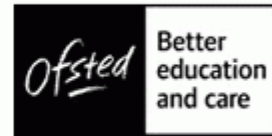




ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



RE-INSPECTION OF CORNWALL COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in literacy and numeracy and in work-based learning (WBL) in sport, leisure and tourism is now **good**. In WBL business studies, WBL hospitality and catering, and WBL health and social care it is **satisfactory**.

Background

Cornwall College 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 work-based learning (WBL) in business studies; WBL in hospitality and catering; WBL in health and social care; WBL in sport, leisure and tourism; and literacy and numeracy 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

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection of WBL business studies; WBL hospitality and catering; WBL health and social care; WBL sport, leisure and tourism, and literacy and numeracy took place during the week of 14 March 2005.

WBL business studies

In the March 2003 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses for business studies as a whole were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- much good teaching on courses for adults
- good achievements on NVQ level 4 courses
- good support for learners and work-based learners
- good learning resources.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on NVQ business administration level 2 in 2002
- low and declining retention and pass rates on foundation modern apprenticeships
- weak coordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training for work-based learners
- weak curriculum management.

Further textual references in the report referred to the following weaknesses in WBL business programmes:

- standardisation of the assessed work of NVQ learners is not effective
- work-based learning in business does not satisfy the needs of learners
- no systematic evaluation of workplaces to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to achieve their NVQ competences
- no out of term-time training
- unsatisfactory arrangements for the delivery of key skills.

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**.

Retention and pass rates on most apprenticeship programmes in administration and accounting, and on advanced modern apprenticeship (AMA) programmes in accounting, are now satisfactory or good. However, the retention rate on the AMA programme in administration declined to 44% in 2004, while achievement of the full framework declined at both levels in 2004. Many learners progress onto higher level programmes.

Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training for work-based learners. Effective guidance and support are provided to learners in the workplace by liaison officers, tutors and assessors. Learners have appropriate access to staff throughout the year. Liaison officers keep employers informed about the progress of employees, and have raised employers' awareness of the requirements of the apprenticeship framework. An NVQ database tracks the progress of all learners, and documentation is thorough. There are regular meetings between course teams across centres to review learners' progress. A more systematic approach to the evaluation of workplace activities is now in place to ensure learners have sufficient opportunities to achieve their NVQ competences.

Assessment procedures are good. Assessors keep accurate and up-to-date records of assessment. Individual assessment plans for each learner are regularly reviewed by tutors and liaison officers. Learners' work is appropriately marked, and feedback is clear. Standardisation meetings are held on a regular basis and records of learners' achievements give a clear audit trail of assessment and verification for the NVQ qualifications. Some visits to the workplace by assessors focus too much on recording learners' work activities, and too little time is spent giving immediate feedback and guidance.

Arrangements for the delivery of key skills are satisfactory. Appropriate procedures are in place for

initial assessment, and key skills teaching is linked to the vocational area and learners' work experience. Attendance at key skills lessons is satisfactory, but teachers do not always plan sufficient activities to ensure all learners are fully engaged and motivated. Most learners are making satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding, but lessons do not offer sufficient challenge or address individual learners' needs and abilities.

The college has introduced documented procedures for the management and delivery of work-based learning as part of the college quality assurance system. This has led to a more consistent approach across centres, and better guidance for staff. Self-assessment reports lack clarity, and there is insufficient analysis of trends in learners' achievements.

WBL hospitality and catering

In the March 2003 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses for hospitality and catering as a whole were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- good achievement on most programmes
- good teaching and learning of adults
- effective integration in lessons of students on different courses
- good use of practical resources to develop sound professional practice.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates in 2002
- poor pass rates for work-based learning
- incomplete application of the quality assurance processes.

Further textual reference in the report referred to the following weakness in WBL hospitality and catering programmes:

- variation in the quality of programmes offered at Camborne and St Austell.

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**.

Performance in WBL at the Camborne site is now satisfactory. Some aspects of the college-based provision for WBL at the St Austell site remain unsatisfactory because they are poorly resourced and fail to provide learners with challenging and relevant training experiences.

Framework achievement has improved gradually with some variations year on year. In 2002/03 the completion rate in food preparation and cooking was 39% across the college, but significant variations in performance remained between the sites. At St. Austell the completion rate declined from 2003 to 2004 and was 35% lower than at Camborne.

There have been significant changes in staffing since the inspection to improve the support and management of work-based learning, including the appointment of liaison officers and training assessors. Effective measures have been put in place to ensure the systematic monitoring of learner progress. Communication between tutors, training assessors and liaison officers is effective and some programmes have been restructured at Camborne to enable earlier learner success. Learners at risk of leaving a programme are identified and monitored monthly. There have been significant developments in work-based assessment and support by the college, including some developments of key skills provision in the workplace, to remove barriers to success. Training assessors are introducing assessment support for new vocational units in the workplace matched to the needs of learners and employers.

