

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of College: Kendal College  
Date of visit: 14 June 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

Have success rates on long courses continued to improve?

- Success rates on long courses at most levels and for most age groups have improved consistently year on year since 2002.
- Success rates for students aged 16 to 18 on courses at levels 1 and 2 have improved consistently year on year. Success rates for learners of this age at level 3 improved during the period up to 2004/05 then declined in 2005/06 to around the national average. The overall trend from 2002 to 2006 is one of improvement and all success rates for students aged 16 to 18 are significantly above the national average.
- Success rates for adults on courses at level 1 have been maintained since 2002. The success rate for these learners declined in 2005/06 to below the national average. Success rates for adults at level 2 have been consistently above the national average and improved up to 2004/05. At level 3 the success rates have improved consistently year on year and are significantly above the national average.
- The college has a good understanding of the factors affecting the success rates and appropriate action has been taken where necessary. Data management is good and success rates predicted at the time of inspection have proved to be accurate. In-year retention rates indicate further improvements in the current year.

## Quality of education and training

What actions are being taken to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning?

- The college's data for 2005/06 shows that 62% of observed lessons were judged good or better, a 3 per cent improvement on the previous year. More recent college evidence shows that the percentage of inadequate teaching has decreased and the percentage of good or outstanding teaching has increased since the inspection. Staff development for individuals and groups is linked well to issues identified through observations, for example, behaviour management. Staff have opportunities to observe peers teaching and to observe sessions in other colleges. Quality days are used to share good practice. The use of the virtual learning environment has improved since inspection and is now developing well in all areas. In many occupational areas, access to information and communications technology (ICT) equipment and its reliability have improved and staff are more confident using the technology. Since the inspection, there has been closer team working in curriculum areas with staff sharing expertise more effectively on courses. The tutorial system is flexible to respond to identified needs and is considered by staff to be effective for setting learners' targets and improving retention and achievement.

Is the quality of advice and guidance consistent across all levels and age groups?

- Both the quality and the consistency of advice and guidance has improved since inspection. For example, in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programmes, more emphasis is placed on ensuring learners are on courses at the right level, checking their long-term intentions, and advising them about the impact on their careers of the rural nature of the area. On other programmes, greater emphasis is placed on ensuring learners have the relevant entry qualifications to help them succeed. Greater emphasis is placed on relevant admissions criteria for students aged 14 to 16 from local schools. The college has the final say on potential learners' suitability for vocational training. Support is now put in place more quickly to meet pastoral and study needs identified through initial assessment. Links between curriculum areas, skills for life programmes, and support staff are more clearly defined.

What is the current position with 14- 16 provision and partnership development?

- Partnership development is good. Cumbria College Limited shares resources well. For example, staff are used to write bids on behalf of all members. The South Lakes Federation, which involves the college and all schools in the areas, works closely together to avoid duplication and ensure that young people with problems are identified quickly and given early opportunities to attend college vocational programmes. A high number of school pupils aged 14 to 16 attend college courses, many of whom successfully progress to apprenticeships and other courses offered by the college. Other good partnership initiatives include a successful consortium bid for Train to Gain, initiatives to raise the profile of work-based learning with schools, and work with smaller providers to extend the range of provision in the community. Links with employers are developing effectively. Monitoring and management of employer engagement are improving.

## Leadership and management

Is health and safety management sufficiently robust to be a strength in leadership and management?

- Health and safety management is a strength in leadership and management. Robust measures are in place to manage health and safety. All learners receive training in health and safety and a useful booklet to reinforce the basic principles. There is an appropriate management structure including an effective health and safety committee with learner representatives. Housekeeping audits are regular and well recorded with effective measures to follow up actions required.

Any themes from the pre-visit analysis not explored during the visit:

- None

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

- None