

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Bishop Burton  
Date of visit: 24 January 2007

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit (AAV). 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 have learners achieved in 2005/06?

- Success rates at levels 1 and 2, for learners aged 16 to 18, are well above the national averages. At level 1, the success rate remained at 74%; at level 2, it improved to 75%, well above the national level. The level 3 success rate, at 71%, is around the national level.
- Adult learners do very well on long courses at level 1, where the success rate for 2005/06 is 20 percentage points above the national rate. At level 2, the success rate is around the national level. The success rates at level 3 improved to above the national rate. Success rates for short courses, with relatively few learners, fluctuate and in 2005/06 they were below average.

### Achievement in work-based learning

- Data in the provider performance report show both overall and 'timely' full framework achievements in 2005/06 to be very good for advanced apprentices. Although numbers are low, success rates have risen substantially since 2003. However, for apprenticeships, where numbers are higher, success rates have shown little improvement against a steadily rising national rate. For 2005/06, the overall success rate is just below the national average and 'timely' success rates are very low. Appropriate action is being taken in horticulture and equine, where success rates are low.

### Quality of education and training

#### Improvements in teaching and learning

- The college has continued to focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The system of internal lesson observations, using trained observers, is now more established. The self-assessment report (SAR) clearly identifies those curriculum areas where teaching is effective and those where there is more to be done. Training and development for teachers has successfully promoted greater classroom expertise. Recently

there has been considerable development of the college's virtual learning environment (VLE). Self assessment identifies the chief characteristics of teaching and learning, but there is scope for further analysis of lessons, for example, by level or aspect, and for learners aged 16 to 18 in particular. Course managers are helping to share good practice informally by undertaking peer observations outside their curriculum area.

### The views of learners

- Learners enjoy their courses and say that their progress is monitored closely. Course work is marked and returned promptly. Where learners are taught key skills as part of their vocational courses, they enjoy these lessons more than separate key skills lessons. They find the campus a safe and friendly place to learn and work. They particularly like the college food.

## Leadership and management

### Progress since the last AAV

- The college has made good progress since the last AAV. A new senior management team has been appointed with redefined and clear responsibilities. The values of the college have been established and are being positively promoted. Curriculum managers and teachers feel they are consulted about developments. They have the interests of their learners at heart. Quality assurance processes have been strengthened, with closer attention to more coherent action planning at course level
- The college has made considerable progress in the management of work-based learning; the director of employer partnerships now has overall responsibility for improving the quality of work-based learning. A new tracking system facilitates much closer monitoring of learners' progress and better identification of learners who are failing to meet their targets. There are formal arrangements in place for the sharing of good practice. The college has carried out much staff development to improve the quality of apprenticeship programmes. The introduction of entry to employment (E2E) programmes and more level 1 provision has ensured that alternative routes are available for those work-based learners who are not ready for employment when they leave school. Strong action has been taken to improve poor success rates for horticultural apprenticeships. New staff are working hard to re-motivate existing learners and improve the planning and co-ordination of the training and assessment.

### Self assessment

- The SAR format and summary context is more comprehensive than previously. It is evaluative and clear, with the evidence to support overall

judgements identified. The overall success, retention and achievement rates are displayed for each level and age group in several graphs, which enhance the clarity. There is scope for further detail and consideration of the impact of actions, for example in leadership and management. The college judges its effectiveness as good. All aspects of provision are assessed as good. Performance against the 5 themes of Every Child Matters are evaluated and graded.

- In curriculum SARs, course teams have reviewed progress against action plans in detail for each aspect. There is an emphasis on continuous improvement, although the basis for some judgements is occasionally understated. In some areas of provision, for example that for 14 to 16 year olds, evaluations are rather brief and standards and achievement are not fully evaluated.

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

- The college has advanced plans for a substantial rebuild of its estate. Senior managers recognise the need to manage the transition process carefully during this period of change.