Some realistic work experience (RWE) for food production at Camborne has been redesigned and developed in conjunction with a major employer in response to their training needs, and learners are making rapid progress. Schemes of work and lesson plans at Camborne follow the same format and are discussed and communicated to employers by the liaison officer. There is good progress in key skills at Camborne for learners attending college on day-release, where the assignments have been embedded into new schemes of work and deal with relevant topics applied to the hospitality and catering industry. Similar developments at St Austell have yet to be extended and embedded. To maximise attendance, key skills are being delivered in the middle of the day. The RWE provision for food production at St Austell is unresponsive to employer needs and fails to provide learners with an effective training experience to meet industry standards, and there are few links with on-the-job training.

At the previous inspection there was very little communication with employers and many had ceased to involve the college in their training provision. Employers are now actively involved in the training process and many contribute effectively to the co-ordination of training, working with the college work-based assessors and the liaison officers, who have good and relevant vocational expertise. Employers are regularly involved in the learner reviews and are formally informed by assessors and liaison officers about learning opportunities and progress. Employers speak highly of the new level of support they are receiving. They are required, appropriately, to support their learners in the completion of the employer rights and responsibilities booklet. In response to employer demand the college has introduced a January intake to the food preparation and cooking apprenticeships.

Liaison officers have implemented an effective progress tracking system which helps them to identify slow progress and deal with it. The progress of learners still in learning is satisfactory. However, progress at St Austell is too slow for many learners. The electronic recording system for individual learning plans (ILPs) is effective in driving the tracking system, but there is insufficient formal data to

record the progress of learners in learning, unit by unit. Retention rates have improved since the inspection and average 64% over the two-year period. Progress reviews completed by the liaison officers include specific targets with defined time scales that are monitored. The college-based response to these reviews and targets at St Austell is often too slow. Liaison officers are active in bringing forward the completion of technical certificates early in the programmes. Training managers oversee the provision across each site and have good communication with the curriculum teams, assessors and liaison officers.

WBL sport, leisure and tourism

In the March 2003 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses for sport, leisure and tourism as a whole were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- good pass rates on NVQ level 2 sport and recreation, GCE AS and GNVQ intermediate courses
- good facilities and resources
- very good provision and take-up of additional qualifications and enrichment activities
- well-developed partnerships with industry and local schools.

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for foundation modern apprentices
- unsatisfactory pass rates on some part-time courses
- too many poorly structured or dull lessons

- insufficient provision at entry and foundation levels.

Further textual reference in the report referred to the following weakness in work-based learning sport, leisure and tourism programmes:

- insufficient written feedback to work-based learners on assessment of their performance, knowledge and understanding.

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

Retention rates remain high and pass rates show an overall improvement and are now good. A wide range of additional qualifications is provided within the WBL framework, which enable learners to extend their qualification base. In 2003/04, 36 learners achieved around 250 individual qualifications. Learners' career prospects are improved by the achievement of additional qualifications and significant proportions of learners have secured permanent employment (not merely seasonal), and are working towards higher qualifications.

Learners' written work and portfolio collections are of a high standard. The revised portfolio promotes greater understanding of evidence collection and the assessment process includes detailed written feedback which helps learners to improve their performance.

The quality of teaching in outdoor pursuits work-based learning is of a high standard. Basic and key skills are embedded effectively within the programme and are relevant to the requirements of outdoor activities. For example, one of the numeracy assignments is based upon a map-reading exercise that has a wider application linked to outdoor safety.

Liaison officers continue to provide good support for learners. They maintain strong and effective links with employers and the local community. The college works closely with three outdoor centres which can provide a suitable length of placement that allows learners to complete the apprenticeship programmes fully.

Initial assessment and induction procedures are effective. These include practical tests to identify the appropriate level of qualification and any support needs. Results and progress are recorded in learners' portfolios. The rigorous application of initial assessment criteria has led to a decline in the numbers offered WBL placements and alternatives such as foundation or assistant activity instructor courses are offered to learners before an apprenticeship.

Leadership and management of outdoor pursuits WBL are good. The current operations manager and liaison officer have reviewed the provision and produced an effective programme that is responsive to the needs of both learners and employers. Regular staff meetings discuss learners' requirements and effective teaching and training methods. Best practice is being adopted to link key skills within the outdoor pursuits curriculum. Portfolio reviews are included as part of quality improvement. Assessments are often linked to other college activities.

WBL health and social care

In the March 2003 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be

unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses for health and social care as a whole were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- high pass rates on most courses
- effective integration of theory and practice in early years lessons
- high quality public services provision
- wide range of part-time programmes for adults.

Weaknesses

- teaching not fully meeting individuals' needs
- slow achievement by work-based learners
- declining retention rates on many courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice across centres
- failure to resolve staffing difficulties.

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**.

Teaching observed during the re-inspection fully addresses the needs of individual learners. Sessions are well planned and learning objectives are shared with the learners. Learning activities are carefully sequenced to ensure progress. Good individual support enables learners to increase

their knowledge and understanding of the topic.

