

Clive House
70 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EX

T 0300 123 1231
Textphone 0161 618 8524
fes@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted



6 February 2018

Paul Joyce
Deputy Director, Further
Education & Skills

Dear Colleague

Increased focus on subcontracted provision during inspection

I am writing to update you on some changes to inspection practice in relation to the inspection and monitoring of subcontracted provision.

I know our common aim is to ensure high quality further education and training now and in the future. You will appreciate that to ensure inspection is most effective, we will amend the focus of it from time to time.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is concerned that all education and training provision should be good or better, including provision that is subcontracted. Some recent inspections have underlined that poor management of subcontracted education and training can be a key reason for poor quality provision. That is not to say that there is not also good quality subcontracted provision – there certainly is.

This letter is to inform you that Ofsted will be increasing its focus on the management and quality of subcontracted provision on its inspections with effect from 12 February 2018.

We will do this primarily through our regular inspections of directly funded providers, as they are accountable for ensuring the quality of provision delivered by any subcontractors they choose to use.

This increased focus may entail additional inspection resource, especially on inspections where the directly funded provider uses multiple subcontractors.

Inspection reports will, where relevant, contain more detail about the quality and management of subcontracted provision and may refer to named subcontractors in the body of the report.

Additionally, we will be increasing our focus on subcontracted provision by undertaking a sample of risk-based monitoring visits to directly funded providers to look specifically at the management and quality of subcontracted provision for specific subcontractors.

These monitoring visits will cover similar ground to inspections with respect to quality and management of subcontracted provision but will focus solely on provision delivered by the specific subcontractor(s).

As is usual with monitoring visits, and as is set out in paragraphs 21/22 of the handbook, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook>) these will result in a published report with progress judgements.

You will wish to inform any subcontractors you have of this increased focus on subcontracted provision and the form it may take in terms of inspection and monitoring visits. To that end, we recommend that you forward this letter to them.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Joyce", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Paul Joyce HMI
Deputy Director, Further Education and Skills