

SIS

SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

Framework and guidance for the educational oversight of private further education colleges

Part 1: framework

Part 2: guidance

PART 1: THE INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The School Inspection Service (SIS) is an approved educational oversight body authorised by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) section of the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges in England, with a Steiner, Montessori or Eurythmy basis or background, or with a clear religious purpose. SIS inspectors are either former Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) or have held other senior roles in education. All have long experience in inspection, including the inspection of privately funded further education in England.

Inspection by SIS is designed to assess the college's compliance with the SIS College Standards set out in this document. The Standards cover the quality of education and welfare provided to all students, including those from overseas who are sponsored by the college for Tier 4 visas, and, where applicable, those under eighteen and vulnerable adults. On-site student accommodation, where provided, is assessed for compliance with the Standards but is not subject to a full boarding inspection.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the extent to which colleges meet the Standards. By placing reports in the public domain, the information they contain is available to students, the UKVI, and the wider community.

Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success. It helps colleges, their staff and trustees/governors/proprietors to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy their weaknesses in relation to compliance. The inspection framework is designed to support and facilitate high quality inspection of private further education colleges with a clearly defined and specific purpose, so that reports can be written and presented which are valuable to the institution, to government agencies, to students, their parents where appropriate, and to the public. The inspection focuses on the compliance with the Standards of the institution at the time of the inspection.

The inspection also takes account of the college's financial performance over the last two years for new providers and since the last inspection for established providers. Based on this evidence an assessment is made of the college's financial sustainability over the next four-year period. This work is done by a qualified accountant on the basis of information provided by the college. Prospective students, their parents and agents should make their own enquiries into the financial viability of institutions before accepting a place.

Types of inspection

SIS conducts two types of inspection of privately funded further education in England. Full inspections are carried out at four year intervals, with interim inspections taking place annually in the intervening years. All colleges scheduled to be inspected by SIS are required to complete in advance the Information Form showing their contact details, numbers of students, including Tier 4, course details and term dates including any dates on which an inspection would not be feasible such as major examination sessions, religious holidays, absence of key staff etc. Colleges are also asked to complete by way of self-assessment a Standards Compliance Record (SCR) (college version) showing how the SIS Standards are being met. Colleges should ensure that any significant changes to provision are communicated to SIS through updating the Information Form and the SCR and re-submitting them to SIS.

The organisation of full inspections

Full inspections are led by a reporting inspector (RI), who manages the inspection process and is the main point of contact with the college. The RI is usually assisted by one supporting team inspector (SI), depending on the size and complexity of the college. The team inspectors have complementary experience and may be allocated particular aspects of the inspection to manage. All inspectors undertake a wide range of inspection activities including the observation of teaching, the interviewing of students and staff, and the scrutiny of records and documentation. The team makes a single visit to the college which lasts two days. The college will be informed about the forthcoming inspection four working days in advance. SIS will ask the college to update their Information Form and SCR (college version) and will send a list of further information required, to be given to the RI at the start of the inspection. SIS will also request that the college arranges for its students to complete the SIS student questionnaire.

The corporately agreed findings of the inspection team are reported to the college orally at the end of the inspection. The inspector gives oral feedback to the head of the college before leaving, stating whether the college has met the Standards. The RI has the responsibility for drafting the written report on the basis of the team's agreed findings. The college has the opportunity to comment on factual accuracy and highlight any errors in the draft report. The draft report is sent to the college for this purpose within two weeks after the end of the inspection with a request that managers check the report for factual accuracy and return it to SIS within two days. Copies of the published report are usually sent to the college and to the UKVI within four weeks of the end of the inspection. The report is published on the SIS website within one week of its issue to the college and remains there until the next full inspection takes place, usually in four years' time. On receiving the final report, the college must make the report available to all current students, to the parents of any students below 18 years of age, and to anyone who requests it.

The organisation of interim inspections

Interim inspections will take place annually in the three intervening years between full inspections. All colleges are asked to update their Information Forms every January giving details of any changes that have taken place since the last SIS full inspection or interim inspection, and of any further changes that are planned for the year ahead. Notice of an interim inspection will follow the same pattern as for a full inspection, with at least four working days' notice given.

