

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

REPORTING INSPECTOR

RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURES

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the key stages of the Reporting Inspector recruitment and deployment process.

2. STATUS

To those who are successful in completing the recruitment, training and selection requirements, the role of Reporting Inspector is offered on a paid consultancy basis. Reporting Inspectors are self-employed.

Expectations

All reporting inspectors are expected to commit to the following:

- Must commit to a minimum of 3 inspections per year
- Must maintain a subscription to the DBS update service
- Must commit to attending the annual conference in January (remuneration and expenses not paid but accommodation & subsistence paid)
- Must commit to update training 1 day annually at the beginning of the autumn term
- Must commit to completing any further training at the discretion of the Chief Inspector
- Must agree to adhere to the RI contract, guidance and code of conduct

3. RECRUITMENT OF NEW INSPECTORS

The ISI training team holds a mailing list for individuals who would like to apply to become ISI inspectors and existing ISI inspectors who would like to apply to train for new roles.

Applicants are directed to add themselves to the ISI training mailing list using Survey Monkey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/traininginterest2018>

4. APPLICATIONS AND SHORTLISTING

Applicants on the ISI training mailing list will be informed when applications open for Reporting Inspector roles. Candidates will have 3 weeks to submit their applications.

Shortlists are determined according to the extent to which a candidate's experience, knowledge and skills match the role requirements. Please note that fulfilling the advertised requirements does not guarantee that a candidate will be accepted on to the Inspector Training Course. At the discretion of the Chief Inspector, specific criteria may be given additional weighting according to ISI's requirements. All applicants will be treated against the same criteria in each recruitment round.

ISI will email candidates in order to inform them of the decision made in respect of their application. Due to the volume of applications, specific feedback will not be provided at the shortlisting stage.

5. SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

A member of the training team will email successful applicants with

- information about the dates of the upcoming training course,
- a request to register attendance and
- a request for two referees (see below for more information).

Course places are allocated on a first come, first served basis and can be reserved at once. But attendance is conditional on suitable references being provided within four weeks' before the proposed course date. Please note that there are no waiting lists. If an individual cannot attend a course, he/ she will have to re-apply to train in the next academic year, with no guarantee of repeated success as this will depend on the inspectorate's priorities for recruitment at any given time.

Three weeks prior to the training course, the successful applicants who have met the reference requirements will be emailed joining instructions and any pre-course tasks which will need to be completed.

Individuals attending the ISI training course must meet their own expenses for travel and accommodation. ISI advises that individuals do not book non-refundable travel and accommodation until joining instructions have been received from ISI.

6. STAGES OF RI INITIAL TRAINING

First Stage – Training & Assessment Course

The successful applicant will need to attend a three-day training course. This will include a number of assessments throughout the three days as well as post course assessment tasks. Applicants will be given written feedback about their progress based on the key criteria for RIs. Where a trainee inspector's performance has been judged to be satisfactory but to require some further improvement prior to deployment on a shadow inspection, at the discretion of the training team, individual inspectors may be offered the opportunity to conduct further assessment tasks. Where an inspector does not meet the required standards an opportunity for discussion with a senior member of staff will be offered.

Second Stage – Recruitment Checks

ISI will check the suitability of all applicants we wish to appoint. Some of these checks will have been initiated prior to training, but all will be completed before the individual is deployed on an inspection. Inspection is considered to be regulated and activity and the same checks therefore apply:

- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Enhanced DBS checks with barring information
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Prohibition from Management
- Medical fitness
- Qualifications
- References

Identity and Right to work

ISI is legally required to make sure that successful candidates have the right to work in the UK. It is important to be sure that the person is who he/she claims to be. ISI must see proof of ID, such as birth certificate, driving licence or passport combined with evidence of address, before any appointment is made. Proof of ID is required in connection with an application for a DBS Check. ISI will ask the applicants to bring proof of ID to the training, where copies will be made. Copies of your documentation will be held on file in line with data protection requirements. If the candidate is unsuccessful at the training, ISI will securely dispose of all the copies taken within two weeks of informing the candidate of the outcome of the training. If the candidate successfully passes the training, ISI will use these documents to carry out the checks listed above and will then hold any retained copies in line with ISI's Data Protection Policy.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check

ISI's DBS policy for inspectors is provided in Annex A.

Prohibition from teaching, and from prohibition from management of an independent school (section 128 directions)

All applicants are checked by the ISI office for prohibition. No additional steps or information are required from the applicant to enable these two checks.

