

## Written evidence submitted by Ofsted (ADM0029)

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. We inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Ofsted is a non-ministerial department.

We have set out responses to the Committee's direct questions below.

### **What policy, if any, you have in regard to the use of algorithms in your sector.**

Few algorithms are used within Ofsted. However, we do use a limited number to help us prioritise which providers to inspect and when. The algorithms that are used in this area are signed off by the Chief Statistician. The development of new algorithms is agreed by a project board, which includes policy and technical experts.

Ofsted has no policies regarding the use of algorithms within the providers it inspects. Providing policies of this nature would be beyond our inspection and regulation remit.

### **What rules or guidance you have issued about algorithms in your sector.**

We do not issue guidance to the providers we inspect about their use of algorithms. Providing this guidance would be beyond our inspection and regulation remit.

### **Any arrangements for bodies in the sector to make available, to you or the public, (i) the details of any algorithms used and/or (ii) an explanation of the way any algorithm functions, to aid understanding.**

Ofsted publishes details of our risk assessment methodology on our website. We publish enough information to allow providers to understand the process, but not enough for providers to replicate our risk assessment precisely. This is because our risk assessments inform our inspection schedule, and it is important that providers aren't able to predict when they might be inspected.

### **What arrangements are in place in the sector to monitor the development and use of algorithms.**

Within Ofsted, the development of algorithms which are used to inform our risk assessments are overseen by the Chief Statistician.

### **The accountability that bodies in the sector have to you for their use of algorithms.**

As set out above, we do not issue any guidance to, or expect any accountability from providers on their use of algorithms.

### **What assessments have been made of the impact that the Data Protection Bill, and the EU General Data Protection Regulation, will have in your sector in regard to the development and use of algorithms.**

This work is ongoing. Ofsted's Senior Information Rights Officer is leading work to ensure Ofsted operates according to General Data Protection Regulation.

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