you get the results of the re-inspection?

After their visit, the inspectors will write their report within five weeks of the inspection and submit it for consideration at the next meeting of the ASAC.

The ASAC will then make a recommendation concerning your accreditation. In the case of a provider applying for continuing accreditation, the ASAC will recommend one of the following:

- continued accreditation
- placing accreditation under review
- withdrawing accreditation.

The inspectors will tell you at the time of the inspection when they will be submitting their report and when the ASAC will be considering it. You will receive the result of your inspection within five days of the ASAC meeting, and you will receive your report within six weeks of the meeting, if there are no outstanding invoices relating to the inspection.

## How do you give feedback, make an appeal or a complaint against the Scheme?

You can give feedback on the inspection process, on the *Inspection evaluation* form.

A provider that is refused accreditation or has accreditation placed under review has the right to appeal against the decision. No right of appeal exists against other decisions.

## How much does it cost?

You pay an annual fee and SESF contribution together with the costs of re-inspection (every four years) and any spot check or supplementary visit which may be ordered by the ASAC or the Accreditation Unit. Note that you do not pay the costs of interim visits.

English UK members receive a discount on the annual fee.

[2.3 Inspection process](#)

[2.5 Follow-up action](#)

[3.2 Between inspections](#)

[2.3 Inspection process](#)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support)

[2.2 Inspection criteria](#)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

[2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#)

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)  
[2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures](#)

*Fees sheet* – [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal/fees](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal/fees)

[3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund](#)

[2.3 Inspection process](#)

[2.5 Follow-up action](#)

# 1 Eligibility and application

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## 1.1 Eligibility

Any educational provider offering English language teaching in the United Kingdom is eligible for accreditation provided that the following requirements are met:

- The provider offers any or all of the following provision:
  - English language teaching for adults
  - English language teaching for children
  - English for academic purposes (English language provision preparing students for, or supporting them in, undergraduate and postgraduate study in an English speaking environment.)
  - English for specific purposes, such as:
    - English for executives
    - English for business
    - ESOL for citizenship
  - one-to-one tuition in English language
  - home tuition/English in a teacher's home (provision where the students both live and study in the home of the teacher; teaching takes place in the teacher's home in groups of a maximum of three students)
  - English language components of access and foundation programmes
  - English language plus studies in other areas (**please note:** only the English language component is eligible for accreditation)
  - development for English language teachers (teacher development provision must: include English language improvement as an aim; be primarily targeted at practising or trainee teachers from overseas; not lead to a formal ELT/ TESOL qualification; not be validated by any recognised validating or examining body; not provide, or be promoted as providing, entry into, or professional advantages within, the UK ELT profession).
- The provider has offered this provision in the UK for the required minimum period of time, and can demonstrate continuity:
  - one year for year-round providers (provision is offered for 25 weeks or more per year), or
  - two seasons (minimum two weeks per season) for seasonal providers (provision is offered for fewer than 25 weeks a year); the provider must have been in operation for a minimum of one year  
(If an applicant is in the same ownership as a provider which is already accredited, a shorter qualifying period may be allowed at the discretion of the ASAC).
- Effective control of the provision is exercised by a proprietor or designated manager(s) with clearly defined responsibilities for policy, for day-to-day management and for the quality of work.
- Private sector only: the proprietor has a permanent residence or (in the case of a company) a registered office in the UK.
- The people in effective or day-to-day control of the provision meet the 'fit and proper person' test.
- Appropriate records and registers are kept and such information and returns provided as the British Council may from time to time require. Records for at least 12 months must be available at the time of the inspection.
- English language provision for international students forms a discrete part of the provision and may not be confused by prospective students with any non-accredited ELT/ESOL provision of any kind taking place in any other section(s) of the institution.

**Please note:** for the purposes of the Scheme, 'the United Kingdom' shall mean the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

English language teaching for adults or children may be suitable for students aged 16 and 17. The **Care of under 18s** section will apply.

Where English language teaching forms only a small proportion of the provision, evidence will be required of appropriate quality assurance for the other activities of the institution.

## 1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility

ESOL (Skills for Life) provision may be covered by accreditation if the institution puts it forward for inspection. However, an inspection of a discrete ELT provision for international students need not include an inspection of ESOL work, if ESOL is clearly separate from ELT provision, unless international students are placed in ESOL classes. If only the ELT provision for international students is inspected, then only this can be accredited and the accreditation will be in the name of the centre or department delivering this provision, and not in the name of the overall institution.

### Non-eligible provision

Excluded from the scope of this Scheme are the following:

- any activities taking place outside the UK
- any activities, other than ELT and ancillary services taking place within the UK
- provision which is organised specifically and exclusively for students (such as refugees) where tuition fees are not charged.

## 1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility

### Year-round providers

A year-round provider is defined as one operating for 25 weeks or more a year. A year-round provider may operate a single, separate, seasonal provision within the same accreditation.

### Seasonal providers

A seasonal provider is defined within the Scheme as a provider that operates for fewer than 25 weeks a year.

### Seasonal multicentres

Seasonal providers that operate in two or more locations are seasonal multicentres.

### Home tuition providers

Providers offering English language provision where the students both live and study in the home of the teacher. Teaching takes place in the teacher's home in groups of a maximum of three students.

- Effective control of the provision will be exercised by a proprietor, designated principal or other properly constituted body. This person or body will have clearly defined responsibilities for policy and quality of provision.
- Where effective control of a home tuition provider is in the hands of a body formed of a group of home tuition providers, its membership and constitution must be made available to the British Council when the application for inspection is made.

Certain inspection criteria do not apply to home tuition providers, this is indicated in the criteria; please see pages 31–32 for additional criteria relating to home tuition.

### International study centres

Providers with the specific aim of preparing international students for independent school education by teaching English language and mainstream subjects through the medium of English. Such providers may request additional inspection under the criteria for international study centres (ISC1–14, see pages 32–33).

### In-company provision

Providers offering English language provision delivered in-company, i.e. on the business premises of the client (UK only) rather than in premises leased or owned by the provider, must be declared and may be submitted for inspection. Certain inspection criteria do not apply to in-company provision, this is indicated in the criteria; please see page 33 for additional criteria relating to in-company provision.

## 1.3 Scope of accreditation

Accreditation is awarded to the provider and therefore all eligible provision must be included in the inspection, irrespective of which part of the operation is delivering it. There should be no doubt in the mind of the student when opting for an accredited provider that all the eligible activities offered have been put forward for inspection and are therefore covered by the Scheme.

Where eligible activity is delivered in-company but is not submitted for inspection, the provider must make it clear to potential clients that accreditation does not cover this activity.

Accredited providers have a responsibility to declare all eligible provision. Therefore,

- the initial application for inspection must set out all eligible provision offered to students
- the annual declaration made by all accredited providers must set out all eligible provision offered to students
- the Scheme reserves the right to inspect all such provision.

See **1.1 Eligibility** for information about provision that is eligible for accreditation.

In the state sector, all eligible provision taking place within the institution must be included in the inspection. The Accreditation Unit must be informed before inspection if there is any ELT/ESOL activity located in a separate part of the institution in order to determine whether or not it should be inspected. Provision offered by a separate private enterprise will not be included in the inspection; this must be clear in the promotion.

In the private sector, each legal entity requires separate accreditation.

Inspection of international study centres seeking specific accreditation will include observation of the teaching of subjects other than English, discussion with relevant staff and survey of resources for subject specific courses in addition to the normal inspection of eligible ELT provision.

ELT provision recruited for and taught as ‘closed groups’ will normally be considered eligible, including cases where some of the provision is supplied by a sponsor or other separate body.

If there is doubt about the eligibility of any provision, the following questions will be used to come to an agreed decision:

- Is the aim of the provision language improvement?
- Is the aim of an element of the provision language improvement?
- Are fee-paying students enrolled (even if taught in classes with non-fee-paying students)?
- Is the fact of accreditation being used to attract students?
- Do students, irrespective of whether they have paid or not, enrol believing that the provision is accredited and expecting a level of service associated with an accredited provider?
- Where students are enrolled on an academic course where ELT is a support, not main, subject, is the in-session support structured (rather than ‘drop-in’)?

If the answer to any of the above questions is ‘yes’ then the ELT provision is eligible, even if it is credit bearing, unless it is a discrete and clearly separate provision (see page 16). If the provider objects to an eligible provision being inspected, then a rationale will need to be presented for its exclusion from the range of inspected provision. This should be presented to the Accreditation Unit at the time of the application for inspection. If no rationale is presented at the time of application it is assumed that all eligible provision (regardless of where it takes place and how it is managed) will be included in the inspection.

In cases where there is doubt about the eligibility of provision, the provider should write to Manager, Accreditation UK, who may refer the matter to the ASAC.

## 1.4 Applying for inspection

### First inspection

Having read and accepted the terms of the Accreditation UK Handbook, the provider decides on a preferred inspection date and submits an inspection application by the appropriate deadline:

Preferred inspection date	Deadline
January/February/March 2016	6 November 2015
April/May/June 2016	8 January 2016
July/August 2016	4 March 2016
September/October 2016	3 June 2016
November/December 2016	29 July 2016
January/February/March 2017	28 October 2016
April/May/June 2017	6 January 2017
July/August 2017	3 March 2017
September/October 2017	2 June 2017
November/December 2017	28 July 2017

For example: if you would like your inspection to take place between 2 and 6 May 2016, your application will need to be with the Accreditation Unit by 8 January 2016.

Accurate staff numbers may not be available in March for inspections during the summer months. However, please submit approximate staff numbers as these will determine the length of the inspection.

### Inspection application

The inspection application comprises:

- *First inspection application* form (three copies). (**please note:** there are different versions of this form for the private and state sectors)
- evidence of qualifications held by the academic manager/management team
- three copies of all ELT publicity materials
- the administration fee, which is non-returnable (cheque made payable to British Council)
- evidence of ownership (and changes)
- *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form
- *Fit and proper person test and declaration* form (private sector only)
- documentation supporting declaration (see [4.3 Inspection documentation](#)).

All the required forms can be downloaded from the website [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application)

Applications will not be processed if application documentation is incomplete.

The address of the Accreditation Unit is:

Accreditation Unit  
British Council  
Bridgewater House  
58 Whitworth Street  
Manchester M1 6BB

The Unit will not be able to confirm your inspection date until at least six weeks after the deadline. However, you will receive confirmation that your application has been received.

The application is scrutinised by the Accreditation Unit, which will decide on provisional eligibility; in cases of doubtful or contested eligibility, the decision may be referred to the ASAC.

In the private sector, the scrutiny process will include credit checks. The Scheme reserves the right to refuse an application if the checks indicate that the financial standing of the provider presents a financial or reputational risk to the Scheme.

If the application proceeds, an inspection is arranged as soon as convenient and appropriate. The final decision as to the date of the inspection rests with the Accreditation Unit.

Private sector providers will be invoiced for the full cost of inspection in advance of the inspection taking place. See *Fees sheet*. This invoice must be settled before an inspection can be set up.

## 1.5 Data protection

### Re-inspection of an accredited provider

An accredited provider wishing to continue accreditation will normally be required to undergo full re-inspection every four years.

The maximum period between inspections will be from the date of the inspection to 31 December in the fourth year following the inspection. For example, a provider inspected in June 2012 will be due for inspection before 31 December 2016.

The maximum period of accreditation will be from the date of inspection to 31 March in the fifth year following inspection. For example, for a provider inspected in June 2012, the period of accreditation will normally be from the date of inspection to 31 March 2017. Please note, however, that for accreditation to be retained beyond 31 December 2016, the provision must be re-inspected before 31 December 2016.

The Accreditation Unit will circulate instructions for application by the end of October for inspections to take place after 1 January the following year. The Accreditation Unit will use the history of inspection and the information provided on the most recent *Annual declaration* to identify an appropriate month for inspection. The provider will then be invited to indicate any preference for the timing of the inspection within that month by submitting an inspection application comprising:

- *Re-inspection application form* (three copies)  
(**please note:** there are different versions of this form for the private and state sectors)
- *Fit and proper person test and declaration form* (where required)
- three copies of all ELT publicity materials.

Where changes to the provision mean that the month of inspection proposed by the Accreditation Unit is unsuitable, the provider must contact the Unit immediately, suggesting an alternative month for inspection and explaining why the change is necessary. Alternative arrangements may then be made.

An inspection will be arranged only if the Accreditation Unit has received a completed *Re-inspection application form* by the deadline given. It is the responsibility of the accredited provider to submit its documentation and application in time. Failure to submit the application for re-inspection in time for the inspection to take place may be grounds for withdrawal of accreditation.

### Re-inspection of an unaccredited provider

Where a provider wishes to re-submit itself for inspection after accreditation has been withdrawn or withheld, that inspection will normally take place no sooner than 12 months after the original inspection, unless a supplementary inspection has been recommended. See [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#).

Where a full re-inspection is required, the application process is the same as for a first inspection.

Where a supplementary inspection has been recommended, an application for re-inspection must be made no later than 11 months after the full inspection. This application comprises:

- *Supplementary inspection application form* (three copies)
- *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance form*
- *Fit and proper person test and declaration form* (where required)
- three copies of all ELT publicity materials
- an action plan indicating the action taken to rectify weaknesses identified in the report.

The Accreditation Unit will advise on the process to be followed and documentation submitted.

## 1.5 Data protection

The British Council Accreditation Unit will use the information provided in application forms and annual declarations to administer the accreditation scheme, contact providers with relevant information about Accreditation UK and list accredited providers on the website and agent resource pack.

We may also pass information on to English UK (our partners in the Scheme), the Home Office and Home Office approved accrediting bodies.

As a public authority the British Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act; we will normally consult the provider in the event of a request for information about their provision or inspection under the Freedom of Information Act.

## 2 Inspections

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### 2.1 Legal and regulatory compliance

The law of the land is obviously superior to the requirements of Accreditation UK and accreditation does not remove the obligation of providers to comply with relevant statutory or other legal requirements.

