ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Henley College Coventry
Date of visit: 28 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

How well do learners achieve?
- The overall college success rate improved by 14% between 2002/03 and 2004/05, compared with an increase in the national average of 8% over the same period. In 2004/05 the overall college success rate was 74%, significantly above the national average of 72%.
- Success rates for learners aged 16-18 in 2004/05 were significantly below the national averages at levels 1 and 3, and similar to the national average at level 2. Success rates have improved since 2002/03 by 2%, 11% and 17% at levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The overall success rate for learners aged 16-18 in 2004/05 was 65% which was similar to the national average of 66%.
- Success rates for adults in 2004/05 were significantly below the national averages at levels 1 and 3, and similar to the national average at level 2. Success rates have improved since 2002/03 by 5% at levels 1 and 2, and 7% at level 3. The overall success rate for adults in 2004/05 was 77% which was significantly above the national average of 74%.
- Value-added and distance travelled indicators published by the LSC suggest that most learners achieve in line with expectations based on their prior attainment. The college has started to use an alternative method to estimate value-added by comparing points scores on entry with qualifications achieved. This information will be used for self-assessment from 2006/07 onwards.
- Work-based learning data indicates that overall success rates for apprenticeships have improved in recent years. However in 2005/06 the overall success rate was below the national average. Timely success rates for apprenticeships have also improved, but are still below the national average.
- At the time of the annual assessment visit in November 2006, around 4% of qualification outcomes for 2005/06 have yet to be confirmed. There

have been clear improvements in the success rates on level 3 courses. The overall college success rate is likely to be similar or slightly better than in 2004/05.

Quality of education and training

What actions has the college taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning? What has been the impact of these actions?

- Since the last Annual Assessment Visit, the college has continued to focus on its arrangements for improving the quality of teaching and learning. In 2005/06 the college carried out 240 internal observations of teaching and learning, which included 26 observations of tutorials. Around 90% of full-time staff were observed and approximately 50% of part-time staff. All new staff were prioritised for observation.
- Overall trends in teaching observation profiles have been variable over the past two years. The college has been successful in reducing its proportion of inadequate teaching and learning grades to around 3%. The proportion of good or better grades decreased by 12.5% between 2004/05 and 2005/06, although it should be noted that not all teachers were observed during this period and the decrease coincided with a focus on improving satisfactory teaching. In the first term of the current academic year there has been a noted increase in the proportion of outstanding grades awarded, which improved to 12% compared to 3.5% in 2005/06.
- In 2005/06 there was a particular focus on improving satisfactory teaching. Staff whose lessons were graded as satisfactory were supported by a member of the teaching and quality team who advised them on how to improve. Teachers were then re-observed within six months. Out of the 33 teachers with satisfactory grades who were re-observed, 29 improved their grades at the second observation.
- Advanced practitioners lead termly departmental training sessions on different aspects of teaching and learning found to be weak, such as differentiation and the effective use of information learning technology. There is also a good bank of briefing sheets on a wide range of teaching topics. The college has recently focused some training on outstanding teaching, and on teaching at foundation level.
- The college produces a useful report, which identifies strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in all curriculum areas. However, this report does not formally analyse the differences between full- and part-time teachers, or the differences in teaching and learning grades across

different types of provision, for instance community-based and main site courses.

How effective is the tutorial provision at the college? How effective are target-setting and progress reviews? How does the college assess the quality of academic tutorials?

- The college continues to improve its tutorial provision. In the past year the college has begun to observe, grade and report on tutorial provision. In 2005/06, 26 observations of tutorials were undertaken with 69% graded as good or better. In the current year, 13 observations have been carried out with similar results.
- The college has a good set of procedures for assessing and monitoring tutorials. In the past year it has developed and improved the auditing of individual learning plans and progress reviews. All departments have carried out an audit of their tutorial provision and identified strengths and areas for development. There has been a particular focus on ensuring that specific and measurable targets are being used.
- The tutorial provision is also assessed through the use of learner feedback. In the early stages of the academic year, the college carries out a survey on a sample of approximately 100 courses to gauge learner feedback on initial advice and guidance, and on induction. Immediate changes to identified problems have been made as a result of this feedback.
- The college carries out a major learner survey on all aspects of its provision. Learner satisfaction on tutorial support compares favourably with other colleges using the same survey.
- The college has a good bank of resources available to advanced tutorial practitioners. There are specific sets of briefing notes on better tutoring covering the overall process, reviews of individual learning plans and target-setting. There are also accessible resource materials on the college intranet. All departments have had training on review processes and target-setting.

Leadership and management

What actions have been taken to improve the provision in business and professional studies and what has been the impact of these actions? Using this area as an example, does the college make good use of measurable criteria to monitor action plan progress?

- The college self assessed the provision in business and professional studies to be inadequate in 2004/05. A number of actions have taken place to try to improve the provision and the 2005/06 self-assessment report judges it to be satisfactory.
- A curriculum improvement review (CIR) carried out in May 2005 concluded that the provision in business and professional studies was unsatisfactory. Under normal circumstances a second CIR takes place after one year to assess the improvement in the provision. In this case, however, although some improvements were noted, ongoing staff problems, relatively low learner satisfaction and a lack of marked improvement in success rates led to the postponement of the CIR until October 2006.
- The CIR in October 2006 concluded that there had been sufficient improvements in the provision for the area to be graded as satisfactory overall, and this has been reflected in the 2005/06 self-assessment report. The specific improvements reported were in staffing, course management, closer monitoring of learners' attendance and progress, and improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The college recognises that the improvements noted in the self-assessment report for 2005/06 have not yet been reflected in improved success rates. The success rates on business courses and key skills qualifications in 2005/06 were inadequate. However, with the exception of the national diploma in business, retention on courses to date in 2006/07 is high and attendance on all courses is also good.
- The action improvement plan for business and professional studies in 2006/07 has been informed by the curriculum improvement review (CIR) and self assessment. Actions are appropriately detailed and broken down into steps. Responsibilities are mostly specific and review dates are in place for each action. Targets are in place for success rates on all full-time and most substantive part-time courses. However, success criteria for many actions could be more specific and linked to quantifiable indicators to enable a more accurate view of progress against the improvement plan.

How has the college improved its monitoring of equality and diversity data in 2005/06 and what has been the impact of any improved monitoring?

- The college has made only slight progress in addressing the weakness identified in its 2004/05 self-assessment report on the insufficient analysis of success rates of different groups at programme level. This year the college's information system has produced the required data at programme level. However, there has been little analysis or use of this data, and it is not included in the 2005/06 self-assessment report. The college does not yet provide this data at course level. Several curriculum areas refer to this as an area for development in the self-assessment report. The college is aware of the need to provide further staff training on how to use the available data relating to equality and diversity. The college intends to address this issue during 2006/07.

- The college does monitor and use diversity data at the whole college level and includes this analysis in a report to governors. It also uses the data in monitoring the equal opportunities action plan and the disability equality scheme. The report to governors identifies the lowest and highest achieving groups and actions are identified to address any areas of underperformance. For example, data suggests that learners aged 16-18 with learning difficulties achieve less well than their peers. To help address this issue, the college has set up a transition support service to offer better support for learners with learning difficulties as they move from schools to the college.