

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: RNIB Loughborough College
Date of visit: 28 February 2007

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

Is student progress and attainment captured effectively? How well did students achieve in 2005/06, especially in literacy, numeracy and communications and independent living skills?

- Rates of retention have improved and are in line with other specialist colleges. Over the past year, the college has introduced a database to capture learners' core achievements, including literacy, numeracy and communication (LNC). This is likely to meet its implementation targets. LNC targets have improved recently and are more appropriate for translation into a range of contexts
- Rates of achievement have improved and were high in 2005/2006 with 100% success in all areas of the curriculum, apart from key skills undertaken by students at the partner college, where they continue to be low. The college has introduced a new qualification for independent living skills (ILS), and it is not yet possible to evaluate the outcomes.

Quality of education and training

Has ESOL provision developed sufficiently since the re-inspection?

- The college does not currently have any ESOL learners. It has however developed an agreement with Loughborough College to assess support needs, should the need arise.

What progress has been made in integrating college and residential programmes? Has baseline assessment for the

independent living skills programme improved since the re-inspection?

- The college now has a baseline assessment for ILS which is based on the accreditation used. This programme is in its first year of implementation and its appropriateness and effectiveness have not yet been evaluated.
- The college has made progress in timetabling specific independent living skills (ILS) sessions into learners' timetables, and has identified a qualification to provide a framework for this aspect of the curriculum. However, further development is needed in order to integrate college and residential programmes. The planning of assessments to demonstrate progress on the ILS programme is not systematic, and further training is needed for key workers when carrying out assessments in the residences. Much of the training for ILS takes place in the teaching and learning accommodation.

Leadership and management

Is the literacy, numeracy and communication strategy now fully established? Are roles and responsibilities of the manager clearly defined and appropriate?

- The LNC strategy is fully established and the curriculum leader has a more clearly defined role. The college has been successful in the further embedding of literacy, numeracy and communications (LNC) into the curriculum. All staff are being trained in LNC as part of a planned programme of implementation.

Do quality assurance systems inform the college's self assessment of provision effectively?

- Quality assurance systems are fully established and provide useful information to base judgements about the quality of provision. The lesson observation process is fully operational and has been successful in identifying staff development needs to improve teaching and learning. Pre-observation meetings are held with staff to raise

awareness of expectations and standards looked for. The college, together with external consultants, has undertaken regular observations since the last inspection, and is now reviewing different ways of capturing the quality of the learner experience which involves the shadowing of students through their programmes.

Is self assessment sufficiently evaluative? Are strengths and areas for improvement clearly identified?

- Much work has been done to improve the self assessment process. The college has been successful in engaging all staff in the process, engendering a culture of ongoing self evaluation for continuous improvement. Curriculum teams are better at evaluating their curriculum areas and their judgements are subject to moderation by line and senior management team members to ensure they are based on sound evidence. Teams are required to evaluate provision against strategic objectives thus involving all staff in improving overall college performance. The 2005/06 Self Assessment Report (SAR), although in some cases repetitive and over descriptive, contains clear evaluative judgements. The evidence contained within the SAR to support judgements is not always clearly stated or apparent.

Does the college comply with current legislation in relation to child protection and equalities legislation?

- Child protection procedures are in place and staff have had the necessary training. There is a comprehensive central record for CRB checks. The college has a disability duty action plan in place to ensure requirements and best practice is being met.