

College of Animal Welfare

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Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	4
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement.....	6
Effectiveness of provision	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	6
Key areas for improvement.....	6
Main findings	8
Achievement and standards	8
Quality of provision.....	8
Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	9
What learners like	12
What learners think could improve.....	12
Learners' achievements	13

Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Animal care and veterinary nursing

Description of the provider

1. The College of Animal Welfare (CAW) specialises in education and training for the veterinary nursing profession and the animal welfare sector. CAW has four main sites in Edinburgh, Leeds, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire, the latter three offering LSC funded work-based learning amounting to around 24% of the college's business. CAW also has a collaborative partnership with Huntingdon Regional College (HRC). The college's administrative headquarters are located at the Huntingdon site. CAW is a veterinary nursing assessment centre approved by Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.
2. CAW provides a wide range of training for the veterinary nursing and animal care industry. In the 12 months before inspection, 3000 delegates had taken advantage of training days. The college also has 250 higher education students across all sites. CAW has 68 members of staff of whom 29 work part-time. A large number of staff work from home to cover the wide geographical area within which CAW operates.
3. At the time of inspection, there were 134 apprentices, 24 of which were studying animal care, 72 advanced apprentices and two learners working towards NVQs. The 180 learners funded through HRC were studying one of a wide range of veterinary nursing courses or a full-time national certificate in animal care, including 45 studying in the specialist area of greyhound racing.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Animal care and veterinary nursing	Good: Grade 2
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards are good, as is the quality of provision. Leadership and management are good but the arrangements for quality of opportunity are satisfactory. Provision in animal care and veterinary nursing is good.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. CAW has demonstrated a good capacity to improve. Good steps have been taken to improve quality since the previous inspection. Staff are self-critical and take full responsibility for continuous improvement. CAW has successfully worked to build on the strengths identified at the previous inspection as well as tackling most areas for development, however, progress with developing skills for life arrangements has been slow. Quality has been maintained during a period of growth. CAW has successfully incorporated provision previously supplied by another provider and expanded into a complex area of animal care where there is little history of work-based learning. Success rates for veterinary nurses have continued to improve. In animal care, although success rates have improved they remain low and untimely. Actions identified in development plans to improve, the provision are appropriate, wide ranging and closely monitored, however, these plans do not always show how the impact of actions for improvement will be measured. Quality assurance arrangements are good. CAW demonstrates a good ability to maintain consistent quality at learning centres spread across the country.
6. The self-assessment process is good and sufficiently self-critical. It draws on a wide range of information such as lesson observations, learner and employer surveys and forums, and consultation with staff. Analysis of success rates and job outcomes is used to good effect. Staff involvement in the self-assessment process is good. Discussions about self-assessment and quality improvement are central to all team meetings. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. It reflects the strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors and focuses appropriately on how these impact on learners. Course reviews make a good self-assessment of individual courses and learning centres, although in some cases they are insufficiently linked to the overall college self-assessment.

Key strengths

- High success rates in veterinary nursing
- Very productive working relations with industry bodies and employers
- Success in widening participation of under-represented occupational specialisms
- Good operational management
- Strong focus on quality improvement

Key areas for improvement

- Success rates in animal care
- Proportion of good or better teaching
- Planning of workplace training and assessment
- Reinforcement of equality and diversity in teaching and reviews
- Implementation of a skills for life strategy

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

7. Achievement and standards are good. Overall success rates in 2006/07 for apprentices and advanced apprentices in veterinary nursing are high at 87%. Success rates in animal care have improved since the previous inspection, although it remains unsatisfactory at 11% for apprentices in 2006/07. Timely success rates are also unsatisfactory. This has been recognised by CAW and suitable actions have been taken to rectify the situation. The success rates for further education programs in animal care are satisfactory.
8. The standard of learners work is good. All learners are employed and demonstrate good practical skills in the workplace. Veterinary nursing portfolios are cross-referenced effectively to performance criteria. Animal care apprentices use a wide range of methods to generate good evidence from the workplace.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

