



Farnborough College of Technology

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Better  
education  
and care

# Re-inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2006	Provider reference 130689
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## Introduction

Farnborough 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 essential skills, hairdressing and beauty therapy and hairdressing work-based learning which was found to be less than satisfactory. Ofsted is responsible for re-inspecting all provision that is less than satisfactory within two years of the original inspection. If inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision remain inadequate following re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at annual assessment visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the full college inspection.

The less than satisfactory essential skills was re-inspected on 24 and 25 January 2006. The outcomes of the re-inspection are as follows.

Foundation Programmes Area	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Literacy and Numeracy		
Essential Skills	4	2

## Context

The college offers a wide range of part-time courses in literacy and numeracy. There are 190 learners enrolled on these courses. Courses leading to accreditation are offered from entry level to level 2.

### *Strengths*

- *high retention and achievement rates in literacy*
- *high retention and achievement rates in numeracy at Entry and Level 1*
- *good development of learners' confidence and skills in literacy and numeracy*
- *high quality accommodation and learning resources*
- *good teaching*

### *Areas for improvement*

- *insufficient staff resources for prompt assessment for dyslexia*

## Achievement and standards

Learners on literacy and numeracy courses successfully develop their confidence and personal skills. They develop independent study skills and the standard of their work is good. Retention and pass rates on literacy and numeracy courses are high, except for numeracy level 2 where pass rates are

below national averages. This has been identified by the college and appropriate action is being taken to bring about improvement.

### Quality of provision

Most teaching is now good. Teachers use a wide range of learning activities with extended tasks to challenge learners at all levels. Additional support staff and volunteers are managed well to support the learners effectively. The assessment of learners' work is thorough and progress is recorded in their individual learning plans. These individual learning plans contain long-term and short-term targets with completion dates. Targets on some learning plans are too general and need to be more detailed and specific.

The new skills development centre provides high quality accommodation. It contains a wide range of new materials and good information and learning technology resources which enhance teaching and promote learning.

Dyslexia testing is available to all learners but there are insufficient staff to provide full assessments promptly.

### Leadership and management

The management of foundation programmes is good. There has been a management restructure which ensures that there are regular foundation programme meetings to ensure consistency and sharing of good practice. The SAR has identified the need for a more robust programme for the observation of teaching and learning, and this has been introduced. The college has now developed a skills for life policy to ensure more consistent delivery across the college.

The less than satisfactory hairdressing and beauty therapy and WBL in hairdressing were re-inspected on 24 and 25 January 2006. The outcomes of the re-inspection are as follows.

Curriculum and WBL area	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	4	2
Hairdressing work based learning	4	2

### Context

The college offers a range of full time and part time courses in hairdressing, beauty and holistic therapy ranging from level 1 to foundation degree. Work-based learning is offered in hairdressing through the foundation modern apprenticeships. There are 58 full time and 144 part time learners of which 71 are work-based learners.

### *Strengths*

- *improved retention and pass rates on level 2 NVQ hairdressing and work-based learning programmes*
- *much good teaching*
- *good monitoring of progress through individual learning plans*
- *improved assessment planning and tracking*
- *good accommodation and resources*
- *vocationally relevant key skills provision*

### *Areas for improvement*

- *strategies for increasing employer engagement*
- *widening the client base for specific activities*
- *developing more opportunities for independent learning*

### Achievement and standards

Retention and pass rates have improved steadily between 2001 and 2005 on NVQ hairdressing courses at levels 2 and 3 and are now above average. On NVQ beauty therapy courses at level 2 retention has risen significantly and pass rates are well above average. Retention rates are above national average on body massage courses, but pass rates declined in 2005 and have now dipped below the national average.

Retention and achievement rates for work-based learners have improved significantly since the last inspection. Retention rates have risen from 42% in 2001 to 69% in 2004. Achievement rates have improved steadily, rising from 33% in 2001 to 64% in 2004.

### Quality of provision

Most of the teaching observed was good, particularly in practical lessons. Teachers were prepared with comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans. Clear objectives were set at the start of lessons but not all teachers checked whether learners had understood the requirements. In the best lessons teachers used a variety of teaching strategies to engage learners and took account of learners with specific learning needs, for example, voice enhancement for a learner with hearing impairment. Learning was checked throughout most lessons and learners used their individual learning plans to set targets for the next lesson. In some sessions target setting was led too much by the teacher with limited input from the learner. Independent learning in theory sessions for level 2 and level 3 learners is not yet sufficiently developed. In some lessons the pace was slow and learners did not make as much progress as they could.

Good health and safety, hygiene and salon practices are in place. Learners are challenged to work within commercial timings. Key skills are vocationally relevant and integrated into the curriculum. Salons have been refurbished and now provide a good realistic working environment. Increased staffing for the hair and beauty reception has improved the booking system for the clients. Learners are well supported and most feel they are making good progress. Assessments are now scheduled regularly throughout the year and internal verification processes are good. All learners take diagnostic tests and skills assessments early in their programme which ensures they are working at the appropriate level for practical work and key skills.

### Leadership and management

Leadership and management are now good. Managers have brought about the necessary change to improve the quality of provision. Staff work well as a team to develop and improve the provision. There are regular team meetings and workshops for sharing best practice and resources. Good planning for internal verification ensures that verification takes place each term. Improved marketing strategies have increased the client base and opportunities for learners to work with clients. However, the diversity of the client base is limited with some classes lacking specific types of clients to cover the necessary range of treatments. The college endeavours to make contact with employers through an employer forum but attendance by employers is low.