

## **Overview of inspection process for provisional accreditation**

New applicant language centres seeking accreditation when (because of visa requirements or other factors) they have no (or very minimal) ELT provision to inspect can be granted provisional accreditation on the basis of an initial partial inspection. They will then require a second full inspection as soon as it is possible to observe ELT delivery in action.

Partial inspection for provisional accreditation is available (subject to satisfying the Accreditation Unit of prospective eligibility and sufficient preparation) to the following:

- Newly established language centres that have not yet run courses but are preparing to do so and require accreditation for their intended students to gain entry to the UK (unable to meet eligibility requirements of 12 months or two seasons)
- Already-established language centres with UK-based students that intend to extend provision to students from outside the UK and require accreditation for their intended students to gain entry to the UK
- Already established language centres (including those previously accredited) that do not currently have students and now require accreditation for their intended students to gain entry to the UK.

### **Inspection for provisional accreditation takes place in two stages:**

Initial inspections, which so far have been conducted remotely, review school policies and records from any courses run previously in order to evaluate compliance with inspection criteria in key areas. Where it is possible to do so, premises are visited (this may be remote). The inspector will complete a brief summary report indicating the language centre's readiness to accept international students and deliver ELT courses and supporting services that meet Scheme requirements.

The purpose of the second inspection is to complete the inspection process by conducting a full inspection when the courses are in action to verify the successful implementation of policies already reviewed, see the premises in use and consider any improvements made since the initial inspection. Inspectors complete a full inspection report as for a standard first inspection of a new applicant. The inspection report is then considered by the Accreditation Scheme Advisory Committee (ASAC/the committee) – leading to full accreditation if all section standards are met.

## Application

Preliminary contact with the Accreditation Unit is usually followed by a meeting to discuss the applicant's individual circumstances, evaluate the readiness for inspection and outline the scope of the initial inspection and appropriate time frame.

The applicant will be required to complete an inspection application form and submit all relevant supporting documents and as many of the **Stage 1 documents** as possible. Depending on the individual circumstances, one or more of the following may not be available:

- Planning permission for premises (where provision is intended to be seasonal and using hired premises)
- Public liability insurance (if no courses run yet)
- Fire risk assessments for premises (if not yet secured)
- Evidence of TEFLQ academic manager (not yet contracted)
- CLA/ERA etc. Licences food hygiene certificate.

## Part 1 – initial inspection

The length of initial inspection varies according to how much provision there is to inspect:

- Can premises be seen?
- Is there any teaching to observe?
- Is there documented history of provision to evidence compliance or is it undocumented/new to market with only policies and forward planning to review?

**Conduct:** One inspector, equivalent to one day (in most cases), may be conducted remotely. Date announced.

**Cost: £699 - £900.** An invoice will be issued and must be paid before inspection.

**Report for ASAC and provider:** similar style to spot check/unannounced interim inspection.

The inspector will receive a brief from the Accreditation Unit plus any Stage 1 documentation received. The People to be seen form may indicate a very limited number of people at this stage of the school's development.

The language centre will share their self-evaluation (document 11) with the inspector and the following key documents:

- (8) Site plan for any teaching premises
- (9) Organogram – may be current and future plan
- (10) Organisation plans, including goals and values statement and plans for launching/resuming operations etc.
- (15) Recruitment documents [e.g. job descriptions for appointed staff and planned recruitment, DSL]

- (22) Link to any publicity
- (24) Recorded video tour of any premises if live access during inspection is not possible
- (25) Statement on resources (list of resources or planned list and budget)
- (26) Academic staff spreadsheet – summary only (except for AcMan), including all available teachers
- (31) Syllabuses or related guidelines for course design [previous or future courses]
- (38) Premises risk assessments (if premises secured)
- (40) Description of accommodation normally offered or plans for accommodation provision [including recruitment checklist for any planned homestay accommodation]
- (46) Emergency plans (for W2)
- (49) Safeguarding policy, including recruitment checks requirements – if under 18s accepted [certificate of Advanced safeguarding training, level 2, for the Designated safeguarding lead (DSL), Specialist training, level 3, will be required by full inspection]
- (50) Parental consent template(s) – if under 18s accepted
- (52) Staff handbook
- (54) Student handbook.

There will be an initial video conference/phone call to discuss practicalities ahead of the formal start of the inspection.

