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Professor Neil Gorman  
Vice Chancellor  
Nottingham Trent University  
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Dear Professor Gorman

Ofsted Subject Survey Programme 2006/07

Sector Skills Area 3: Agriculture, horticulture and animal care

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 13 October 2006. I am particularly grateful to those involved for all their hard work in preparing the programme and background documentation and giving up a great deal of their time during the visit. Please pass on my thanks to other staff and learners who gave up their time to talk to me.

The visit provided much useful evidence for the subject survey in agriculture, horticulture and animal care. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but should we wish to include specific aspects of practice we will contact the college first. All college letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform judgements included: interviews with staff and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of good practice examples.

I agreed to provide a summary of my observations of good practice seen in animal management.

Good practice observed included:

- the effective use of new technologies to manage and enhance learning, as well as to check on attendance, punctuality and retention
- the thorough use of on-line questionnaires to obtain views and feedback from learners
- the comprehensive virtual learning environment which promotes the development of learners' research skills including through links to other useful websites, and enhances communication between staff and learners

- the innovative use of a web cam on site to enhance learners' learning experiences, currently used in nest boxes and roosting boxes and for a badger watch on-site
- good and constructive assessment feedback.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop land-based courses in the college.

As I explained, a copy of this letter will be sent to your LLSC and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Bryan Davies  
Inspector, Adult Learning Inspectorate.