

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Reinspection of curriculum areas 1996-97

October 1997

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

THE FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate publishes reports on each college of further education every four years. The inspectorate also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum and gives advice to the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge and experience in the work they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member who does not work in education and a member of staff from the college being inspected.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are set out in Council Circular 93/28. During their inspection, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of aspects of college provision. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also use a five-point grading scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses. The descriptors for the grades are:

- grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

REINSPECTION OF CURRICULUM AREAS

The Council has agreed that colleges with programme areas judged by the inspectorate to have more weaknesses than strengths (grades 4 or 5) may have their funding agreement with the Council qualified to prevent them increasing the number of new students enrolled in those areas until the Council is satisfied that the weaknesses have been addressed satisfactorily.

Arrangements are made to reinspect curriculum areas graded 4 or 5 in time for the next funding round. This is a report on those curriculum areas which have been reinspected in time for the 1997-98 funding round.

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 109/97

REINSPECTION OF CURRICULUM AREAS, OCTOBER 1996 TO MAY 1997

Summary

The Council has agreed that colleges with curriculum areas judged by the inspectorate to have more weaknesses than strengths (grades 4 or 5) may have their funding agreement with the Council qualified to prevent them increasing the number of new students enrolled in those areas until the Council is satisfied that the weaknesses have been addressed satisfactorily.

The Council requires that colleges are given the opportunity to have curriculum areas graded 4 or 5 reinspected within a year of their original reinspection. Colleges may request the Council to defer reinspection if they do not believe that sufficient improvements in provision have been achieved.

This is a report on those curriculum areas, reinspected between October 1996 and May 1997. Inspectors visited 18 colleges to reinspect 19 curriculum areas which had been judged by the inspectorate to have more weaknesses than strengths. Significant improvements were found in all but one of the curriculum areas.

The reinspection grades are shown in the table below. The table also indicates those colleges with curriculum areas graded 4 or 5 which will be included in a future reinspection report.

COLLEGES INSPECTED IN 1993-94

<i>College</i>	<i>Curriculum area</i>	<i>Inspection grade</i>	<i>Reinspection grade (January 1995)</i>	<i>Reinspection grade (November 1996)</i>
Hendon College	Science and mathematics	4	4	4

COLLEGES INSPECTED IN 1994-95

<i>College</i>	<i>Curriculum area</i>	<i>Inspection grade</i>	<i>Reinspection grade</i>
Keighley College	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3
Kidderminster College	Art and design (pre-degree)	4	*
	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	*
Sir George Monoux College	Business	4	2
	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English for speakers of other languages	4	3
Stanmore College	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3
Woolwich College	Mathematics and science	4	2

**Reinspection scheduled*

COLLEGES INSPECTED IN 1995-96

<i>College</i>	<i>Curriculum area</i>	<i>Inspection grade</i>	<i>Reinspection grade</i>
Askham Bryan College of Agriculture and Horticulture	Equine studies	4	2
Bedford College	Hairdressing and beauty therapy	4	3
Bexley College	Leisure and tourism	4	3
	Law, history, economics, psychology and sociology	4	†
Cardinal Newman College	Business	4	3
Cleveland Tertiary College (The) (Name changed to Redcar and Cleveland College on 1 August 1997)	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3
Croydon College	Hairdressing and beauty therapy	4	3
De La Salle College (became part of Pendleton College in February 1997)	Mathematics/information technology	4	‡
	English and languages	4	‡
Furness College	Business	4	3
Great Yarmouth College of Further Education	Basic education, including provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	*
Hackney Community College	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	2
Hammersmith and West London College	Health and community care	4	*
	Humanities	4	*
	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	*
Hillcroft College	Computing, mathematics and core studies	4	3

College	Curriculum area	Inspection grade	Reinspection grade
North East Surrey College of Technology	Leisure and tourism	4	3
	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	*
Salisbury College	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3
Sandwell College	Art, graphic design and media	4	*
Somerset College of Arts and Technology	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	†
Stroud College of Further Education	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	*
West Cheshire College	Construction	4	§
	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3
Wirral Metropolitan College	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4	3

* *Reinspection scheduled*

† *Reinspection to be scheduled*

‡ *Will be inspected as part of Pendleton College inspection in 1998-99*

§ *Provision discontinued*

**ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION**

Reinspection of equine studies: December 1996

Background

Askham Bryan College of Agriculture and Horticulture was originally inspected between April and December 1995 and the findings were recorded in inspection report 24/96. The equine curriculum area was awarded a grade 4.

Teachers were well qualified and enthusiastic and the facilities at York Riding School were good. A major issue was the lack of effective communication between the college and York Riding School, which led to inadequate co-ordination of provision, some duplication of course material and elements of contradictory teaching. The provision at York Riding School was not effectively monitored or assessed by the college. Course documentation and management lacked consistency. Theoretical and practical aspects of the work were not effectively related. Students were not given enough practical experience in stable duties and stable management to meet the requirements of industry and they were not reaching an appropriate level of competence in riding. Achievements in British Horse Society qualifications were low; students' retention and achievement rates on BTEC first diploma and national diploma courses were poor. The team teaching equine studies was not involved in the college's strategic planning process.

The reinspection took place between 9 and 11 December 1996. The inspector observed 12 lessons at the college and York Riding School. Minutes of meetings, course files and students' work were examined, and meetings were held with staff, students and employers.