Medical Fitness

Applicants will be required to complete a medical fitness declaration form to self-certify that he/she is medically fit to work around children.

Qualifications Check

ISI Reporting Inspectors are not required to have qualified teacher status. However, successful candidates will be required to provide proof of any professional qualifications that they claim to hold which are relevant to their application, particularly any relating to teaching.

References

ISI takes up references for all candidates to become an inspector, at any level. The basic requirement is for references from **two referees**. These must be people of the highest seniority who are the direct line manager of the applicant (E.g. Chair/Head) in the relevant organisations, who are in a position to be aware of any concerns that have been expressed about the applicant or disciplinary/competence matters.

Referees must be from **two different institutions**. The relevant schools will be those at which the applicant is currently, or was most recently, employed. ISI may also seek additional references from any source to follow up information received.

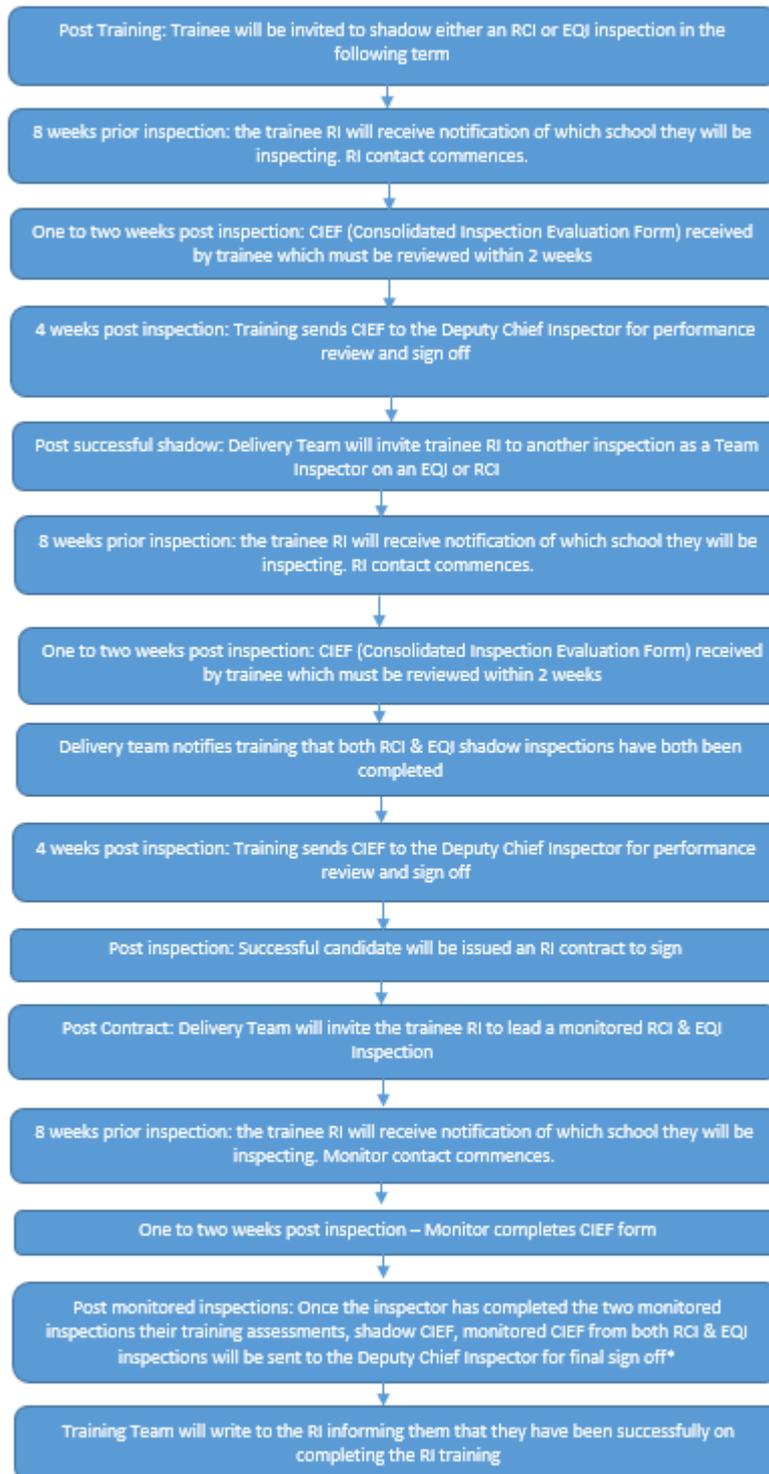
For an applicant who is a Head, appropriate referees will usually be Chairs. For others, it will usually be the Head. So, for example, for a candidate who is in their first headship, the appropriate referees will be usually be the Chair of their current school and the Head of their previous school.

