



OFSTED REVISED INSPECTION HANDBOOK AUTUMN 2014 and MARCH 2015 CAREERS-RELATED CONTENT

Ofsted's [School Inspection Handbook](#) (September 2014) for inspectors provides us with a clear message of what they will look for in careers work. When taken with March 2015's [statutory guidance](#), there is now a clear mandate that schools and colleges should have the processes and procedures in place that ensure high quality, impartial, careers education and impartial guidance. How well does your school or college match up to these requirements?

Schools poor in giving impartial, informed career guidance

Ofsted's revised guidance comes at a time when 80% of schools have been found wanting in their provision of impartial guidance as explained [on Ofsted's site](#).

From the Handbook: Inspecting leadership and management (para 154 page 43) includes:

- the extent to which the school has developed and implemented a **strategy** for ensuring that all pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive effective careers guidance
- the **impact** of this guidance in helping young people to make informed choices about their next steps
- how well the school meets the needs of all **vulnerable groups** of pupils, including reducing the numbers who do not continue to education, employment or training
- how well the school works **with families** to support them in overcoming the cultural obstacles that often stand in the way of the most able pupils from deprived backgrounds attending university.

Separate sixth form judgement

This new Ofsted Inspection Handbook includes a new and separate inspection grade for **sixth form** provision. The relevance of careers education and guidance to this grade is outlined here (para 211 page 78) as inspectors will consider:

- how well students' **personal, social and employability skills** are developed and how well this prepares them for their **next steps** in education or at work, including the contribution of 'non-qualification' activity and/or **work experience** and appreciation of how to approach life in modern Britain positively
- the extent to which students are supported to choose the most appropriate courses, taking into account retention and success rates, as well as **destination and progression** information and students' views
- how well leaders and managers (page 79):
 - ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum and the arrangements to provide well-planned and well-managed individual study programmes, including the contribution of **partnerships** with other providers and
 - ensure that all students are provided with **high-quality impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance** prior to starting post-16 courses, and about choices following completion of their post-16 study programme
 - use information about the **destinations** of those leaving the sixth form to check the extent to which provision meets the needs of all groups of students.

Inspectors will talk to students in order to assess (para 212 pages 79-80):

- how well individual study programmes **meet their expectations, needs and future plans**, including for disabled students, those with SEN, those who are disadvantaged or the most able
- the development of **personal and wider employability skills**
- the **quality and impact** of any non-qualification activity and/or work experience
- the **quality and impartiality** of the **information, advice and guidance** they were given prior to starting their post-16 study programme.



Careers education is specified in the sixth form grade descriptors (page 81) for:-

Outstanding

- All students are provided with high quality impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance prior to starting post-16 courses and are fully aware of their choices following completion of their post-16 study programme.
- All students access high quality non-qualification activity or work experience relevant to their study programme.

Good

- The school provides good, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance prior to starting post-16 courses. Students are aware of their choices following completion of their post-16 study programme.
- All students take part in non-qualification activity or work experience relevant to their study programme.

Inadequate & requires improvement does not mention CEIAG. This suggests that CEIAG is a pre-requisite for 'good' or 'outstanding'.

Inspecting partnerships and off-site provision (para 77 page 23)

- Inspectors may wish to speak to **key partners** who work with the school. They should make every effort to telephone or meet with those institutions where pupils are taught off-site to help assess the school's quality assurance arrangements. They must evaluate the rigour with which the school monitors the attendance, behaviour, learning and progress of pupils attending alternative provision.

Careers education as a subject (annex 2 page 86)

- Careers education has now been included as a **named subject area** in the inspection coding.

In March 2015, an [update](#) to the inspection guidance refers twice to inspection of careers work:

- While it is good that careers guidance is achieving greater prominence in reporting, inspectors need to evaluate and comment on this crucial area where it is weak, not just where it is effective (page 1, bullet 2).
- When evaluating achievement, inspectors should give due weight to retention, and consider how this relates to curriculum provision and careers guidance, explaining any links in the report. (page 4, sixth form PANDA).

What does this mean?

At its simplest interpretation, careers provision will be formally inspected by inspectors. It has been placed under leadership and management, which is central to the inspection.

How the school or college meets the requirements of the new Ofsted inspection requirements is up to each individual school. However, in practice it seems difficult to imagine how a school could achieve 'good' or 'outstanding' without a commitment to a comprehensive careers education and work related programme and a clear provision of 1:1 guidance from an appropriately qualified careers adviser. Working towards a [QiCS approved quality standard](#) will help you to develop an appropriately robust and well-managed careers education and guidance programme. This is now a clear recommendation in the DfE's statutory guidance, paragraph 67.

How can I help?

As an experienced, nationally awarded careers education adviser and careers adviser I can support you in putting into place robust provision to support Ofsted's requirements.

If you would like to discuss how I can help with your programme, training or want to work towards quality standards such as [Career Mark](#), do have a look at [my website](#) and get in touch.