The Scheme requires accredited providers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

- Providers must take steps to ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, all existing and new legal requirements.
- On initial application and annual renewal of accreditation, providers are required to confirm that they are complying with all applicable laws and regulations (*Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form).
- A *Fit and proper person test and declaration* is to be submitted by private sector providers on initial application and applications for re-inspection. A confirmation of continued compliance with this is included in the requirements for annual renewal.
- Inspectors will check a random sample of items during inspection, in relation to criterion M1; if they find evidence of a breach of statutory or other legal requirements, the provider will be required to submit evidence of compliance confirmed by the appropriate regulatory body.
- Any breach of the law or regulations will be viewed seriously by the Scheme and may result in the withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.
- Any sustained breach of the law or regulations which an accredited provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy will result in accreditation being withdrawn.

Providers should read the following guidance notes before completing the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form which is available at [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)

#### Guidance notes

**Please note:** The following list is **not** exhaustive and is intended for guidance only. This is not a comprehensive statement or summary of relevant law but indicates the main areas of law relevant to the ELT sector and gives website addresses for the various regulatory bodies or sources of further information. More detail is given in areas which directly affect student welfare. We advise you to obtain legal advice about any issue which may have a legal dimension.

There may be some differences in statutory and other legal requirements in different countries within the United Kingdom. Providers in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are advised to check the responsibilities and powers of the devolved administration in the relevant country; the following websites may be of help:

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)  
[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)  
[www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk)

#### Practical advice for business

**Business support:** [www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline](http://www.gov.uk/business-support-helpline)

Provides useful information on starting or running a business.

**Licence finder:** [www.gov.uk/licence-finder](http://www.gov.uk/licence-finder)

Allows you to make a customised search to identify regulations, licences and permits relevant to your business and location.

## 2.1 Legal and regulatory compliance

We cannot accept any liability for the accuracy or completeness of the list which follows.

### Use of premises

**The Planning Portal:** [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

- You may be required to obtain planning consents of various kinds before you begin to operate or if you plan any change in the nature or size of your existing operation.
- The type and number of permissions will vary according to the location and type of your premises and the size and nature of your provision.

### Health and safety

**Health and Safety Executive:** [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

**HSE publications (many online):** [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)

**Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents:** [www.rosipa.co.uk](http://www.rosipa.co.uk)

**Fire Protection Association:** [www.thefpa.co.uk](http://www.thefpa.co.uk)

**Fire safety for accommodation:** [www.gov.uk/government/publications/do-you-have-paying-guests](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/do-you-have-paying-guests)

- Employers must display the HSE notice 'Health and Safety Law' or provide each worker with a copy of the equivalent pocket card.
- Where appropriate, providers should be registered with the Health and Safety Inspectorate and the local Environmental Health Department.
- Generally employers have a duty to assess all types of risk in the workplace, and take reasonable steps to minimise risks of injury or harm to anyone using their premises. This includes:
  - identifying and removing fire hazards, ensuring fire alarms and equipment are fully operational, and that those using the premises are familiar with emergency procedures
  - stating health and safety policy and assigning clear roles for carrying out the policy
  - providing a safe, comfortable and healthy working environment, including lighting, toilets, washing facilities and drinking water, with an ergonomic workspace and eye tests for those using computers
  - ensuring food handlers are trained, that food storage and preparation areas are clean and free from pests/vermin, and that waste is hygienically disposed of
  - ensuring first aid needs are assessed and met, and that there is an accident record for any accident leading to absence from work of three or more days, any notifiable work-related disease or dangerous occurrence
  - ensuring that regulations on private transport (minibuses) for students are observed.
- Employers must hold suitable insurance to cover injuries to employees arising in the course of their employment, and public liability insurance to cover injury to others while on their premises.
- Providers of accommodation are responsible for keeping the property safe and in good repair; they must comply with the law on fire safety, carry out a risk assessment and arrange for regular gas safety checks.

### Equal opportunity

[www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance)  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

- It is unlawful to discriminate against an actual or potential employee or service user because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

### Child protection

**British Council:**

[www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/care-children](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/care-children)

**Information on criminal records checks:**

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)  
[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)  
[www.dojni.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.dojni.gov.uk/accessni)

- Organisations working with children must comply with the provisions of the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, as well as the Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Employers must not knowingly employ in regulated activity, or use as a volunteer, a barred person; and must refer to the relevant safeguarding body any case where they dismiss or cease using a person in regulated activity because they think the person harmed or posed a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults. Persons barred from regulated activity must not work or seek to work in regulated activity from which they are barred.
- The local social or children's services must be informed about all private fostering situations, i.e. when a child or young person under 16 years old (or 18 if they have a disability) is looked after for 28 days or more by someone who is not a close relative, guardian or person with parental responsibility.

### Employment

**ACAS:** [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

**Employing people – GOV.UK:**

[www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people](http://www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people)

- Staff contracts must specify terms and conditions of employment, including pay, holiday and pension entitlements, sickness arrangements, hours of work, and disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Most workers in the UK have a legal right to the National Minimum Wage.
- Proper arrangements must be made for deduction of income tax and National Insurance contributions.

### Data protection

**Information Commissioner's Office:** [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

- Staff, student and host records should be maintained and divulged to third parties only within the provisions of the Data Protection Act.
- Normally the consent of the data subject to expected forms of data disclosure (for example to inspectors) should be obtained at the time of data collection.

### Supply of goods and services, and advertising

**Advertising Standards Authority:** [www.asa.org.uk](http://www.asa.org.uk)

- Consumer protection and trade description legislation governs the provision of goods or services, including provisions for the protection of consumers.
- Providers are required to deliver the service specified in the contract on time.
- Terms and conditions of the contract must be fair and reasonable and not force the buyer to give up rights, for instance in the case of cancellation.
- Where the contract is electronic (enrolment through website, for example) full and clear information must be provided to the buyer and the buyer is entitled to a 'cooling-off period' of 14 days with a right to free cancellation.

### Copyright

- Providers must either hold a current licence from the **Copyright Licensing Agency** or ensure that no material protected by copyright is reproduced. [www.cla.co.uk](http://www.cla.co.uk)
- Providers must either hold a current licence from the **Newspaper Licensing Agency** or ensure that no material protected by copyright is reproduced. [www.nlamediaaccess.com](http://www.nlamediaaccess.com)
- Providers must either hold a current licence from the **Educational Recording Agency** or ensure that no material protected by copyright is used. [www.era.org.uk](http://www.era.org.uk)
- Providers may require a licence for use of films or other audiovisual works; the **Motion Picture Licensing Company** offers an umbrella licence. [www.themplc.co.uk](http://www.themplc.co.uk)

### Immigration/Home Office regulations

**UK Visas and Immigration:** [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration)

**British Council site with information for international students:** [www.educationuk.org/global/sub/visas](http://www.educationuk.org/global/sub/visas)

- Providers must verify prior to enrolment that prospective students have the right to study in the UK.
- To enrol students from outside the EEA on courses lasting more than 11 months, providers must sponsor those students under Tier 4 of the points-based system. To do this, providers must obtain a sponsor licence and comply with sponsorship duties.
- Accredited providers can enrol visa students on a short-term study visa, up to six months for under 18s and up to 11 months for students aged 18 and over (English language only), and incidental study up to 30 days for those on a standard visitor visa.
- Employers must check that a job applicant is allowed to work in the UK before employing them.

### Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-immigration-services-commissioner](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-immigration-services-commissioner)

- Individual student counselling on immigration matters, including applications for extension of leave to remain, must not be given unless the member of staff responsible is registered with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner.

### Companies Act 2006

**Companies House:** [www.companieshouse.gov.uk](http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk)

- Certain details, such as VAT numbers and registered addresses, must be included on invoices and letterheads.

### Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

#### The Education and Training Foundation:

[www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk](http://www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk)

**Training modules:** [www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/prevent-online-training-modules](http://www.preventforfeandtraining.org.uk/prevent-online-training-modules)

- Education providers have responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent people of all ages being radicalised or drawn into terrorism (Prevent duty).

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Notes:

Where providers teach other subjects in addition to ELT, the inspection criteria relate to the management, staff, facilities and resources relevant to the experience of any ELT students.

Some criteria are not applicable to certain types of provider, this is indicated as follows:

- criteria marked H do not apply to home tuition providers
- criteria marked N do not apply to first-time new applicants
- criteria marked I do not apply to in-company provision.

Additional criteria apply to the inspection of home tuition (HT) providers, international study centres (ISC) and in-company provision; these are listed after the main criteria.

Evidence will be sought from inspection application forms, interviews with staff and students, on-site and off-site checks, classroom observation, and the documentation listed in the column beside the criteria as appropriate.

The documents are listed next to the sub-section to which they refer and may apply to one or more criteria in the sub-section.

Please note that where 'any' is used, this means if available/applicable to the provider being inspected.

*The inspection criteria follow on pages 22–33.*

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Management

#### Standard

The management of the provision will operate to the benefit of its students, in accordance with its publicity and in accordance with the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form.

#### Legal and statutory regulations

M1 Providers will operate at all times in accordance with the declaration made in the *Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form and will satisfy the *Fit and proper person test and declaration*.

**Please note:** Inspectors may spot check elements of the legal and regulatory declaration, as well as awareness of and attention paid to compliance (see page 19).

#### Staff management

M2 There will be a documented and clearly understood structure of management and administration for the ELT operation, and arrangements to ensure its continuity at all times.

M3 The duties of all staff working with ELT students will be specified.

M4 There will be effective channels of communication between all involved in the ELT operation (including homestay hosts and group leaders), and between the ELT operation and any wider organisation of which it is a part.

M5 In addition to complying with the statutory requirements, the provider will have and implement appropriate human resources policies for all staff.

M6 Employers will take all reasonable steps to investigate and verify the qualifications and experience of all prospective employees.

M7 The provider will have and implement appropriate induction procedures for all staff.

M8 There will be clear procedures for monitoring and appraising all staff, and for handling unsatisfactory performance.

M9 There will be a formalised policy and procedures to ensure the continuing professional development of all staff in order to meet the needs of the individual, the students and the organisation.

#### Student administration

M10 Staff will be helpful and courteous to students and their representatives, and there will be sufficient administrative staff and resources to handle the volume of work efficiently.

M11 Students will receive sufficient information and advice on their course choices before arrival and during their stay.

M12 Enrolment, cancellation and refund procedures, will be carried out efficiently, fairly, and with appropriate sensitivity.

M13 There will be effective systems to maintain up-to-date records of local contact details for students, and of their next of kin or other designated emergency contact. These will be accessible at all times to the person(s) within the ELT organisation responsible for responding to emergencies.

M14 There will be a clear and effective policy on student attendance and punctuality that will be known and applied to all students; accurate records will be kept and effective arrangements made for following up student absences.

M15 All staff and students will be made aware of conditions and procedures under which a student may be asked to leave the course.

#### Quality assurance

M16<sup>N</sup> An appropriate action plan (template available on website), based on the Points to be addressed of the previous inspection report, will be submitted in preparation for the next inspection or earlier as required by the ASAC. This plan will include a timeframe and will form part of the next inspection. There will be a satisfactory explanation for points not addressed.

Numbers in brackets refer to the numbers used in [4.3 Inspection documentation](#)

*Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form

*Fit and proper person test and declaration* form

*People to be seen* form (1)

list of staff (2)

organogram (3)

job descriptions (4)

statement describing recruitment policy (5)

statement describing induction procedures (6)

statement describing staff appraisal process (7)

policy documents and list of CPD (8)

staff handbook(s) (27)

minutes of meetings (32)

information sent to prospective employees (33)

Signed staff contracts (34)

appraisal/monitoring documents and records (35)

list of staff (2)

statement describing policy on student absences (9)

publicity materials (30, 31)

completed enrolment documentation (36)

records of student contact details (37)

registers/attendance records (38)

record of follow-up action (39)

summary of action taken (10)

self-evaluation/inspection/audit reports (40)

completed student feedback forms and record of action (41)

(continued)

- M17 Providers will review systems, processes and practices with a view to continuing improvement. Appropriate action will be taken and recorded.
- M18<sup>H</sup> The provider will regularly obtain and record feedback from students on all the services offered. This will include initial and end-of-course feedback. Feedback will be circulated to relevant staff and appropriate action will be taken and recorded.
- M19 The provider will regularly seek and record feedback from all staff on the services offered. Appropriate action will be taken and recorded.
- M20<sup>H</sup> All students will be made aware of the organisation's complaints policy, which will be written in clear, accessible English. All complaints and the action taken will be recorded in writing.

### Publicity – information available before enrolment

(Where one medium of publicity is clearly predominant and any other is primarily used to refer prospective students to the main medium, then the secondary medium need not fully meet criteria M23–M27, providing that its contents are accurate and comprehensible.)

- M21 All publicity and information (including social media) about the provider and the services it offers will be in clear and accurate English, accessible to non-native speakers, or in translation.
- M22 Publicity and information about the provider and the services it offers will be accurate and give rise to realistic expectations about the premises, location, and the extent and availability of the services and resources.
- M23 Publicity will give an outline description of each course, including objectives and levels.
- M24 Publicity will give accurate and easy to find information on the courses, including:
- the times of classes, any private study periods and the number of taught hours per week
  - course dates and any non-teaching days within the course
  - the minimum enrolment age and, where courses are for under 18s\*, the maximum enrolment age
  - maximum class size.
- M25 Publicity will include clear, accurate and easy to find information on:
- the cost of tuition
  - the cost of any teaching materials which students are required to buy
  - the cost of any accommodation offered
  - the approximate cost of any leisure programme not included in the course fees
  - the approximate cost of any course related examination fees not included in the course fees
  - the requirements for deposits, payment of fees, and the refund policy, including the arrangements and deadlines for cancellations.
- M26 Publicity will give an accurate description of any accommodation offered:
- the provider will make it clear if accommodation offered is arranged by an agency
  - the types of accommodation offered will be clearly described (please see the note on page 28).
- M27 Publicity will give an accurate description of any leisure programme offered.
- M28 Any description of staff qualifications and experience will be accurate and apply to the full range of staff at any time. Any classes or courses which are used for teacher training purposes (with unqualified teachers) will be so designated, and will be provided free of charge or at substantially reduced cost.

records of staff feedback and any action (42)  
statement of complaints procedure, record of any complaints and action taken (43)  
course reports (54)

statement describing publicity (11)  
map of organisation/centre's location (12)  
*Teacher CV* forms/spreadsheet (14)  
timetables (17, 50, 63)  
description of accommodation (21)  
list of accommodation (22)  
leisure programme (24, 73)  
student handbook (if available pre-enrolment) (29)  
publicity materials (30)  
any document additional to or changing terms specified in publicity (31)  
completed enrolment documentation (36)  
registers/attendance records (38)  
teaching staff records (48)

\* This does not apply to adult courses with a minimum enrolment age of 16.

