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Ms Marion Plant
Principal
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Dear Ms Plant

Ofsted Subject and Survey Inspection Programme 2006-07

Sector Subject Area 15: Business, Administration and Law

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 1 and 2 February 2007. I am particularly grateful to your staff for all their hard work in preparing the programme and background documentation and giving up a great deal of their time during the visit. Please pass on my thanks to learners who gave up their time to talk to me.

The visit provided useful evidence for the good practice survey in business and administration. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but should we wish to cite specific aspects of practice we will contact the college first.

The evidence used to inform judgements included: interviews with managers, stakeholders and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of learners' work and observation of eight lessons including one tutorial across three sites.

I agreed to provide a summary of my observations of good practice seen in business and to suggest some areas for development.

Good practice observed

- Good and mostly improving success rates.
- Examples of good and occasionally outstanding teaching.
- Successful and innovative developments in the CoVE for leadership and management, especially the role of the employers' forum.
- Many examples of vocational students being motivated by the contemporary business focus of their tasks and assignments.

- Good internal progression opportunities.
- Successful enrichment opportunities through overseas visits.
- Well structured self assessment report and good arrangements for monitoring progress on the action plan, but rather overgenerous judgements on the quality of teaching.

Areas for development, which we discussed, included:

- the need to investigate further the reasons for underperformance in law
- to improve some teaching techniques, especially question and answer, checks on individual student progress during lessons and the use of differentiation in practice and not just in planning lessons
- the quality and consistency of lesson planning
- the quality and consistency of tutorial support and student action planning
- the quality and consistency of feedback to students on their written work, especially to help them improve their written communication
- to develop further the use of ICT to stimulate and enhance learning.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop business courses in the college.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your LLSC and will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of the half-term following the inspection. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rhys Evans
Additional Inspector