Assessment

The college has made considerable progress in meeting its improvement targets. In particular, stronger links with the York Riding School are reflected in better course planning, teaching and tutorial work. Course management has improved significantly. Course documentation, which includes details of assignments and assessments, is of good quality. There are effective arrangements to ensure consistency in assessment procedures and the standards observed. An internal verification system has recently been introduced. Course leaders now maintain accurate and detailed records of students' achievements. Teaching is considerably improved. In the best lessons, teachers make frequent reference to the commercial and practical application of the work undertaken, sharing their wide experience with the students. Appropriate standards are set for the presentation of assignments, and the use of IT skills is evident in coursework. The increased emphasis on achieving practical skills ensures that students obtain sufficient experience in riding, stable duties and management to meet industry requirements. Retention rates on the national diploma course are improving; there were no withdrawals from the 1996 intake during the first term. The college should continue to address: the lack of information on teaching methods and resources in schemes of work; some weaknesses in teaching, including the lack of variety in theory lessons, the over-instructional approach in some practical lessons and the lack of constructive comment on students' written work; assignments which are too theoretical and which fail to encourage students to undertake investigative work in real situations; and poor retention and achievement rates on some courses.

Revised grade: equine studies 2.

BEDFORD COLLEGE**EASTERN REGION****Reinspection of hairdressing and beauty therapy: February 1997****Background**

Bedford College was inspected between March 1995 and January 1996 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 56/96. Provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy was graded 4.

Courses in beauty therapy were well planned and teaching methods were suitably varied. On beauty courses, students were encouraged to be professional and there was keen attention to health and hygiene. There was no work experience. Students undertook no competition work and there were few visits or visiting speakers. In hairdressing the curriculum was very narrow and theory sessions failed to motivate students. Too little time was spent on theoretical studies compared with practical salon work. As a consequence, students did not undertake enough written work. Students acquired adequate practical skills in hairdressing and beauty therapy but key skills were inadequately developed and there was no opportunity for students to develop information technology skills. There was not enough insistence on professional standards. Students often dressed inappropriately. Absenteeism was high on many courses and students were not always punctual. Courses failed to provide realistic conditions for students to work in and both equipment and accommodation were unsatisfactory.

The area was reinspected by two inspectors in February 1997. They observed 13 sessions and examined students' assessed work. Meetings were held with managers, staff, clients and students.

Assessment

The college had already identified a number of problems in hairdressing at the time of the college inspection and changes were imminent. Since the inspection, there has been considerable progress in addressing the weaknesses which were identified. New teachers have been appointed. Teachers are appropriately skilled and qualified and they encourage appropriate standards of professionalism in students' work and dress. There are appropriate schemes of work and there is now a suitable balance between theoretical and practical work. Students develop satisfactory practical skills and the quality of their written work has improved. The range of activities undertaken by students has been broadened. There are regular checks on attendance and progress. Records of students' assessed work are well maintained. In some of their assignments students fail sufficiently to relate theoretical knowledge to practical skills. Key skills remain underdeveloped and students make little use of information technology in the salons or in their assessed work. Although some deficiencies in specialist equipment and in accommodation have not been addressed, the college's accommodation strategy provides for major improvements which are expected to be complete by January 1998.

Revised grade: hairdressing and beauty therapy 3.

BEXLEY COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION

Reinspection of leisure and tourism: February 1997

Background

The college was inspected between May and November 1995 and the inspection findings were recorded in college inspection report 14/96. Leisure and tourism was awarded a grade 4.

The strengths of the provision were that: teaching and lesson management were generally sound; there was a good level of literacy support; most students on advanced programmes were well motivated; and some students' work was of an appropriate standard. These strengths were outweighed by weaknesses: inattentive students in some intermediate GNVQ lessons; the use of over-complex language on intermediate GNVQ handouts; inadequate feedback to students on how written work could be improved; assessment procedures which were not sufficiently comprehensive; very poor completion rates and examination pass rates, particularly on GNVQ programmes; a lack of specialist accommodation and equipment; teachers' narrow range of specialisms and lack of relevant industrial experience; and poor management of the curriculum area.

The provision was reinspected by one inspector over three days in February 1997. The inspector observed nine lessons, examined students' written work, met managers, teachers and students, and scrutinised a wide range of documentation relating to the college and the courses.

Assessment

The college has made significant progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the original inspection. The quality of teaching has improved. More effective assessment procedures have been introduced and teachers provide a more thorough feedback on students' work. The teaching team has been expanded and now has a substantially wider range of expertise. Several teachers have updated their commercial experience. The standard of work produced by most intermediate GNVQ students is good. GNVQ results have improved. Specialist accommodation and equipment now enable students to learn in an appropriate environment. Weaknesses still to be addressed include: a minority of sessions in which students were not sufficiently involved in the work; the slow pace of learning in some lessons; lesson plans which fail to take account of the range of students' abilities; and low completion rates on some programmes, although there has been an improvement over the last two years.

Revised grade: leisure and tourism 3.

CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE**NORTH WEST REGION****Reinspection of business: January 1997****Background**

Cardinal Newman College was inspected between September 1995 and March 1996 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 73/96. Provision in business was graded 4.