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

M29 All eligible provision will be declared for inspection as set out in **1.3 Scope of accreditation**. Any claims to accreditation, or registration of accommodation agencies, will be in line with the guidelines set out in **3.1 Claiming accreditation**, and will not be applied to unaccredited or ineligible provision.

### Resources and environment

#### Standard

The learning resources and environment will support and enhance the studies of students enrolled with the provider, and will offer an appropriate professional environment for staff.

#### Premises and facilities

- R1 Premises, including any external areas, will be adequate in size and number to provide a comfortable environment for students and staff.
- R2 Premises, including any external areas, will be in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration.
- R3 Classrooms and other learning areas will be:
- adequate in size and number
  - adequately lit, heated and ventilated
  - free from disruptive extraneous noise
  - furnished for sufficient flexibility of layout
  - arranged so that all students can see, hear and write in comfort.
- R4<sup>I</sup> Students will be provided with adequate room and suitable facilities for relaxation and the consumption of food. A choice of appropriate food at affordable prices will be available to students on site if not available locally.
- R5<sup>HI</sup> There will be adequate signage to buildings, routes, rooms and exits, and facilities for the display of general information.
- R6<sup>HI</sup> There will be sufficient space for all staff, for meetings, relaxation and the storage of personal possessions, and for teachers to carry out their preparation and marking.

#### Learning resources

- R7 Learning materials will be appropriate to the level, length and type of courses offered and sufficient for the number of students enrolled.
- R8 There will be an adequate stock of appropriate, up-to-date materials and resources for teachers, including facilities for the production and reproduction of materials. These resources will be accessible, well maintained and organised.
- R9 Any educational technology inside the classroom and elsewhere, will be well maintained with adequate technical support. Staff will be appropriately trained in using the available technology to support learning.
- R10<sup>I</sup> Any area for quiet study and self-access work will be appropriately equipped and organised.
- R11<sup>I</sup> Students will receive guidance on the use of libraries and self-access centres where these are available.
- R12 There will be a policy for the continuing review and development of teaching and learning resources and evidence of its implementation.

floor and, where relevant, site plan (13)  
completed student feedback forms and record of action (41)  
records of staff feedback and any action (42)  
records of any complaints and action taken (43)

teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (29)  
list of available equipment (44)  
policy statement or records relating to resources (45)  
list of resources (46)  
list of professional publications subscribed to (47)  
list of any examinations (55)

## Teaching and learning

### Standard

Teachers will have appropriate qualifications and will be given sufficient support to ensure that their teaching meets the needs of their students. Programmes of learning will be managed for the benefit of students. The teaching observed will meet the requirements of the Scheme.

### Academic staff profile

T1 All academic staff will have a general level of education normally represented by a Level 6 qualification on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications. Exceptionally, the employment of any academic staff without the appropriate general level of education may be acceptable with the provision of a valid rationale.

T2 All teachers will have ELT/TESOL qualifications appropriate to the courses they are teaching.

For information on qualifications, see [4.2 Academic staff qualifications](#).

The Scheme expects that:

- teachers of courses for students under 18 will hold at least a TEFLI qualification or have appropriate qualified teacher status

- teachers of courses for adults will hold at least a TEFLI qualification

and normally,

- teachers of teacher development courses and EAP courses will hold at least a TEFLQ qualification

- teachers on ESP courses other than EAP will have relevant specialist qualifications or experience at an appropriate level.

T3 There will be a valid rationale for the employment of any teachers without the appropriate ELT/TESOL qualifications.

T4 The academic manager or academic management team will have an appropriate professional profile to provide academic leadership:

- they will be academically and ELT/TESOL qualified as appropriate to the range of courses on offer; at least one person will have, as a minimum, a TEFLQ qualification

- they will all have at least three years' full-time relevant teaching experience.

T5 There will be a valid rationale for the employment of any academic managers without the appropriate qualifications or experience.

### Academic management

T6 Teachers will be matched appropriately to courses.

T7 There will be effective procedures for the appropriate timetabling of students, teachers, courses and classrooms.

T8 There will be formalised arrangements, satisfactory to students and staff, for covering for absent teachers.

T9 Where enrolment is continuous, special attention will be paid to all aspects of academic management affected.

T10 There will be formalised arrangements, led by an academic manager and covering all teaching sites, to ensure appropriate guidance and support for all teachers in line with the organisation's professional development policy.

T11 There will be effective arrangements for the observation and monitoring of teachers' performance by a TEFLQ academic manager/TEFLQ member of the academic management team, including appropriate feedback and action planning to improve and develop teaching. Particular care will be taken to monitor and guide inexperienced teachers, those whose classroom performance exhibits weaknesses and those whose student feedback indicates dissatisfaction with their teaching.

organogram (3)  
 job descriptions (4)  
 statement describing recruitment policy (5)  
*Teacher CV* forms/spreadsheet (14)  
 rationales (15)  
*Qualifications evaluation* forms (16)  
 teaching staff records (48)  
 observation records for teachers with MAs (49)

job descriptions (4)  
 policy documents and list of CPD (8)  
*Teacher CV* forms/spreadsheet (14)  
 timetables (17, 50)  
 teacher handbook (28)  
 appraisal documents/records (35)  
 student feedback (41)  
 staff feedback (42)  
 teaching staff records (48)  
 substitution policy statement, staff absence and substitution records (51)  
 teacher observation records (52)  
 class records (66)  
 handover notes/records (67)

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Course design and implementation

- T12 Course design will be based on stated principles. There will be a coherent and appropriate course structure described in writing for teachers' guidance.
- T13 Course design will be regularly reviewed in light of the different and changing needs of students and feedback from teachers and students.
- T14 Written course outlines and intended learning outcomes, appropriate to the course length and type, will be available to students.
- T15 Courses will include study and learning strategies that support independent learning and will enable students to benefit from their programmes and continue their learning after the course.
- T16 Courses will include strategies which ensure that students can develop their language skills outside the classroom and benefit linguistically from their stay in the UK.

### Learner management

- T17<sup>H</sup> There will be efficient procedures for the correct placement of students, appropriate to their level and age, and assessment of starting level so that progress can be evaluated.
- T18 There will be procedures for monitoring and for recording students' progress, such as tutorials, for providing learning support and enabling students to change courses or classes where necessary.
- T19 Students will be guided to select the examinations and examination training best suited to their needs and interests.
- T20 In the case of examination courses and where there is internal assessment relevant to progression routes, assessment criteria and procedures will be in writing and available to staff and students.
- T21 Academic reports will be made available to students on request and, in the case of under 18s, to their parents/guardians.
- T22 Students wishing to enter mainstream UK education will have access to relevant information and advice.

### Classroom observation

#### Knowledge and planning

- T23 Teachers will demonstrate sound knowledge and awareness of the use of English and the linguistic systems underlying it, and will provide appropriate models of both spoken and written English.
- T24 The content of the lessons will show that the course objectives, the learning needs and cultural backgrounds of the students have been taken into account.
- T25 Lessons will lead to relevant learning outcomes, made known to students and achieved through a coherent sequence of activities.

#### Delivery and review

- T26 Teaching techniques will be appropriate to the focus of the lesson and to the needs of the group and individual learners.
- T27 Teachers will promote learning by the effective management of the classroom environment and resources.
- T28 Students will receive appropriate and timely feedback on their performance during the lesson.
- T29 Lessons will include activities to evaluate whether learning is taking place.
- T30 Teachers will demonstrate the ability to engage students and create a positive learning atmosphere through the effective management of learning activities and interactions, and use of language appropriate to the level of the learners.

syllabuses or related guidelines for course design (18)  
teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (course description) (29)  
minutes of meetings (32)  
schemes of work (53)  
course reports (54)  
course plan (63)  
lesson plans (64)  
class records (66)

staff handbook (27)  
teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (29)  
list of examinations (55)  
examination course documentation (56)  
examination results (57)  
written description of placement procedures and placement tests (58)  
progress, mid-course and exit tests (59)  
tutorial records (60)  
completed academic reports and written description of assessment criteria and procedures (61)

syllabuses or related guidelines for course design (18)  
schemes of work (53)  
class profile (62)  
course plan and day's timetable (63)  
lesson plans, materials and handouts (64)  
examples of students' work/files (65)  
class records (66)  
handover notes/records (67)

## Welfare and student services

### Standard

The needs of students for security, pastoral care, information and leisure activities will be met; any accommodation provided will be suitable; the management of the accommodation systems will work to the benefit of students.

### Care of students

- W1 Provision will be made for the safety and security of students on the provider's premises appropriate to their age, background and the location of the provider.
- W2 Students will be given pastoral care appropriate to their age, background and circumstances (including any additional support needs). Account will be taken of any special needs arising from religious observance.
- W3 A named person or persons will be identified to all staff and students to deal with students' personal problems.
- W4 There will be policies and procedures, known to all students and staff, for dealing with abusive behaviour by staff or students (verbal abuse, harassment, bullying, actual or threatened violence, damage to personal property) or behaviour that may lead to extremist radicalisation.
- W5 Students will be issued with a 24-hour emergency contact number for the provider, in writing, except in the case of organisations enrolling only those students already settled in the local community and with a local support network.
- W6 Information on the most appropriate forms of transport between the point of entry to the UK and the provider or accommodation, and approximate costs, will be available in advance to students. Where transport is offered by the provider, arrangements will be clear, effective and reasonably responsive to unforeseen circumstances.
- W7 As appropriate, students will be given advice on:
- local facilities, services and amenities, including, in the state sector, student union membership
  - registration with the local police
  - banking
  - personal safety and the care of valuables
  - medical and personal insurance
  - local places of worship
  - licensing laws
  - traffic regulations
  - compliance with the law, e.g. in relation to the use of drugs, motoring offences, procedures in case of arrest by the police.
- W8 Students will be informed about their rights regarding medical and dental treatment through the NHS. Longer-term students will be encouraged to register with a local GP. Students will have full access to any medical and welfare services available in the organisation.

This section is normally not applicable where the provider only offers in-company provision.

map of organisation/centre's location (12)  
 risk assessments (19)  
 written policy statement for dealing with abusive behaviour (20)  
 staff handbook (27)  
 student handbook (29)  
 publicity materials (30)  
 any document additional to or changing terms (31)  
 information for group leaders (68)  
 student cards/emergency number (74)  
 school notices (75)

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Accommodation

**Please note:** The type of accommodation should be described in the following terms:

- **Homestay accommodation:** the hosts treat the student as a full member of the household, eating together and sharing the common living areas; no more than four students will be accommodated in homestay accommodation at any one time (homes accommodating more than four students should not be described as homestay accommodation).
- **Other accommodation:** in private homes accommodating more than four students, student houses, residential halls or hostels, catered or self-catering.

The following are not normally suitable for under 18s: private homes accommodating more than four students, residential accommodation where there is no overnight supervision, and self-catering accommodation. Please see the additional criteria for [Care of under 18s](#).

#### All accommodation

- W9 The following will be made available to the student to ensure a comfortable living environment throughout their stay:
- a bedroom and common areas in a proper state of cleanliness and repair
  - adequate heating and lighting
  - a sufficiently spacious bedroom with natural light, equipped with an adequately sized bed and adequate hanging and drawer space for clothes
  - privacy from members of the opposite sex
  - a table for private study (where appropriate)
  - sufficient washing facilities and access to a bathroom, with baths or showers available daily
  - a change of towels and bed linen each week and an adequate supply of duvets or blankets
  - a weekly laundry service (especially in the case of under 16s) or clearly explained laundry arrangements.
- W10<sup>H</sup> All accommodation allocated to students will be inspected (for safety and suitability) by a responsible representative before students are placed.
- W11 All accommodation will be inspected (for safety and suitability) by the provider or their agency at least once every two years.
- W12<sup>H</sup> Accommodation registers will be kept up to date with accurate information, including records of visits, and checks that fire risk assessments and annual Gas Safe certificates are in place.
- W13 Confirmation of accommodation booked for a student will include accurate and sufficient information about the type of accommodation, location, approximate time and cost of travel between the accommodation and teaching premises, services provided and payment arrangements (including cancellation penalties). Where a student is expected to share a bedroom with another student, this will be clearly indicated in the provider's publicity. Conditions and procedures under which accommodation arrangements can be terminated will be included.
- W14 Students will be told who to contact in the case of any problems with their accommodation. At an early stage in their stay, students will be asked by the provider or its accommodation agency if they are satisfied with their accommodation. Problems will be addressed promptly and action taken will be recorded.
- W15 Meals will be provided as agreed and will offer a well-balanced diet, taking into account any reasonable dietary requirements expressed by students.

Where a self-catering option is offered, this will be made clear to students

description of accommodation used (21)  
list of accommodation available (22)  
documents relevant to student accommodation (23)  
staff handbook (27)  
student handbook (29)  
publicity materials (30, 31)  
completed enrolment documentation (36)  
student feedback forms (41)  
records of any complaints (43)  
dated records of accommodation inspections (69)  
accommodation records/rooming lists (70)

### Accommodation: homestay only

- W16 No more than four students will be accommodated in a homestay at any one time.
- W17<sup>H</sup> Hosts will be made aware in writing of the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider with respect to the provision of accommodation services. Booking and cancellation arrangements will be clear.
- W18 No more than two students will be accommodated in the same bedroom unless specifically requested in writing by the students, their agents, parents or legal guardians.
- W19 Students with the same first language will not be lodged in the same home at the same time unless written consent of the students or their agents on behalf of their parents or legal guardians is obtained in advance of arrival.
- W20 English will normally be the language of communication within the homestay home.
- W21 Hosts will ensure that there is an adult available to receive students on first arrival.

### Accommodation: residential

- W22 Adequate provision will be made for cleaning.
- W23 Providers offering residential accommodation will make adequate provision for the care of their students' health.

