

RE-INSPECTION MONITORING OF HARTPURY COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection Monitoring

The overall provision in work-based learning in horticulture is now satisfactory.

Background

Hartpury College was inspected in January 2002. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory in all areas inspected, except in work-based learning in horticulture which was found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum or WBL area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas.

As a result of the monitoring re-inspections inspectors may judge that the curriculum or work-based learning areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Date of the Re-Inspection Monitoring Visits

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection monitoring visits of work-based learning in horticulture took place on 22 and 23 October 2002, 2 and 3 April 2003 and 9 and 10 October 2003.

Work-based learning Horticulture

In the January 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses relating to work-based learning were identified within the inspection report:

Strengths

- Good understanding by work-based learners of horticultural principles
- Good support for students by employers.

Weaknesses

- Low pass rates for most work-based learners
- Insufficient machinery and equipment
- Poor management of work-based learning
- Ineffective use of workplace evidence towards NVQ achievement
- Ineffective linkage of theory to experience at work
- Lack of integration of Key Skills into the NVQ training
- Little use of APL to inform the planning of training programmes
- Unsatisfactory coordination of on and off-the-job training

- Poor awareness of ILPs by learners
- Lack of identification weaknesses by IV to improve quality
- Poor understanding by teachers and students of equality of opportunity.

Following the re-inspection monitoring inspections, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses and that overall provision in this area is now **satisfactory**.

Improvements have been made in the pass rates in the NVQ in Horticulture. For 2002-03 college data indicates a pass rate of 60%, a significant improvement on 2001-02. Achievement of frameworks is low, however several portfolios are awaiting accreditation. The standard of work and progress is satisfactory. Retention rates are good. Progress and attendance are carefully monitored and attendance is very good. Lessons observed used experiences at work well. Detailed initial assessment enables additional learning needs to be identified. A skills check is used to assess vocational skills and is discussed with employers to plan off-the-job tasks. However, this is not always implemented systematically to improve learners' speed of progress. Key skills is now well integrated into training. Learners are credited with key skills through their work or relevant tasks. Learners are well aware of the importance of key skills and have a good understanding of the modern apprenticeship framework. The use of workplace evidence is now satisfactory. The resources available for learners are now adequate. New learners are loaned laptop computers to help develop their IT skills.

The coordination of on and off-the-job training is satisfactory. Reviews with learners and employers identify short term targets. Regular audits are carried out of reviews. Twice- yearly observations of tutorials and reviews by staff take place. Good feedback is given and good practice is shared. The layout of Individual learning plans (ILPs) has been improved and target dates are set for individual elements of NVQ units. This is not yet fully implemented for all learners and some learners' understanding of progress is insufficient. ILPS are amended as the programme develops. Well minuted monthly meetings of the work-based learning team take place. These receive a good range of reports form the MIS system, and learners' achievement retention and progress is thoroughly discussed. Clearly planned internal verification identifies weaknesses in assessment and there is good feedback to assessors and sharing of good practice.

Review forms have been revised to ensure equal opportunities is raised. Induction coverage at induction is much improved. Some learners' understanding of equal opportunities is still insufficient. Monitoring of employers' own equal opportunities policies is not carried out. Equal opportunities is discussed at the monthly work-based meetings and all staff have had recent training.