

# Ofsted: The Draft Education Inspection Framework

## Consultation Response from the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is the UK's learned society and professional body for geography and geographers. The Society maintains a strong overview of the discipline, its standing and practice in schools, higher education, and the workplace, including professional accreditation.

We advise on, and support the advancement of, geography; the dissemination of geographical knowledge to the public, policy makers and other specialist audiences including teachers, Geography ITT Scholars, and those involved in expeditions and fieldwork; and training and professional development for practising geographers. We work closely with the Department for Education, Ofqual, Ofsted, the awarding organisations, and geography teachers to support good practice in teaching and learning in geographical education.

We have 16,000 members and Fellows and our work currently reaches more than three million people per year. The Society awards the professional accreditation Chartered Geographer, which is awarded to teachers through the Chartered Geographer (Teacher) designation. Each year the Society works in a range of ways with teachers and pupils from about half of all English secondary schools which includes work with academies and their respective MATs, Free, independent and maintained schools.

The Society provides a significant programme of activities to support teachers during their training year and entry into the profession. We work regularly with Schools Direct, Teach First and HEI ITT providers to provide subject specialist input into their secondary programmes and since 2016 the Society has been supported by the DfE to run the Geography ITT Scholarship programme.

Our annual programme of CPD reaches about 1,500 teachers and the Society's online resources [www.rgs.org/schools](http://www.rgs.org/schools) receive over 1.3 million views annually.

There is much to celebrate about the teaching and learning of geography in primary and secondary schools and the progress that has been recently made. For example, 10 years ago Ofsted reported that 137 maintained schools did not enter any candidates for geography at GCSE<sup>1</sup>.

Today GCSE geography numbers are at a 20 year high with 256,420 candidates for the 2018 examinations (242,268 in England)<sup>2</sup>. In addition, overall candidate numbers at A Level have risen, alongside the numbers of young people moving onto study geography at undergraduate level.

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) regularly works with teachers (and their pupils) who demonstrate high standards, good practice and secure geographical knowledge. Through our annual awards, prizes and the professional accreditation Chartered Geographer (Teacher) we recognise and celebrate good practice in geographical education, and our CPD programme and online resources share this expertise across the community.

However, there are continuing concerns including:

<sup>1</sup> Geography: Learning to make a world of difference. (Ofsted 2011)

<sup>2</sup> Joint Council for Qualifications [www.jcq.org](http://www.jcq.org)

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- weaker provision in geography, particularly in schools serving more disadvantaged pupils
  - the marginalisation of geography within many primary schools and the need for greater capacity to be developed among primary teachers in order to provide good quality geography lessons
  - geography experiencing one of the lowest levels of teacher subject specialist provision at GCSE, and this situation worsening over the 2010-16 period<sup>34</sup>
  - how the erosion of time and focus on KS3 in many schools has undercut the provision of geography within the statutory National Curriculum. This is evidenced by Ofsted's findings that a third of inspected geography classes were not good enough and the most able pupils were not being sufficiently challenged in KS3 geography<sup>5</sup>.

This consultation response has been informed by the Society's wider engagement with geography teachers, discussion at the Society's Education Committee<sup>6</sup> and the Society's educational expertise.

Please contact the Society if you would like any further details about our views and work.

I am responding to the consultation as the Head of Education of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) on behalf of the Society.

The consultation response, set out on the following pages, is not confidential.

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<sup>3</sup> Retaining and developing the teaching workforce (National Audit Office, Department for Education 2017)

<sup>4</sup> Since 2016 the Society has been supported by the DfE to provide a Geography ITT Scholarship programme. This encourages individuals with strong geographical subject knowledge to become teachers and also helps raise the overall numbers of applicants to Geography ITT programmes. [www.rgs.org/scholarships](http://www.rgs.org/scholarships)

<sup>5</sup> KS3 The Wasted Years (Ofsted 2015)

<sup>6</sup> A standing committee of the Society's Council which includes Head Teachers, Head of Geography, geography teachers, assessment specialists, Chartered Geographers and other expert geographers

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## Proposal 1: introduction of 'quality of education' judgement

### *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce a 'quality of education' judgement?*

- **Strongly Agree**

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) strongly supports the introduction of a 'quality of education' judgement.

This is in its own right and as one of the four areas to be graded: quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management.

The Society also strongly supports the announcement (16 March 2019) by Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman to publish subject reviews and Ofsted's recognition of how these contribute to the resurgence in the importance of subject disciplines that is underway across the country. Such a focus on the health, or otherwise, of a subject will help inform how the distinctive contribution made by a subject can underpin a school's provision in regards to the quality of education judgement.

The Society also welcomes Ofsted's recent appointment of Majesty's Inspector and National Lead for Geography.

### **Comments**

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) welcomes the Intent, Implementation and Impact statements proposed in the draft education inspection framework (Section 25).