The strengths of the programme were: the effective questioning of, and informed responses from, students in many lessons; steady and productive work by students; good rates of progression to higher education; well-qualified staff and good information technology equipment and software. The strengths, however, were outweighed by weaknesses: schemes of work were of variable quality; too much class time was spent in taking notes; learning materials were not always well planned; attendance at, and retention on, some courses was poor; key skills were not effectively integrated with other elements of the course; quality assurance procedures were underdeveloped; and staff were not working effectively enough as a team.

The reinspection took place in the week beginning 6 January 1997. Two inspectors spent four days in the college. They observed 10 lessons, examined students' work, and held meetings with students, all staff teaching on the business programme area and the principal.

Assessment

The college has made significant progress in addressing a number of the weaknesses identified. The range of provision has been extended. Schemes of work are well prepared and well documented and are used by course teams. The documentation and the procedures related to monitoring and assessing students' progress have been improved and, in most cases, students' progress is appropriately monitored and recorded. A substantial amount of staff development has led to improved methods of teaching and learning, the production of learning materials, training and development lead body accreditation and the development of a team approach. New staff have been appointed. Changes to the teaching accommodation, improved information technology equipment, and the creation of wall displays have made the business suite a more appropriate environment for business studies. There remain some weaknesses. Students' motivation varies; teachers do not always succeed in maintaining their interest. Work experience is not fully exploited. Although it improved this year, the retention rate on the intermediate GNVQ programme has been poor. Quality assurance procedures are not yet sufficiently developed to ensure that the end of course review is effective.

Revised grade: business 3.

**CLEVELAND TERTIARY COLLEGE (THE)
NORTHERN REGION**

**Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
February 1997**

Background

The college was inspected at the beginning of the autumn term 1995 and the findings were recorded in inspection report 03/96. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was graded 4.

The college's strategic plan expressed a commitment to provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college showed a willingness to respond to the needs of students who were not able to travel into college. It also recognised a need for initial screening procedures to identify and provide the learning support which students required. However, there was insufficient information on the range of needs to be covered and on how the provision would be developed. The co-ordination of the work across the college and the marketing of the provision offered were inadequate. The main course for full-time students, 'Flexible Pathways', did not have a curriculum framework and students following the course did not receive a record of achievement. There was no individual programme for students with learning goals against which progress could be measured. The provision was not rigorously monitored and evaluated. Some of the classrooms used were of poor quality. Few staff had specialist qualifications relating to the teaching of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there was little training for learning support teachers.

The provision was reinspected over three days in February 1997. Eleven classes were observed. There were discussions with senior managers, learning support co-ordinators, course tutors and students. A range of documentation and students' work was also examined.

Assessment

Action has been taken to address many of the weaknesses identified. Market research into the students' needs in the area has been undertaken, staff have visited other colleges to view the range of provision offered and contacts with schools and careers advisers have been strengthened. A disability statement has been published and details of the arrangements for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have been included in all the course brochures. The college has conducted a needs analysis and considered options to meet demand. Co-ordination of the provision has been strengthened by the appointment of three new co-ordinators covering the areas of discrete provision, additional support and core/basic skills. The provision for students now involves an accredited course with a clear curriculum framework and processes for recording student progress. Further courses are being considered to ensure progression routes are available. Specialist staff and vocational tutors have undergone training, and there are plans to extend this to others. Classroom accommodation has been improved. There is increased rigour in the planning and teaching of most courses. However, significant further development is required to ensure that individual needs are identified, learning goals set and that teaching is fully effective. Effective quality assurance procedures need to be developed. There is also a need to address the poor take-up of the learning support made available through core/basic skills sessions and additional support.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

CROYDON COLLEGE**GREATER LONDON REGION****Reinspection of hairdressing and beauty therapy: March 1997****Background**

Croydon College was inspected between May and November 1995 and the findings were published in inspection report 26/96. The hairdressing and beauty therapy provision was graded 4.

The provision had several strengths: the quality of the teaching was generally good; teachers organised work effectively to take account of students' differing abilities; students were developing appropriate practical skills and were able to work together productively; staff were suitably qualified and had a good grasp of their subject; and accommodation was satisfactory. However, these strengths were outweighed by weaknesses: schemes of work lacked coherence; theoretical and practical sessions were inadequately linked; there were insufficient resources for the number of students; there were not enough clients in the salon upon whom students could practise their skills; individual students received insufficient support; punctuality and levels of attendance were poor; completion rates were low; there were some very poor achievement rates; and arrangements for monitoring students' achievements were inadequate.

The provision was reinspected by one inspector over three days in March 1997. She observed 17 theory lessons, practical sessions and tutorials. She inspected students' written work, met managers, teachers and students and examined a wide range of documentation relating to the college and the courses.

Assessment

The college has made significant progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the original inspection. Hairdressing and beauty therapy provision has been moved to another college site. It is well resourced and equipped. Substantially more clients now make use of the salon. Schemes of work have been redesigned and the relationship between theory and practical work is now evident. There is a more effective system for reporting students' absences. More tutorial support has been made available. There has been some improvement in completion rates. Levels of achievements have improved on most courses. There are weaknesses still to be addressed: completion rates on some courses remain low; some achievement rates, particularly on the hairdressing programme leading to NVQ level 3, should be improved further; opportunities for students' achievements to be assessed are too limited; and teachers do not always produce lesson plans or provide tutorial programmes.

