

REINSPECTION REPORT

The City Literary Institute Reinspection

29 January 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

THE CITY LITERARY INSTITUTE REINSPECTION

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. City Literary Institute (the Institute) is one of the largest providers of part-time adult education in the United Kingdom. It is situated in central London and was established in 1919 as one of five literary institutes. It has extended its provision in the arts, humanities and languages to include learning programmes in information and communications technology (ICT), health and fitness, literacy and numeracy, and the provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Foundation programmes

2. The Institute's department of essential skills and learner services provides a range of services including courses in literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), dyslexia and learning support. The department also manages a study skill centre that supports learners at all levels, from pre-entry to postgraduate level. Discrete literacy, numeracy and language courses are provided both during the day and in the evening, primarily at the main site. Most of the courses are taught in one-term modules. The provision includes two courses of seven and a half hours a week, one for beginners called Getting Started and a follow-up course called Moving On. Getting Started has been introduced since the previous inspection. There is now a progression route from beginners to pre general certificate of secondary education. Literacy, numeracy and language support is also provided within study skills support, mainly in the form of drop-in sessions, and within individual sessions for people with dyslexia. This includes a full diagnostic service.

3. In 2002-03, there were 350 learners accounting for 670 enrolments on courses. Learners in literacy, numeracy and language made up 1.3 per cent of total learner hours across the college. All enrolments involved concessionary fees. Since September 2003, a total of 198 learners have been recruited: of whom 61 per cent are women and 61 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Sixteen per cent have a declared learning difficulty and/or disability. Eleven learners are receiving support for dyslexia and 91 learners are receiving additional support through the study skills centre. Of these, 17 are also enrolled on discrete literacy, numeracy or language support courses.

4. The area is managed by a full-time head of programme area, a manager for literacy, numeracy and language initiatives and a co-ordinator of study skills support. There are two fractional literacy, numeracy and language staff and seven part-time staff. In the study skills support area, there are four full-time staff, a part-time staff member providing support, five fractional staff and nine part-time tutors.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	9
Number of learner interviews	12
Number of staff interviews	9
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	2

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. During the previous inspection, the quality of the provision in foundation programmes was found to be unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were found to be satisfactory.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Foundation programmes	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	198	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- improving trends in retention, achievement and attendance
- good teaching
- effective development of learners' personal and life skills
- good specialist support for learners with dyslexia

Weaknesses

- some inadequate individual learning plans
- poor accommodation
- insufficient use of information and communications technology

Achievement and standards

6. Achievement rates on externally accredited courses have increased from 52 per cent in 2001-02 to 59 per cent in 2002-03. Achievement of all the targets on individual learning plans increased from 52 per cent to 67 per cent in the same year. The falling retention rates noted in the previous inspection have been stabilised and in the first term of 2003-04, retention was 80 per cent, which is an improvement of 7 per cent over the same period in 2002. Attendance in classes is currently 77 per cent, an increase of 17 per cent. Attendance over the first term of 2003-04 showed an increase of 12 per cent over the same period in 2002.

7. There is effective development of learners' personal and life skills. Learners develop good self-confidence and independent study skills. For example, one learner who started studying at entry level has now progressed to level 2. ESOL learners attending the established literacy, numeracy and/or language drama classes are able to improvise everyday encounters in front of their peers with confidence and skill. Some of these learners had poor self-confidence at the beginning of the course.

8. Overall, learners' standard of work is satisfactory. Attainment is good in most classes. However, some portfolios of evidence being prepared for accreditation are not adequately structured and learners have not worked well to ensure good presentation of their work.

Quality of education and training

9. Teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, 90 per cent were good or very good. No classes were unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Lesson-planning is detailed. Learning objectives are explained to learners at the start of classes. Tutors are skilled at involving all learners in the lessons and in providing very good support for less-confident learners. Homework is a regular feature on most courses with many learners completing work beyond that asked of them. There is an effective and innovative approach to teaching ESOL. Pairs of teachers, comprising an ESOL specialist and a drama specialist, work closely as teams to teach language skills in drama classes. These skills are reinforced by English grammar classes later in the week. However, not enough attention is given to the accuracy of pronunciation in the drama classes.