An interim inspection involves one inspector, who is named as the Reporting Inspector (RI), visiting the college for one day. The inspector will ask the college to update its Information Form and where necessary its single central record of staff appointments (SCR). The inspector will follow up the details of any changes, speak to staff and students and look at the college's data. In addition they may observe any teaching and learning that is taking place and look at samples of students' work and its assessment. The activities during the visit may vary and will be tailored towards any issues arising from the last inspection or from the student questionnaire. The inspector gives oral feedback to the head of the college before leaving, stating whether the college has passed the interim inspection check, or whether, exceptionally, the next full inspection should be brought forward. This will only happen in unusual circumstances, for example, if major changes have taken place such as a merger with another institution, or if the interim inspection uncovers serious concerns about whether the SIS College Standards continue to be met. The RI has the responsibility for drafting a written report on the basis of his or her findings. The college has the opportunity to comment on factual accuracy and highlight any errors in the draft report. The draft report is sent to the college for this purpose within two weeks after the end of the inspection with a request that managers check the report for factual accuracy and return it to SIS within two days. Copies of the published report are usually sent to the college and to the UKVI within four weeks of the end of the inspection. The report is published on the SIS website within one week of its issue to the college and is added to previous inspection reports, which remain on the website. On receiving the final report, the college must make the report available to all current students, to the parents of any students below 18 years of age, and to anyone who requests it.

Charging for inspection

The SIS makes an annual charge for inspection services. Invoices are issued at the start of each calendar year and must be paid within 28 days. Inspection fees depend on whether an interim inspection or a full inspection is required within the year. A list of our charges is available from enquiries@schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk

Inspectors' Code of Conduct

Inspectors are required to adhere to the *Code of Conduct* set out below. They should uphold the highest professional standards in relation to all who are involved in the process before, during and after the inspection. They are expected to:

- evaluate objectively, display impartiality, and have no previous connections, either with the college or with individuals at the college, which could undermine their objectivity;
- report honestly and fairly, and be scrupulous in ensuring that their judgements are accurate and reliable and in accordance with the evidence that they have gathered;
- display integrity in carrying out their work;
- treat those whom they meet in the course of their work with courtesy and sensitivity, while maintaining an appropriate level of authority and objectivity;
- recognise that the process of inspection can be stressful and do everything they can to minimise stress for everyone involved, putting a high priority on the best interests and well-being of all those connected with the college;
- engage in, and maintain, constructive dialogue with those being inspected, whether they be students or staff, and communicate their evaluative judgements clearly, openly and honestly;
- respect the confidentiality of all information, especially that which concerns individuals and their work;
- pay close regard to legal requirements for safeguarding the welfare of students under the age of 18 and any vulnerable adults;
- respect the confidentiality of information received and judgements made before, during and after the inspection; and
- at all times adhere to the requirements outlined in the inspection handbooks and associated guidance.

All inspectors are required to be consistent and rigorous in their adherence to these principles, and ensure that, in consequence, inspections proceed smoothly.

Guidelines for colleges

Those involved in inspection should:

- treat inspectors with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, and take all reasonable steps to facilitate their work in the college;
- provide open and objective information on the college and communicate clearly in response to questions;
- co-operate with inspectors in the best interests of the students at the college, raising any concerns promptly in a constructive manner;
- respect the confidentiality of information about the inspection and inspectors;
- seek to understand the *SIS Inspection Framework and Guidance* and to assist inspectors in fulfilling its requirements;
- respect the inspectors' need to make direct observations and to talk with staff and students.

In addition:

- it is the duty of the college leadership to inform all staff of the nature of the

- inspection, including the observation of lessons; and
- to ensure that the need for confidentiality regarding the inspection findings is maintained.