Revised grade: hairdressing and beauty therapy 3.

FURNESS COLLEGE
NORTH WEST REGION

Reinspection of business: December 1996

Background

Furness College was inspected in the spring term 1996. The findings of the inspection were recorded in college inspection report 105/96. Provision in business was graded 4.

The provision had a number of strengths: course timetables had been adapted to take account of the needs of mature students, including women returning to study; in some part-time classes students were able to draw on their experience of work to illustrate the theory being taught and to share ideas with fellow students; in the secretarial workshop students worked well, developing skills at their own pace; good support was available for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; some course materials were well produced; computing provision had recently been improved and most students had satisfactory access to computers and CD-ROMs; in some course reviews, students' views were respected and taken into account. Strengths, however, were outweighed by weaknesses: schemes of work and lesson plans, where available, were poor; there was a degree of complacency about curriculum development and course design; teaching methods on some courses were ineffective; students were involved in identifying and evaluating what they had learned in a minority of sessions only; students were disadvantaged by teachers' lack of up-to-date experience of commerce and industry; the data on students' achievements were unreliable; some examination results appeared to compare unfavourably with national averages; student handbooks and study guides were poor or non-existent; teaching rooms were bare and uninviting; quality assurance was rudimentary; and management roles were ill-defined.

Business at Furness College was reinspected by two inspectors on 2 to 4 December 1996. They observed 23 classes, examined students' written work, scrutinised examination results, and held discussions with students and staff.

Assessment

Many of the weaknesses have been addressed. New staff have brought with them valuable industrial experience. Lesson plans and schemes of work have been produced using the standard college format, though they still vary in quality. There is a greater use of up-to-date case studies to illustrate business issues. The portfolio of courses has been reviewed and new provision planned to meet the needs of the community. Management roles have been defined and management information improved. On several courses, for example, single subject office skills, GNVQ intermediate and advanced business and GCSE accounts, recent examination results compare favourably with national averages. Plans to improve quality assurance have been agreed but there remains an inadequate focus on teaching and learning. Although the quality of teaching and learning and students' achievements have improved in parts of the programme area, they remain poor in some areas. In some lessons students were set work which was insufficiently demanding. A minority of students' assignments are overgraded. The industrial experience of many staff continues to need updating. Arrangements for sharing good practice are inadequate and procedures for setting and monitoring standards need further development.

Revised grade: business 3.

HACKNEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**GREATER LONDON REGION****Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:****January 1997****Background**

Hackney Community College was inspected previously between April and November 1995 and the inspection findings were recorded in college inspection report 28/96. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was graded 4.

The college was clearly committed to its provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The work was given high status through the direct involvement of the principal and other senior managers. Priority had been given to this area of work in the college's mission and strategic and operational plans. A particularly wide range of courses was on offer. Support for deaf students and students with partial hearing was good. However, there were major weaknesses in the quality of teaching, the effectiveness of learning and in the recording of students' achievements.

The provision was reinspected in January 1997. Seventeen teaching sessions were observed, meetings were held with managers, staff and students, students' work was inspected, and a wide range of documentation provided by the college was examined.

Assessment

The college has made significant progress in addressing the weaknesses identified during the earlier inspection while retaining and developing the strengths. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. The majority of sessions observed had strengths which outweighed weaknesses. The range of courses has been revised so that some courses originally inspected have been changed or replaced. This makes the provision more relevant to students' needs. Some new accreditation arrangements have been introduced which enable students to progress more easily to higher level courses. The management structure, which was new at the time of the first inspection, is now fully operational and effective. A range of materials has been developed to promote learning and achievement. Teachers analyse and record teaching, learning and students' achievements. Standardised forms have been developed to facilitate this. Students express high levels of satisfaction with their courses and with the support they receive. Their achievements are celebrated through a range of displays, events and presentations. Course documentation requires further development and some aspects of teaching and learning could be improved. Staff should extend their understanding of 'self-advocacy' and the skills required of students to practise this effectively. They should also address some aspects of students' behaviour and forms of communication. Staff and students would benefit if the good practice which exists was identified and shared with others. The college should further extend its provision to increase the opportunities students have to progress.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 2.

HENDON COLLEGE

GREATER LONDON REGION

Reinspection of science and mathematics: November 1996

Background

Hendon College was inspected between September 1993 and February 1994 and the findings were published in inspection report 33/94. The science and mathematics provision was graded 4. Subsequently, the provision was reinspected in January 1995 when a grade 4 was awarded again.

The reinspection in January 1995 established that there had been some improvements in provision, such as: the establishment of a strategy for the support of students whose first language is not English; an improvement in the quality of teaching and the promotion of learning; and the availability of detailed information on examination results and retention rates. However, the following important weaknesses remained: poor course completion rates; poor examination results in some GCSE subjects and low pass rates in GCE A level subjects, particularly mathematics; inadequate guidance from teachers on how students might improve their written work; and poor attendance and a lack of punctuality amongst students.

A second reinspection was carried out in November 1996 by two inspectors over three days. They inspected 28 lessons, had meetings with managers, teachers and students, examined students' written work and scrutinised a wide range of relevant documents.

