

RE-INSPECTION KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the area of English as a foreign language is now satisfactory.

Background

Kensington and Chelsea College was inspected in May 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 English as a Foreign language which was 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

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection monitoring visits of English as a Foreign Language took place on 18-19 November 2002, and 25-26 February 2003. A re-inspection of the provision took place during the week commencing 24 May 2004.

English as a Foreign Language

In the May 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

- Effective action to improve retention rates in 2001
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Good monitoring of students' progress

- Good support for students.

Weaknesses

- Very poor and declining pass rates
- Much poor teaching on evening classes at one centre
- Inadequate recording of student withdrawals and transfers.

Following the re-inspection monitoring visits and 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 are high and well above national averages. Overall, students' level of attainment in lessons is satisfactory. Most students have a sound grasp of English vocabulary and structure at a relevant level. They are able to communicate confidently and effectively in English at an appropriate level. Written work is mostly of a suitable standard. In some cases students' work demonstrates a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but in others it is weaker due to a lack of accuracy and poor style. Not all retention rates are satisfactory. In 2003, the retention rate for the Key English Test long course was 49%, and for the Certificate of Proficiency in English long course was 62%. These figures are well below national averages and have declined over recent years. The pass rate in 2003 for the Certificate in Advanced English course, at 37%, is also below the national average. Students' attendance was low in many lessons. There is no data regarding average attendance during the year. During the inspection the average attendance in lessons observed was 66%, which is low.

Overall teaching and learning in EFL are satisfactory. During the inspection all lessons were judged to be at least satisfactory and in approximately 53% teaching was judged to be good or better. Most students learn well. They are committed and industrious and generally participate well in lessons. They work together supportively in group work activities. Teachers plan and structure lessons well, with clear learning outcomes which are often shared with learners. Teachers have a good rapport with students, have a clear understanding of their individual needs, and engender confidence. They give good, clear explanations and good individual support in lessons and tutorials. In the best teaching, tutors maintain an energetic pace and set up a variety of lively learning activities, including

games and brain-storming sessions, to stimulate learning. In less stimulating lessons, a monotonous pace of activity or loss of momentum slows down learning. In a few lessons, learning is hampered by ineffective teaching strategies which fail to involve all students. Sometimes, teachers fail to correct errors of pronunciation often enough. In some instances, a lack of concrete examples to illustrate new points of grammar hinders less confident students. Punctuality is poor in many lessons and this is not always dealt with by teachers at the time. Little use is made of IT resources, videos or listening material to support and enhance students' learning.

Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication is effective. A restructuring of the department to create a number of course director posts, together with significant changes in the tutors' timetable, has resulted in a more even spread of responsibilities and increased management support for tutors across the provision. A new EFL tutor handbook, and a shared bank of teaching resources at all levels, provides effective additional specialist guidance and support. All tutors are observed teaching and unsatisfactory teaching when it is observed leads to support aimed at improvement. Staff development activities relating to teaching and learning are open to all tutors and registered reserve tutors. However, there has not yet been sufficient focus on strategies for stimulating very good or excellent teaching and learning. Targets are set and monitored at course level for enrolment, retention and achievement based on end of year management data. However, there is insufficient attention to summary data on attendance during courses. Monitoring of attendance and retention during the year is ineffective. However, student withdrawals are accurately recorded on registers and teachers are individually aware of class membership.

There will be no further re-inspection of the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory/very weak areas.