



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



RE-INSPECTION OF COLCHESTER INSTITUTE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

- The overall provision in the WBL area of construction is now **satisfactory**
- The overall provision in the curriculum area of Engineering is now **good** and in **WBL** is now **satisfactory**
- The overall provision in the curriculum areas of literacy, numeracy and ESOL is now **satisfactory**

Background

Colchester Institute was inspected in March 2003. 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 Engineering, WBL Engineering, WBL Construction, and Literacy, numeracy and ESOL which were found to be less than satisfactory.

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 where leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory leadership and management, or less than satisfactory provision in solely WBL, inspectors from Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the less than satisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that previously less than satisfactory areas of provision, or leadership and management, are now satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, but there is curriculum provision that is less than satisfactory, there will be no monitoring visits. All less than satisfactory provision will be re-inspected, normally during one week, within two years of the original inspection.

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 engineering, WBL engineering, WBL construction, and literacy, numeracy and ESOL took place during the week of 28th February - 4th March 2005.

WBL construction

In the March 2003 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

- high standard of students' work
- good use of evidence from the workplace towards NVQ assessment for electrical installation
- wide range of work placements providing good opportunities for work-based learners

Weaknesses

- poor achievement of modern apprentices
- insufficient integration of key skills in the programmes and poor attendance in key skills lessons
- overcrowding in some workshops
- weak work-based learning reviews
- too few opportunities for planned work-based assessment with employers

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above

weaknesses and that overall provision in this area is now **satisfactory**.

The achievements of the foundation modern apprenticeship (FMA) in plumbing, FMA in electrical installation and the advanced modern apprenticeship (AMA) in electrical installation improved substantially and are now well above the national averages. In contrast, the achievement of FMA in wood trades and the AMA in plumbing declined further since the last inspection. Retention rates on the FMA in plumbing and FMA electrical installation improved considerably and are now above the national averages. On the FMA wood trades and AMA plumbing, retention rates declined to below the national averages. Students' achievement of key skills shows a similar pattern - improvement in plumbing and electrical installation and decline in wood trades. The quality of students' portfolio is satisfactory. The better portfolios are indexed, well-written, contain a diverse range of evidence, student details, induction packs, drawings, sketches and photographic evidence of the completed work.

Key skills are now integrated in the programmes and delivered in a vocational context. Students find them relevant and appreciate their values. However, attendance in key skills lessons remains poor.

The quality of workshops has improved. The plumbing workshop, for example, has been redeveloped. To ease the overcrowding that was reported in the last inspection, new workshops have been built on Clacton site.

The college now has a strategy for the conduct of the on-site reviews. However, the strategy is not consistently implemented by the training advisors (reviewers). During the re-inspection, one of the two on-site reviews observed was found to be inadequate. Targets for a student were already stated on the review document prior to the commencement of the review and they were not negotiated with the student. Equality of opportunity was not dealt with.

On-site assessments are variable in quality. One of the three assessments observed was insufficiently rigorous and confined to ticking boxes. The employer, although present, did not participate in the assessment planning or the assessment process. The other two on-site assessments were thorough and rigorous, had good technical coverage and employers were effectively engaged in the process. Assessors do not have assessment plans to inform students about the frequency and the criteria for the on-site assessment.

Engineering including WBL

In the March 2003 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

- broad range of provision

- good workshop facilities in engineering

- good learning resources to support independent study

- effective and productive relationship with industry and employers

Weaknesses

- low and declining pass rates on many courses
- poor retention rates on NVQ and City and Guilds courses at level 2
- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- insufficient awareness of health and safety requirements
- poor quality motor vehicle resources
- unsatisfactory achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses. The provision in this area is now **good** and work-based learning (WBL) is now **satisfactory**.

Pass rates on many courses have improved since the inspection and are now good. Retention rates on college courses are increasing and are above national averages for 2003/4 on level 1, 2 and 3 courses. Pass rates on motor vehicle FMA provision have resulted in a framework success rate which is above national average. Retention rates on the motor vehicle foundation modern apprenticeship programme have decreased. Students' attendance has improved in observed lessons. Lessons now start promptly and students who are late are challenged by lecturers. Students exhibit good workshop skills over a range of competencies and obtain a wide range of experience.

The quality of teaching is now good. A wide variety in teaching strategies was observed. Learning objectives were clearly stated and shared with students. In many lessons students were observed to be working hard and information and learning technology (ILT) is now used appropriately in the classroom. Well produced worksheets allow for differentiated learning. , Students were well motivated and actively involved in the learning process and their skills and abilities were extended. Health and safety issues are now emphasised by tutors and students possess good health and safety knowledge. Motor vehicle workshops have been re-furbished and have modern tools, vehicles, equipment and training media. Trainees are able to use modern high technology industrial equipment.

Curriculum area management has successfully addressed most of the issues from the last inspection report. The engineering provision has been re-organised into one department with a head of centre and two team managers, and leadership is now strong.

Literacy numeracy and ESOL

In the March 2003 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 development of students' oral skills on ESOL courses
- good links between literacy and numeracy tutors and vocational staff

Weaknesses

- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- insufficient development of students' literacy and numeracy skills
- ineffective monitoring of students' progress
- unsatisfactory co-ordination of literacy and numeracy support

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

The quality of teaching has improved. Most teaching observed was good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching, though there was some unsatisfactory student attainment. Good individual support for students and differentiated learning were observed in most lessons seen. There is good use of individual learning plans in the adult literacy numeracy and ESOL programme. Pass rates in adult literacy are good, but pass rates in key skills at level 1 and 2 are still low. There is good use of information and learning technology across the programme.

On the discrete programme of courses there is now good development of language, literacy and numeracy skills. On vocational courses there is still a small number of students whose literacy and numeracy skills are not at a level where they can meet the requirements of the course. The development of literacy and numeracy through key skills has improved.

Monitoring of students' progress has improved in all aspects of the area. Students are clear about the progress they have made in key skills, reports on students receiving support are sent each month to the learning support department, and there is good monitoring of learning targets in the discrete programme.

Co-ordination of literacy and numeracy support has improved. There is a new management

structure, and managers implemented improvements in initial and diagnostic assessment, planning and review, and raised the standard of teaching through staff development, better observation of teaching and learning, and sharing of good practice through meetings and the cross-college steering group. The range and diversity of support provided across the college is good.

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

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