

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form  
College  
Date of visit: 14 March 2007

This feedback contains brief findings from the annual assessment visit. It focuses on the themes explored during the visit and does not attempt to give a comprehensive overview of the college's performance.

### Achievement and standards

How is the college trying to improve success rates further to avoid these 'levelling off' and becoming static?

- The overall pass rates particularly at level 3 are high, with many subjects achieving high grades at both A2 and AS. On value added performance measures, using ALIS data, the college is in the top 15% of colleges. Success rates are a little above the national average. Achievement is better than retention.
- The college is continuing to set appropriate academic targets for its students and has introduced subject review days that involve students, parents and tutors positively and closely in reviewing progress. The students have found these helpful, though not all reviews explain in sufficient detail how students can achieve their targets.
- The working parties established to further develop ways of improving student focus across the college are having a positive impact. Though they are successfully raising expectations and tackling complacency, the college acknowledges that there is still further work to be done.

What is being done to improve retention for students aged 17 and at the end of year 12?

- The programmes of students in year 12 are now carefully reviewed in the spring term to check that the college can continue to offer suitable courses for them. The provision of new courses involving more 'mix and match' under a new student entitlement programme is improving the situation. These courses are catering more appropriately for students who might leave at the end of year 12 and early indications of students' intentions show this is having a positive impact.

What measures are being taken to improve success rates at level 1 and 2?

- The focus of the staff development programme to develop teaching skills of those who teach level 1 and 2 programmes, including managing behaviour, is appropriate. More effective learning support is now being provided for these students and there is better coordination as a result of the appointment of a work-based learning manager.

How effective are the college's measures to maintain and improve attendance and punctuality?

- Measures to improve attendance and punctuality are good. Though approaches to dealing with punctuality vary, follow up to absences is prompt and appropriate.

## Quality of education and training

What measures are being taken to improve the quality of provision in computing and information communication technology (ICT) to reach the level of the rest of the college?

- There has been a thorough review with sound action plans, monitored through the Departmental Report and Action Plan (DRAP) process. Effective actions taken have been:
  - identifying and supporting students at risk of not completing
  - improving teaching and learning strategies
  - early review and moderation of coursework
  - tripling of January (sessional) examinations, results of which show improved passes.

What impact has the appointment of head of learning support achieved?

- The learning support unit has moved to a central location in the college where access is better. Central coordination is now more effective and good progress has been made in use of learning classroom support as a result of reviewing and defining the role. The range of pre-enrolment advice is better as students have an interview with a member of the learning support team before they enrol. The increase in more appropriate

case conferences is an early indication of positive impact. However, as other measures to assess the impact of learning support are being developed, it is too early to assess effectiveness.

How is the college planning to improve teaching and learning further, having judged it to be good?

- The priorities for improving teaching and learning are appropriate and well judged. The college takes part in the External Quality Review (EQR) process and has recently put in place an effective post lesson observation system that follows up on agreed actions. The links between targets for individual teachers to improve their teaching and learning and outcomes of lessons observations are a good feature.
- Sharing good practice, arising from lesson observations, is done well through the Bite Size initiative. However, more formal structures for staff to informally observe colleagues and share good practice have not been developed.
- Good use is made of the four subject learning coaches to develop best practice in their own areas (ICT, maths, biology, health and social care) but the model is underdeveloped elsewhere in the college.

## Leadership and management

How are timely and accurate data for curriculum managers being provided and what has been the impact?

- Regular reports on attendance and retention and value added measures are readily available on line for both managers and tutors. The impact has been that attendance and students' performance are closely monitored.

What impact has the appointment of a manager for work-based learning had to date?

- The appointment has ensured better and more effective coordination of work-based learning. The manager has already brought together a good central register of students, giving a clear holistic picture of students' programmes and their progress. There is also better coordination between the employers, students and the Brighton and Hove Training Agency (BHTA).

What progress has been made in taking forward points raised at the last AAV?

- Points raised at last year's AAV have been taken forward. The self-assessment report (SAR) gives evidence of how these have been dealt with.

Any other observations from the visit not identified in the pre-visit analysis:

Meetings with students indicated that there is limited feedback to them when their views are sought and the use of student views in making improvements is underdeveloped. When they have tutorials, the purpose of the session and how it fits into the scheme of tutorial work is not always made clear.