



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



RE-INSPECTION OF THE CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE

Published April 2005

Outcome of Re-inspection

- The overall provision in engineering work-based learning is now **satisfactory**.
- The overall provision in the curriculum area of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) remains **unsatisfactory**.

Background

The City of Wolverhampton 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 engineering work-based learning and in ESOL 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 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 the re-inspection of engineering work-based learning and ESOL took place during the week of 7 to 11 March 2005.

Engineering work-based learning

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

Strengths

- good retention rates on most courses
- good achievement on NVQ performing manufacturing operations courses
- very good development of practical skills
- good teaching and learning
- well-equipped workshop facilities
- effective additional learning support.

Weaknesses

- poor work-based learning provision
- poor development of key skills
- inadequate health and safety practices in motor vehicle and fabrication workshops.

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

The number of work-based students has increased from 40 at the time of the original inspection to

50 at the time of the re-inspection. Success rates for foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships have improved during the last two years. Retention rates for these awards have also improved and are now satisfactory. There is satisfactory development of learners' key skills.

Standards of teaching and learning in inspected lessons were satisfactory or better. Learners have a satisfactory initial learning assessment and induction programme. Assessment in the workplace is now scheduled regularly and appropriately qualified assessors carry out these assessments. Learners have individual training plans and these enable clearly defined progress and assessment targets to be set. Monitoring of the progress of learners is now more rigorous, with scheduled review meetings in the workplace every 12 weeks. There are also timetabled weekly tutorial sessions. There is adequate monitoring of health and safety issues during learner progress reviews.

Resources are well matched to the training needs of work-based learners. Work placements are of high quality. Employers are supportive of college programmes but have a limited understanding of the apprenticeship framework. Some employers do not allow sufficient time for learners' portfolio completion. Adequate attention is given to matters of equality and diversity. The overall management of engineering work-based learning is now good.

ESOL

In the January 2003 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

- effective response to meeting the needs of the local community
- good classroom accommodation
- good use of a wide range of enrichment activities.

Weaknesses

- poor attendance and punctuality
- inadequate arrangements to monitor progress and achievement of learners
- insufficient development of individual learners' use of language
- narrow range of teaching styles.

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that insufficient progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses. The overall provision in this area remains **unsatisfactory**.

There is insufficient emphasis on the development of students' personal and learning skills, and students do not have adequate opportunities to develop independent learning. The attendance and punctuality of students have improved since the last inspection, and punctuality is now satisfactory.

The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and learning is much higher than the national average for the area of learning. Teachers pay insufficient attention to students' individual learning needs and most do not make effective use of individual learning plans. In some classes, all of the students have the same learning targets. Formative assessment practice is weak, with insufficient checks on students' learning during lessons. Some class sizes are too large to enable effective learning. The less than satisfactory lessons are too teacher-led and have insufficient emphasis on speaking accurately and learning relevant functional language. A minority of teachers use incorrect spoken English and make spelling errors in lessons. In some lessons, teachers make good use of ICT to help students to learn.

There are good procedures for the admission, initial assessment and induction of students. Learners can join classes throughout the year. The provision is responsive to community needs and classes are run at community venues and on Saturdays. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

There are some remaining weaknesses in curriculum management. These include ineffective self-assessment, internal verification procedures that lack rigour, and insufficient sharing of good practice amongst teachers.

There will be no further re-inspection of the college as the stipulated 24 months from the original inspection has expired.