### Accommodation: other

- W24 Students will be informed of the implications of their living in bed-sits or flats (tenancy agreements, local taxes, possible loss of contact with speakers of English out of classroom hours, cooking, washing, etc.). Advice will be available in case of difficulties.
- W25 Any other accommodation recommended by the provider will be monitored and booking and payment arrangements will be clear.

### Leisure opportunities

- W26 Students will have appropriate information about, and access to, social, cultural and sporting events and activities which enhance their experience of studying in the UK.
- W27 Any leisure programmes will be well organised and sufficiently resourced. Where activities form part of a course package, alternatives will be available for activities cancelled for reasons such as poor weather.
- W28 There will be effective systems in place to ensure the health and safety of students on all on-site and off-site activities, including written risk assessments and clear guidelines on how to respond to situations where students are at risk.
- W29 Any sporting and leisure activities on- or off-site will be under the direction of a nominated, responsible person who has appropriate experience and training.

leisure programmes (24, 73)  
 statement describing policy on supervision ratios and specialist qualifications of staff (25)  
 staff handbook (27)  
 student handbook (29)  
 information for group leaders (68)  
 risk assessments (71)  
 leisure activity information packs (72)  
 student cards/emergency number (74)  
 in-house publicity (75)

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Care of under 18s

(This section is not applicable where the provider never recruits students under the age of 18.)

#### Standard

There will be appropriate provision for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 within the organisation and in any leisure activities or accommodation provided.

- C1 There will be a safeguarding policy which specifies procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all students under the age of 18. A named member of staff will be responsible for implementing this policy and responding to child protection allegations.
- C2 The provider will make the policy known to all adults in contact with under 18s through their role with the organisation (including employees, sub-contractors, homestay hosts, group leaders and volunteers) and provide guidance or training relevant to its effective implementation.
- C3 Publicity or other information made available before enrolment will give an accurate description of the level of care and support given to students under 18.
- C4 Recruitment procedures for all roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s will be in line with safer recruitment best practice and the organisation's safeguarding policy (including suitability checks).
- C5 Suitable arrangements will be made for the supervision and safety of students during scheduled lessons and activities, normally by:
- ensuring that students under the age of 16 are not placed in classes with students of 18 years or older
  - ensuring there is sufficient adult supervision\* for all scheduled activities both on-site and off-site, taking into account the nature of the activity, age, gender and needs of the students. (Group leaders and other adults travelling with students under 18 will be responsible only for students in their own group.)
  - the provision of a leisure programme appropriate to the age, ability and interests of the students (for under 16s, the cost should be included in the course fee).
- C6 Suitable arrangements will be made for the supervision and safety of students between and outside scheduled lessons and activities, normally by:
- providing clear rules for what they may do outside the scheduled lesson or activity times and without supervision, appropriate to the age of the students and the location, and having procedures in place to ensure these rules are adhered to
  - making hosts, group leaders and residence supervisors aware of the rules for what students may do outside the scheduled activity times, and particularly what time they are expected to return for meals and at night, and having procedures in place to ensure these rules are adhered to.

Guidelines and advice are available at [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/care-children](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/care-children)

*People to be seen* form (1)  
staff lists (2)  
organogram (3)  
job descriptions (4)  
statement describing recruitment policy (5)  
statement describing induction procedures (6)  
policy documents and list of any CPD (8)  
risk assessments (19, 71)  
description of accommodation used (21)  
list of accommodation (22)  
documents relevant to student accommodation (23)  
leisure programmes (24)  
statement describing policy on supervision ratios and specialist qualifications of staff (25)  
safeguarding policy (26)  
staff handbook (27)  
teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (29)  
publicity materials (30, 31)  
any information sent to prospective employees (33)  
signed staff contracts (34)  
completed enrolment documentation (36)  
records of student contact details (37)  
any information for/agreement with group leaders (68)  
leisure activity information packs (72)  
student cards/emergency number (74)  
evidence of suitability checks (76)

\* **Please note:** The 1998 DfEE publication *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* advises the following: 1:6 (under 8s), 1:10–15 (8–10s), 1:15–20 (11+). Providers would be expected to exceed these ratios if the safety and welfare of the students required it. There should be enough supervisors to deal with an emergency.

- C7 Suitable arrangements will be made for the accommodation of students.
- The provider will normally be responsible for providing accommodation and all meals unless alternative arrangements have been made by the parent(s) or legal guardian and confirmed in writing.
  - A responsible adult (known to and vetted by the provider) will always be present overnight and normally be present when students under 16 are at home or in residence.
  - Providers will ensure that students under 16 lodged by them or their agency in homestay or residential accommodation will not be lodged with students of 18 years or older.
  - In residential accommodation, the ratio of supervising adults to students will be at least 1:20 for students aged 12–17, and 1:15 for students under 12. First aid facilities and an appropriately trained member of staff will be available at all times, together with an arrangement with a local doctor in case of emergencies.
- C8 Arrangements will be in place to ensure contact between the provider and parents, legal guardians or their nominated representatives concerning the welfare of students.
- The provider will ensure that effective measures and information are in place to enable 24-hour contact with parents or legal guardians of students.
  - The provider will give parents, legal guardians or agents of students a telephone number that can be used to contact the provider outside office opening hours.

### Additional criteria for the inspection of home tuition

Where these replace criteria in the main section, the criteria replaced are referenced in brackets.

#### Home tuition register

- HT1 Home tuition registers will be kept up to date with accurate information of all teaching hosts used by the provider. Any classification system the provider may use (or other organisation or agency used for the accommodation service) should be clearly explained to the inspectors, who will select a range of teaching hosts to inspect. Records should be retained for at least two years. (W12)
- HT2 Teaching hosts allocated to students will be inspected (for safety and suitability) by a responsible representative before students are placed. (W10)

#### Terms and conditions

- HT3 Teaching hosts will be fully acquainted with the rules, terms and conditions applied by the provider in respect of the placing of students, and booking arrangements will be clear. (W17)
- HT4 Students will stay with teaching hosts on a homestay basis, which means that the student is treated as a full member of the household, eating together and sharing the common living areas.

#### Placement

- HT5 Providers will make every attempt to match each student with an appropriate home tuition placement, taking into account the location, home, teaching host qualifications and experience, and any other relevant factors.
- HT6 There will be efficient procedures for assessing students' level and needs, either at head office or on arrival locally. (T17)
- HT7 Procedures will exist to uncover students' problems so that they may be properly investigated and solved without delay. A named person, other than the student's teaching host, will be identified to all students to deal with such problems. Complaints will be dealt with speedily and appropriate action taken and recorded. (M18 and M20)

Teacher CV forms/spreadsheet (14)  
rationales (15)  
home tuition register (22)  
sample documents relevant to student accommodation (23)  
staff handbook (27)  
teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (29)  
completed student feedback forms (41)  
records of any complaints and action taken (43)  
teaching staff records (48)  
written description of placement procedures and sample copy of placement tests (58)  
dated records of accommodation inspections (69)

## 2.2 Inspection criteria

### Environment

- HT8 All rooms used for teaching and study will be ready and available exclusively for their purpose at designated times.
- HT9 Teaching hosts will ensure that the home environment and the local environment both serve to support the students' learning and development during their stay.
- HT10 Arrangements will be in place for students to spend time away from their teaching hosts when appropriate.

### Additional criteria for the inspection of international study centres

#### Management and communication

- ISC1 The centre will have a clear mission statement describing its aim of preparing students for independent school education. There will be clear evidence that this aim is being met.
- ISC2 The centre will provide all students with effective support and guidance to facilitate their future full integration into the academic, social and sporting life of an independent school.
- ISC3 There will be structured, clear and effective lines of communication between ELT and subject-specific teachers to ensure that students receive appropriate linguistic support and support for any difficulties resulting from significant differences in educational ethos and expectations between the British education system and their own.

#### Teaching

- ISC4 Teachers will make appropriate adjustments in their preparation, teaching, assessment and choice of materials to help students overcome any linguistic difficulties encountered in the study of subject-specific courses delivered in English.
- ISC5 Teachers will make appropriate adjustments in their preparation, teaching, assessment and choice of materials to help students overcome any difficulties resulting from significant differences in educational ethos and expectations between the British education system and their own.

#### Teacher support

- ISC6 Ongoing and effective support for the professional development of teaching staff will enable them to make subject-specific programmes of study accessible to EAL students.

#### Teacher qualifications

- ISC7 All subject-specific teachers will normally hold teaching qualifications appropriate to the courses they are teaching. Where this is not the case, satisfactory rationales will be provided.
- ISC8 All subject specific teachers will hold [at least] a certificate in ELT/TESOL or receive specialist training to equip them to meet the needs of EAL students.

#### Curriculum

- ISC9 There will be evidence that the centre's curriculum effectively prepares students for entry into the independent school system.
- ISC10 The centre's curriculum will include the development of study skills appropriate to international students intending to enter mainstream independent school education.
- ISC11 The centre's curriculum will include preparation for public examinations facilitating admission to mainstream independent school education.

organogram (3)  
job descriptions (4)  
statement describing recruitment policy (5)  
statement describing induction procedures (6)  
list of CPD (8)  
timetables (17, 50, 63)  
staff handbook (27)  
teacher handbook (28)  
student handbook (29)  
schemes of work (53)  
list of examinations (55)  
examination course documentation (56)  
copy of completed academic reports and written description of assessment criteria and procedures (61)  
lesson plans, materials and handouts (64)  
class records (66)  
mission statement (ISC1)  
list of all subject specific teachers (ISC2)  
teaching timetables for subject specific courses (ISC3)  
any moderation reports of subject-specific programmes of study (ISC4)  
subject-specific course outlines (ISC5)  
curriculum (ISC6)  
student files (ISC7)  
teacher files (ISC8)  
teacher support programme, including subject-specific teachers (ISC9)  
examination results (ISC10)  
any student tracer studies (ISC11)  
enrolment policy (ISC12)

**Placement**

ISC12 There will be effective and transparent systems to support a student's application to independent school education.

ISC13 The centre will provide effective, independent and timely advice to all students intending to go on to study at a mainstream boarding school.

**Publicity**

ISC14 Publicity will include the following information:

- entry requirements into the centre
- the balance between English language training, study skills and subject-specific courses
- the subject-specific courses (and combinations thereof) available
- the mode of delivery of subject-specific courses.

In addition, claims about the currency of the education on offer will be clear and open to scrutiny.

In addition, publicity will provide clear and accurate information about the system of entry into mainstream independent school education.

## Additional criteria for the inspection of in-company provision

**Managing client expectation**

IC1 Prospective clients will receive clear and comprehensive information about the services offered by the provider and the costs.

IC2 Any publicity or tender document will accurately reflect the courses offered and the extent to which provision can be tailored to meet client requirements.

IC3 Any description of teacher qualifications and experience will be accurate and apply to all teachers who may be used to fulfil the contract.

IC4 There will be a written agreement for each client detailing the services to be provided and the extent of the provider's responsibility for any services:

- course materials
- classroom equipment
- any welfare or leisure services.

**Premises**

IC5 Providers will ensure that the client provides an appropriate space for the lesson(s) to take place.

IC6 Teachers and students will have access to appropriate equipment – whether supplied by the client or the provider, as previously agreed.

**Timetabling and course design**

IC7 Timetabling of teachers to in-company courses will take account of teachers' travel and preparation needs.

IC8 Courses will be designed to meet the needs of the students and the stated objectives of the client, as identified through needs analysis and the contract/ agreement.

**Welfare and student services**

Where any elements of welfare and student services are the responsibility of the provider, the relevant standard inspection criteria will be assessed.

*Teacher CV forms/spreadsheet (14)*  
*publicity materials (30)*  
*tender documents, contracts and student needs analysis (31)*  
*teaching staff records (48)*  
*previous timetables (50)*

## 2.3 Inspection process

### 2.3 Inspection process

#### Timing of an inspection

The date and timing of an inspection will be arranged between the Accreditation Unit and the provider, with the aim of ensuring that a representative range and volume of provision is seen.

All accredited providers undergo a full inspection every four years in order to retain accreditation. In the absence of an agreement the Accreditation Unit may impose a date, even if the provider is unable to offer a representative range and volume of provision at the time chosen.

In addition, providers may be subject to spot checks, supplementary inspections, or interim visits. Note that a spot check is routinely carried out within 18 months of first granting accreditation. Details of these shorter inspections are given in [2.5 Follow-up action](#).

#### Allocation of inspectors

The nomination of inspectors is the responsibility of the Unit, but the provider has the right to object to up to two nominated inspectors. An outline CV for each inspector is available from the Accreditation Unit on request.

The Accreditation Unit will seek to ensure that at least one of the appointed inspectors has experience of working in the relevant sector: state or private.

No nominated inspector will have any financial or working connection, past, present or prospective, with the provider to be inspected.

Where a nominated inspector is directly connected with another provider in the field of ELT, the provider under inspection will have the right to object to such a nomination in addition to the objections allowed above.

#### Preparing for inspection

Once an inspection has been set up, the provider will receive written confirmation of the inspection details (date and inspectors' names and contact details) from the Accreditation Unit, along with a reminder of the action to be taken next. Providers are required to send the [Stage 2: inspection preparation documentation](#) to each of their inspectors, to arrive at least ten working days before the start of the inspection (see [4.3 Inspection documentation](#)).

#### Cancellation of inspections

If the inspection is cancelled, either by the provider or the Accreditation Unit (please see below), within 28 working days of the first day of the inspection a cancellation charge is payable (see the *Fees sheet*).

The Accreditation Unit will cancel an inspection if, in the view of Manager, Accreditation UK, the provider to be inspected has not submitted sufficient documentation within ten working days of the agreed inspection date for the inspection to take place. Documentation required for an inspection is set out in [4.3 Inspection documentation](#). In this case, the cancellation fee will be payable by the provider to be inspected.

The cancellation charge will not be payable by the provider if the inspection is cancelled by the Accreditation Unit for reasons other than the non-submission of documentation.

#### The inspection

The inspection is normally carried out by two inspectors – the reporting inspector and the co-inspector. An inspection for a small provider will last one day, usually with the previous evening being used to visit accommodation. With larger providers, there may be three or four inspectors working over several days.