The content of inspection reports

Full Inspection reports will include the following sections:

Title page

The overall inspection findings will be given on the title page. It will include a table, showing whether the college meets all the UKVI Standards for each report section, as follows:-

UKVI Standards for	
courses and qualifications are	MET/NOT MET
teaching, learning and assessment are	MET/NOT MET
the cultural and moral development of students are	MET/NOT MET
welfare, health and safety are	MET/NOT MET
the effectiveness and suitability of staff are	MET/NOT MET
financial sustainability, leadership and governance are	MET/NOT MET
premises and accommodation are	MET/NOT MET
information and complaints are	MET/NOT MET

This is followed by a formal overall confirmation of whether or not overall the college complies with all UKVI Standards.

Introduction

This section contains a fixed statement of the **Purpose and scope** of the inspection. This is followed by a description of the **characteristics of the college**. This description is purely factual, giving details of the college's courses, the student numbers and age range, and sets out the college's main aims. The description will also include information about sites and location, the structure of governance and any distinctive features. Any significant changes in the nature of the college in recent years or since its previous inspection will be noted.

Section A: Main findings and Actions Required

This section opens with a short summary of the main findings, showing the college's main strengths and areas for improvement in relation to the SIS College Standards. It will judge how well the college meets its aims as they relate to the Standards, and will state the extent to which the Standards are met.

This is followed by a table setting out the two alternative overall findings of the inspection, the reason for them in terms of compliance with all the Standards, and a statement of what steps will follow as a result. The one that does not apply will be deleted. For any Standards that are not met, there will be a statement of what actions are required in order to meet them.

Overall Main Finding	Compliance	Outcome for the College
The college meets UKVI requirements.	It meets all the Standards.	It will receive an interim inspection check in one year and a full inspection four years after its first full inspection.
The college does not meet UKVI requirements.	It does not meet one or more of the Standards.	It fails the SIS educational oversight, so UKVI will review whether the college can hold a Tier 4 sponsor licence.

Section B: Detailed evaluation of Standards

The report will contain eight further sections, each of which evaluates the extent to which the college meets the Standards:

- Courses and qualifications
- Teaching, learning and assessment
- Cultural and moral development of students
- Welfare, health and safety
- Effectiveness and suitability of staff
- Financial sustainability, management and governance
- Premises and accommodation
- Information and complaints

Section C: College and inspection details

This section will contain details of the college (name, address, telephone number, email address, name of proprietor and principal, licence number and type of college), details of the student body (age range, numbers on roll, fees) and inspection details (type of inspection, inspection team and dates).

Interim Inspection reports will include the following sections:

Title page

The overall inspection findings will be given on the title page. It will include a table, showing whether the college meets all the UKVI Standards for each report section, as follows:-

UKVI Standards for

courses and qualifications are	MET/NOT MET
teaching, learning and assessment are	MET/NOT MET
the cultural and moral development of students are	MET/NOT MET
welfare, health and safety are	MET/NOT MET
the effectiveness and suitability of staff are	MET/NOT MET
financial sustainability, leadership and governance are	MET/NOT MET
premises and accommodation are	MET/NOT MET
information and complaints are	MET/NOT MET

This is followed by a formal overall confirmation of whether or not overall the college complies with all UKVI Standards.

Introduction

This section contains a fixed statement of the **Purpose and scope** of the inspection. This is followed by a description of the **characteristics of the college**. This description is purely factual, giving details of the college’s courses, the student numbers and age range, and sets out the college’s main aims. The description will also include information about sites and location, the structure of governance and any distinctive features. Any significant changes in the nature of the college in recent years or since its previous inspection will be noted.

Section A: Main Findings and Actions Required

This section will give an overview of the college’s provision in relation to the Standards. The text will be shorter than for a full inspection and will summarise the main sub-sections of the Standards, drawing on updated information provided by the college as well as evidence from the inspector’s visit. Any significant changes in provision which relate to the Standards will be identified.

This is followed by a table setting out the two alternative overall findings of the inspection, the reason for them in terms of compliance with all the Standards, and a statement of what steps will follow as a result. The one that does not apply will be deleted. For any Standards that are not met, there will be a statement of what actions are required in order to meet them.