Assessment

The college has made some progress in addressing weaknesses identified in the original inspection and first reinspection: systems are being developed to strengthen the monitoring of students' attendance and progress; there is well-structured tutorial support for students whose English is weak; and science laboratories have been improved substantially so that they now provide a high-quality learning environment. Despite these improvements, however, there are still substantial weaknesses. The standard of teaching and the effectiveness of learning have declined. Assignment briefs and marking schemes vary in quality and teachers sometimes provide inadequate feedback on students' written work. Teachers, generally, have only modest expectations of what the students are capable of achieving. Many of the tasks which students are set are insufficiently demanding, and the work they produce is often poorly presented. Pass rates on vocational courses are in line with national averages. However, GCE A level pass rates remain poor; in some cases, they have declined since the last reinspection. The proportion of students obtaining grade C or above in GCSE mathematics has halved in the past year and is well below the national figure. The overall attendance rate in lessons inspected was 70 per cent. Attendance was good in GCE A level mathematics and chemistry lessons but poor in GCSE mathematics. Although students' punctuality has improved, a lack of punctuality created difficulties in a few of the sessions inspected. Data on 1995-96 completion rates are imprecise but attendance registers indicate that completion rates are still a cause for concern.

Revised grade: science and mathematics 4.

HILLCROFT COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION

Reinspection of computing, mathematics and core studies: March 1997

Background

Hillcroft College was inspected between May and December 1995 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 34/96. Provision in computing, mathematics and core studies was graded 4.

The strengths of the provision were the commitment of staff, some effective teaching and the good level of progression to higher education. The weaknesses were: the ineffective teaching in some lessons; students' limited achievement of key skills; inadequate arrangements for the initial assessment of students and for meeting their differing needs; unclear management roles; some poor schemes of work; inadequate computing equipment; and the lack of open learning materials for students to develop their mathematics, computing and core skills.

The area was reinspected by two inspectors in March 1997. They observed 15 classes and examined students' work. Discussions were held with managers, teachers, students and the librarian.

Assessment

The college has made progress in addressing the weaknesses which were identified in the earlier inspection. A new middle management structure provides greater cohesion for these areas of work. New schemes of work have been developed for computing and mathematics modules. The college now has systems for identifying students' needs in relation to core skills. Study skills are taught as an integral element of courses. The majority of students are gaining information technology skills. Computer equipment has been increased and upgraded to the latest industry standard and a new learning resource centre enables students to use a range of open learning materials. However, computer printing facilities are inadequate and access to the computer room is restricted. There is significant variation in the effectiveness with which students' progress in acquiring study skills is measured. Other weaknesses include students repeating work already covered in other lessons, teachers' lack of attention to individual learning needs, and the inappropriateness of the numeracy provision for some students.

Revised grade: computing, mathematics and core studies 3.

KEIGHLEY COLLEGE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION

Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
May 1997

Background

Keighley College was inspected during May and June 1995 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 125/95. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was awarded a grade 4.

The college was committed to providing educational opportunities for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some students with disabilities were provided with support which enabled them to study alongside their peers on vocational and academic programmes across the college. However, procedures for assessing students' needs on entry to college and for developing individual programmes were ineffective. The range of vocational programmes available to students with learning difficulties was limited and there were too few opportunities to gain nationally recognised qualifications. Generally, there was too much emphasis on remedying students' weaknesses in basic skills through classroom-based activities. The co-ordination of learning support was weak. Schemes of work and lesson plans were often of poor quality. Many teachers were using inappropriate methods of teaching and learning. Little training had been provided to raise awareness in staff of the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The provision was reinspected on 12 and 13 May 1997. Ten classes were observed. Discussions were held with senior managers, faculty directors, the co-ordinators of numeracy, communications and additional support, teachers, support staff and students. Students' work and documentation provided by the college were examined.

Assessment

Action has been taken to address many of the weaknesses. Senior managers and governors have provided support and leadership in developing an inclusive approach to education. Staff across the college have responded positively to the issues raised during the initial inspection. The curriculum of the specially designed programmes has been reviewed, and the range of vocational programmes available for students with learning difficulties has been extended. The roles and responsibilities of staff have been clarified and new procedures for learning support have been implemented. Training has been provided to help staff across the college to understand the concept of inclusive learning and to consider its practical implications. Accommodation for the specially designed programmes has been provided on the main site. The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now has a higher profile and status within the college. Some issues require further action. Insufficient emphasis has been given to prioritising what students need to learn. Some of the objectives within their programmes are too general and cannot be monitored effectively. Links with external agencies are not well developed. Foundation level programmes are not yet available in some vocational areas. Links between vocational/academic staff and the staff providing learning support need strengthening. Further training is needed to help teachers develop suitable methods of teaching and learning.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

NORTH EAST SURREY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
SOUTH EAST REGION

Reinspection of leisure and tourism: February 1997

Background

North East Surrey College of Technology was inspected between June and November 1995 and the findings of the inspection were recorded in college inspection report 21/96. Provision in leisure and tourism was awarded a grade 4.

The strengths of the provision were: the good working relationships between teachers and students; very good learning support facilities; students' interest in the course; good library resources; and teachers who had a good grasp of their subject. The weaknesses were: the inability of some teachers to manage large classes; the lack of suitable teaching materials for some lessons; the slow pace of work in lessons; teachers' failure to take account of students' differing learning needs; inadequate internal assessment and verification procedures; the unsatisfactory development of key skills as an integral element of GNVQ programmes; poor examination results; poor retention rates; the high level of absenteeism; and a lack of rigour in record keeping.