The role of the inspectors is to assess the extent to which the provision meets the inspection criteria (see [2.2 Inspection criteria](#)).

Inspectors will meet with senior staff at least two thirds of the way through the inspection (more frequently on long inspections) to check the accuracy of their findings so far; this is an opportunity for the provider to correct any misperceptions by providing further information and supporting evidence. There will be a short round-up meeting at the end of the inspection, at which time the inspectors will explain what happens next. Inspectors are not able to indicate whether or not accreditation will be awarded or continued, as this recommendation is made by the ASAC.

#### Sites to be seen

All sites where eligible ELT provision takes place will normally be visited on a full inspection. If there is any dispute between the Accreditation Unit and the provider as to whether more than one accreditation is required, then the matter will be referred to the ASAC for a decision. In this case, the extent of the provision as advertised in the provider's promotional materials will be taken into account.

#### Accommodation

Where accommodation is offered, inspectors will visit a sample of accommodation, review documentation and may also conduct telephone interviews with homestay hosts or other accommodation providers. Accommodation agencies may apply to be registered with the Scheme through separate inspection. When an English language provider using an agency registered by the Scheme is inspected, the inspectors will be notified that a registered agency is in use and will receive a copy of the latest report. Where there is no accommodation provision other than that offered by the agency, the provider's inspection will not need to include a visit to the agency or, in most cases, any accommodation. Inspectors will utilise the relevant information from the agency's inspection report and interview relevant people at the school/college to assess the standard of provision. If necessary, inspectors will be able to contact the agency for further information and reserve the right to visit accommodation. Where there is additional accommodation provision, this will be inspected in the normal way and the inspection report will reflect both agency and non-agency provision but direct re-inspection of the agency will not be necessary.

#### Providers operating in more than one location

##### Year-round providers

See [1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility](#) for the definition of 'year-round'.

Providers that operate year-round in more than one location and where each location has a distinct identity, will normally submit each location for separate inspection and accreditation.

### Seasonal multicentres

See [1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility](#) for the definition of 'seasonal multicentre'.

The following sample of centres will normally be visited.

Where the total number of centres is 16 or less:

- the headquarters
- one in four of centres operating in the year of inspection, which will include one centre without prior notice ('wild card' inspection) with a minimum of two centres normally being inspected
- further 'wild card' inspections where the inspectors and the Accreditation Unit consider that the sample visited does not enable them to gain a full picture of the standard of the provision.

Where the total number of centres is more than 16:

- the headquarters (extended inspection)
- two centres, with prior notice of inspection
- three centres without prior notice ('wild card' inspections)
- further 'wild card' inspections where the inspectors and the Accreditation Unit consider that the sample visited does not enable them to gain a full picture of the standard of the provision.

### Year-round and seasonal providers

A year-round provider which, in addition, offers seasonal provision must seek separate accreditation for the seasonal provision if it takes place in two or more locations in addition to the year-round provision.

### Groups with multiple accreditations

Groups of private sector ELT providers with more than three year-round schools may apply for a head office inspection if policies and procedures are developed centrally by senior management teams and then implemented in uniform ways in their schools. The purpose of such an inspection is to inspect the centralised functions, policies and procedures and produce a head office inspection report which will inform the inspection team(s) conducting subsequent inspections of the individual schools. Head office reports will not be published and should not be used in publicity by the group or individual schools.

### International study centres

International study centres may request additional inspection under the criteria for international study centres (ISC1–14, see pages 32–33).

The inspectors will be allocated additional time to observe the teaching of subjects other than English, for discussion with relevant staff and survey of resources in order to establish whether the additional criteria are met. The centre will provide additional documentation, as specified in [4.3 Inspection documentation](#) and the inspectors will write an additional section to the report covering the ISC criteria.

In order to be accredited as an international study centre, the inspection report must indicate that the standards of the Scheme are met in each of the five sections and that the ISC criteria are met.

### Home tuition providers

Providers offering English language teaching in the teacher's home will be inspected on the basis of the main inspection criteria and the additional home tuition criteria.

#### Inspection of eligible provision

The provider must inform the Accreditation Unit of all eligible English tuition offered, including the homes and premises used by all teachers employed by or having a part in the provision. The Accreditation Scheme reserves the right to include these within the scope of the provider's inspection.

#### Providers offering home tuition only

Inspection of home tuition providers will include the following:

- inspection of the headquarters (site of general and academic management)
- inspection of a representative sample of the homes and teaching used.

Where the provider being inspected is not currently accredited, the inspection will be conducted in two stages.

- Inspection of headquarters (stage 1)

In addition to the assessment of the criteria listed in other sections of the handbook, inspection of headquarters of a home tuition provider will include assessment of:

- all student feedback (including telephone logs) and reports on action taken
- the methods and rigour of teacher observation/assessment and guidance
- evidence of evaluation of materials and methods used
- evidence of the development of one-to-one teaching materials and methods appropriate to the students' needs.

- Inspection of teachers' homes and teaching (stage 2)

In the case of samples marked\*, the inspectors may select suitable alternatives where precise criteria do not apply.

The inspectors will expect to see the following cross sample of teachers' homes:

- at least one home which has been used for at least ten student weeks\* in the year preceding inspection **and**
- at least one home which has been used for fewer than three student weeks\* in the year preceding inspection **and**
- at least one established home which has been used for more than one year\* **and**
- at least one recently recruited home which has been used only within the six months\* preceding inspection **and**
- at least one further home.

All homes inspected must be those of teachers on the current register.

## 2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

All homes inspected will be chosen by the inspectors after examining the provider's records of student feedback and evaluation.

The following cross-sample of teaching will be inspected:

- at least one teacher who has taught at least ten student weeks\* in the year preceding inspection **and**
- at least one teacher who has taught fewer than three student weeks\* in the year preceding inspection **and**
- at least one teacher who has worked for the provider for more than two years\* **and**
- at least one teacher who has worked for the provider for less than six months\* prior to the date of the inspection **and**
- at least one teacher who holds a diploma in ELT/TESOL **and**
- at least one teacher who holds a certificate in ELT/TESOL only **and**
- at least one other teacher.

All teaching inspected will be chosen by the inspectors after examining the provider's records of student feedback and evaluation.

### General

Teaching and premises may be inspected in the same homes.

The size of the sample seen by the inspectors will be related to the size of the home tuition provision as a whole. The number of teachers sampled will be in proportion to the number of student weeks over the provider's peak month (normally one teacher to every 30 student weeks), and will normally be at least five.

**Please note:** inspection will not necessarily take place during the peak period.

Where the home tuition provider covers a number of geographical areas, the inspection of teachers and their homes will be in at least two of these areas.

Telephone interviews (particularly in remote areas) will also be included in the inspection process.

### Providers offering home tuition in addition to their on-site provision

These providers will be inspected on the standard basis in relation to their on-site provision and with reference to the procedures above and the additional criteria for home tuition in relation to their home tuition provision.

### In-company provision

Providers seeking accreditation for English language teaching delivered in company will be inspected on the basis of the main inspection criteria plus the additional criteria for inspection of in-company provision (IC1–8, see page 33). The inspectors will be allocated additional time to observe a sample of in-company teaching, for discussion with relevant staff and survey of resources in order to establish whether the additional criteria are met. The provider will submit additional documentation, as specified in [4.3 Inspection documentation](#) and the inspectors will write an additional section to the report covering the additional in-company criteria.

### After the inspection

After their visit, the inspectors will write an inspection report within five weeks of the inspection and submit it for consideration at the next meeting of the ASAC. The ASAC meets six times a year, dates for forthcoming meetings are available on [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

The ASAC will then make a recommendation concerning accreditation; this will be communicated to the provider in writing within five days of the ASAC meeting. The inspection report will be sent to the provider within six weeks of the meeting, if there are no outstanding invoices relating to the inspection. Reports on accredited providers, including those where accreditation is placed under review, will be published on the website.

Please see [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#) and [2.5 Follow-up action](#) for details of the possible results.

Please see [2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures](#) for information on the procedures for challenging the results or findings of an inspection.

### Inspection evaluation

An inspection evaluation questionnaire will be emailed to the provider after the inspection. Please help us to improve the working of the Accreditation Scheme by completing this to give us your feedback on the inspection.

The Accreditation Unit also seeks feedback on the inspection process by conducting post-inspection feedback questionnaires by telephone with a selection of providers recently inspected. A member of the staff from the Unit may contact you for this purpose between the inspection and the ASAC meeting at which your inspection report will be considered.

Specific feedback on an inspection is only passed on to the inspectors concerned after the inspection report has been submitted to the Accreditation Unit.

Feedback is also copied to the ASAC and, where relevant, any response from the inspectors or ASAC will be passed on to the provider.

Feedback received about inspectors will be taken into account when planning inspector training and reviewing appointments to the panel of inspectors.

Feedback on the inspection process also contributes to the future development of the Scheme.

## 2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

### Accreditation

In order for a provider to receive or retain accreditation its inspection report must indicate that the standards of the Scheme are met in each of the five sections (four if under 18s are never accepted). The standard for each section is stated on page 5. Newly accredited providers will be spot-checked in their first 18 months of accreditation (see [2.5 Follow-up action](#)).

## 2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations

It is expected that all criteria will be met by accredited providers. However, it is acknowledged that the Scheme accredits a wide range of providers offering a variety of services to students and not all criteria may be relevant in all cases. In the case when one or more criteria are not met, the section summary must give a clear indication that failure to meet the criteria in question has no significant negative effect on the experience of students, and the overall standards of the Scheme are met. When this is not demonstrated to the satisfaction of the ASAC, accreditation will be withdrawn or withheld.

In order for the **Teaching and learning** section of the report to be considered satisfactory, the report on teaching must indicate that the criteria in this section (T23–30) were seen to be met in the lessons observed, whatever methodology is used.

For seasonal multcentres, all centres inspected must meet all the standards set out above in order for the provider to receive accreditation. See **1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility** for a definition of 'seasonal multcentre'.

Providers seeking accreditation as an international study centre must also meet the ISC criteria (see **3.1 Claiming accreditation**).

Where, on receipt of an inspection report, the ASAC has reservations about granting accreditation for a full four years, a period between inspections of less than four years may be recommended.

Where the four/five section standards are met but the inspection report identifies weaknesses, the ASAC may recommend a spot check or other follow-up action (see **2.5 Follow-up action**).

The ASAC may also bring forward the date of any inspection where there is evidence of cause for concern about the provision offered or changes taking place.

### Re-inspection of an accredited provider

Where the provision at re-inspection does not meet the standards, i.e. at least one section summary states that the required minimum standards are not met, the ASAC will recommend withdrawal of accreditation. It is normally recommended that providers that have had accreditation withdrawn wait 12 months before seeking to be re-inspected.

In the case of an accredited provider with limited and clearly identified problems which the ASAC considers it likely that the provider will be able to overcome within a defined period of time, the ASAC may recommend placing accreditation under review pending the rectification of areas of weakness identified in the report.

### Placing accreditation under review

This outcome can only be recommended in the case of re-inspection of an already accredited provider.

Accreditation will continue while under review, which will normally be for a period of not less than three months and not more than one year from the date of inspection. The length will be determined by the ASAC at the time of the decision and made clear to the provider. The provider will remain on the list of accredited providers and the inspection report, indicating the standard not met, the weaknesses to be addressed and the period of review, will be published on the accreditation website.

At the discretion of the ASAC, the period of review will be terminated by either a full re-inspection or a spot check, at the provider's expense, or by the submission of satisfactory evidence of the rectification of weaknesses. The required procedure will be made clear at the time of the decision.

Where the period of review is to be terminated by submission of evidence of rectification of weaknesses, failure to provide satisfactory evidence will be grounds for withdrawal of accreditation.

Where the period of review is to be ended by a full inspection, failure to submit the application for inspection in reasonable time for the inspection to take place within the period set will be grounds for withdrawal of accreditation.

Where the period of review is to be terminated by a spot check and where the spot check report indicates that the weaknesses which led to the review have not been rectified, then the ASAC will normally recommend withdrawal of accreditation.

Where the period of review is to be terminated by a spot check and where the spot check indicates serious weaknesses other than those indicated in the report which led to placing accreditation under review, the ASAC may recommend that a full inspection take place. If, having considered the report on the full inspection, the ASAC continues to have serious reservations about the provision, such that they would normally have recommended placing accreditation under review, then the ASAC will recommend withdrawal of accreditation.

### Inspection of a provider not currently accredited

Where the provision does not meet the standards, i.e. at least one section summary states that the required minimum standards are not met, the ASAC will recommend withholding of accreditation. It is normally recommended that providers that have failed to gain accreditation wait 12 months before seeking to be re-inspected.

Where accreditation is withheld because of limited and clearly identified problems which the ASAC considers it likely that the provider will be able to overcome within a defined period of time, the ASAC may offer the provider an earlier opportunity to demonstrate that the weaknesses have been rectified through a full re-inspection or a supplementary inspection taking place within 12 months of the original inspection.

During the period between these inspections the provider remains unaccredited and cannot make any claims about the outcome or possible outcome of the inspection process.

The ASAC will specify an appropriate time period for the inspection, which will be not less than three months and not more than 12 months from the date of the original inspection. The type of re-inspection and the time period in which it may take place will be made clear to the provider.

When a provider is invited to apply for a full re-inspection within a period of less than 12 months, the provider must submit the normal application documentation by the appropriate deadline for the period they wish re-inspection to take place (see **1.4 Applying for inspection**).

## 2.5 Follow-up action

When a provider is invited to undergo a supplementary inspection to demonstrate that the weaknesses identified in their report have been rectified, the provider must notify the Accreditation Unit of their readiness to be re-inspected within the time period set. Failure to do so will forfeit the opportunity and a full re-inspection will be required if the provider wishes to continue to seek accreditation.

If, at the time of re-inspection, the inspection report indicates that the weaknesses which led to accreditation being withheld have not been rectified, then the ASAC will normally recommend withholding of accreditation with no further opportunity for early re-inspection.

If at the time of re-inspection, the inspection report indicates serious weaknesses other than those indicated in the report which led to accreditation being withheld, the ASAC will normally recommend withholding of accreditation with no further opportunity for early re-inspection.