However, the Society believes these areas should be strengthened to more fully recognise:

- the underpinning that subjects provide to the curriculum
- the necessity for teachers to be actively engaged with subject specialist knowledge
- how subjects provide their own distinctive views and perspectives, for example 'thinking geographically' provides a different approach to 'thinking mathematically' or 'thinking scientifically'.

Please see highlighted amends to reflect these concerns:

#### **Intent:**

- "The provider's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills, **across the full range of subject**, for future learning and employment"

#### **Implementation**

- "Teachers have good knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach **and the professional support necessary to maintain this**. Leaders ensure **their subject specialists are actively engaged in updating their subject expertise and** provide effective support for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise"
- "Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught **and how a subject can provide a distinctive approach or perspective**. They check learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In doing so, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary, without unnecessarily elaborate or differentiated approaches"

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## Proposal 2: Separation of judgements

***We propose to judge ‘personal development’ separately from ‘behaviour and attitudes’ to enhance the inspection focus on each and enable clearer reporting on both.***

- Agree

### Comments

In relation to personal development, section 27 should be amended (see highlighted below) in order to:

- make explicit the need for young people to *understand* Britain and British society
- recognise the wider range of *differences* represented by the British population – not *just* the protected characteristics
- “The provider prepares learners for life in modern Britain by: **enabling them to better understand Britain and British society**; equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for **our differences; including** the different protected characteristics as defined in law.”

**Proposal 3 is specific to early years. Would you like to give your views on our proposal?**

- No

**Proposals 4, 5 and 6 are specific to maintained schools and academies. Would you like to give your views on our proposals?**

- Yes

## Proposal 4: increasing short inspections from one day to two days

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed focus of section 8 inspections of good schools and non-exempt outstanding schools and the proposal to increase the length of these inspections from the current one day to two days?***

- Strongly Agree

### Comment

This change provides greater opportunity for inspectors to more fully assess a school’s curriculum offer, the thinking behind it and what it provides in practice.

## Proposal 5: on-site preparation

***To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed introduction of on-site preparation for all section 5 inspections, and for section 8 inspections of good schools, on the afternoon prior to the inspection?***

- Neither agree not disagree

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## Proposal 6: non-statutory internal progress and attainment data

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal not to look at non-statutory internal progress and attainment data and our reasons why?*

- Strongly agree

### Comments

There are well-documented concerns about data management, the time required to do this and its impact on teacher workload, and efficacy of the data being collected.

Ofsted's proposal to step back from the need to look at non-statutory internal and attainment data is welcomed.

**Proposals 7 and 8 are specific to non-association independent schools. Would you like to give your views on our proposals?**

- Yes

## Proposal 7: quality of education criteria

*To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that inspectors should normally use the non-specialist curriculum as their primary source of evidence in assessing the extent to which the school meets the quality of education criteria?*

- Agree

### Comments

Non-association independent schools have the right to offer a distinctive approach through their specialist curriculum. However, it is important that their pupils have access to a broad, rich curriculum.

When making a judgement about the quality of their education it is right that Ofsted consider evidence from the non-specialist curriculum, unless there is clear evidence that significant coverage is being provided for the wider curriculum within a school's specialist provision.

## Proposal 8:

*To what extent do you agree or disagree that where non-association independent schools have been found to improve or decline at an additional inspection, Ofsted should provide up-to-date judgements about the school's current performance?*

- Neither agree nor disagree

**Proposals 9, 10 and 11 are specific to further education and skills. Would you like to give your views on our proposals?**

- No

### Other comments

### Leadership and Management

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The Society welcomes that the draft of this section identifies issues concerning leadership and management. However, this section should be amended in order to:

- more strongly identify the commitment of leadership teams to supporting their teachers' subject knowledge through CPD (in all its forms)
- recognise the invaluable support provided by subject specialist bodies (such as learned societies, professional bodies and subject associations) upon which teachers can draw knowledge
- identify the opportunities for teachers to have their subject expertise externally recognised and validated e.g. through the new specialist NPQs proposed for 'subject and curriculum expertise' in the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy<sup>7</sup> framework and relevant professional accreditations such as Chartered Geographer (Teacher)<sup>8</sup>

The draft should be amended in the following areas:

- "Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies, practice **and ongoing CPD.**"
- "Leaders, through the provision of internal and external professional support as relevant, focus on improving staff's subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge, to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment. The practice and subject knowledge of staff are built up and improve over time and where appropriate opportunities sought for the recognition of this expertise."
- "Leaders engage effectively with learners and others in their community, including – where relevant – parents, carers, employers, local services **and subject specialist bodies.**"

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<sup>7</sup> Department for Education 2019

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.rgs.org/professionals/chartered-geographer/chartered-geographer-\(teacher\)/](https://www.rgs.org/professionals/chartered-geographer/chartered-geographer-(teacher)/)