

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Richard Huish College  
Date of visit: 23 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

Performance headlines from the 2005/06 academic year

- The proportion learners achieving high grades at GCE A level continues to be outstanding and has improved on last year's performance.
- Value added results at AS and GCE A level are outstanding. Value added, as measured by ALPS, places the college in the top 10% of similar colleges for AS levels and in the top 15% for GCE A levels.
- Success rates at GCE A level and AS level continue to be very high and have steadily improved at AS over the past 3 years.
- Success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 at all 3 levels are well above national averages.
- Pass rates for adult learners on level H courses are high. The Learning Skills Council's individual learner record (ILR) does not accommodate the structure of some professional qualifications in accountancy. As a result success rates appear lower than they are.

### Work-based learning

- Indicative overall work-based learning success rates for 2005/06 are satisfactory and higher than the provisional national average. Timely success rates for the same period are low and below the provisional national average. Retention across work-based provision is very good, particularly in accountancy. Progression is good. Many learners progress to, or remain in, employment.

## Quality of education and training

Progress with accommodation issues identified at the last inspection

- The college continues to make good progress in addressing the accommodation issues identified at the last inspection. The college is currently bidding for capital with the LSC to maintain and accelerate this progress. Every teaching room now has data projection facilities.

How effective is the college at spreading good practice in teaching and learning and how does the process inform the staff development strategy?

- The college has a very robust strategy to ensure that good practice in teaching and learning is spread effectively. This includes the use of subject learning coaches, peer observation and formal lesson observation. Over 50% of teaching staff work as external examiners for awarding bodies. There is a well co-ordinated approach to the development of information technology in teaching and learning. The college has benefited from the Rolls Royce Science prize, to develop particular aspects of teaching and learning. There is extensive consultation with teachers and managers to determine staff development priorities.

Work-based learning development

- The college is well placed to provide opportunities for further study and this will be advanced in 2007/08 with the proposed introduction of a Foundation Degree.
- The college has made good progress in building its capacity to deliver work-based learning. Currently, directly funded programmes to deliver apprenticeships in accountancy, business administration, business management, and sports are in place. The college also acts as a sub-contractor to two other providers in the southwest, and is currently working with the Lawn Tennis Association to act as a sub-contractor for them in delivering a national contract.
- A contract for the delivery of LearnDirect provision, focused on Skills for Life, has doubled since 2005/06 when over 500 learning opportunities were delivered. A recent learner satisfaction survey indicated a particularly positive response to the provision.

- Resources to support work-based learning are appropriate. A dedicated work-based and adult centre provides a satisfactory environment which is well adapted and equipped. Appropriate investment is being made in a further custom-built centre which is due to open in 2007. Resources are appropriate to the programmes being delivered and developed.

## Leadership and management

How can managers be fully confident that the self-assessment process continues to be appropriate as a quality improvement tool?

- The college has streamlined the self-assessment process and the review of examination results is now the starting point. Moderation and standardisation of subject self-assessment reports is very rigorous. Teachers and managers use data very well in self-assessment. The college is committed to continuous improvement and there are many examples of how self-assessment has driven quality improvement. These are demonstrated through improved success rates and/or value added outcomes.

What changes have been made to the use of data in the college and what has been their impact to date?

- The college has started its target setting process with learners much earlier in order to develop learners' progress still further. Minimum Target Grade (MTG) data are shared on-line with staff and learners. The first review of current working grades has been brought forward by ensuring early formative assessment in the first term. The MTG for the A level cohort are re-profiled at the beginning of the GCE A level year in order to ensure their reliability. The thorough and regular review of individual learner progress is a key to the college's outstanding performance in success rates, high grade achievement and value added. In a 2 year programme leading to the achievement of GCE A level learners' progress is reviewed 11 times. The impact of these changes is demonstrated by improved success rates and value added.

Quality improvement arrangements in work-based learning

- Quality improvement arrangements are good. Regular and timely staff meetings take place to share good practice. Annual employer and work-based learner satisfaction surveys are in place, but the response rates to

these are low. This is recognised and plans are in place to resolve the matter. The responses received are generally positive.

Any themes from the pre-visit analysis not explored during the visit:

- none

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

- none