### Appeals and complaints

Complaints about inspection reports or results are considered by the ASAC, see [2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures](#) for further information.

A provider whose application for accreditation or continued accreditation is rejected has the right to appeal. The appeals procedure to be followed is set out in [2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures](#).

## 2.5 Follow-up action

### Following inspection

Following an inspection the ASAC may recommend:

- accreditation with a spot check in the first 18 months of accreditation (new applicant)
- continued accreditation with no specific follow-up action required
- continued accreditation with action to be taken, for example a report submitted to a future meeting outlining action taken to address certain weaknesses identified in the report
- continued accreditation with a spot check focusing on specific areas where improvement is required
- accreditation be placed under review, the period of review to be ended by the submission of evidence, a spot check or a full re-inspection
- withdrawal or withholding of accreditation.

Where an inspection has been unable to cover all necessary areas, the ASAC may recommend that a supplementary inspection takes place.

### Spot checks

A spot check is an inspection of all or part of the provision carried out without prior arrangement of date. Spot checks are normally carried out by two inspectors and will normally last half a day.

A spot check is routinely carried out within 18 months of first granting of accreditation. In addition, a spot check may be required at any time during the accreditation period at the discretion of Manager, Accreditation UK, or on direction of the ASAC or EB. For example, a spot check may follow a complaint in writing about the provider. A spot check may also be carried out if there is any reason to believe that there have been significant changes to the provision, or if there is reason to believe that there may be grounds for accreditation to be withdrawn.

Changes likely to trigger a spot check include:

- change of owner, principal or academic manager or persons carrying out these functions or any other person responsible for the operating policy of the provision
- removal to new premises and centres
- use of additional premises and/or centres
- major changes or damage to premises or resources
- introduction of any eligible activity not seen at the previous inspection.

The ASAC will take into account the timing of the next scheduled full inspection when deciding whether a spot check is necessary.

Spot checks will normally be carried out at the provider's own expense.

The spot check is not a full inspection and inspectors will not look at all areas covered by the criteria but will concentrate on maintenance of standards and on any progress in specific areas they have been asked to focus on. They will take into consideration the length of time since the previous inspection and any specific requirements for improvement given by the ASAC.

The inspectors will contact the provider to ask for any relevant information about course dates or programmes. They will not indicate exactly when the spot check will take place but they will try not to arrive on a day that is inconvenient, such as an intake day or an excursion day. They may require more information such as staff lists but they will not ask for the level of documentation required in a full inspection. Some providers have found it useful for both them and the spot check inspector to look at the 'Points to be addressed' from the inspection report and to comment on progress.

On arrival, the inspectors will ask to see the most senior person and will present the authorisation letter for the spot check. They will outline what they want to do and who they would like to meet. They will discuss with the provider how their proposals will fit into the day's schedule.

The inspectors will give a brief round-up at the end of their visit but they will not discuss their final recommendation. The spot check report will be considered at the next ASAC meeting.

### Supplementary inspections

Supplementary inspections may be carried out at the discretion of Manager, Accreditation UK, or the ASAC if there is reason to believe that an inspection has been unable to cover all necessary areas and further information about the provision is required.

Supplementary inspections will normally be carried out by two inspectors (often the inspectors who conducted the full inspection), on a pre-arranged date, and at the provider's own expense. The findings of the supplementary inspection will be presented to the ASAC along with the findings of the full inspection.

### Outcomes

Following a spot check or supplementary inspection, inspectors will provide a report to the ASAC, who will recommend any ensuing action. The report and recommendations will be sent to the provider after the ASAC has considered them.

On receipt of a spot check or supplementary inspection report the ASAC may recommend that:

- no further action be taken
- Secretary to the ASAC writes to the provider advising on improvements
- a (further) spot check be conducted
- accreditation be placed under review
- the full re-inspection of the provision, at the provider's expense, be brought forward.

In exceptional circumstances, a recommendation may be taken from the ASAC to the EB for immediate withdrawal of accreditation on the basis of evidence in the report and associated documents only. In this case, the final decision on whether accreditation should be withdrawn will be taken by the EB. In the case where no EB meeting is to be held within two weeks of the ASAC meeting, then the decision may be made on behalf of the EB by its Chair.

## 2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures

Accredited providers have an opportunity to give annual feedback on the Scheme through the customer satisfaction survey conducted each year.

### Complaints about inspectors or the conduct of the inspection

An inspection evaluation questionnaire will be emailed to the provider after the inspection. Please use this to submit any comments (positive or negative) that you may have about the inspectors or the conduct of the inspection.

The Accreditation Unit may contact the provider to investigate any negative feedback. All feedback will be copied to the ASAC and the inspectors. Please note that feedback on an inspection is passed on to the inspectors concerned only after the inspection report has been submitted to the Accreditation Unit. Where relevant, any response from the inspectors or ASAC will be passed to the provider.

### Complaints about inspection reports or results

Complaints about factual inaccuracies in inspection reports and feedback concerning the inspection results will be considered by an administrative review panel and, if necessary, the ASAC and should be addressed to Manager, Accreditation UK within five working days of receipt of the report.

Requests to update a summary statement should be addressed to Manager, Accreditation UK for consideration by the ASAC (see [3.1 Claiming accreditation](#)).

### Appeals

A provider that is refused accreditation after the first or subsequent inspection or has accreditation placed under review has the right to appeal against the decision. The appeals procedure should not be used concerning decisions other than withdrawal or withholding of accreditation. Complaints about other inspection results or the report will be considered by the ASAC (see above).

The appeals process is time-consuming and expensive. Providers should consider the findings of the inspection report very carefully before beginning the process.

A provider wishing to appeal must have sent the Manager, Accreditation UK written notice of this intention in writing within five working days of receiving the report that confirms refusal of accreditation. If the report is withheld because of non-payment, the provider will lose the right to appeal.

An accredited provider submitting an appeal will continue to be accredited, and an unaccredited provider will continue to be unaccredited, until after the hearing and determination of its appeal. In the case of an accredited provider where accreditation has been withdrawn or placed under review, any publication of the inspection report will be delayed until after the hearing and determination of the appeal but any previous inspection report will be withdrawn (the accreditation website will indicate that the report has been disputed).

The role of the Appeal Committee is to assess all information relevant to the ASAC recommendation to withdraw or withhold accreditation or place accreditation under review and to decide whether to uphold or reject the appeal. It is not the role of the Appeal Committee to assess the validity of complaints made against the Scheme in general.

The Appeal Committee will focus on the appellant's provision at the time of the relevant inspection(s). Changes made to the appellant's provision since inspection will not be considered.

The responsibility lies with the appellant to demonstrate that the recommendation made by the ASAC, based on evidence presented in the inspection report(s), is unsound.

The appeals procedure is described in more detail on the website.

### Other complaints about the Accreditation Scheme

These will be considered by the EB. They should be made in writing addressed to Manager, Accreditation UK or the Chair of the EB.

Complainants will be informed about the decision of the EB in response to their complaint by the Chair of the EB within ten working days of the EB meeting.

## 2.7 Liability

The British Council will not be liable to providers in respect of any indirect or consequential losses, including without limitation loss of profit or commercial opportunities, arising out of or in connection with the publication of the inspection reports. Nothing in this disclaimer shall limit any of the British Council's liabilities that may not be excluded under applicable law.

# 3 Accreditation

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## 3.1 Claiming accreditation

### Please note the following conditions relating to the claiming of accredited status

- Accreditation covers all eligible provision, regardless of whether or not it has been individually inspected, provided that it has been declared.
- Providers which also offer non-eligible courses (please see [1.1 Eligibility](#)) must take all possible steps to ensure that there is no confusion in promotional materials between the accreditation status of these courses and that of accredited provision.
- The inclusion of inaccurate or misleading statements concerning accreditation in promotional materials will be brought to the attention of the ASAC and may lead to accreditation being withdrawn.
- A provider that ceases to be accredited must immediately cease to advertise itself as accredited and cease to use the inspection report or summary statement.
- A provider that has applied for, but has not yet been granted, accreditation may not use a phrase such as 'applied for British Council accreditation' in promotional or other materials.

### Please note the following conditions relating to the use of the Accreditation Scheme marque

- A provider that has been granted accreditation should use the 'accredited by the British Council' marque in promotional materials. This marque comprises the British Council logo with the words 'accredited by the British Council'. Please see right for examples of correct uses of the marque to claim accreditation.
- The positioning, size and font type of the marque must be used in accordance with British Council design standards. Details on how the Accreditation Scheme marque should be used and the marque itself are available from the Accreditation Unit. Further advice about the use of the marque is available from the Accreditation Unit [accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org](mailto:accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org) or telephone 0161 957 7692.

- The marque may only be used on a provider's publicity relating to accredited provision showing the same name as on the certificate of accreditation.
- The marque should be restricted to information relating to accredited provision. If the marque is used on a letterhead, which may be used in connection with non-eligible provision, or appears on the front of a brochure containing both eligible and ineligible provision, the provider should use one of the versions with additional wording, for clarity. Alternatively, the provider may choose to limit the use of the marque in brochures to pages describing eligible provision.

Accreditation does not give providers the right to use the British Council logo separate from the accreditation marque.

From 2016 providers will be encouraged to use:

Accredited by the



for the teaching  
of English in the UK

Use of an older version will be permitted, provided it is not misleading, for the next two years (and longer for permanent signage).

Accredited by the



Accredited by the



for the teaching  
of English

### Providers gaining specialist accreditation

- In the case of an international study centre which has met the additional criteria (ISC1–14, see pages 32–33) the marque may be used with the phrase ‘as an international study centre’. If a study centre is accredited but has not met the additional criteria, the marque can only be used with the phrase ‘for the teaching of English’.

Accredited by the



as an international  
study centre

- In the case of a home tuition provider, whether managed by a representative body or by a proprietor or proprietor organisation, the ‘accredited by the British Council’ marque may be used in promotional materials by the home tuition body or organisation only. Individual teachers or groups of teachers who are members of the organisation may not use the marque on their own promotional materials. Accredited home tuition organisations may use the marque with the phrase ‘as a home tuition provider’.

Accredited by the



as a home  
tuition provider

### Publication of inspection reports

All inspections result in an inspection report. These are written for the ASAC to make a recommendation on accreditation; they also help the provider continue to improve. From 1 January 2013, inspection reports on accredited providers will be published on the website. Providers can also request publication of their most recent inspection report. Please note that it will be four years before all providers have a published report. Reports on providers failing to gain accreditation will not be published and they are not listed on the website. Reports on spot checks and supplementary inspections will be included on the website after the full inspection report but reports on interim visits which are not part of the regular inspection schedule will not be published.

Where the report is to be published, the provider will have five working days from receipt of the report to comment on any factual inaccuracies before the report is published (see [2.6 Appeals and complaints procedures](#)). The provider will receive a copy of the report, in pdf format, when it is published and may include this on their website. The following conditions will apply:

- The summary statement (formerly publishable statement) may be used for promotional purposes separate from the full report.
- Selective quoting from or reference to other parts of the inspection report is not permitted.

- Where changes render the report out of date, the provider may request a supplementary inspection or early re-inspection resulting in a revised or new inspection report. All costs for the inspection must be met by the provider.

## 3.2 Between inspections

### Annual declaration

Accredited providers must complete, by 15 February each year, an *Annual declaration*. The Accreditation Unit will circulate instructions each year.

### Notification of change

In addition, the Accreditation Unit must be notified (by submission of a *Notification of changes* form) in advance or within five working days of any significant change in the scope or character of the provision including any of the following:

- unscheduled closure
- change of owner, principal or academic manager or persons carrying out these functions or any other person responsible for the operating policy
- removal to new premises and centres
- use of additional premises and/or centres
- major changes or damage to premises or resources
- vacation of premises previously occupied
- introduction of any eligible provision not seen at the previous inspection; for information about eligible provision, see [1.1 Eligibility](#).

The Accreditation Unit must also be notified immediately of any situation which may lead to accreditation being withdrawn under the provisions set out in [3.4 Withdrawal or withholding of accreditation](#).

Following any such notification, the Accreditation Unit may arrange either a spot check or full re-inspection of the whole provision, or may refer the matter to the EB for a recommendation on withdrawal of accreditation.

Failure to submit an *Annual declaration* form or notify the Accreditation Unit of changes will lead to withdrawal of accreditation or a spot check at the provider’s expense.

See [2.5 Follow-up action](#) for information about spot checks.

### Interim visits

In order to ensure that standards are maintained between inspections, each year a number of accredited providers chosen at random will receive unannounced interim visits.

Interim visits are short inspections (like a spot check) conducted without prior notice. Interim visits are carried out at the Scheme’s expense, by one or two inspectors.

Following an interim visit, inspectors will provide a report to the ASAC, who will recommend any ensuing action. The report and recommendations will be sent to the provider after the ASAC meeting.

## 3.3 Extension of accreditation

On receipt of an interim visit report the ASAC may recommend that:

- no further action be taken
- Manager, Accreditation UK, write to the provider advising on improvements
- a spot check be conducted
- accreditation be placed under review
- the full re-inspection of the provision, at the provider's expense, be brought forward.

In exceptional circumstances, a recommendation may be taken from the ASAC to the EB for immediate withdrawal of accreditation on the basis of evidence in the report and associated documents only. In this case, the final decision on whether accreditation should be withdrawn will be taken by the EB. In the case where no EB meeting is to be held within two weeks of the ASAC meeting, then the decision may be made on behalf of the EB by its Chair.

## 3.3 Extension of accreditation

Accredited year-round providers that extend their operations to include a multicentre provision\* or any additional year-round provision\*, or accredited seasonal\* multicentre providers which extend their operations to include a year-round provision, must seek separate accreditation for the 'extension' provision if they wish to claim accreditation for it.

\*See [1.2 Different types of provider and specific eligibility](#)

For extension to be granted, the accredited provider must demonstrate clearly:

- its legal relationship with the new provision
- (with allowance for local imperatives), that its systems, structures and ethos will be reflected in the new provision
- the process by which continuing support for the new provision will be available, and the resources set aside for this, until such time as the new provision becomes accredited in its own right.

