

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: North Warwickshire and Hinckley College  
Date of visit: 6 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 7% between 2002/03 and 2004/05. The increase in the national average during this period was also 7%. In 2004/05 the overall college success rate was 84%. This was significantly above the national average.
- Success rates for 16-18 year olds in 2004/05 were significantly above the national averages at levels 1, 2 and 3. Success rates have improved since 2002/03 by 8%, 9% and 9% at levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The overall success rate for 16-18 year olds in 2004/05 was 74% which was significantly above the national average.
- Success rates for adults in 2004/05 were significantly above the national average at levels 1, 2 and 3. Success rates have improved since 2002/03 by 2%, 12% and 8% at levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The overall success rate for adults in 2004/05 was 86% which was significantly above the national average.
- Value-added and distance travelled indicators published by the LSC suggest that most learners achieve in line with expectations based on their prior attainment.
- Work-based learning data indicates that overall success rates for apprenticeships have improved in recent years and are above the national average. Timely success rates for apprenticeships have also improved and are above the national average.
- At the time of the annual assessment visit in November 2006, around 4% of the qualification outcomes for 2005/06 had yet to be confirmed. However, college data indicates that success rates for 16-18 year olds and for adults on long courses improved in 2005/06. Success rates on short courses for 16-18 year olds and adults are likely to be similar to the previous year. In 2005/06 there was a marked increase in the proportion of long qualifications taken by learners compared to short qualifications. It is likely that the overall success rate in 2005/06 will be similar to that of the previous year and above the national average.

## Quality of education and training

To what extent has the college developed the use of ICT to support teaching and learning? What has been the impact of any developments?

- The college has continued to develop the use of ICT to support teaching and learning. An information learning technology (ILT) strategy has been established and priorities are being implemented. The college has also introduced two new posts to coordinate and support cross-college ILT development. The college ILT core team has been extended with the addition of seconded staff from within curriculum areas. There is an ILT cross-college steering group chaired by the vice-principal for quality and curriculum.
- The use of ILT in teaching and learning and the involvement of staff in relevant training have been incorporated into the target-setting and review process for staff appraisal. The take up of staff training leading to ICT qualifications has increased. The use of ILT in teacher training has also been extended. ILT resources in the college have improved.
- A detailed implementation plan for the promotion and development of ILT has been produced for 2006-2008. The aims include a target for establishing courses on the college virtual learning environment. This target has already been exceeded and there has been an increase in the use of ILT in curriculum areas. However the evaluation of these on-line courses and a review of the impact of greater use of ILT have not yet taken place. This work scheduled for the end of the academic year 2006/07.

How effective are target-setting and progress reviews? Do academic tutorials promote progress? Are there any significant differences between the experiences of full-time and part-time learners? How does the college assess the quality of academic tutorials?

- The college has comprehensive and appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that learners are involved in effective individual target setting and progress reviews. These processes are monitored and improved through the college's quality improvement arrangements. The college has recently extended these processes into new areas of work, for example provision for 14-16 year olds.
- All learners receive an induction which includes the production of an individual learning plan based on initial assessment. The plan is used effectively with learners during tutorials as a basis for reviewing progress, establishing targets and action planning.
- Improvements have been made to the college progress reporting system for individual learners. There is now an electronic system which enables teachers and tutors to access all the information about a learner's progress in order to inform reviews. Appropriate targets are

set and reviewed regularly. Employers are involved in the progress reviews of work-based learners.

- Learner satisfaction surveys indicate very positive feedback about the quality of tutorials.
- There are no significant differences in the entitlement for tutorials between full-time, part-time and work-based learners.
- The college monitors the effectiveness of tutorials through observation and the evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment. Standards for tutoring are published as part of the best practice guidelines for tutors. These standards are used as a basis for quality improvement monitoring, staff development and support for tutors. From 2005/06 lead tutors have carried out observations of tutorials and the outcomes are recorded on the college database. The college has yet to agree on an appropriate format for grading the quality of tutorials.

## Leadership and management

How has the college improved its use of targets and performance indicators and what impact has this had on the quality of provision?

- The college has made clear improvements in its use of targets and performance indicators following restructuring in 2005/06.
- A new mission was agreed in 2006 and the 2006-09 strategic plan focuses on three key aims. Each aim is linked to operating statements which are associated with quantifiable outcomes.
- A planning group has started to meet regularly in 2006/07 to assess performance against a wide range of targets. Directors are challenged to explain any significant variance in performance and to take action to address any issues. These actions are reviewed at subsequent meetings. This process has only been introduced in the current academic year. Working methods are being reviewed and the directors are building their capacity to respond to challenge in this forum.
- Planning group meetings are attended by a variety of staff with cross-college responsibilities. These meetings have enhanced communication and the effectiveness of working relationships between curriculum areas and functional units within the college.
- Performance against targets is part of the staff appraisal system. There are clear relationships between whole college targets and those of senior managers, middle managers and individual members of staff.
- Improvements in target-setting and reviewing performance are promoting greater compliance with quality assurance arrangements and greater understanding of the quality improvement agenda among staff. It is intended that these factors will facilitate improvements in self-regulation in the future. It is too early to assess the full impact of these changes.

- The college makes good use of a number of performance indicators for self-assessment and subsequent validation. There is, however, scope for gathering a wider range of quantifiable indicators to inform self evaluation. In addition, the good practice seen in the use of data to assess outcomes in the operational plan is not reflected in the current quality improvement plan which is due for review in December 2006.