For applicants who have not worked in more than one school, at the Chief Inspector's discretion, exceptions can be made to the general rule if there is cogent evidence that the candidate has sufficient breadth and/or depth of professional experience for the role. However, a second professional referee of convincing seniority should be provided.

Inspectors are not permitted to participate in ISI training until the reference requirements have been met to the satisfaction of the Chief Inspector, whose discretion is absolute.

Third Stage – Practical training

After the applicant has been informed that they have been successful in the first two stages of the Reporting Inspector initial training, they will be invited on a shadow inspection. Connectivity declarations must be made and taken into account (see section on DEPLOYMENT below). The following diagram shows the process for the practical stage of training:



*If the DCI is unable to sign off the new RI feedback will be given. No further training or development opportunity will be given unless in exceptional cases and then only at the Chief Inspector’s discretion.

Note:

The type of inspection that the RI will be invited to shadow and subsequently to lead first will be subject to operational requirements.

An individual's first monitored inspection must be completed within the year of Reporting Inspector training.

7. DEPLOYMENT

Contracts

Before deployment, all inspectors must sign their agreement with the ISI terms and conditions, and associated documents.

Connections to schools

All inspectors must declare any actual or perceived connections to the schools inspected by ISI. Reporting Inspectors declare by completing the relevant page of their individual profile on the ISI internal system stating all connections to schools, past and present. The duty to declare connections is on-going and is set out in detail in the terms and conditions signed by Reporting Inspectors upon appointment. Inspectors are advised that when they are in any doubt a potential connection should be brought to ISI's attention. A failure to do so is likely to result in no further deployment for the inspector.

Inspectors cannot be deployed in relation to the inspection of schools to which they have a connection:

- Inspectors must not inspect a school at which they have worked/advised in the last 6 years: connectivity in practice may be considered to extend much longer due, for example, to on-going acquaintance with former colleagues who remain on the staff of a school.
- Following an inspection, inspectors may not work in or advise the school in a personal capacity (including for ISIC) for a period of 2 years.
- Inspectors will not usually inspect a school which they have previously inspected. As a general rule, an inspector must not re-inspect a school at its next inspection if it is a routine scheduled inspection, a 'brought forward' inspection or an 'additional' inspection. However, inspectors may conduct the 'progress monitoring visit' after an initial inspection where there have been compliance failings or a 'material change visit'. In some instances, it can be particularly helpful for the same inspectors to return.

Inspector connections to schools which do not meet the standards

Employees of schools – By definition, inspectors who are currently serving in schools will be Heads or senior leaders. As such they may be perceived by schools inspected by ISI as sharing responsibility for any reported deficiencies in their employer school, whether or not this was attributable in practice to their own default.

Proprietors, including trustees, governors and others – Proprietors are legally responsible for ensuring that their school meets the Independent School Standards and that their senior leaders have the necessary skills, knowledge, diligence and competence to ensure consistent compliance. As such they are and may be perceived by schools inspected by ISI as responsible for any reported failings in their school, even where day to day responsibility was/is delegated.

Procedure for informing ISI of non-compliance - Inspectors must

- inform the ISI delivery team when their school is reported not to meet the standards, on: delivery@isi.net
- note their school's non-compliance on their inspector profile on the ISI system
- if invited to inspect, pro-actively check with the ISI delivery team that the team is aware of their connection to a non-compliant/recently non-compliant school and has taken this into consideration in offering the inspection invitation.

Deployment during non-compliance – Inspectors may not inspect while they are connected (whether as an employee/governor/proprietor) to a school which does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards, or for two years thereafter (calculated by reference to the date of publication of an inspection report confirming full compliance).

Historic issues

ISI will not deploy any inspector who works or has worked in a senior capacity in a school which was non-compliant at the time they left. In addition, if ISI is made aware of historic regulatory issues, particularly those linked to safeguarding which are alleged to have occurred whilst the inspector was working in a senior capacity at a school, ISI reserves the right to no longer deploy the reporting inspector, subject to a discussion with the inspector. This is at the absolute discretion of the Chief Inspector.