The procedure for doing this is as follows:

- The accredited provider must notify the Accreditation Unit of the existence of the extension provision, and that they wish to claim accreditation for it. The Accreditation Unit must receive written details of what premises will be used and expected student numbers at least two months before the provision begins.
- Accreditation may be claimed for the extension only after written agreement to this effect has been received from the Accreditation Unit. In the case where the last inspection report on the main provision revealed one or more areas of weakness which needed to be addressed, the ASAC may ask the provider for evidence that these have been resolved before agreement is granted or refused.
- If it is agreed that the extension provision may claim accreditation, it will undergo a spot check, at the provider's expense, at as early a date as possible.
- If the spot check is considered to be unsatisfactory, then the extension provider must immediately cease to claim accreditation, and all normal rules for a new applicant seeking accreditation will apply.

- If the spot check is considered by the ASAC to be satisfactory, the provider may claim accreditation for the extension provision for a maximum of 12 months from the date of the spot check.
- Within 12 months of the date of the satisfactory spot check, there must be a full inspection of the extension provision. This inspection will take place under the rules for a first inspection (i.e. inspection of provider not currently accredited).
- If the inspection report is satisfactory (according to the guidelines set out in [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#)), then the extension provision will gain accreditation, separate from the main provision. All normal provisions and fees for accredited providers will apply.
- If the inspection report is unsatisfactory and accreditation is withheld, then all normal rules for providers from which accreditation has been withheld will apply (See [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#)).

## 3.4 Withdrawal or withholding of accreditation

### Following inspection

Accreditation will be withdrawn or withheld on the advice of the ASAC if the provider fails to meet the standards required by the Scheme (see [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#)).

### Following a period when accreditation is under review

Accreditation may be withdrawn following a period when accreditation is under review in the circumstances described in [2.4 Results of inspection: ASAC recommendations](#).

### Following a complaint

Accreditation may be withdrawn following a complaint under the procedures set out in [3.5 Complaints against accredited providers](#).

### Failure to comply with the regulations of the Scheme

In addition to any other reasons stated in the handbook, accreditation may be withdrawn on the following grounds:

- failure to undergo re-inspection when due
- failure to declare all eligible provision or the making of any false statements on the inspection application forms, *Fit and proper person test and declaration* form or *Annual declaration* form
- failure to inform the British Council in advance or within five working days of any significant changes in the provision (as specified in [3.2 Between inspections](#))
- changes taking place within the provision which lead to the provider no longer being eligible for accreditation
- failure to take steps to ensure that users cannot infer that non-accredited provision has received accreditation and cannot confuse accredited provision with non-accredited provision
- non-payment of accreditation, inspection or spot check fees.

### Other grounds for withdrawal

- Conviction of the owner(s), a company director or the head of the institution of a criminal offence relevant to the good management of the provision, which includes offences involving dishonesty, sexual offences, health and safety and immigration.
- Failure of any person (owner/proprietor, director/chief executive officer, head of school/principal) with effective or day-to-day control of the organisation in the UK to demonstrate that they are a 'fit and proper person' as defined by the Scheme.
- Sustained breach of the law or statutory requirements which the provider fails upon reasonable notice to remedy.
- Any action or lack of action on the part of the provider which in the opinion of the Accreditation UK Executive Board poses a serious risk to the safety of individuals or the reputation of the Scheme or its partners.
- If the accredited provision is owned by an individual or individuals then, in the event of any such individual becoming bankrupt or making a composition or arrangements with his or her creditors.
- If an accredited provision is owned by a company or companies then, in the event of the company having a proposal for a voluntary arrangement for a composition of debts, or scheme or arrangement approved in accordance with the Insolvency Act (1986), or having an application made under the Insolvency Act (1986) to the court for the appointment of an administrator, or having a winding-up order made, or (except for the purposes of amalgamation or reconstruction) a resolution for voluntary winding-up passed, or a provisional liquidator, receiver or manager of the business or undertaking duly appointed, or having an administrative receiver, as defined in the Insolvency Act (1986), appointed, or possession taken, by or on behalf of the holders of any debentures secured by a floating charge, of any property comprised in or subject to a floating charge.

### Closure or voluntary withdrawal from accreditation:

Accredited providers closing or wishing to withdraw from accreditation must inform the Accreditation Unit in writing of their intentions. The Accreditation Unit will inform the ASAC; remove the provider's name from the lists of accredited providers; and inform British Council offices, English UK and other relevant parties.

Members of English UK should inform both the Accreditation Unit and English UK of any intention to withdraw from accreditation.

## 3.5 Complaints against accredited providers

It is a requirement of the Scheme that all accredited providers must have in place an explicit procedure to deal with complaints made by students or parents/agents. For members of English UK, this will normally include a reference to this organisation.

### English UK members

If English UK receives a complaint from a student or student's representative against one of its members:

- it will investigate the complaint, in accordance with its established procedures, with a view to resolving it to the satisfaction of the complainant and the member
- if an agreement cannot be reached, English UK may refer the matter to their Ombudsman
- English UK will submit to the EB an annual return showing the number and nature of complaints received and resolved, and the organisations concerned.

If the Accreditation Unit receives a complaint against an accredited provider which is a member of English UK:

- the complaint will be recorded and referred in the first place to English UK for investigation, as above.

### Accredited providers not in English UK membership

If the Accreditation Unit receives a complaint from a student or student's representative against an accredited provider which is not a member of English UK:

- the complaint will be recorded and referred in the first place to the Principal/Head of ELT concerned
- the Principal/Head of ELT will report to Manager, Accreditation UK within 30 calendar days what action is proposed
- within a further 30 calendar days the Principal/Head of ELT will report to Manager, Accreditation UK what action has been taken
- if, in the opinion of Manager, Accreditation UK, the matter has not been satisfactorily settled, he or she will consult the Accreditation Scheme Ombudsman on further action.

Where a complaint is passed to the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman will investigate the complaint and recommend measures to settle it. Recommendations by the Ombudsman may include the following:

- that the complaint be dismissed
- that the complainant be reimbursed all or part of his or her course fees
- that the complaint be included in the briefing papers for the inspectors at the next inspection
- that Manager Accreditation UK authorises a spot check inspection specifically to investigate the issues raised by the complaint
- that the ASAC considers bringing forward the next inspection of the provider
- that the EB considers withdrawing accreditation from the provider.

If the provider accepts the Ombudsman's recommendations and the complainant does not, the complainant will be told that the Scheme will take no further action.

## 3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund (SESF)

If the provider does not accept the Ombudsman's recommendations, the Ombudsman will recommend to the EB one of the following measures:

- an immediate spot check
- an immediate full re-inspection
- withdrawal of accreditation
- other appropriate steps.

Any spot check or re-inspection will be at the provider's expense.

### Further action following a complaint

If the EB considers that the investigation of a complaint reveals what appears to be an unsatisfactory standard of performance by the provider (i.e. below that expected of an accredited provider) the following action may be taken:

- an immediate spot check
- an immediate full re-inspection
- withdrawal of accreditation
- other appropriate action.

Any spot check or re-inspection will be at the provider's expense.

If a defect is revealed in the operation of a seasonal provider after the course is over and the staff dispersed, any re-inspection will be arranged in the season following the complaint.

A provider refusing re-inspection or a spot check following a complaint will have its accreditation withdrawn.

## 3.6 Student Emergency Support Fund (SESF)

The financial collapse and closure of an accredited English language centre is a rare occurrence but one with significant potential to damage the reputation of Accreditation UK and of the UK ELT profession. Therefore, when this does happen, the most important concern is that students are taken care of and that their programme of study is able to continue with the least possible disruption. Accredited providers are expected to share responsibility for offering alternative accredited English language courses where possible, at no additional cost to the students, in the event of the sudden closure of an accredited provider in their region.

In addition to this shared responsibility, all accredited providers are required to pay an annual contribution to the Student Emergency Support Fund (SESF) managed by English UK, which is used to provide emergency assistance to students affected by the closure of an accredited centre. This would normally cover such things as accommodation fees paid by students up to the date of declaration of insolvency or assistance with the cost of travelling if the alternative course provided is at a distance from the premises of the closed provider. The SESF does not provide payment to providers for the tuition of the students that they have taken from the stricken centre.

## 4 Help

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### 4.1 Sources of help

#### Accreditation website

This handbook is complemented by the Accreditation UK website, which contains more detailed information on all aspects of the Scheme, the forms required by the Scheme and comprehensive guidance for providers on each stage of the accreditation process.

General information about the Scheme is available on the home page [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation) and details of the management of the Scheme at [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/how-we-regulate/governance)

Providers are advised to use the relevant sections to access the forms and additional information supporting the inspection process.

#### Pre-inspection briefings

The Accreditation Unit runs pre-inspection briefing events for providers preparing for inspection. These events give providers an opportunity to learn more about the application and inspection process, ask any questions they have about the process or inspection criteria and get advice from the Accreditation Unit and Chief and Senior Inspectors.

The programme, dates of forthcoming briefings and a booking form are available on the website: [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/inspection-support)

#### English UK

English UK offers a pre-inspection consultancy service for providers who are preparing for inspection and a number of professional development events and qualifications for English language teaching operations.

For details of the consultancy service or training programme, contact:

English UK  
219 St John Street  
London EC1V 4LY

+44 (0)20 7608 7960

[accreditation@englishuk.com](mailto:accreditation@englishuk.com) or  
[training@english.uk.com](mailto:training@english.uk.com)

[www.englishuk.com/training](http://www.englishuk.com/training)

#### Accreditation Unit

Providers can contact the Accreditation Unit for specific advice about accreditation:

Accreditation Unit  
British Council  
Bridgewater House  
58 Whitworth Street  
Manchester M1 6BB  
+44 (0)161 957 7692

[accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org](mailto:accreditation.unit@britishcouncil.org)

### 4.2 Academic staff qualifications

#### ELT/TESOL

ELT/TESOL is used by the Scheme as a general term covering TEFL/TESOL or other qualifications that qualify teachers to teach English to speakers of other languages.

#### The role of the Accreditation Scheme

The Accreditation Scheme is not an accreditation scheme for ELT/ TESOL qualifications. The Scheme assesses qualifications solely for the purpose of deciding whether a provider meets its requirements for 'Teaching and learning'. Please see [2.2 Inspection criteria, Teaching and learning](#).

The Scheme does not endorse and cannot be held responsible for the use of its assessment for any other purposes.

#### Teacher recruitment

It is the responsibility of an accredited provider or a provider applying for accreditation to ensure that the qualifications of teachers it recruits meet the requirements of the Accreditation Scheme. The Scheme cannot normally advise on the recruitment of individual teachers. Responsibility for the decision to recruit a teacher rests solely with the provider, that will wish to take into account not only the requirements of the Scheme but also its own needs and operating context. Where there is a conflict between the Scheme's requirements and the provider's preferred candidate for a teaching post, the provider is strongly advised to recruit the teacher who is the best person for the job. Where that teacher does not have appropriate TEFL qualifications, the provider should (a) be prepared to explain at inspection how all other relevant teaching and learning criteria are met; and (b) where appropriate,

## 4.2 Academic staff qualifications

provide a rationale for the teacher's employment which demonstrates why the teacher was considered to be suitably professionally prepared for his or her employment.

Please see **2.2 Inspection criteria**, T3. Guidelines for rationales are on the website.

### Checking the status of qualifications within the Scheme

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the qualifications of their staff are appropriate to the courses that they are teaching. If you are unsure as to the status of an ELT/ TESOL qualification, please read the following carefully and complete the *Qualifications evaluation* form available on the website. This should be made available to the inspectors in preparation for the inspection. Inspectors will not be able to assess a qualification unless all sections of the form are completed. It is the responsibility of the provider applying for accreditation to ensure that the form is accurately and fully completed. Providers are advised to ensure that the necessary information is received from the teacher concerned and, if necessary, verified with the validating body before the teacher is appointed.

### First degrees

Although a first degree is not an entry requirement for some courses leading to ELT/ TESOL qualifications, the Scheme normally requires all teachers to have a first degree or equivalent, i.e. level H FHEQ (Level 6 Qualifications and Credit Framework). Please see **2.2 Inspection criteria**, T1. A level 7 diploma also meets this requirement.

## ELT/ TESOL qualifications

For the purposes of the Accreditation Scheme, qualifications are classified as:

### TEFLI certificate in ELT/ TESOL

Certificate-level qualifications are first-level qualifications, usually taken by teachers with little or no ELT/ TESOL experience who wish to enter the profession. To be considered by the Scheme as a valid certificate in ELT/ TESOL, a qualification must:

- be externally validated by a reputable examination body (usually a university or recognised examination board) and/or accredited by a national accrediting body such as Ofqual in England
- contain at least six hours' supervised teaching practice (i.e. teaching practice where a qualified and standardised assessor observes the trainee teacher teaching real students and gives feedback on his or her performance)
- contain at least 100 hours of ELT/ TESOL input.

Examples of ELT/ TESOL certificate-level qualifications are certificates in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages accredited by Ofqual or similar national regulators, at Level 4 or Level 5 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (the Scottish Qualifications Authority uses a different framework).

Other qualifications which providers may consider to be certificate level (provided that they meet the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above) are:

- PGCE in English/modern languages with ELT/ TESOL subsidiary
- university 'certificate in ELT/ TESOL' courses.

### TEFLQ diploma in ELT/ TESOL

Diploma-level qualifications are higher-level qualifications, usually taken by teachers with relevant experience who wish to follow a career in ELT/ TESOL. To be considered by the Scheme as a valid diploma in ELT/ TESOL, a qualification must:

- be externally validated by a reputable examination body (usually a university or recognised examination board) and/or accredited by a national accrediting body such as Ofqual in England
- require candidates to have prior EL/ ESOL teaching experience
- contain at least five hours' supervised teaching practice (i.e. teaching practice where a qualified and standardised assessor observes the trainee teacher teaching real students and gives feedback on his or her performance)
- contain at least 100 hours of ELT/ TESOL input.

Examples of ELT/ TESOL diploma-level qualifications:

- diplomas in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages accredited by Ofqual or similar national regulators, at Level 6/7 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework\*
- PGCE: Post Graduate Certificate in Education with ELT/ TESOL (Level 6/7).

