

RE-INSPECTION OF WIGAN AND LEIGH COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the curriculum area of hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism is now **satisfactory** and the overall provision in the curriculum area of sports studies is now **satisfactory**.

Background

Wigan and Leigh College was inspected in November 2002. 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 hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism and in sports studies which were found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum or WBL area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that the curriculum or WBL areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, all unsatisfactory provision will be re-inspected normally during one week.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Date of the Re-Inspection Visit

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection of the curriculum areas of hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism and sports studies took place during the week beginning 26 April 2004.

Hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism

In the November 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- Much good teaching on travel courses
- Good utilisation of specialist resources and realistic work environments in hospitality and travel
- Effective learning support for level 1 students in hospitality and travel.

Weaknesses

- Low retention and pass rates on many courses
- Classroom accommodation is poor and is disruptive to learning
- Narrow curriculum in leisure and hospitality
- Inadequate internal moderation and verification procedures in hospitality
- Unsatisfactory teaching and poor quality learning materials in theory classes.

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses. The overall provision in this area is now **satisfactory**.

There have been significant improvements in retention rates and pass rates on many courses since the November 2002 inspection. In 2002/03 the success rates of six of the eight main courses were above the national average. Pass rates on NVQ level 1 food preparation and cooking, AVCE hospitality and catering, AVCE travel and tourism, and GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism were well above national averages. Retention rates were above the national average in NVQ level 2 food preparation and cooking and AVCE hospitality and catering. Retention has declined, however, to an unsatisfactory level in NVQ level 1 food preparation, and cooking and GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism, and remains low on GNVQ foundation leisure and tourism.

During the re-inspection, very good craft skills and operational management skills were demonstrated by students from level 1 to 3. Standards of work and dishes produced are of a high quality, and in many instances are above the level that could be expected of students. Attendance monitoring has improved since the November 2002 inspection and high targets of punctuality and attendance are set and generally achieved. Students' attendance during the week of re-inspection

was 82%, which is above the average for this curriculum area.

Inspectors graded all but one lesson satisfactory or better. Most teachers address the variety of different student needs. Learning objectives are often negotiated and agreed between students and teachers. Teachers encourage and support students in lessons with effective individual coaching. Student discussion is well managed. Students are encouraged to become reflective practitioners and both peer and group evaluation is used effectively. Learning support staff in lessons are under-utilised. In a few theory classes, teaching remains dull, and there is an over reliance on students taking notes and restricted use of IT. Teachers continually reinforce and place emphasis on attention to health, safety and hygiene.

Good use is made of both work experience for students and teachers' commercial experience in teaching and learning. Students have a good awareness of customer expectations and industry standards. The quality and consistency of learning materials has improved significantly, and there is standardisation of the shared course materials. The travel shop is an excellent resource for leisure and tourism students for training, assessment of customer service skills and work placement. The lack of significant IT in the hospitality realistic working environment adversely affects students' learning experiences. Naturally-occurring key skills evidence that emerges during lessons is lost and students do not always develop and increase their level of skills and expertise in using key skills.

Classroom accommodation has been improved and is no longer disrupts students' learning. The majority of classrooms are well equipped and decorated to a satisfactory standard. The restaurant has been refurbished to a good standard.

The range of courses in leisure and tourism has been extended to include craft courses at level 3 and a pre-foundation course. Students across the curriculum have a range of work placements, educational trips and visits that enhance and enrich the provision.

Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been a successful drive for improvement within the faculty which has focused on improving student achievement and teaching and learning. The advanced practitioners have been helpful in supporting improved classroom practice. The internal verification system is thorough, systematic and well co-ordinated and now meets awarding body requirements. Course teams in leisure and tourism understand target setting, can readily identify early completers and record carefully the current retention and progress of students. Quality procedures in hospitality are not as effective. The insufficient standard of competence in a minority of part-time hospitality students has been overlooked, and not all staff have identified early completers or planned to address the incidence of students who do not complete their course on time.

Sports studies

In the November 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- Well-equipped human performance laboratory and impact fitness centre
- Good enrichment programme for sports students.

Weaknesses

- Low pass rates on most advanced courses
- Very low retention rates on several courses
- Poor classroom accommodation and on-site practical sports facilities
- Inadequate progression opportunities for students at level 1
- Poor management of GCE A-level sport and physical education courses.

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses. The overall provision in this area is now **satisfactory**.

Pass rates on most courses have improved significantly since the inspection. In 2003, pass rates on the A level physical education and on the sport and physical education courses improved respectively from 53% to 89% and from 22% to 88%. They are both now in line with national averages. The improved pass rate of 79% on the national diploma in sport and exercise science is also now in line with national averages. The pass rate of 63% in AS sport and physical education, however, though an improvement on previous years, is unsatisfactory.

Retention rates on most courses in 2003 were in line with national averages. Retention rates on the national diploma in sport and exercise science improved to 72% against a national average of 59%. However, there are some low retention rates. Though all students on the NVQ 1 sport and recreation course achieved a pass in 2003, only 40% completed. Retention rates on the first diploma in sport science dropped to 11 percentage points below the national average. College data for in-year retention during 2003/04 show improvement on on-year courses, except the AS course, but retention on the second year of national diplomas in sport and sport and exercise science is falling, and at the time of the re-inspection was 63% and 56% respectively. The student attendance rate during re-inspection was good at 87%, against an average of 79% for this curriculum area.

There are notable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. In two thirds of the observed lessons, teaching was judged to be good or better. Teachers encourage active participation by students. They use a variety of activities to engage the students' interest and students are generally well motivated and attentive. In a few lessons, tasks are set at too high a level for students and sometimes students are given too long to complete a task. Little use is made of ICT in teaching.

The opportunities for students to progress from one level of study to another have improved. Courses are offered in NVQ 2 exercise and fitness, and the first diploma in sport and exercise science has been replaced with the first diploma in sport. A good range of courses is available at level 3 and there is a higher national diploma course. However, there are very limited additional qualifications offered to sports students to enhance their employment opportunities or entry to university. There are few part-time courses.

Leadership and management are now satisfactory. Though the provision is run from two faculties, it is coherently managed by the heads of faculty. Sport GCE is now in the sixth form faculty and subject to the same quality assurance procedures as all other A levels. The divisional managers

have led the arrangements for improving the quality of teaching and learning. These have included: lesson observations; the sharing of good practice at the regular team meetings; introducing annual course reviews; and training provided by the advanced teacher practitioners. There have been clear improvements in most of the weaknesses identified in the inspection report. Action is continuing to address the remaining weaknesses.

There will be no further re-inspections of the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory areas.

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