

# Ofsted's four-point grading system and their consequences

## 1 – Outstanding

Providers judged 'outstanding' for overall effectiveness are not normally subject to routine inspection and can go a decade without the education watchdog revisiting.

However, they may receive a full inspection if its performance declines or and there are risks, such as potential safeguarding concerns.

## 2 – Good

'Good' providers will usually be inspected within five years of the publication of their previous inspection report. This will normally be a short inspection but may be a full inspection if information suggests that this is the most appropriate way forward, for example, if the provider's performance has declined.

## 3 – Require improvement

Providers judged to require improvement will normally receive a full inspection within 12 to 30 months of the publication their previous inspection report. These providers will be subject to a monitoring visit before the full re-inspection, normally seven to 13 months after the publication of their previous inspection report.

A grade three for either overall effectiveness of just apprenticeships will also prompt a "diagnostic assessment" for colleges from the FE Commissioner. This early engagement "enables the FEC to support leadership teams and governing bodies to accelerate improvement, reducing the risk to learners and the likelihood of the college requiring formal intervention".

## 4 – Inadequate

Providers who receive the lowest possible judgement will receive re-inspection monitoring visits and then a full inspection within 15 months.

If you're a private provider rated 'inadequate' overall, the ESFA will typically terminate your funding contracts within three months of the Ofsted report being published.

If any provider is rated grade four for apprenticeships, they will be removed from the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers and banned from delivering this provision until the grade improves.

An 'inadequate' rating will prompt formal FE Commissioner intervention for colleges. The FEC's role during an intervention assessment is to "assess the capacity and capability of the existing governance and leadership to deliver rapid and sustainable improvement where serious weaknesses and risk of failure have been identified". It will result in a series of recommendations the college should undertake to improve.