Other qualifications that providers may consider to be diploma level (provided that they meet the validation, entry requirements, teaching practice and input criteria listed above) are:

- university 'diploma in ELT/ TESOL' courses
- overseas qualifications (equivalent to a PGCE, BEd or MA in ELT/ TESOL) which qualify teachers to teach ESOL in state educational institutions in their country of origin.

Certain combinations of qualifications are accepted as equivalent to TEFLQ. Examples of these are:

- PGCE in English and a TEFLI certificate in ELT/ TESOL that meets the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above.
- PGCE in Foreign Languages and a TEFLI certificate in ELT/ TESOL that meets the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above.
- PGCE PCET: Professional/Post Graduate Certificate in Education, (Post Compulsory Education and Training) – ESOL specialism, and either Additional Diploma (ESOL) in the Lifelong Learning Sector or Diploma (ESOL) in the Lifelong Learning Sector or a TEFLI certificate in ELT/ TESOL that meets the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above.
- Post-graduate qualification in ELT/ TESOL or related subjects and a TEFLI certificate in ELT/ TESOL that meets the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above.

\*Where delivery is modular, all modules must be completed successfully for the teacher to be considered TEFLQ.

### Post-graduate master's degrees in ELT/TESOL (or related subjects).

MAs in ELT/TESOL or related subjects can be considered diploma-level equivalent provided that they meet the validation, teaching practice and input criteria listed above. Where the teaching practice (only) criterion is not met and the teacher is not TEFLI, a teacher with this qualification may be considered diploma level qualified for the purposes of the Scheme where there is documented evidence that he or she has undertaken at least five hours of systematic observation of lessons by a fully TEFL-qualified academic manager or teacher trainer post-qualifying.

**Please note:** the above does not apply to certificate or diploma-level qualifications without a supervised teaching practice component.

### Academic managers

Please note that under T4 there are requirements relating to teaching experience as well as to qualifications for an academic manager. A valid rationale will be required to explain the deployment of any members of the academic management team without a TEFLQ qualification.

### ELT/TESOL management qualifications

Qualifications in ELT/TESOL management are normally considered appropriate qualifications for academic managers only, provided they meet the validation and teaching practice requirements stated above. Where the teaching practice (only) criterion is not met a teacher with this qualification may be considered suitably qualified as an academic manager for the purposes of the Scheme where there is documented evidence that he or she has undertaken at least five hours of systematic observation of lessons by a fully TEFL-qualified academic manager or teacher trainer.

### Academic management in further education

In further education colleges, holders of a qualification for a full-teaching role in ESOL, such as a Level 5 generic teaching qualification and a Level 5 specialist TESOL qualification, will all be considered appropriately qualified as an academic manager in the further education (state sector) context only. Integrated qualifications that meet the requirements are the Level 5 Diploma in Education and training (English: ESOL) and the DTE (ESOL)LLS. Stand alone specialist diplomas include the Level 5 Diploma in Teaching English: ESOL and the additional DTE(E)LLS.

See under TEFLQ diploma in ELT/TESOL for the status of PGCE PCET (ESOL) specialism, a Level 6/7 qualification. The academic manager or members of the academic management team who hold such qualifications and have the relevant experience will be acceptable in relation to T4 and for T11 only within the context of a further education college.

### Qualified teacher status (QTS)

PGCE or equivalent qualifications which lead to qualified teacher status in the UK, i.e. qualified to teach in state maintained and special schools, may be considered by the Accreditation Scheme to be an appropriate qualification for teaching English language to under 18s if the subject specialism is related to English language teaching (e.g. modern languages or English) or the teacher has primary QTS.

### Specialist qualifications

Teachers holding specialist qualifications in ELT/TESOL such as young learners or one-to-one qualifications may be considered appropriately qualified provided the qualification meets the validation, teaching practice and input requirements stated above and the teacher is teaching the appropriate students/mode (e.g. young learners or one-to-one).

Teachers without ELT/TESOL qualifications but with specialist professional qualifications in other subjects (e.g. law, business or medicine) may also be considered by the Scheme to be qualified to teach relevant ESP courses.

Providers that employ teachers without ELT/TESOL qualifications but with specialist professional qualifications (in subjects such as sports or drama), which the provider believes complements their teaching provision, are required to provide a rationale for their employment. Please see [2.2 Inspection criteria](#), T3.

### Absence of relevant qualifications

It may be the case that teachers have undergone a course of training which does not meet the validation, teaching practice or input requirements stated above. In this case, the Scheme will consider them not to have an ELT/TESOL qualification and the provider is advised to produce a rationale for their employment. Please see [2.2 Inspection criteria](#), T3. Guidelines for rationales are on the website.

## 4.3 Inspection documentation

This list of documents is designed to help you ensure that your inspectors get a full picture of your provision.

The provision of clear, complete and accurate documentary evidence will make your inspection proceed more efficiently and economically.

Please refer to the website for further information and guidance on preparing and sending the documentation.

All forms listed are available on the website:  
For new applicants: [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/application)  
For re-inspections: [www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/accreditation/information-centres/renewal)

### Stage 1: Inspection application documentation

These documents must reach the Accreditation Unit by the appropriate application deadline.

Please note:

- 1 Where 'any' is used, this means if available/applicable to the provider being inspected. If in doubt, please look at the criterion for which the document provides evidence to assess whether the document is relevant in your situation. A full list of documents and the criteria which they support is available on the Accreditation website.

## 4.3 Inspection documentation

- 2 Not all the documents listed in Stage 2 and 3 are relevant to all providers:

documents marked **P** = private sector only (including home tuition and international study centres)

documents marked **S** = state sector only

documents marked **HT** = home tuition only

documents marked **ISC** = international study centres only

In addition to providing the relevant documentation for the inspection of English language teaching, providers seeking accreditation as an international study centre will provide the ISC documents listed.

### New applicants

*First inspection application* form (three copies)

Copies of the certificates for TEFL qualifications held by the academic manager/members of the academic management team (and a complete *Qualifications evaluation* form where the status of any ELT/TESOL qualification is uncertain)

ELT brochure (three copies)

Administration fee (payable to British Council)

Evidence of ownership (P)

*Fit and proper person test and declaration* form (P) (in a separate envelope)

Statement of any changes in ownership or senior management in the last year

*Declaration of legal and regulatory compliance* form

Certificate of employers' and public liability insurance

Evidence of appropriate registration with the Local Authority/ permitted planning use for the premises (educational: D1, or C2 for residential)

Evidence of registration with local Environmental Health officer (if food is prepared on the premises)

Evidence of conforming to fire and safety standards

CLA licence\*

ERA licence\*

NLA licence\*

\*Where a CLA/ERA/NLA licence is not appropriate, a statement explaining why the licence(s) is/are not required must be attached.

### Re-inspections

*Re-inspection application* form (three copies)

*Fit and proper person test and declaration* form (P) (in a separate envelope)

ELT brochure (three copies)

Inspectors will also receive from the Unit:

- Last full inspection report
- Report on any subsequent spot check or interim visit
- ASAC letters relating to the above
- Current *Annual declaration* form

## Stage 2: Inspection preparation documentation

Self-evaluation: providers are invited to submit a completed self-evaluation form as part of Stage 2 documentation. The following documents must reach the inspectors at least ten working days before the inspection. They are essential for the inspectors to plan the inspection timetable and gain an overview of the structure and operation of the provision. If these are not received by the inspectors at least ten working days before the inspection, the inspection will be cancelled and cancellation charges made (see *Fees sheet*).

### Management

- 1 *People to be seen* form
- 2 List of staff: all current administrative and welfare staff involved with ELT students, stating relevant qualifications and experience
- 3 Organogram including all management and academic staff
- 4 Job descriptions for relevant academic, non-academic and administrative staff
- 5 Statement describing recruitment policy
- 6 Statement describing staff induction procedures
- 7 Statement describing staff appraisal process
- 8 Policy documents and list of any continuing professional development activities for the previous 12 months
- 9 Statement describing policy on student absences
- 10 Summary of action taken in response to 'Points to be addressed' from the last inspection report (not applicable to first time applicants)
- 11 Statement describing publicity (which is main medium, what is available, translations etc.) and any updates produced since the submission of Stage 1

### Resources and environment

- 12 Map of organisation/centre's/home tuition location(s) (HT – before inspectors visit teachers)
- 13 Floor, and where relevant, site plan

### Teaching and learning

- 14 *Teacher CV* forms/spreadsheet for all academic staff including the DOS
- 15 Rationale(s) for any T1, T2 or T4 exceptions
- 16 *Qualifications evaluation* form where the status of ELT/TESOL qualifications is uncertain
- 17 Comprehensive and accurate class timetable for the inspection period (S/ISC timetable showing any EL staff deployment on other subjects during inspection period)
- 18 Syllabuses or related guidelines for course design

### Welfare and student services

- 19 Risk assessments (premises and Prevent duty)
- 20 Written policy statement for dealing with abusive behaviour
- 21 Description of accommodation used:
  - type, location, adults/under-18s for period of inspection (predicted numbers)
  - type, location at peak.

- 22** List of any accommodation available (HT – home tuition register), with an indication of which accommodation will be in use during the inspection period
- 23** Sample documents relevant to student accommodation and home tuition placement:
- application form for prospective hosts/home tuition teachers
  - inspection form/checklist, including safety and suitability
  - letter of agreement between hosts/home tuition teachers and provider
  - information/advice for hosts/home tuition teachers
  - information/advice for students
  - pricing and payment details
  - booking confirmation letter for students/hosts
  - evaluation form
  - any sample declaration forms for hosts/home tuition teachers looking after under 18s
  - any information for hosts regarding safeguarding.
- 24** Any current leisure programme covering the inspection period
- 25** Statement describing policy on supervision ratios and specialist qualifications of any staff used on leisure activities both on- and off-site

### Care of under 18s

- 26** Safeguarding policy

### Information for staff

- 27** Staff handbook (any notes for staff):
- any information for administrative/support staff
  - any information for residential staff
  - any information about accommodation
  - any information about leisure activities
  - any safeguarding or care of under 18s advice, including guidance about staff/student numbers on leisure activities.
- 28** Teacher handbook (any notes for teachers)
- relating to academic resources
  - guidance about teaching
  - description of course structure
  - guidance about teaching performance.

### Information for students

- 29** Student handbook (any notes for students):
- statement of complaints procedure for students and any relevant documents
  - any code of conduct
  - any information on safeguarding
  - information relating to academic resources
  - course description/methodology statement
  - guidance notes on examinations
  - any pre- and post-arrival documents, including advice about coming to and living in the UK
  - information on any library or self-access centre.

- 30** Publicity materials including website and any supplementary information to the brochure, e.g. price lists for extras, information about excursions, information for agents
- 31** Any document which is additional to or changes terms specified in publicity (e.g. contracts for closed groups)
- Any tender documents, contracts and student needs analysis for in-company provision

### Additional documentation for international study centres

- ISC1** Mission statement
- ISC2** List of all subject specific teachers, their qualifications and courses taught
- ISC3** Teaching timetables for the subject-specific courses

### Stage 3: Additional documentation

These documents should be made available to the inspectors during the inspection. Inspectors will sample files and records to obtain evidence that criteria are met.

### Management

- 32** Minutes of meetings
- 33** Any information sent to prospective employees
- 34** Signed staff contracts (with terms and conditions of service)
- 35** Appraisal/monitoring documents, and appraisal records
- 36** Completed enrolment documentation, including any consent forms from parents/guardians of under 18s
- 37** Records of students' contact details
- 38** Registers/attendance records
- 39** Record of follow-up action for student absences
- 40** Self-evaluations or inspection/audit reports from any relevant external quality assurance bodies (e.g. OFSTED)
- 41** Completed student feedback forms and record of follow-up action
- 42** Records of staff feedback and any action taken
- 43** Statement of complaints procedure, records of any complaints and action taken

### Resources

- 44** List of available equipment, e.g. CD/DVD players
- 45** Any policy statement or records relating to resources
- 46** List of resources: printed, audio and visual, computer software
- 47** List of professional publications and associations subscribed to

### Teaching and learning

- 48** Teaching staff records – copies of certificates
- 49** Observation records for teachers with MAs in TESOL or TESOL-related subjects, minimum five hours
- 50** Previous timetables
- 51** Substitution policy statement for absent teachers, and staff absence and substitution records
- 52** Teacher observation records and feedback; record of action in relation to staff development

## 4.3 Inspection documentation

- 53 Schemes of work
- 54 Course reports for any courses not seen
- 55 List of any examinations for which preparation/guidance/enrolment is provided
- 56 Any examination course documentation, e.g. entry tests for examination courses, syllabuses
- 57 Examination results for previous year
- 58 Any written description of placement procedures and sample copy of placement tests used
- 59 Any progress, mid-course and exit tests
- 60 Any tutorial records
- 61 Copy of completed academic reports and any written description of assessment criteria and procedures
- 62 Class profile for each class running during inspection
- 63 Course plan and day's timetable for each class
- 64 Lesson plans, including teacher's full name, level/name of class, room number, aims, stages, any homework to be given, with copies of materials and handouts used
- 65 Examples of students' work/files
- 66 Class records, including homework records
- 67 Handover notes/records

### **Welfare and student services**

- 68 Any information for and/or agreement with group leaders
- 69 Dated records of accommodation inspections
- 70 Accommodation records/rooming lists
- 71 Risk assessments relating to the supervision of activities
- 72 Any leisure activity information packs for students and homestay hosts
- 73 Any previous leisure programmes, for the preceding 12 months

### **Care of under 18s**

- 74 Student cards/emergency number
- 75 In-house publicity, notices and handouts about leisure programme
- 76 Evidence of suitability checks for holders of roles involving responsibility for or substantial access to under 18s

### **Additional documentation for international study centres**

- ISC4 Any moderation reports of subject-specific programmes of study
- ISC5 Subject-specific course outlines
- ISC6 Curriculum
- ISC7 Student files
- ISC8 Teacher files
- ISC9 Teacher support programme, including subject-specific teachers
- ISC10 Examination results
- ISC11 Any student tracer studies
- ISC12 Enrolment policy



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