

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Scarborough Sixth Form College
Date of visit: 20 November 2006

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit. It focuses on the themes explored during the visit and does not attempt to give a comprehensive overview of the college's performance.

Achievement and standards

College achievements

Learners aged 16-18

- in 2004/05 success, retention and pass rates were similar to the national averages for sixth form colleges. Success rates at levels 1 and 2 were high and at the average at level 3
- college data for 2005/06 show that success rates fell to the average at level 1, remained above average at level 2 and fell to be below average at level 3
- the GCE A-level success rate has been close to the national average in the four years to 2006. The pass rate fell slightly in 2006 but remains close to the average. The rate was adversely affected by the low general studies pass rate in 2006. With this subject removed, the pass rate is high
- the GCE AS success rate fell in 2006 to be 5% below average. The pass rate was close to the average. With general studies results removed, these rates are much higher
- the pass rate on AVCE courses in 2006 was high
- value added data show that learners performed less well than their incoming levels of attainment suggest in a significant number of subjects

Adult learners

- the small number of adult learners achieved well; success and pass rates were in the top quartile of similar colleges

Quality of education and training

Learner numbers

- FT learner numbers have increased steadily in recent years. In 2005/06, due to over-recruitment against target, some were not funded.

Learner support

- in response to the last inspection report arrangements for learner support have been strengthened on a number of fronts. For example,
 - the management structure has been changed and a number of senior tutor posts created
 - individual learning plans and learner progress information are now located on the college computer network, allowing closer monitoring of learners and easy access to records for appropriate staff
 - processes for the initial assessment of learners' attainment in basic skills are being piloted
 - additional learner support for targeted learners is being implemented
 - a document, "Scarborough expects" outlines the expectations placed on learners, staff and managers. Expectations of learners are promulgated appropriately

Teaching and learning

- increased emphasis has been placed on improving teaching. For example, a whole staff conference focussed on good practice in teaching and learning; learner questionnaires and focus groups concentrate more closely on teaching quality; and the college continues to use external consultants to help it improve teaching and learning
- learners are positive about the learning experience at the college, particularly so about the feedback they receive on the quality of their work and the monitoring of their progress. They confirm that in some instances there remains a variability in the quality of both teaching and of tutorials
- the team teaching general studies has been strengthened this year, and improved learning materials are being developed

Leadership and management

Management

- in order to eliminate the variability in the quality of tutorials and in some subject areas, noted in the last inspection report, the college has implemented a raft of changes, for example
 - the establishment and dissemination of new strategic priorities
 - improved professional development reviews which are more clearly aligned to the outcomes of self assessment and are used to set clear, appropriate and closely-monitored targets. Senior managers possess a good knowledge of the issues pertaining to each subject area
 - management training

Quality assurance

- the college continues to use outside consultancy to help improve the accuracy of the lesson observation process and the quality of provision
- self-assessment draws on a detailed analysis of learners' achievements
- the college analyses the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning carefully and uses the results of this analysis to inform the whole-college self-assessment report and professional development programme. Some curriculum area team do not analyse the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning in their areas of work sufficiently