Overall Main Finding	Compliance	Outcome for the College
The college meets UKVI requirements because	it meets all the Standards.	It will receive an interim inspection check in one year and a full inspection four years after its first full inspection.
The college does not meet UKVI requirements because	it does not meet one or more of the Standards.	It fails the SIS educational oversight, so UKVI will review whether the college can hold a Tier 4 sponsor licence

Section B: College and inspection details

This section will contain details of the college (name, address, telephone number, email address, name of proprietor and principal, licence number and type of college), details of the student body (age range, numbers on roll, fees) and inspection details (type of inspection, inspection team and dates).

PART 2: INSPECTION GUIDANCE

The Standards

Most of the Standards are framed in a general way. Inspectors use their professional judgement and weigh up all the available evidence to decide whether the Standards are met or not. For any Standard that is judged not to be met, there must be a clear statement of what the college has to do in order to meet the Standard in the future. Inspectors exemplify the evidence to substantiate their judgements.

Some Standards, however, are more precise and for these, the guidance below states what has to be done in order to meet them. Most of the Standards apply to all colleges, but some, prefaced by an asterisk, only apply in particular circumstances.

Standards for courses and qualifications

1. *The courses offered are at a suitable level for the students.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Students' questionnaires; discussions with students and staff; observation of teaching and learning; course outlines and plans.

This Standard is not met if a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that the courses are too difficult or too easy, and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; observation of teaching shows either that many students are having difficulty in keeping up or that many students do not appear to find their work challenging; course outlines and plans do not seem to be pitched at a suitable level, and staff, when asked, are unable to give good reasons for this.

2. *Prospective students are given clear information about the level of their competency in English and the prior knowledge of the subject required for each course.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Students' questionnaires; discussions with students and staff; observation of teaching; pre-course information and requirements.

This Standard is not met if a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that they were not given clear information about the level of English and/or the prior knowledge of the subject required for the courses they are following, and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; observation of teaching shows either that many students do not understand enough English to follow the courses, or do not understand enough about the subject matter in order to do so; the pre-course information and requirements given to students are vague or non-existent and staff, when asked, are unable to give good reasons for this.

3. **Where students are admitted without the usual level of English or prior knowledge, appropriate support is given to bring them quickly up to requirements to enable them to access the courses.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Provision for support; case studies of individual students; discussion with them and with the staff who teach them; scrutiny of their work.

This Standard is not met if any students, who have been admitted without the usual level of English or prior knowledge, have not been given sufficient support and are unable to benefit from the courses that they are following.

4. *All full-time students follow courses that taken together require full-time study.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Time-tables of full-time students.

This Standard is met if all full-time students on courses of study below UK degree level have a minimum of 15 hours per week of organised (i.e. classroom) daytime study. This is a UKVI requirement for any Tier 4 student, and is a reasonable benchmark for all FE students. The organised study can include supervised self-study as well as direct teaching. The minimum amount of organised study is expected in most, typical weeks but not necessarily in all. There can legitimately be particular times during a course when students are required to pursue research, write assignments or undertake practical tasks on their own. For any Higher Education (HE) students, the contact time may be less, supplemented by a greater amount of self-study.

5. **Where courses lead to externally validated qualifications, the college is authorised by the external validating bodies and meets their requirements in full.*

Note: Most colleges will have externally validated courses, since it is a requirement of UKVI that Tier 4 students must follow a main course that leads to an approved qualification (see Standard 8 for further details). However, a college that does not currently have any Tier 4 students may also not have any externally validated courses. These colleges should be aware that before they can sponsor any Tier 4 students in the future, there must be externally validated courses, leading to approved qualifications, for them to follow.

Range of evidence to be considered: Communications between the college and the validating bodies; requirements of the validating bodies.

This Standard is met if the college complies with all the requirements of its validating bodies.

6. *Where colleges provide their own qualifications, prospective students are made fully aware of this fact.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Students' questionnaires; discussions with students and staff; information given to students.

This Standard is not met if a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that they do not know which of their courses lead to the college's own qualifications, and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; the information given to students about courses and qualifications is confusing and misleading and, SIS PFE Framework and Guidance for Educational Oversight:

when asked, staff cannot explain how students are supposed to distinguish between courses leading to externally validated qualifications and those which lead to the college's own qualifications.