10. There is good specialist support for learners with dyslexia. In 2002-03, 97 learners received individual support through the study skills centre. The retention of these learners was 9 per cent above that for all literacy, numeracy and language learners. Learning materials and teaching styles are tailored to meet learners' specific needs. Wider support for learners is generally good and staff develop good working relationships with learners.

11. Resources for learning are satisfactory. There is a good comprehensive resource bank for literacy. These resources are prepared in-house and are reviewed by all teachers before their general use. Tutors have appropriate qualifications and most have substantial experience of working with adults. There is inadequate access to information and communications technology (ICT) resources.

12. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. A range of initial assessment procedures are adopted including diagnostic assessments. However, the outcomes do not always sufficiently aid the production of individual learning plans. Assessment of work is accurate and carried out regularly. There is good verbal feedback to learners to help them improve. However, written comments on returned work are often not sufficiently detailed.

13. The range of provision is satisfactory. The weakness of inadequate provision to meet the needs of beginners has been rectified by the introduction of Getting Started. Effective links with other local providers ensure learners are referred if the Institute's provision does not meet their needs.

14. Although improvements have been made to individual learning plans since the previous inspection, they are not used consistently to adequately plan and monitor learning. Some targets are too general. Some staff have completed the learner outcome section with guidance for the tutor. Most learners do not have copies of their individual learning plans, though good discussions take place during their production. Learners do not keep a weekly diary of their work. There are good examples of individual learning plans for learners on discrete literacy, numeracy and language courses who access the

study skill centre. These individual learning plans are presented differently to the standard format and include statements of general learning goals. Specific targets are relevant and expressed in simple language. Detailed records are made following each session measuring progress towards the targets.

15. There is insufficient use of ICT. No classes have access to ICT facilities without moving to either specialist ICT rooms or to the learning centre. However, the study skills centre is used as a teaching room for some morning classes. Learners cannot access online extension work within the teaching environment. Literacy, numeracy and language learners are not able to use ICT to improve the presentation of their work.

16. Accommodation is poor. With the exception of the study skills centre, the literacy, numeracy and language skills team have no rooms which can be prepared for their specialism. Classes are taught where there is room in other departments. There is no dedicated wall space to celebrate learners' achievements. Tutors have to carry resources from room to room and do not have easy access to additional resources. There is too much use of paper-based worksheets. Some rooms are too small. For example, an ESOL class using role-play could only function effectively with some activities taking place onto the corridor. The writing platform attached to the chairs in all classrooms has inadequate space for literacy, numeracy and language work. In a numeracy class, learners were unable to measure accurately and record their results without great difficulty. The writing platforms are designed for right-handed people.

Leadership and management

17. Since the previous inspection, the department has carried out an in-depth review of its literacy, numeracy and language support work and has developed a comprehensive strategy. Staff and learners were fully involved in this review and have a good understanding of the new strategy. A detailed implementation plan had not been developed at the time of reinspection. Management has been restructured so that most aspects of literacy, numeracy and language provision and learner support are in the same department, though some community-based programmes remain the responsibility of other managers.

18. Management has been effective in not only raising retention, achievement and attendance rates but also in increasing the number of learners. Enrolments increased by 62 per cent between 2001-02 and 2002-03 and by a further 12 per cent in the first term of the current academic year.

19. There is effective management of equal opportunities. Programmes of work are managed to ensure social inclusion and equality of access for learners. Curriculum materials are free of bias and encourage diversity. A broad-ranging staff development programme supports the positive approach to equal opportunities and diversity issues.

20. The recently completed self-assessment report is accurate in most of its judgements. There are action plans to tackle the weaknesses identified. The post-inspection action plan has been implemented successfully and the quality of the provision has improved

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significantly.

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

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Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.