Retention is improving in care and early years and is good in oral health and laboratory operations. Issues resulting in slow achievement by work-based learners have now been satisfactorily addressed. The September 2004 intake onto the level 3 NVQ in laboratory operations and oral health are making satisfactory progress towards achievement within an appropriate time frame. The 2002 intake onto the laboratory operations NVQ 3 did not complete within the two year period due to problems with the introduction of the NVQ units. However, three learners have now completed and three more are on track to complete by summer 2005. In the NVQ level 3 in oral health, learners who began in October 2003 are on track to complete within the two year training period. The college no longer recruits in care and early years. Those learners remaining are due to complete within the expected period.

Opportunities for sharing good practice across centres have been increased and enhanced. Three cross-college meetings have taken place this academic year to discuss the new standards for NVQ. Minutes show an appropriate focus on improving teaching and learning and the standardisation of procedures and practices. The successful integration of key skills into teaching programmes at Camborne will serve as a model of good practice for others to follow. Regular staff meetings provide an effective forum for the sharing of information and strategies to improve provision.

Problems arising from a shortage of assessors and staff absence have now been satisfactorily resolved. Three new assessors have been appointed and are making a positive impact in the area. Tutors are well qualified academically and professionally and regularly keep up to date with current practice in the sector.

Literacy and numeracy

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

- good teaching in community-based literacy lessons
- effective support for learners with dyslexia
- good facilities for teaching and supporting those with literacy and numeracy needs at CPR (Camborne, Pool and Redruth) and Rosewarne.

Weaknesses

- much unsatisfactory teaching

- lack of staff with specialist skills
- poor target setting and planning with individuals not well established
- ineffective additional support
- ineffective management.

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

Teachers prepare effective lesson plans for individual learning and identify clear achievable targets for individual learners that are cross-referenced to the adult core curriculum in literacy and numeracy. Individual learners are aware of their own personal targets and consider them to be sufficiently challenging and, where appropriate, vocationally relevant. Individuals take part in the process of planning their own targets, which helps them in the development of personal learning skills. There has been an overall improvement in retention and achievement rates across the college. This has been achieved alongside a significant increase of approximately 50% in the number of learners undertaking skills for life courses. Key skills retention and achievement rates have improved significantly, being at least at, and in most cases significantly above, national averages.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly and is now mostly good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Good teaching is characterised by effective planning based on detailed initial and diagnostic assessment of individual learners' needs that leads to the creation of realistic targets within an individual learning plan (ILP). The planning of discrete sessions within vocational areas is written in language that clearly explains the expected learning outcomes. Without exception, teachers write these expected learning outcomes legibly and explain them fully at the start of each lesson. The pace of delivery is brisk and includes skilful questioning of learners by teachers about prior knowledge. This is built upon appropriately using real life scenarios and realistic problems to solve. This was demonstrated by engaging learners in practical activities, both in groups and individually. At St. Austell, a tutor sensitively developed numeracy in a childcare session by putting the activity in context around making play-doh; this improved both the measuring and number skills of all learners. At Saltash a group of vocational and specialist teachers work together to reflect on, and further improve, teaching and learning within specific curriculum areas. The discussions lead to the identification of good practice and how this might be further embedded in lessons.

Specialist training in skills for life for staff is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching. All full-time and part-time staff maintain a log of all activities to update skills. This updating has been systematic and draws upon the national agenda for skills for life. There has been awareness raising throughout all college sites, with strand 2 delivered, followed by initial assessment, core curriculum and planning of individual learning. An effective model for sharing good practice was observed at Saltash centre, where staff discussed how the strand 2 awareness raising training would be developed further to promote effective learning through an understanding of learning styles. The development of language skills in vocational sessions is good. For example, in an arable production lesson the tutor skilfully tested learners' understanding of their existing technical vocabulary, and

then built upon this with a range of new words that would be of use in their working lives.

Screening and diagnostic assessment are effective in identifying additional support needs. The process of addressing individual learning needs through additional support is timely and appropriate. There is a general acceptance by most learners of the usefulness of this support. Where learners refuse support there is a follow up meeting to discuss the issues. Additional support in lessons is effective in addressing the assessed needs of individual learners. The monitoring of individual targets is effective. Teachers and support staff work collaboratively in the best interests of learners. At Falmouth, the teacher worked with support staff to ensure the social and educational inclusion of learners with assessed barriers to learning. Learners were able to access the Internet to find visual explanations to help their understanding of light marine engines, thereby learning in ways that suited them. Learners themselves confirmed the importance of learning support in their retention on courses.

Managers and team leaders set a clear direction on how the provision can improve and this is communicated effectively to all staff. There is a whole organisation approach to skills for life, and systematic training programmes that have led to improving the professional skills of staff who deliver skills for life, both in discrete sessions and within vocational areas. All staff discuss the importance of literacy, numeracy and language in underpinning their vocational areas, subscribing to the college culture of improvement. The skills for life manager understands the importance of monitoring performance and then taking steps to improve provision. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively with social and educational inclusion addressed through teaching and additional learning support.

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