

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: St. John's College
Date of visit: 16 January 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

What progress has been made since the inspection on the use and recording of learning targets?

- The college has made good progress and has implemented a new system of recording learning targets since the last inspection. A scoring system, against specific and well targeted objectives has been introduced. The overall scores against each target are being regularly reviewed each term. Of those produced to date, there are clear indications of progress made by the learner. The system enables staff to appropriately assess if targets have been set too high or too low. The system records and captures all accredited and non-accredited parts of the learners' programmes well. There are opportunities to change targets each term and additional learning and achievements acknowledged and recorded when appropriate. This is a new system, which has not yet completed a full annual cycle and it is therefore too early to judge its full impact.

Quality of education and training

Are lessons consistently well planned, taking into account learners' learning targets?

- Lessons plans satisfactorily include learners' targets. How well targets are used during lessons is yet to be formally monitored by management.

Are baseline assessments effective across all areas of the curriculum in identifying appropriate learning targets for learners to work towards?

- The process for baseline assessments within the learners' first term is satisfactory overall. The results inform individual learning plans very well. The college recognise that they have yet to ensure that all teachers use pre-entry and baseline assessment information to establish the learners' skills and understanding at the start of their course modules across all areas of their programme, particularly for non-accredited learning.

Are good links still maintained with local colleges to increase the range of courses available?

- There are still good links with local colleges. Management have appointed one member of staff with responsibility for co-ordinating and quality monitoring of these links. Some difficulties with local college provision has resulted in some level 1 courses no longer being available for St. John's learners to undertake. The college has recently established links with a third local college, and is currently developing service level agreements with all three colleges.

Leadership and management

Do quality assurance processes, in the process of development, show the potential to provide a rigorous evaluation of the quality of provision in relation to student learning and achievement?

- Quality assurance processes are improving. Much work has been done to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the development of a new teaching observation scheme to be introduced from January 2007. To enable staff to be more involved in their own evaluation of teaching and learning, the new lesson observation system is based on a peer monitoring system. Education staff are receiving training on observation protocols with a view for them to be operational from February 2007. The college has devised a more rigorous analysis of attendance so that patterns can be identified and used to plan lessons and deploy support staff

more effectively. This will be linked with a reward system to provide appropriate incentives to improve individual student attendance and to maximise achievements. These systems show potential in enabling the college to improve their evaluation of the quality of provision by the college, but it is too early to assess their impact.

Does the quality improvement plan provide the direction and actions necessary to enable the college to improve further? How effectively is it being monitored?

- The quality improvement plan contains appropriate actions, which when fully implemented, will lead to improvements for those aspects of provision identified within the last inspection report. This is in the process of being updated, as some dates for the completion of actions are not stated or in need of amendment. The plan is being monitored closely through the regular meetings held by the charity's Business Management Team (BMT) and college's Senior Management Team (SMT), to ensure actions remain on track for their completion.

What has been done to involve governors and trustees in the self assessment process?

- An audit committee has recently been established with members of the governing body taking a more predominant role in assessing the quality of provision. Information from this committee will be used to inform further improvements needed to improve provision.

Is the college now fully compliant with equalities legislation and what plans are there in place to improve the accessibility of the site for learners with restricted mobility?

- The college has made much progress in this area. There is now a policy and procedure relating to the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA), and all staff have received training in its implementation. There is a very detailed plan to ensure the college adheres to the Disability Equality Duty. Comprehensive data has been collated in accordance with requirements and some of this has been used effectively to inform future improvements. The plan is not yet

systematically monitored to ensure actions required are adhered to in accordance with specified dates. There are plans to appoint a disability co-ordinator to oversee its implementation and to incorporate a review of the plan within self assessment processes. Work has commenced to improve access on the site for learners with physical disabilities. Some teaching accommodation is in need of redecoration. This is being undertaken during the continuing improvements and refurbishment of the buildings.