

RE-INSPECTION MONITORING OF CAMBRIDGE REGIONAL COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the work-based learning areas of **Construction** and **Engineering** is now **satisfactory**.

Background

Cambridge Regional College was inspected in January 2003. 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 or better in all areas inspected, except in construction, engineering and hairdressing and beauty therapy, which were 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 leadership and management, or solely WBL that is less than satisfactory, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that the WBL areas, or leadership and management and any unsatisfactory curriculum areas, are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, but there is curriculum provision that is less than satisfactory, there will be no monitoring visits. In these cases, all unsatisfactory provision will be re-inspected normally during one week within 24 months of the original inspection.

If, after approximately 24 months, or after a re-inspection, 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

In accordance with the above procedures, a re-inspection monitoring visit took place on 21-22 February 2005 to consider the progress being made in work-based learning in construction and engineering.

Construction

In the January 2003 inspection, the quality of work-based learning in this area was judged to be

unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- improved and now high retention and pass rates in national certificate in building studies
- good practical work in heating and ventilation
- high retention rates on electrical installation programmes
- good support for students.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates in NVQ trowel and bricklaying programmes
- poor completion of the full framework by modern apprentices
- much uninspiring teaching
- unsatisfactory assessment practice on NVQ programmes
- unsatisfactory management of work-based learning.

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

Pass rates in national vocational qualification (NVQ) trowel and bricklaying programmes have improved, and are now satisfactory. The achievement of frameworks for foundation modern apprentice (FMA) students has improved but still remains poor. At the time of the full inspection, the college transferred students from FMA to advanced modern apprentice (AMA) programmes before they had completed the FMA framework. This practice has been stopped. Significant actions have been taken to improve learners' achievements, and there has been a noticeable impact on achievement of different elements of the framework. The achievement of AMAs has also improved

and is now satisfactory.

The standard of teaching observed is satisfactory. In the better lessons the pace of learning is good and students are actively engaged. The teaching of key skills has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory.

Assessment is now being undertaken in the workplace in all craft areas, and is part of most learning programmes. Workplace assessment is being carried out, and workplace evidence is being recorded to meet awarding body requirements. Evidence is being cross-referenced to performance criteria. The standard of portfolios is at least satisfactory and, in some cases, good. Tracking and monitoring of progress have been significantly improved.

The management of work-based learning is now satisfactory. Employer briefing meetings and a number of vocational tutor assessor posts have been introduced. Communications between the college and employers has been improved. In some crafts, for example heating and ventilation, co-ordination between on and off-the-job training is good.

Engineering

In the January 2003 inspection, the quality of work-based learning in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- high retention rates on City and Guilds motor vehicle courses
- good balance of student activities in most lessons
- well-resourced practical areas
- courses meeting the needs of students and employers.

Weaknesses

- low retention and pass rates on foundation modern apprenticeships
- student understanding not always checked in lessons
- poor management of work-based learning

- unsatisfactory management of some courses.

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

Retention rates have improved and are now satisfactory. Pass rates remain poor; however, pass rates for elements of the framework have improved significantly. The college transferred students from FMA to AMA programmes before they had completed the FMA framework. This practice has been stopped. Significant actions have been taken to increase learners' achievements. Achievement rates of individual key skills have improved. Students who started in September 2004 are making satisfactory to good progress, and many are completing elements of key skills early.

The management of work-based learning is now satisfactory. Lines of responsibility are clear. Managers provide clear direction, and appropriate targets are set for improvement. A number of additional posts have been created, for example a specific key skills co-ordinator. Key skills are now delivered early in the programme.

Monitoring of student progress is now good. Good use is made of visible tracking charts and students have a good knowledge of their progress and of qualification requirements. Students' progress is now rigorously monitored at a range of individual and team meetings. Arrangements to provide additional support to help students' progress are good.

There will be no further monitoring visits to the college because there are no further unsatisfactory areas.