



Epping Forest College

Re-inspection report

Audience	Published	Provider reference
Post-sixteen	TBC	130677

Introduction

Epping Forest College was inspected in April 2004. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in construction and engineering which were found to be less than satisfactory. Ofsted is responsible for re-inspecting all provision that is less than satisfactory within two years of the original inspection. If inadequate areas of learning or aspects of provision remain inadequate following re-inspection, inspectors will continue to monitor progress at annual assessment visits, but the areas will not be re-graded. They will be re-inspected during the full college inspection.

The less than satisfactory construction area was re-inspected on 7 & 8 June 2006. The outcomes of the re-inspection are as follows.

Curriculum area	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Construction	4	3

Context

Construction courses are available in brickwork, plastering, plumbing and electrical installation on a full-time, part-time and evening basis. There are 439 students of whom 193 are full-time and 246 part-time, 186 students (42%) are adult learners. Most courses are at levels 1 and 2. A multi skill construction crafts programme is offered for learners aged 14-16 from local schools

Strengths

- *good monitoring of learners' progress*
- *good learning support in theory lessons*
- *effective development of learners' practical skills*
- *good management of the curriculum*

Areas for improvement

- *low retention on Intermediate Construction Award*
- *insufficient learning support in practical lessons*

Achievement and standards

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Success rates on most programmes have improved since the last inspection. The standard of work in theory and practical lessons is satisfactory. There is effective development of learners' practical skills with some learners working above their current practical level.

Key skill achievement at level 1 communication for this year is good. However, pass rates on some electrical installation programmes are declining.

College data show improved retention for the current year with the exception of the Intermediate Construction Award which has been below national average for the last two years. Attendance rates have improved to a satisfactory level.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are now satisfactory. There is an effective focus on improving teaching, learning and learners' achievements. Most staff are new in post and much work has been carried out to improve teaching and learning. A dedicated construction mentor provides good support to develop the skills of the many new staff. Learners make satisfactory or good progress in lessons. Key skills are delivered in a variety of ways and are now satisfactory. There is good learner support in theory lessons provided from staff assigned to construction; however, there is no learner support provided in practical lessons and some learners make slower progress. In many lessons learners agree their learning objectives at the start of the lesson and evaluate progress at the end. The monitoring of learners' progress is now good. All learners are monitored regularly and receive an individual tutorial where progress to date, achievement and future targets are agreed. Learners are now clear on the requirements for achievement.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management provided by the new team is now good, the focus is clearly on improving all aspects of the learners' experience. The new staff are being supported well to obtain their appropriate teaching qualifications. Internal verification and external assessment is satisfactory. Staff now use management information well to monitor the effectiveness of course provision. Resources in practical areas and theory rooms are satisfactory. Much importance is placed on health and safety and safe systems of work.

Curriculum/WBL area/CIF aspect	Original grade	Re-inspection grade
Engineering (Area 4)	4	3

Context

The college offers a range of full and part-time courses in engineering and motor vehicle at levels 1 to 4, the majority being levels 2 and 3. Motor vehicle also offer programmes for learners aged 14 to 16. There are currently

193 learners, 90% full-time and 10% part-time. Adult learners comprise 13% of the student body. In addition there are 54 learners aged 14 to 16.

Strengths

- *good teaching and acquisition of skills by learners aged 14-16 on motor vehicle programmes*
- *effective management of the curriculum*
- *good personal and academic support for students*
- *good development of learners' practical skills*

Areas for improvement

- *insufficient opportunities for work experience on 16 to 18 core programmes*
- *low pass rates on some courses*

Achievement and standards

Overall achievement is satisfactory with success rates broadly at the national average. Retention rates on most courses are satisfactory; however, pass rates on some level 2 and 3 programmes are below the national average. College data show that retention rates and achievement are expected to show an improvement in response to development work across the engineering curriculum. Learners aged 14-16 with a history of poor attainment and attendance at school are achieving well and progressing to full-time level 1 and 2 core programmes. Learners' enjoy practical sessions and are producing practical work to a good standard. Effective systems have improved learners' attendance and punctuality to a satisfactory level.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching and support staff are generally enthusiastic, with significant development having taken place to raise the standard of teaching since the last inspection. Most learners make satisfactory or good progress in their lessons. However, there is still some dull teaching in a minority of classes. The workshop areas are clean and generally well laid out and maintained. Recent investment in the motor vehicle workshops include a new vehicle lift. The dated equipment in the engineering workshops, although fully functional, inhibit the teaching of modern manufacturing techniques found in industry. A modern well-equipped interactive learning suite supports learning across the curriculum with facilities for simulation and testing. However, the overall standard of accommodation is generally poor. Learners receive good personal and academic support and demonstrate a positive attitude to their studies.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management of the curriculum area are good and communicated well through a network of regular meetings. Management information for quality improvement is effective and used well by staff across the curriculum area. Health and safety is embedded in the curriculum. There are good and productive links with employers and schools. Work placement opportunities are insufficient and are generally not a component part of the curriculum.