The leisure and tourism provision was reinspected over two-and-a-half days in February 1997. The inspector observed eight lessons, examined students' written work and GNVQ portfolios, scrutinised documentation relating to the provision, and held meetings with curriculum managers, the GNVQ co-ordinator, teachers and students.

Assessment

The college has taken seriously the outcomes of the earlier inspection. New staff are enthusiastic and energetic and second-year students report they are very much more satisfied with the provision than they were in their first year at the college. The documentation used for GNVQ courses has improved significantly and there is now good record keeping. All but two of the lessons inspected were graded 2, which marks a significant improvement. Teachers use a variety of teaching methods and are better able to help students in difficulty during lessons. Course handouts and other materials are topical; technology is used effectively in lessons; and classroom management has improved. The college has a new, impressive fitness suite. An effective work-placement programme for students has been introduced. Retention rates have risen and, on GNVQ courses, students' achievements have improved. Levels of achievement remain poor in GCE A level physical education; improvement targets are being set to address them. There is still a high level of absenteeism in some classes. The college is about to implement an electronic registration system and it is strengthening its tutorial system in an attempt to improve attendance. There is still scope for ensuring that key skills are developed more effectively as an integral part of GNVQ work and that students who need additional support attend the sessions arranged. There is a need to analyse more rigorously students' achievements and retention data; develop a more robust way of collecting students' views to inform their action plans; and strengthen internal verification of assignment grades.

Revised grade: leisure and tourism 3.

SALISBURY COLLEGE
SOUTH WEST REGION

Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
May 1997

Background

Salisbury College was inspected between February 1995 and February 1996. The findings of the inspection were recorded in college inspection report 86/96. The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was awarded a grade 4.

The strengths of the provision were: the caring and committed staff who knew each student well; a range of courses specifically designed to address the particular needs of individual students; the progression routes available to some students; and the accommodation which provided a friendly learning environment in which students were able to develop their skills. The weaknesses were: the ineffectual organisation of some courses; deficiencies in classroom management; the limited range of methods of teaching and learning; teachers' failure to take account of the full range of ability in classes; and restricted opportunities in lessons for students to contribute their own ideas. For some students, expectations were too low; the work given to them was not demanding enough and skills were not being developed sufficiently. There were too few learning goals. The focus was upon the activities in which students had participated rather than the learning they had achieved. The arrangements for recording and reporting on students' progress were not adequate.

The provision was reinspected over three days in May 1997. Twelve teaching sessions were observed. Students' work and files were scrutinised. Meetings were held with managers, staff and students.

Assessment

Some of the weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection have been addressed. Provision is better managed. Programme planning has improved and is more consistent. Teachers are adopting a more structured approach to teaching and learning. They are introducing more varied ways of working and beginning to share good practice. The quality of teaching and the promotion of learning has improved. Students have more opportunity to voice their views in the classroom and the work is more demanding. Guidance and support systems have been strengthened. More comprehensive and better organised systems for recording students' progress and achievements have been introduced. The college should: aim to achieve greater interaction between elements of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and between this provision and other college programmes; develop learning materials which cater more effectively for students' differing needs; design individual programmes which ensure that all students are working consistently towards clear, attainable goals; and improve the recording of, and analysis of, learning which has taken place.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

SIR GEORGE MONOUX COLLEGE**GREATER LONDON REGION****Reinspection of business: October 1996****Background**

The college was inspected between January and March 1995 and the inspection findings were recorded in college inspection report 113/95. The business provision was awarded a grade 4.

The strengths of the provision were: the effective range of teaching styles; good or improving GCSE results; supportive staff; a recognition of the difficulties facing the department and a willingness to address them; and the introduction of strategies designed to make the department more effective. The weaknesses were: ineffective management; the absence of policies for the development of key aspects of the business provision; the failure of GNVQ teachers to work effectively as a team; a lack of differentiation in the content of intermediate and advanced GNVQ programmes; inappropriate joint teaching of first-year and second-year advanced GNVQ students; insufficient and often inappropriate guidance from teachers on how students might improve their written work; some poorly presented written work; and examination results in GCE A level business studies which compared unfavourably with national averages.

The business courses were reinspected in October 1996 by two inspectors over three days. The inspectors observed 16 lessons, held meetings with managers, teachers and students, inspected students' written work and examined a wide range of documentation relating to the business provision and the college.

Assessment

Many weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection have been addressed. The department is now well managed. Management systems have been developed which have had a particularly beneficial impact on the quality of GNVQ programmes. Teachers work co-operatively in planning courses and lessons. Good use is being made of the specialist knowledge and up-to-date commercial experience of teachers, most of whom have been appointed since the original inspection. Students receive full information about the structure of courses and study requirements. Literacy and numeracy tests are used to assess the students' needs for learning support. There is much good teaching; strengths outweighed weaknesses in over 50 per cent of lessons observed. Weaknesses outweighed strengths in one session only. Students are set suitably demanding tasks. Some of their written work is of impressive quality and teachers now provide helpful written guidance on how this work can be improved. Completion rates for most courses are good. The pass rates for GNVQ courses, which account for most business students, are well above the national figures at all three levels. GCSE business studies results are also good. A number of weaknesses remain: there is no clear view of the teamwork skills to be developed in group work; there is little use of visual teaching aids to enhance learning; not enough attention is paid to developing students' oral presentation and information technology skills; GCE A level pass rates, although improving significantly between 1995 and 1996, were still below the national average; and the proportion of GCSE accounting students achieving grade C or above in 1996 was low.