Exceptions to the rule - ISI recognises that it is in the interests of children that struggling schools should be able recruit knowledgeable governors and employees to assist them to turn around non-compliance and improve rapidly. Therefore, if an individual is joining a school after that school fails an inspection, this circumstance should not preclude this individual from training. However, this exception lasts only until the next inspection after the individual joins the school. Equally, there may be circumstances where, in the interests of the well-being of children or the reputation of the inspectorate, an inspector should not be invited to inspect again.

In exceptional circumstances, the two-year period may, therefore, be **reduced or extended** at the discretion of the Chief Inspector taking into account information such as:

- the role of the inspector in the school
- the date and length of the connection
- the nature of the non-compliance
- the severity of the non-compliance
- the length of time for which the school was non-compliant
- the extent to which the inspector was or might be perceived to have been responsible for the reported non-compliance
- the role played by the inspector in remediating the non-compliance
- the inspector's performance history with ISI
- information from third parties, such as (but not limited to) the DfE or statutory agencies, whether or not in the public domain
- reputational risk to ISI
- any other relevant information.

In considering whether inspector status may be re-instated, the Chief Inspector reserves the right to set pre-conditions and conditions, such as:

- taking up new references
- consulting statutory agencies
- asking the inspector to submit to additional vetting checks
- requiring the inspector to attend an interview with the Head of Delivery and HR, or the Chief Inspector
- requiring the inspector to undergo additional training
- placing restrictions on the type of inspection or school that the inspector can inspect
- any other pre-conditions or conditions considered appropriate.

Decisions regarding the recruitment and continued deployment of inspectors are in the absolute discretion of the Chief Inspector whose ruling is final.

Performance Reviews

The Performance Review Team (PRT) meets each term to make recommendations to the Chief Inspector about issues which have arisen prior to, during or after an inspection, when the inspector code of conduct may have been breached, and to discuss any ongoing performance management issues. Consideration will be given to an inspector's historical performance, through evaluations, appraisals and feedback from schools. The inspector will have the opportunity to respond to any concerns about their performance or conduct. Failure to meet the standard required may result in ISI discontinuing the deployment of an inspector.

Planned Break from Inspections

All breaks are subject to the Chief Inspector's approval. This will need to be requested in writing to the training team (training@isi.net) with the dates and reason for the break.

The inspector will only be allowed a break of a maximum of 1 academic year (3 terms) and is required to be available to inspect in the fourth term after the year's break. During this 1-year period the inspector's status will be set to 'pending' on the ISI online system, which means that the inspector will not be invited to any inspections during this period and will not have RI access to the ISI system and ISI documentation. The inspector will be expected to attend the first instance of training immediately following the 1-year break period, and attendance is compulsory in order to continue inspecting for ISI.

The inspector will be contacted in the interim, in order to confirm if they wish to return to inspecting for ISI in order for ISI to include the inspector in the next term of scheduling. Should the break extend to longer than a year, the inspector will usually be removed from the list of inspectors, with the option to re-apply for training at a point in the future if they wish.

ANNEX A

DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all inspectors to share this commitment. For this reason, and in accordance with the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), all individuals applying to become inspectors must undergo the same safe recruitment vetting checks as teachers (see [Approval of independent inspectorates September 2014](#)).

2. PURPOSE

This policy sets out ISI's approach to obtaining DBS disclosures for inspectors prior to deployment and also sets out the process of re-checking the criminal records of existing inspectors.

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all inspectors who are deployed by ISI and applicants for inspector roles and is in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service eligibility guidance and code of practice.

4. CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

- a. All inspectors are subject to an **enhanced DBS check with barring information**.
- b. DBS checks may be carried out
 - i. via the DBS update service, for existing subscribers, or
 - ii. directly by ISI, requesting a new check, or,
 - iii. exceptionally and at the Chief Inspector's absolute discretion, a recent check carried out by a school where the inspector/candidate is currently employed may be adopted by ISI on condition that it is at the enhanced level with barring information and the original certificate is seen by ISI.
- c. As a matter of policy, ISI repeats criminal record checks, including barring, every three years.
 - i. To facilitate re-checking, at the time of applying to become an inspector, inspectors are required to join the DBS update service. It is a matter for the Chief Inspector's absolute discretion whether to allow an application to proceed where the candidate declines to join the update service.
 - ii. Inspectors whose service for ISI commenced before the policy decision to recommend the DBS update service, are encouraged to join the update service when their check is renewed.
 - iii. Team inspectors who do not currently work in a school must join the DBS update service.
 - iv. ISI will re-check inspectors against the update service on a termly basis

