



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



## RE-INSPECTION MONITORING OF BLACKBURN COLLEGE

Published May 2005

### Outcome of Re-Inspection Monitoring

The overall provision in the engineering work-based learning (WBL) area is now **satisfactory** and in the hospitality, sports and leisure WBL area it is now **good**.

### Background

Blackburn College was inspected in January 2004. 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 engineering and hospitality, sports and leisure WBL areas which were found to be less than satisfactory.

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 where leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory leadership and management, or less than satisfactory provision in solely WBL, inspectors from Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the less than satisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that previously less than satisfactory areas of provision, or leadership and management, are now 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. All less than satisfactory provision will be re-inspected, normally during one week, within two years of the original inspection.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgment 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 engineering and hospitality, sports and leisure WBL areas took place on 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> September 2004 and 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

## Engineering WBL

In the January 2004 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

### Strengths

- very effective use of ICT in teaching and learning
- well-planned curriculum with good progression routes
- very good individual support for students.

### Weaknesses

- low pass rates for work-based learning
- insufficiently challenging teaching
- insufficient information and evaluation on lesson plans.

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

Since the inspection of January 2004, six learners have achieved the full apprenticeship framework. Two learners completed in advance of scheduled dates. There are another six learners who are on target to complete the full framework. Previous to the inspection no learner had successfully completed the key skills aspect of his or her framework. This aspect of the framework has improved considerably. All work-based learners are now given a key skills initial assessment, which did not occur prior to the inspection of January 2004. Since the full inspection the college has developed a progress tracking system to monitor individual and overall progress of learners. This has been very successful and has led to the introduction of systems to identify learners who are in danger of falling behind or dropping out of the programme. As a consequence of this action, all learners who

commenced their training since September 2004 are still in training.

Successful efforts have been made to ensure that tutors know the identified needs of learners before lesson plans are prepared. The arrangements are intended to better inform tutors about the group profile of classes. This includes the identification of learning styles and attributes of learners. However, this has not led to capturing these differences on the lesson plan. In practice, differentiation does take place, especially in practical groups where slower learners are paired with supportive peers and the tutor gives more support to those learners who require it. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the re-inspection.

Improvements have been made in lesson plan organisation and design by motor vehicle tutors. Work and lesson plans are now held in files located in a centralised location. Standard formats for lesson plans have been completed and introduced into the technology section. At the full inspection there was insufficient detail in lesson plans, especially in relation to key skills evidence gathering and evaluation of learning taking place. These issues have now been rectified. All staff attended a meeting in which lesson plans and schemes of work were discussed. Management looked at an example of each individual tutor's lesson plans to assess their quality and make recommendations for improvement. In December a member of staff from another section in the faculty held a workshop to share good practice in order to further improve the quality of lessons plans. Plans are also formally reviewed and quality assured using internal college quality assurance systems. Unsatisfactory lesson plans are returned with suggestions for improvement.

### **Hospitality, sports and leisure WBL**

In the January 2004 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

#### **Strengths**

- high retention rates on many courses
- outstanding development of students' confidence and personal effectiveness
- good learning materials to support individual learning
- effective development of key skills for full-time students in hospitality and sports
- wide range of relevant enrichment activities.

## Weaknesses

- low pass rates on level 2 bakery and level 1 food preparation courses
- low retention rates for work-based learning
- poor achievement of the framework by work-based learners
- unsatisfactory development of hospitality and catering students' practical skills
- insufficient research and investigation by students on advanced level courses.

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

Good improvements have been made to retention rates. Currently retention on the apprentice programme is 96%, and it is 100% on the advanced apprenticeship. This has been achieved by introducing rigorous recruitment, guidance and selection procedures. The selection process ensures learners are recruited onto the appropriate level of framework. Learners' apprenticeship programmes are better matched to their job role. Initial assessment and induction procedures have been improved, which has had a positive impact on retention. Induction is clearly structured and includes a settling-in period for the learner before they commit totally to the framework. During this period employers are fully informed of the support requirements of the apprentice. Learner attendance at college is closely monitored and employers are kept informed of attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance is rewarded with prizes being given for excellent attendance.

The college has made good progress in improving achievement rates of the apprenticeship programmes. The chefs' modern apprenticeship framework achievement is now 95% with 100% achievement for the advanced apprenticeship. Assessments are now frequent and in most cases on demand. Individual action planning is effective and there has been significant improvement in assessment feedback to learners.

A programme management file has been developed to assist in the quality assurance of the programme and to improve learner progression. Learners are monitored on a regular basis and receive valuable information that was previously delayed and resulted in slow progress towards qualification. Employers receive a calendar of learning events that enables them to plan working patterns for their employees and thus avoid missing key learning activity, for example key skills end tests.

The regularity of assessment visits has improved, and this has had a positive impact upon assessment opportunities. Learners are now able to progress more swiftly through the NVQ by effective pre-planning of assessment activities. College-based learners receive weekly observations, and each work-based learner is visited every two weeks at their employer's workplace.

Good improvements have been made to learner development and progression. Assessment and observation documents have been improved to guide assessors in writing evaluative judgements. Assessment decisions are clear and provide the learners with detailed guidance on how to improve their skills and knowledge base. Target achievement dates are set for the action required following assessment. During an observed assessment the assessor provided verbal and written feedback giving evaluative statements that correctly judged the learner's competence. Feedback is recorded within learner portfolios and appropriate terminology is used to evaluate learner performance.

The college has used more assessors to ensure that the full range and diversity of work-based programmes are assessed by vocationally competent assessors. This has been particularly required for the chef's advanced apprenticeship programme due to the specialist skills used in advanced work. Two WBL assessors have undertaken professional development during the summer vacation to further enhance their front of house skills and provide evidence of current industrial working practices to support their occupational competences for NVQ assessment. During an assessment observed by inspectors there was good use of questioning to test learners' underpinning knowledge. Clear feedback was provided to the learners, which was effective in evaluating their performance.

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

---

© Crown copyright 2005. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced verbatim without adaptation, and the source and date of publication are stated.  
Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