Revised grade: business 2.

SIR GEORGE MONOUX COLLEGE**GREATER LONDON REGION****Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL): October 1996****Background**

The college was inspected between January and March 1995 and the inspection findings were recorded in college inspection report 113/95. The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ESOL was graded 4.

The strengths of the provision were: the individual guidance and support given to students; the good relationships between teachers and students; the high standard of some students' work; the individual attention that teachers were able to give students by teaching them in small groups. The weaknesses were: a significant amount of ineffective teaching; inappropriate accreditation schemes for recognising students' achievements; poor levels of achievement; the inappropriate combining of two separate groups of students on a single course; the lack of clear management support for the provision; uncertainty amongst staff about what they should be doing; insufficient use of teaching materials and equipment; and ineffective quality assurance.

The provision in ESOL and the learning support provision was reinspected over two days in October 1996. The inspector visited 10 lessons, examined students' work, held meetings with managers, staff and students and examined a range of course and college documentation.

Assessment

The reinspection took place during the fifth week of a newly developed programme and the findings reflect this early stage of development. Significant attempts have been made to address the weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection report. The provision has been restructured and now reflects the distinct and different needs of students of ESOL and those requiring learning support on vocational programmes. A screening test has enabled the college to identify accurately the levels of literacy and numeracy support which students need. The provision is well managed and taught by qualified and experienced staff. Specialist learning support teachers work effectively in partnership with vocational teachers. Students receive support in setting their own learning goals and their progress is monitored closely by teachers. Adult students who attend English courses in the evening are encouraged to make decisions about their preferred ways of learning. Students now work towards appropriate qualifications. A good range of books and worksheets is used to support learning. However, there is no use of computers, insufficient use of visual aids and an over-dependence on worksheets. Some teachers rely too much on individual tuition and their strategies for handling the mix of abilities in groups are not always effective. Some students are late for lessons and attendance is poor in some sessions. The education development centre is too small for the number of students who need to use it. A significant number of students identified as needing learning support have not taken up the offer of additional support. Additional training is required to ensure that all college staff are in a position to advise students on their learning needs and to encourage them to use the support available.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and ESOL 3.

STANMORE COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION

**Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
November 1996**

Background

Stanmore College was inspected in January 1995 and the findings of the inspection were recorded in college inspection report 63/95. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was graded 4.

The strengths of the provision were: some well-planned, effective teaching by committed hard-working staff; the introduction of appropriate accreditation arrangements; the development of a course leading to a foundation level GNVQ; and effective procedures for enrolling and supporting students with severe physical disabilities on courses of their choice. However, there were significant weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching of the full-time pre-vocational course and the school link course for students with learning difficulties. The curriculum lacked vocational relevance and did not prepare students adequately for employment or progression to other courses. Students were not always given enough opportunity to develop some responsibility for their own learning and there were few examples of effective strategies for teaching students with differing abilities within the same group. There was no access to information technology. Poor use was made of classroom assistants.

The provision was reinspected in November 1996. The inspector observed eight lessons, held meetings with managers, teachers, support workers and students and examined students' work, including their course files.

Assessment

The course team has worked constructively to address the weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection. There is now a well-defined curriculum for both the pre-vocational and school link courses. There are clear underlying principles and aims, and links with the foundation GNVQ programme and other courses. Courses and lessons are effectively planned and there is a regular review of accreditation arrangements. Students have access to information technology and their work is generally well organised and well presented. Classroom assistants are deployed appropriately to support students when they need help. There are still, however, some weaknesses. Students' timetables do not always provide a balance of different activities in one day. Some teachers have not addressed weaknesses identified in the earlier inspection. For example, in some lessons, all the students undertook the same activity regardless of their differing levels of ability, some written exercises were beyond the reading level of the students and there was an overemphasis on writing as a method of learning. Occasionally, teachers operated unnecessarily strict codes of behaviour and students were not given sufficient opportunity to do things for themselves. There is a need for further staff development to ensure that staff are appropriately qualified for this area of work.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

WEST CHESHIRE COLLEGE**NORTH WEST REGION****Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
February 1997****Background**

West Cheshire College was inspected during the spring term of 1996 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 94/96. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was graded 4.

The provision had a number of strengths: the college accepted students with a wide range of disabilities and learning difficulties; effective links had been established with external agencies; a range of foundation level vocational programmes had been introduced and there was a willingness to develop individual programmes to meet the needs of students. However, the strengths were outweighed by weaknesses: there were insufficient opportunities for students with learning difficulties to undertake vocational training leading to nationally recognised qualifications; the provision was poorly co-ordinated; roles and responsibilities relating to support for students were ill-defined and some students did not have the support they needed; divisions other than human sciences had little involvement in planning and teaching programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; there was too much emphasis on students choosing subjects they liked, with the result that some programmes lacked coherence; many teachers had low expectations of students and some students were underachieving; systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning were ineffective; few staff had the specialist skills required to understand the educational implications of students' learning difficulties and/or disabilities; resources were limited and often inappropriate; and students had few opportunities to learn in accommodation designed for specialist vocational work.

