



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



## RE-INSPECTION OF DERBY COLLEGE

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### Outcome of Re-Inspection

- The overall provision in the curriculum area of hairdressing and beauty therapy is now **satisfactory**.
- The overall provision in the curriculum area of humanities is now **satisfactory**.

### Background

Derby 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 hairdressing and beauty therapy, and in humanities, 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 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 the hairdressing and beauty therapy and humanities curriculum areas took place in the week commencing 7 March 2005.

### **Hairdressing and beauty therapy**

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 beauty therapy
- very good pass rates on the NVQ level 3 beauty therapy course
- good progression from level 1 to level 2
- high standards of students' work in holistic therapies.

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor pass rates on hairdressing courses
- poor retention rates on most courses
- insufficient and outdated resources in the majority of hairdressing and beauty salons
- unsatisfactory arrangements for pre-course guidance for many students
- no planned work experience for full-time students.

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 has been some improvement in pass rates on hairdressing courses. At level 2 the pass rate has risen steadily over the past three years although it is still marginally below the national average.

In 2003/04 the pass rate for NVQ level 1 in hairdressing declined slightly, but still remained above the national average.

Retention rates have improved on the NVQ level 2 hairdressing and most beauty therapy courses, and many are now above the national averages. Retention on NVQ level 1 in hairdressing is at the national averages and retention in the current year is high.

The accommodation and equipment in hairdressing and beauty salons are satisfactory. There is a new nail studio and the hairdressing salons on the main college site have recently been refurbished so that one now reflects a modern salon environment. However, dressing units are too low in one salon and there is too little space to move between clients in another. Teachers have developed a range of good quality learning packages and some useful interactive exercises which are available through the college's virtual learning environment. However, many students are not aware of this resource. The standard of accommodation of the college's franchise partner is high and provides a good quality real working environment. However, students on this site do not have full access to the range of support available at the main site.

Pre-course guidance for students is now satisfactory. The prospectus lists entry requirements for each course and applicants are interviewed by specialist teachers at the college. However, some students are inappropriately placed on hairdressing courses. Students are enrolled to level 1 with no account taken of the outcomes of initial assessments, GCSE results or prior experience.

Work experience is now in place for all students taking hairdressing and beauty therapy courses at levels 2 and 3.

Some aspects of curriculum management remain unsatisfactory. Planning for internal verification has improved but in some areas there is still too much reliance on verification of assignments and portfolios rather than practical skills. Internal verifiers' reports often consist of brief judgments with no supporting evidence and fail to include useful feedback or action points. Standardisation meetings are ineffective.

## **Humanities**

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 pass rates for GCE AS and A-level sociology
- very good retention rates on most GCE A2 courses
- very good teaching of adult students.

### **Weaknesses**

- unsatisfactory and poor pass rates on GCE AS courses

- unsatisfactory in-year retention rates on GCE AS courses in 2002/03
- much dull and undemanding teaching of students aged 16 to 18
- inadequate monitoring and review of students' academic progress.

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 at AS-level have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory. In both psychology and sociology students do better than predicted from their GCSE entry profile and in psychology pass rates are above national averages. Pass rates in law have consistently improved over the last three years and are now similar to national averages, as are those in geography. Pass rates in history have been unsatisfactory in two of the last three years.

Retention rates are now satisfactory, at around the national averages for similar colleges for all subjects at AS level. Attendance during observed lessons was 81% compared to 73% at the original inspection.

There has been a significant improvement in teaching and learning. Most lessons observed were good or better, and in psychology no observed lessons were graded less than good. Teaching methods are successful in creating and maintaining students' active involvement throughout most lessons and students generally respond enthusiastically. Small group tasks are well structured, and debriefing is effective and allows individuals to benefit from the work of others. There are, however, few examples of activities or materials which are planned to support the particular needs of individuals or small groups. There is effective use of questions and answers to motivate students, increase their depth of learning, make links with earlier topics and test understanding. However, in some lessons students are not given sufficient encouragement to expand on short answers or move from simple recall to higher level responses. There were some instances of students arriving late to lessons but these did not cause the disruption reported in the last inspection.

individual learning plans are not used effectively and remain a weakness. Some reviews are not dated, some action plans are not completed and many action points are insufficiently specific to be useful. There is often no written evidence of actions and progress against targets being monitored and reviewed.

Leadership and management have improved. Teams meet regularly both formally and informally and there is a focus on improving teaching and learning. However, the formal self-assessment report is weak, lacking in-depth analysis and sometimes regarding normal practice as a strength.

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

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