**The inspector will:**

- Interview all available management to verify a sound basis for compliance with Scheme criteria in as many areas as possible and understand plans for forthcoming courses
- (If relevant) examine records from previous or existing courses
- (If possible) undertake a tour of the premises
- Observe a sample of any teaching taking place
- Sample records (e.g. of any recruitment, feedback on any courses run)

**Initial report**

After the initial inspection, the inspector will write a brief inspection report using a pro forma template. The report will give an overview of the history of the language centre and its courses and summarise the inspector's findings in key areas determining the language centre's readiness to accept international students and deliver ELT courses and supporting services that meet Scheme requirements.

The report is considered by the ASAC and, if the committee is satisfied that the language centre has demonstrated sufficient standards/readiness to trade or resume trading, provisional accreditation can be awarded as follows:

*We recommend provisional accreditation for a maximum of one year pending a full inspection within six months. / In summer 20XX. / as soon as eligible courses commence/resume; this is currently expected to be*

Language centres with provisional accreditation are listed on the A–Z on the Accreditation UK website, with their initial inspection report, and are issued with a specific version of the accreditation marque indicating that they have provisional accreditation.

### **Preparation for Part 2 inspection**

The language centre must inform the Accreditation Unit as soon as the start date for courses is known, so that a full (Part 2) inspection can be scheduled. Additional information may be requested. Where possible, the allocated inspection team will include the original inspector, but this cannot be guaranteed during peak periods.

The Accreditation Unit will send the inspectors:

- relevant Stage 1 documentation from the first inspection
- any relevant subsequent communication, for example, evidence submitted to ASAC to demonstrate that any weaknesses affecting health and safety have been addressed
- the initial inspection report
- annual declaration.

The language centre will need to provide the inspection team with the Stage 2 documents at least ten working days before the start of the inspection, including those presented for the initial inspection (where these have been updated since the initial inspection, this should be clearly indicated).

The language centre will also need to send the inspectors:

- Action plan for all points to be addressed in the initial report (not just those for which evidence requested by ASAC)
- Updated People to be seen form
- Updated self-evaluation document.

### **Part 2 – full inspection**

The inspection will be carried out by two inspectors and will be conducted as the first full inspection of a new applicant. The Accreditation Unit will advise on the length of the inspection:

- minimum one day plus a part day (for very small centres with no accommodation or under 18), approximate cost of £2,057.00 plus travel and accommodation expenses
- 1.5 days (for a school with fewer than eight teachers, accommodation provision or under 18), approximate cost £2,105.00 plus travel and accommodation expenses
- increasing in length, and cost, for centres with eight or more teachers.

There will be an initial video conference/phone call to discuss practicalities ahead of the formal start of the inspection.

- During the inspection, ideally at least one of the inspectors will travel to the teaching premises to observe provision in person but parts of the inspection may be conducted remotely by one or both inspectors. The inspectors will:
- Interview key staff: management, those with specific role responsibilities (accommodation, safeguarding) to understand their roles, how the organisation works and how policies are implemented. Cross check what they have read in policies and been told by management and discuss any changes since the initial inspection (including action against Points to be addressed).
- Conduct teacher and student focus groups.
- Review publicity and compare provision with what is advertised.
- Look at the premises and resources – get an impression of the site so they can describe it, verify the facilities and resources available and their condition, check health and safety.
- Observe teaching – classroom, online, hybrid.
- Review the information available to support students and staff and make sure things are done consistently, e.g. staff/student handbooks, meeting notes, recruitment records, notices on staff/student noticeboards.
- Evaluate any accommodation provision – policies, records, accommodation manager, ‘phone calls or video calls with hosts.
- Find out about any leisure programme.
- Check all arrangements for safeguarding under 18s are in place (if courses are usually offered for under 18s).
- Provide initial oral feedback at the end of the inspection (they cannot, however, indicate whether or not they will be recommending full accreditation).

## **Inspection report**

After their visit, the inspectors will write their report within four weeks of the inspection using a pro forma report template and submit it for consideration at the next meeting of the ASAC.

The ASAC will then make a recommendation to the Executive Board concerning accreditation. In the case of a language centre with provisional accreditation applying for full accreditation, the ASAC will recommend either ‘accreditation’ or ‘withholding of accreditation’. In order for full accreditation to be recommended, the inspection report must indicate that the standards of the Scheme are met in each of the five sections (four under 18 are never accepted). Where the provision does not meet the standards, i.e. at least one section summary states that the required minimum standards are not met, full accreditation will be withheld, and provisional accreditation will be withdrawn.



The inspectors will tell the language centre at the time of the inspection when they will be submitting their report and when ASAC will be considering it. Inspection results are sent to the main contact at the language centre by email within five working days of the ASAC meeting.

If full accreditation is granted, there will be a follow-up spot check inspection during the first 12- 18 months of full accreditation.