

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of college: Shipley College

Date of visit: 23/11/06

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

What does the college's own data for 2005/06 indicate? Have the success rates for those aged 16-18 at level 3 improved?

- Whole college data was still being collated for 2006 at the time of the annual assessment visit. However, college data compiled to date indicates that the high success rates for those aged 19 or over have been maintained. The success rates for learners aged 16-18 improved in 2005/06 from 47% to 54%, although still below the national average. The curriculum has been adjusted for 2006/07. A number of previously lower-performing courses, which impacted on the overall retention and achievement at level 3, have been replaced and there is now an increased focus on vocationally-orientated programmes.

What has been done to improve the low framework achievement in work-based learning (WBL)? Are there signs of improvement?

- The college has recognised the need to ensure that learners are enrolled on the correct programme to meet their needs. A variety of routes are now available including 'NVQ-only' and entry to employment (E2E) as well as work-based learning. Managers scrutinize data effectively and fewer learners are leaving early. A detailed action plan focuses on both managers' and section leaders' actions to improve the overall framework success rates. At programme level these actions include the re-structuring of programme delivery to better incorporate framework elements such as the technical certificate and key skills from the beginning.
- The latest published data for period 12 records some improvement in the overall success rate from 13% in 2004/05 to 31% in 2005/6. Individual area improvements include health from 13% in 2003/04 to 30%, ICT from 4% to 37%, and business administration from 0% to

37%. Agriculture decreased from 44% to 25%. Unpublished data for period 13, however, indicates further improvements in all areas with an overall success rate of 44%. Success rates are still below the current national averages, but actions taken to improve outcomes in WBL are starting to impact.

## Quality of education and training

At the last inspection Every Child Matters (ECM) themes were judged to be outstanding. How has the college continued to develop and monitor this aspect of their work?

- Overall provision in regards to the ECM themes remains outstanding. The college has continued to promote ECM through its 'everyone matters' agenda. Existing strengths have been built upon under all five themes. ECM themes are actively promoted in all classrooms and are now incorporated into schemes of work. Learners' health, safety and well-being are given priority through tutorial, induction and additional personal and social education (PSE) sessions. Since January 2006 increased advertising of the fitness suite has encouraged more students to use the gymnasium. Learners based mainly at the Mill Building, however, are not always aware of the enrichment activities available to them.
- The celebration and promotion of cultural diversity remains particularly strong for both staff and learners. Staff awareness has been heightened through a programme of disability and cultural awareness training. There are a range of opportunities for students to get involved in different aspects of citizenship. Learners are encouraged to engage with members of the local community and take ownership for their own targets for improvement. They feel they have a genuine voice and two-way dialogue with college staff, and their views are listened to.

What specific strategies have been developed to improve teaching and learning in the foundation for learning and life area? Are there signs these are working?

- A cross-college strategy is now in place to improve teaching and learning in all areas. Within foundation for learning and life there is a particular focus on developing the rigour of individual target setting and the monitoring of individual learning plans (ILPs). Progress against these actions is regularly reviewed. Improved rigour in internal

observations has enabled the area to more effectively identify and action areas for development.

## Leadership and management

How is the college ensuring all aspects of its quality assurance are equally robust?

- Overall revisions to the management of quality assurance now provide a more rigorous and cohesive college-wide approach. The college rightly recognises the need to develop in-year action plans to include more measurable targets. An increased schedule of formal review of these documents provides more rigorous monitoring of progress and has helped managers to more effectively compare area performance.
- A revised quality cycle is applied to both staff and learners with clear links developed between staff training requirements and outcomes from the internal observation scheme. All staff have received training in lesson observation to foster an improved understanding of the process. Good collaboration with partner colleges in observation activities has aided consistency of practice and is being expanded this academic year. The identification and use of advanced practitioners and subject coaches have been very effective in providing additional focus on, and support for, teaching and learning. All teaching staff are now required to identify and work to improve four elements of teaching and learning in their practice.

How much progress has been made post-inspection against the areas identified for improvement? How has any action taken so far impacted on the learners' experience?

- The college has made good progress and in some cases very good progress in identifying issues and appropriate action for development. Areas identified for improvement have been carefully analysed and a whole-college approach has been embraced. A clear, regularly-monitored post-inspection action plan is in place and focuses particularly on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Involvement in a Quality Improvement Project has led to the development of a more robust approach to monitoring teaching and learning. From September 2006 a developmental and supportive system of lesson observation has been introduced and welcomed by staff.

- It is too early to judge the full impact of all the measures taken on the learner experience, however there are signs of improvement in the success of learners aged 16-18 and for those studying on work-based learning programmes.

Any other observations from the visit not identified in the pre-visit analysis:

- The college has continued to expand its highly effective 14-16 provision. In 2005/06 69% of learners achieved a full qualification, an increase of 10% from the previous year. Around a third of these learners progressed onto further education courses at Shipley College. This academic year, learner numbers have risen by 22%, a wider range of programmes has been offered and flexible off-site delivery has been introduced.
- There continues to be a strong commitment to social and educational inclusion. To support Local Learning Skills strategy, funding has recently been gained to work directly with a large, specific cohort of male learners from September 2006 who may be at risk of not completing their education. Presently over 90% of these learners remain on programme.
- A creative and practical approach has been taken to producing the college's self-assessment report (SAR). The draft 2005/06 SAR is more sharply focused on key strengths and weaknesses than its predecessor. A user-friendly summary has been designed which is more accessible to staff and stakeholders, containing both textual and photographic evidence.