7. *The proportion of students completing courses and attaining qualifications is appropriately high, given any evidence from their previous education, and the nature of the courses and qualifications.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Statistics about the college's completion rates and success rates in its various courses over the last three years, where the completion rate is the number of students who left having completed the course, divided by the total number of students who enrolled for the course at the outset, and the success rate is calculated in a similar way, based on the number of students who completed the course and obtained the qualification; discussion with staff about courses where completion and/or success rates are below 95%.

This Standard is not met if a high proportion of students did not complete their courses and obtain qualifications, without understandable reasons or extenuating circumstances. The government's national target for success rates in FE is 80%. UKVI expect a completion rate of more than 95% of Tier 4 students. However, particularly in small colleges, percentage rates need to be treated with caution and can be adversely affected by a small number of individuals in special circumstances. If the completion and/or success rates for courses are below 95%, the Standard will only be met if the college can give convincing reasons to show that the lower figures arise from factors beyond the college's control.

8. **All courses on offer to international students using Tier 4 lead to qualifications which meet the definition of an approved qualification for UKVI purposes.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Details of the courses being followed by all current students sponsored under Tier 4.

This Standard is met if all Tier 4 students are following as their main course, or will follow as their main course when they have completed pre-sessional courses, a course that leads to a qualification approved by UKVI. In addition to their main course, Tier 4 students may follow subsidiary courses that do not lead to approved qualifications. An approved qualification for UKVI purposes is one which is: validated by Royal Charter; or awarded by a recognised body on the recognised bodies list operated by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills,(see <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/higher-education/recognised-uk-degrees/recognised-bodies>); or recognised by one or more recognised bodies via a formal articulation agreement with the awarding body; or in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, on the Register of Regulated Qualifications (see <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>) at Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) or National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 3 or above (*that is, equivalent to A-levels or above*); in Scotland, accredited at Level 6 or above in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) by the Scottish Qualifications Authority; or an overseas qualification on which the UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) is able to

advise on its validity, with a level equivalent to Level 3 or above on the National Qualifications Framework.

9. *The content of all courses is compatible with the declared ethos of the college.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Course outlines and planning; observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if the courses do not support the values, ethos and purpose of the college as expressed by the college in documentation or on its website.

Standards for teaching, learning and assessment

10. *The teaching enables students to acquire new knowledge, and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff; records of students' progress; samples of students' work.

This Standard is not met if in several sessions observed, students are making little or no progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding; students say that they are not learning much and, when asked, have good reasons for saying so; records of students' progress are skimpy or non-existent and, when asked, staff cannot give good reasons why this is so; students' work shows no evidence of increased knowledge, skills or understanding during their time at the college.

11. *Students apply intellectual, physical or creative efforts, show interest in their work, think and learn.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if in several sessions observed, students do not appear to be making any effort, showing any interest, or thinking and learning; students say that the work is too easy, is not interesting and does not stimulate thought, and when questioned they have good reasons for saying so; staff do not expect enough from their students and, when asked, are unable to give good reasons for their low expectations.

12. *Teachers demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of teaching and learning; students' questionnaires; discussions with students and staff; staff qualifications and experience.

This Standard is not met if in several sessions observed, staff do not show much knowledge or understanding of the subject matter they are covering; students say that they are often confused by the ill-informed teaching they receive and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; staff with appropriate qualifications fail to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding when they teach; staff without

appropriate qualifications fail to show that they have compensatory experience and expertise.

13. Students' work is assessed regularly and thoroughly and students are given clear information about their progress.

Range of evidence to be considered: Samples of students' work; students' questionnaire; records of students' progress; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if students' work shows no evidence of marking or comments; a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that their work is not assessed regularly and thoroughly and/or they are not given clear information either in written or oral form about their progress, and when questioned they have good reasons for saying so; records of students' progress are skimpy or non-existent and, when asked, staff are unable to give good reasons why this is so.

*14. *Where there are students who need support with English as an additional language(EAL), the quality of support is effective, and those who give it are appropriately qualified or experienced. Strategies and expertise are in place to support students who may have difficulties with learning.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Discussions with students and staff; students' questionnaires; evidence of progress.