The provision was reinspected by two inspectors on 25 and 28 February 1997. They observed 15 classes, held discussions with senior managers, the staff responsible for additional support and the separate specialist programmes, teachers and students, inspected students' work, and examined documentation provided by the college.

Assessment

Action has been taken to address many of the weaknesses. The curriculum of the separate specialist programmes has been changed to prepare students for vocational training. The range of foundation level vocational programmes has been extended. The management and co-ordination of the provision is more effective. Systems have been developed to identify students who have additional support needs. The range of teaching methods has been widened and more appropriate learning resources have been provided. Training has been provided to make staff more aware of the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Some issues require further action. In many instances the activities in class are led by the demands of the accreditation framework rather than the learning requirements of each student. Within lessons, too much emphasis is given to recording activities and too little time is spent evaluating what students have learned. Some students are still underachieving. Further training is needed to ensure that all staff understand the educational implications of students' learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

WIRRAL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE**NORTH WEST REGION****Reinspection of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
December 1996****Background**

Wirral Metropolitan College was previously inspected during the autumn term of 1995 and the spring term of 1996 and the findings were recorded in college inspection report 51/96. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was graded 4.

The college accepted students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there was a commitment to provide support for students within mainstream classes. A comprehensive draft development plan provided an appropriate framework for the development of the provision. Links had been established with a range of external agencies and staff involved in the discrete programmes were committed to their work. However, these strengths were outweighed by weaknesses: the provision had a low profile and low status within the college; there was no cross-college body to provide direction and leadership for the development of the provision; insufficient time was allowed to those involved in administering and co-ordinating the provision; a lack of response from schools across the college meant that students had insufficient opportunity to undertake vocational training leading to nationally recognised vocational qualifications; students did not have individual programmes with goals against which progress could be monitored; methods of teaching and learning were unsuitable for many of the students; there was no formal system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and no staff development strategy to raise staff awareness of these students' needs; few staff had qualifications relating to the teaching of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; many teaching rooms were inappropriate; and many learning resources were of poor quality.

The provision was reinspected by two inspectors on 9 and 10 December 1996. They observed 12 classes, held meetings with senior managers and staff responsible for the discrete programmes and additional support, other teachers, support staff and students. They inspected students' work and examined documentation provided by the college.

Assessment

Many of the weaknesses identified have been addressed. Schools across the college are responding more positively to the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Management of the discrete programmes and additional support is more effective. The range of foundation level vocational programmes has been extended. Initial assessments are comprehensive and detailed and there is a more rigorous approach to teaching and learning. Training has been provided to raise the awareness of college staff to these students' needs. Accommodation has been improved and students now have access to vocational equipment and specialist rooms. Much of the work undertaken to improve provision is at an early stage of development and issues remain. There is no cross-college body to plan and implement the college's strategic objective for inclusive learning. There are insufficient opportunities for students with learning difficulties to learn alongside their peers in mainstream classes. There are too many discrete pre-vocational programmes and some are insufficiently challenging. Course reviews are not analytical enough. There is a need for further staff training.

Revised grade: provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities 3.

WOOLWICH COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION

Reinspection of mathematics and science: November 1996

Background

The college was inspected between August 1994 and January 1995 and the inspection findings were recorded in college inspection report 44/95. The mathematics and science provision was awarded a grade 4.

The strengths of the provision were: the good relationships between teachers and students; some effective teaching and learning; and some satisfactory examination results. The weaknesses were that: there was much ineffective teaching where material was not appropriately matched to students' abilities; teachers set insufficient work for students who frequently failed to complete even the limited amount they were given; GCE A level and GCSE completion rates and pass rates were poor; students were unpunctual; attendance at lessons was low; and resources for mathematics were inadequate.

The science and mathematics provision was reinspected by two inspectors over four days in November 1996. They observed 34 lessons, inspected students' written work and met managers, teachers and students. A wide range of documentation relating to the college and the courses was examined.

Assessment

The staff responsible for science and mathematics courses have made a very positive response to the weaknesses identified in the original inspection. Teaching and the promotion of learning have improved remarkably. Of the lessons observed, 76 per cent had strengths which outweighed weaknesses and almost 30 per cent had no significant weaknesses. Students now undertake a greater variety of activities and these cater far more effectively for the full range of ability within classes. Teachers are setting students more work and students are completing it. Courses are well managed. Students' attendance and progress are carefully monitored. Students have reacted positively to the changes which have been introduced. During the reinspection, they were punctual and the average attendance at lessons was 82 per cent. GCE A level pass rates have improved over the past two years and are above the national average in almost all cases. The college's value-added calculations indicate that GCE A level students perform better than might be expected from their GCSE qualifications when they start their course. Completion rates for GCE A level and GCSE courses have increased, although there is scope for further improvement. GCSE pass rates at grade C or above are, generally, in line with national averages. Weaknesses still to be addressed include: work in some lessons which is not sufficiently demanding; limited resources to help students study on their own, particularly in mathematics; relatively little use of information technology by science students; and insufficient information technology resources in classrooms to support the teaching of mathematics.

Revised grade: mathematics and science 2.

GLOSSARY

CD-ROM	compact disk read-only memory
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
GCE A level	general certificate of education advanced level
GCSE	general certificate of secondary education
GNVQ	general national vocational qualification
IT	information technology
NVQ	national vocational qualification

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