9. Overall teaching and learning are good. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In better lessons, sessions are well planned and tutors draw on a wide range of their own and learners' experiences during lessons. Learners are able to work independently and are attentive and keen to succeed. However, sessions often lack a range of activities and teachers use too few teaching strategies. There is little use of interactive computer technology. Teachers do not take advantage of opportunities to use visual resources and or make links with practical teaching during theory sessions. Learners' written work is of a high standard and feedback from teachers is prompt and detailed. CAW makes insufficient use of resources available nationally to improve teaching and learning.
10. Internal verification is good. Standards of assessment have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Practical work is observed and assessed frequently. Learners working with greyhounds are given good workbooks which they use effectively. Internal verifiers ensure that work-based assessors work to a common standard. They make frequent visits to the workplace to support and guide assessors and learners and assure the quality of assessment. Learners receive good feedback on their progress, however, there is insufficient planning of training and assessment in the workplace. Pre-assessment skills checks are often completed, although, insufficient tutorial time is available to ensure an appropriate plan is in place to develop the necessary skills before assessment. Frequently the planned assessment identifies gaps in training and the assessment changes to a training session. Information regarding off-the-job training for veterinary nurses is given to employers, however, it is not linked to a training plan to influence the work carried out in the surgery. Employers do not receive copies of individual learning plans. The literacy and numeracy needs of learners are assessed accurately at the beginning of training. Where it is identified that they require support they are assessed again after six months to identify improvement.
11. Progress reviews are good and well structured. Clear targets are set, agreed and monitored with employers and learners. In veterinary nursing, information is particularly detailed and

includes formative and end of term test results, progress with skills for life and key skills and monthly portfolio targets. Some reviewers do not give learners sufficient encouragement to contribute fully to discussions and express any concerns they might have.

12. Resources in the workplace are good but some learners, particularly in animal care, work with only a narrow range of animals. A well stocked library is used frequently by learners during off-the-job training. In some cases there are not enough physical resources for off-the-job training, such as radiography resources and scrubbing up facilities.
13. The extent to which courses meet the needs and interests of learners is good. Employers contribute financially to learning. They are highly committed to the training and give good support for learning. Many employers and workplace supervisors take advantage of the professional development opportunities provided by CAW. Employers within the greyhound industry, new to training, are enthusiastic about the programme and endorse the skills and knowledge that learners are gaining.
14. Support and guidance for learners are good. CAW provides specialist provision for those with dyslexia, however, additional learning support is not currently provided for learners in the workplace. The care, advice and encouragement to achieve high standards given by CAW staff are good. Information, advice and guidance to learners, particularly about career progression, are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

15. Leadership and management are good. Operational management is good and there is a clear emphasis on innovation and the success of learners. Strategic plans set clear actions with a strong emphasis on business performance and improving quality. Decision making is communicated well and the management structure allows for rapid responses and fast implementation of new strategies. Risks to the business are monitored closely and there is good succession planning including strategies for dealing with critical incidents. Staff performance is reviewed regularly and business and personal targets are set. Staff recruitment, selection and training are good. An extensive range of business focused staff development takes place. Staff are well qualified and maintain their occupational competence, particularly in veterinary nursing. Good communication arrangements exist for remote based staff and there is excellent use of information technology to give access to records at locations throughout the country. There are good arrangements to maintain regular contact with remote based staff. Measures to ensure personal security for staff and learners are appropriate.
16. CAW maintains an effective and productive range of partnerships. The broad range of animal welfare related programmes, course levels and study options has been established through close dialogue and partnership with industry. An advisory board meets regularly to consider new developments and to comment on existing provision. Good engagement with employers is used successfully to involve the veterinary and animal care industries in providing effective work-based learning and assessment. The management of work

placements is effective. CAW has used its many partnerships to develop learning arrangements for learners who would not normally participate. A particularly strong partnership exists with a local further education college to deliver a well managed range of programmes on a franchise basis. A further four training providers subcontract with CAW for off-the-job training.

17. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and satisfactorily reflect current legislation. Procedures to meet child protection and safeguarding requirements are appropriate. Staff and learner inductions have a good focus on raising initial awareness of legislation and CAW procedures. Staff receive regular updates on equality and diversity at team meetings and training courses. Data on groups of learners with specific needs is analysed and targets are set. For example, strategies to improve success rates for male learners have been successful. Initiatives to widen participation from under-represented groups are good, although they have not yet impacted significantly on the proportion of males and learners from minority ethnic groups. A particularly successful initiative has engaged the greyhound racing industry in training. Distance learning is available for learners living in remote areas. Training centres are located around the country offering a range of access points.
18. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace is satisfactory but there is insufficient ongoing checking and development of learners understanding of diversity during teaching sessions and workplace reviews. Staff are not fully conversant with the wider issues of diversity outside the animal care industry.
19. Performance is monitored frequently. Data collection focuses on retention and achievement rates which are monitored at all levels. Staff have a good understanding of, and take responsibility for, the performance for their own course and training centre. However, they are less clear about the college's overall performance. In animal care there is insufficient focus on improving success rates or measuring the impact of strategies for improvement.
20. Quality assurance is wide ranging. Regular observation of teaching, reviews, induction and additional support takes place, although this does not include on-the-job learning. Termly and post-induction learner surveys and annual employer surveys collect a wide range of data and information which is analysed and used for quality improvement activities. Data on learners' destinations after leaving CAW are analysed to indicate the proportion of learners who gain employment or continue training. Annual course reviews analyse performance well, although the use of targets to improve attendance or retention is too variable. Complaints from learners and employers are investigated thoroughly. Internal verification arrangements are strong.
21. Lesson observation arrangements are thorough, although too much teaching is satisfactory and uninspiring. Observations focus well on learning and are starting to identify whether lessons meet the individual needs of learners. Arrangements for recording the observation outcomes are cumbersome. There is statistical analysis of observation grades which compares performance at different centres, however, this does not identify the better aspects of teaching nor the commonly weak areas. Although teachers are appropriately qualified CAW does not do enough to identify and share best teaching practice, particularly in specialist animal care and veterinary nursing provision.

22. The strategy for the provision of additional learning support is satisfactory. Policy is in place for providing additional learning support but there is no skills for life strategy. CAW has identified the need to recruit skills for life specialists and to improve the provision of literacy, numeracy and language support, particularly within the workplace and for remote based learners.

What learners like:

- Learning 'why'
- Qualifications and choice of programmes
- 'College is good'
- 'Being close to home'
- Practical work especially at Level 3 veterinary nursing
- 'Hands on experience'
- Being employable
- 'Learning new things'
- Very helpful and easy to contact staff
- Mix of practical and theory
- Library and information technology facilities at Royal Veterinary College
- Being assessed in the workplace
- 'Working together to make you learn'
- Realistic targets in reviews

What learners think could improve:

- Pressure of portfolios, exams and work
- 'Tedious' portfolios
- Teaching of health and safety
- Availability of transport from Potters Bar station
- 'Some input to the content of the vending machine'
- 'Benches in the garden to sit on at lunch break'

Annex

Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning apprenticeship programmes** managed by the College of Animal Welfare **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	1	100%	48%	0%	34%
		timely	1	100%	31%	0%	22%
	05-06	overall	13	85%	53%	62%	44%
		timely	17	53%	34%	41%	27%
	06-07	overall	23	96%	64%	87%	58%
		timely	32	56%	43%	53%	37%
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	10	70%	51%	60%	39%
		timely	12	58%	29%	42%	22%
	05-06	overall	32	78%	58%	69%	52%
		timely	36	58%	58%	53%	34%
	06-07	overall	57	74%	65%	74%	61%
		timely	70	57%	47%	50%	44%

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** Provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'