This Standard is not met if a significant number of students indicate that support for EAL is inadequate and when questioned they have good reasons for saying so; records of progress are inadequate; staff are not sufficiently well qualified or experienced.

15. Subject specialists plan their work and deliver lessons effectively. They manage time well and show understanding of the need to communicate clearly.

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of teaching and learning.

This Standard is not met if lesson plans are inadequate and do not support the effective use of available time to address the needs of all students in the class; teachers do not communicate effectively with students.

Standards for cultural and moral development of students

16. Students develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence.

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of teaching and learning; course outlines and plans; students' questionnaires and discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if in none of the teaching sessions observed, there are any opportunities for students to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; students are not given opportunities to develop self-knowledge,

self-esteem and self-confidence.

17. Students behave responsibly and obey the law, and the college has due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Note: Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 states that ‘A specified authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. While many private FE colleges are not ‘specified authorities’ as listed in Schedule 6 of the Act, SIS expects that all colleges that it inspects will fulfil this general duty. Further guidance, relating to such matters as external speakers and events, risk assessment, staff training, welfare and pastoral care, and IT policies, can be found in *Prevent Duty Guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales* on the government web-site.

Range of evidence to be considered: Observation of students’ behaviour in sessions and around the college; discussions with students and staff; college policies including any which relate to the Prevent Duty, course outlines and plans.

This Standard is not met if students do not behave responsibly; in discussion, students show scant regard for the law of the land; college policies and course plans do not demonstrate an expectation that students should obey the law; there is no evidence that the college has due regard to the need to prevent its students from being drawn into terrorism.

18. Students are encouraged to treat everyone with respect, including those of different cultural traditions.

Range of evidence to be considered: Course outlines and plans; observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if courses contain materials that encourage students to look down upon people of different cultural traditions, or any other groups of people; sessions are observed in which intolerance goes unchallenged; discussions with students indicate that intolerant attitudes are widespread; staff, should they be asked, are unable to give convincing details of how tolerance is encouraged.

Standards for welfare, health and safety

19. The college has proper regard, and effective policies, procedures and practices for health and safety issues.

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures for health and safety, including first aid and appropriate record keeping; observation of premises; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if the policies, procedures and records are skimpy or non-existent, or do not appear to be followed in practice; the premises are hazardous and threats to health and safety have not been noted or dealt with; students say that they

do not feel safe, and have good reasons for saying so; when asked, staff are unable to give good reasons for apparent deficiencies in health and safety matters.

20. There is a satisfactory level of fire safety, which conforms to legal requirements.

Range of evidence to be considered: Discussion with the fire safety officer; fire risk assessments, policies and procedures; any correspondence with the local Fire Brigade; record of checks on equipment; record of fire drills.

Note: Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the college has a duty to:

- carry out a fire risk assessment (formally recorded and regularly reviewed so as to keep it up to date);
- produce a fire risk policy which includes the elimination or reduction of risks from dangerous substances;
- develop fire procedures and provide staff training (repeated periodically where appropriate);
- ensure the safety of staff, students or anyone else legally on the premises;
- carry out fire drills and contact emergency services when necessary;
- appoint one or more competent persons (with sufficient training, experience and knowledge) to assist in taking preventive and protective measures (including firefighting and evacuation);
- have a suitable system for the maintenance of clear emergency routes and exits (with doors opening in the direction of escape), signs, notices, emergency lighting where required, fire detectors, alarms and extinguishers (the maintenance of which should be by a 'competent person' for example, ISO9001 certified or BAFE approved);
- provide staff, students and any others working on the site with fire safety information.

21. This Standard is met if the college conforms to its legal duties as set out above. The welfare of students is safeguarded and promoted through pastoral care in line with the declared ethos and the aims of the college.

Range of evidence to be considered: Students' questionnaires; policies and procedures for welfare and pastoral care; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that they do not feel that they are looked after well or valued as individuals, and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; policies are skimpy, non-existent or not followed in practice and, when asked, staff cannot give convincing reasons for this apparent neglect.

