

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 October 2007

Dr A Smith  
Principal  
Aquinas College  
Nangreave Road  
Stockport  
SK2 6TH

Dear Dr Smith

Ofsted survey inspection programme – a comparison of the effectiveness of post 16 providers

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 10 October to look at work in level 3 provision.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and brief visits to three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of level 3 provision was judged to be outstanding.

#### Achievement and standards

Standards are above national averages. The achievement of students including their personal development is excellent. Students are highly motivated and present themselves as mature young adults.

#### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning, including academic guidance is outstanding. Relationships amongst the staff and students at the college are excellent. Teaching is varied and captures the interest of students. Students enjoy their lessons. They feel very well cared for and guided as a result of the comprehensive range of effective support available to them.

## Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. The very broad range of subjects and enrichment opportunities available at the college is strongly motivating for the students. All interests are extremely well catered for. The extremely thorough enrolment and induction processes contribute significantly to high retention rates on level 3 courses.

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are highly effective. The college demonstrates a genuinely corporate commitment to securing the personal development of all students. Management processes are thorough and well-conceived, making good use of data without being data driven. Data is used very effectively as evidence to guide interaction between staff and with students, and to test impact.

## Inclusion

The college is very inclusive. Students with a broad range of levels of prior attainment are enabled to make good progress and achieve well. The college exhibits a strong sense of community.

## Areas for improvement

There were no significant areas for improvement discussed.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop level 3 provision in the college.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your Local Learning Skills Council and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss  
Her Majesty's Inspector