- d. Inspectors and applicant inspectors are also required to disclose any cautions, convictions¹, or orders barring them from working with children or vulnerable adults, and any professional sanctions or directions from the Secretary of State, or matters disqualifying them from childcare (including by association), or allegations or disciplinary or competence proceedings against them, whether in the UK or overseas. This is an on-going duty of disclosure. **Failure to disclose any relevant matter is in itself a serious matter likely to have an adverse effect on an application or the continued deployment of a current inspector.**

5. REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT 1974

ISI recognises the rehabilitative intent of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974: the disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, will not necessarily bar a person from becoming an inspector unless the nature of the information disclosed renders them unsuitable to inspect.

6. SUITABILITY

- a. Suitability to inspect is assessed in accordance with the DfE's requirements as set out in paragraph (i) of Approval of independent inspectorates September 2014, which include:
 - i. *"Inspectors should behave professionally at all times ..."*
 - ii. *"Inspectors refrain at all times from expressing views or participating in activities that could undermine public trust in their ability to inspect objectively against the independent school standards, particularly the standard relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils".*
- b. With the above in mind, where a conviction or caution or other information has been disclosed, in assessing suitability, ISI will consider:
 - i. the nature of the offence;
 - ii. whether more than one offence has been committed;
 - iii. how long ago the offence was committed²;
 - iv. the person's age when the offence was committed; and
 - v. other factors which may be relevant.

¹ Cautions and convictions generally become "spent" after a specified period of time and are no longer disclosable to most employers. However, in certain categories of employment where an enhanced DBS check is required, as is the case for inspectors, spent cautions and convictions will still be disclosed.

² As a rough guide, six years following a caution and 11 years after a conviction may be considered a sufficient length of time where there are no other concerns.

- c. In some cases, a criminal conviction or caution may prevent an individual from becoming an inspector, however as stated above it will not automatically prevent an application from progressing. An application is more likely to proceed, or current inspector status be unaffected, where the offences are historical and less serious, and do not cast doubt on the applicant's current suitability to become an inspector. An application is less likely to be able to proceed if the applicant has committed offences that are recent or of a more serious nature, or if the offences involve fraud or dishonesty. If the applicant has committed an offence that led to a prison sentence, whether or not suspended, it is very unlikely that the application will be allowed to proceed.

7. SERIOUS VIOLENT AND SEXUAL OFFENCES

- a. Due to the sensitive nature of ISI's work and the need for inspectors to refrain from any activity that would undermine public trust, certain types of cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences will always prohibit an individual from becoming an inspector. This would include:
 - i. cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences;
 - ii. other offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
 - iii. all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended; and
 - iv. all convictions where more than one conviction is recorded.

8. MOTORING OFFENCES

- a. Convictions for motoring offences must be declared and will be treated in the same way as any other criminal conviction. ISI treats offences related to driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs seriously and a conviction for any such offence will mean that it is unlikely that an application will be allowed to proceed, subject to the factors listed at paragraph 6.2 above.
- b. Any disqualification from driving must be declared. If the applicant has regained their licence following disqualification only within the last four years, it is unlikely that their application would be allowed to proceed.

9. DECISION TAKING

Ultimately, final decisions about suitability are made by the Chief Inspector whose discretion is absolute, however, all staff who deal with inspector applications should be aware of the contents of this guidance.

10. CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION

- a. Candidates for inspector training may call ISI in advance of making an application to have a discussion in confidence regarding their circumstances. Such queries should be directed to Head of Training and Recruitment (training@isi.net) in the first instance.
- b. Current Reporting Inspectors may request a confidential discussion with either the Head of Training and Recruitment (training@isi.net) or the Chief Inspector (Chief.Inspector@isi.net).

11. HANDLING OF DBS CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

ISI complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificates and certificate information. Disclosure information will only be shared with relevant persons in the course of their specific duties relevant to recruitment and vetting processes. ISI will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, ISI will keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate and the unique reference number of the certificates.

12. REVIEW OF DBS POLICY

This policy and procedure will be reviewed by September 2019