22. *The college maintains accurate admission and attendance registers, and when a student with a Tier 4 visa fails to enrol, misses ten expected contacts, or discontinues study, the required report is made to UKVI as soon as is practicable. Systems are in place to follow up absences rigorously for all students.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Admission and attendance registers; overall attendance rate for the last year, where the attendance rate is the number of actual attendances divided by the number of possible attendances; procedures for following up absences; procedures for making reports to UKVI, when required.

This Standard is met if admission and attendance registers are accurate and up-to-date; unexplained absences are followed up promptly; overall attendance is high, and any poor attendance is a result of students' personal circumstances beyond the college's control; reports are made promptly to UKVI when required.

Effectiveness and suitability of staff

23. *The proprietors are successful in recruiting and retaining sufficient staff with appropriate qualifications, expertise and experience, who are in sympathy with the declared ethos and aims of the college concerned.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Staff list, including qualifications, experience and length of service; observations of teaching and learning; discussions with trustees/governors/proprietors and staff.

This Standard is not met if the staff list shows that few members of staff have appropriate qualifications and experience; staff turnover is high leading to problems with consistency and continuity; in sessions observed, staff members lack appropriate expertise proprietors report serious difficulties in recruitment and retention;

24. *Prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff and volunteers, appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their identity and their right to work in the UK, and prudent enquiries have been made, taking up character and professional references and checking on qualifications, as appropriate, so that all this information is taken into account to determine whether appointments will be confirmed.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures for recruitment; confidential staff files with details of checks undertaken and references taken up; discussions with proprietors and senior staff.

This Standard is met if trustees/governors/proprietors and/or senior staff can show that appropriate checks and prudent enquiries are carried out when new members of staff are appointed.

25. **Where there are students under the age of 18, or some of the students are vulnerable adults, all staff and volunteers have had appropriate checks made on their suitability to work with young people, and/or vulnerable adults, including an enhanced DBS check with barred list information, following government guidance regarding the frequency and nature of their contacts with such students.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures for recruitment of staff who work with students under the age of 18; confidential staff files for these staff with details of checks undertaken including medical fitness; discussions with proprietors and senior staff.

Note: Government guidance, in *Keeping children safe in education September 2016* (KCSIE), gives details in paragraph 64 of the pre-appointment checks that colleges are required to make on staff and volunteers who are in regulated activities, a term that is explained on page 25 of KCSIE.

This Standard is met if all staff who work regularly with students under the age of 18, or with vulnerable adults, have had appropriate checks made and recorded on their suitability to work with young people, and/or with vulnerable adults. Where students themselves undertake placements in other institutions that involve working regularly with students under the age of 18 or with vulnerable adults, the provider must ensure that the receiving institution has the necessary procedures in place for DBS checks or supervision arrangements for the students on placement.

26. **There are records, made available to inspectors on request, of all instances of disciplinary action, suspension or departure of members of staff or volunteers; where this was due to their lack of suitability to work with young people, the record shows that an appropriate report has been made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).*

Range of evidence to be considered: Any records of disciplinary action, suspension, dismissal or departure of members of staff or volunteers, in circumstances where dismissal might have been considered.

This Standard is met if the records are made available, are comprehensive and up to date, and show that reports have been made to the DBS when appropriate. Where there have been no instances of disciplinary action, suspension or departure of members of staff or volunteers, in circumstances where dismissal might have been considered, this Standard is not applicable.

27. **Where the college uses temporary staff supplied by an employment business or agency, the identity of these staff have been checked, and all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the employment business has carried out all appropriate checks.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures relating to supply staff; correspondence with the employment business supplying staff.

This Standard is met if the identity of supply staff is checked and reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that the employment business carries out all appropriate checks.

Financial sustainability, management and governance

28. The college's recent financial performance, together with its plans and forecasts over the next four years, give reasonable confidence of financial sustainability, so that students are not at risk of being unable to complete their course as a result of the college's financial failure.

Range of evidence to be considered: Accounts for the last two years, as submitted to Companies House, and/or the Charity Commission; response to a financial questionnaire giving details of the college's financial plans and forecasts over the next four years.

This Standard is met if a scrutiny of the college's accounts, plans and forecasts, undertaken before the inspection by a qualified accountant on behalf of SIS, judges that there is reasonable confidence of financial sustainability.

29. The proprietor/governing body provide appropriate policies and procedures, review them for effectiveness, and ensure sufficiency of resources.

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures; availability of resources.

30. The trustees/governors/proprietors, leaders and managers work together effectively to sustain the college's strengths and to remedy any weaknesses.

Range of evidence to be considered: Discussions with trustees/governors/proprietors and senior staff; extent to which other Standards are met; development and/or improvement plans. Outline of college corporate structure, main points about organization, ownership and control, corporate governance arrangements.

These Standards (29 and 30) are not met if the college fails to meet several other Standards and has no credible plans for bringing about improvement; trustees/governors/proprietors, leaders and managers do not show that they are working together effectively but appear to be at odds with each other; far from sustaining strengths, quality of provision has declined over recent years and there are no credible plans for halting or reversing this decline.

Standards for premises and accommodation

31. The college buildings and accommodation are fit for purpose and properly maintained, to enable all courses to be taught effectively, and to safeguard the health and safety of all students, including any with special needs or disabilities.

Range of evidence to be considered: Buildings and facilities; maintenance records; observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff; case

studies of any students or staff with special needs or disabilities.

This is not met if buildings are in a poor state and are not properly maintained; sessions observed are adversely affected by poor accommodation and lack of facilities; students complain with good reason about the deficiencies of the building; maintenance records are skimpy or non-existent and, when asked, staff are unable to give good reasons why the accommodation and facilities have been neglected; reasonable adjustments have not been made for any students or staff with disabilities and there are no plans to improve access for them.

32. **Where the premises are also used for other purposes, this use is arranged so that it does not interrupt the students' education or threaten their welfare, health or safety.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Details of the other uses of the premises; observation of teaching and learning; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if the other uses of the premises interfere with the students' education; sessions observed are adversely affected by other uses; students complain with good reason about the way in which other uses of the premises threaten their welfare, health or safety; when asked, staff are unable to give good reasons why other uses of the premises are allowed to have such a negative effect.

33. **Where food is provided, it is prepared and served hygienically, conforming to any relevant regulations.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Hygiene and food safety certificates; reports from environmental health officers.

This Standard is met if certificates are up to date and the college has responded satisfactorily to any recommendations from environmental health officers.

Standards for information and complaints

34. *Students and prospective students are given clear, comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information through the prospectus, the web-site (where available) and by other means.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Prospectus, web-site and any other sources of information; students' questionnaires; discussions with students and staff.

This Standard is not met if the prospectus, web-site and other sources of information are misleading, incomplete, inaccurate or out of date; a high number of students respond to the questionnaire by saying that they have not been given clear, comprehensive and up-to-date information, and when questioned have good reasons for saying so; when asked, staff cannot give a convincing explanation of how deficiencies in the prospectus and web-site are compensated for by the provision of other information.

35. *Suitable systems have been established for communicating with students, and where appropriate with parents, and their agents abroad. Reports on progress are suitably frequent and appropriate*

to the level of the course.

Range of evidence to be considered: Policies and procedures; feedback from students' questionnaires and discussions with students.

This Standard is met if suitable systems exist for communication with students, giving them information about their progress.

36. Students and staff are made aware of an easily accessible complaints procedure, which is fair and effectively implemented when necessary.

Range of evidence to be considered: Complaints procedure; students' questionnaires.

This Standard is met if there is a complaints procedure, it is fair, students respond to the questionnaire by saying that they know about it and, when necessary, it is implemented effectively.

*37. *The college keeps records, made available to inspectors on request, of any formal, written complaints that have been made and of how they have been dealt with.*

Range of evidence to be considered: Records of formal complaints.

This Standard is met if the records of any formal, written complaints are made available and they are sufficiently detailed and in line with the complaints procedure. If there have been no formal, written complaints, this Standard is not applicable.