

**East Yorkshire College of Further Education
Reinspection of Quality Assurance: January 2000
Report from the Inspectorate
The Further Education Funding Council**

THE FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education according to a four-year cycle. It also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum, disseminates good practice and advises the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

REINSPECTION

The FEFC has agreed that colleges with provision judged by the inspectorate to be less than satisfactory or poor (grade 4 or 5) should be reinspected. In these circumstances, a college may have its funding agreement with the FEFC qualified to prevent it increasing the number of new students in an unsatisfactory curriculum area until the FEFC is satisfied that weaknesses have been addressed.

Satisfactory provision may also be reinspected if actions have been taken to improve quality and the college's existing inspection grade is the only factor which prevents it from meeting the criteria for FEFC accreditation.

Reinspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circulars 97/12, 97/13 and 97/22. Reinspections seek to validate the data and judgements provided by colleges in self-assessment reports and confirm that actions taken as a result of previous inspection have improved the quality of provision. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work they inspect. The opinion of the FEFC's audit service contributes to inspectorate judgements about governance and management.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Assessments use grades on a five-point scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses. The descriptors for the grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding provision which has many strengths and few weaknesses*
- *grade 2 - good provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory provision with strengths but also some weaknesses*
- *grade 4 - less than satisfactory provision in which weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- *grade 5 - poor provision which has few strengths and many weaknesses.*

Audit conclusions are expressed as good, adequate or weak.

*Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone 02476 863000
Fax 02476 862100
website: <http://www.fefc.ac.uk>*

© FEFC 1999

You may photocopy this report and use extracts in promotional or other material provided quotes are accurate, and the findings are not misrepresented.

East Yorkshire College of Further Education Yorkshire and Humberside Region

Reinspection of quality assurance: January 2000

Background

East Yorkshire College of Further Education was inspected in October 1998 and the findings were published in inspection report 04/99. Quality assurance was awarded a grade 4.

Key strengths during the inspection of quality assurance were: extensive staff involvement in the self-assessment process; procedures for the internal validation of new courses and the revalidation of selected current courses; a valued and effective system of staff development. Weaknesses were: deterioration in the profile of lesson observation grades since the previous inspection; the ineffective use of performance indicators at course level; weak links between the annual course review process, internal verification and self-assessment; insufficient use of surveys of students' perceptions; and lack of quality standards to monitor and improve performance of support services.

Reinspection took place over three days in January 2000. Inspectors examined a range of documents, scrutinised students' achievements and retention data, had meetings with managers and staff and spoke with students from a range of courses.

Assessment

The college has made some progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The college has received re-accreditation for Investors in People. It has developed a more rigorous teacher observation scheme in which teachers are observed annually and given detailed constructive feedback. Teachers who are performing unsatisfactorily are reviewed and supported. However, inspectors found the quality of teaching and learning to be variable. Courses have targets, which are monitored monthly, and achievement against these is now part of the recently revised course review and evaluation process. Inconsistencies remain in the completion of these reviews. Overall achievements have improved. However, achievement on long courses was 6% below the national average in 1997-98. Attainment at the end of compulsory schooling in the area is just below the national average. Retention rates for full-time courses in 1998-99 show no improvement and are below national benchmarks. Service standards have been produced for most cross-college support areas and performance is reported to governors. These standards are not sufficiently challenging and recently governors have requested they be reviewed. Charter commitments are not monitored. The college recently introduced a new quality assurance system, but it is too early to judge its impact in some areas. Significant weaknesses still remain. Inconsistencies in the use and effectiveness of student surveys persist. A new questionnaire has been developed to address this issue but it has not yet been implemented. Weak links between the annual course review, internal verification and self-assessment remain. The college has created two new quality assurance roles, but staff are confused about their remit and responsibilities. Approaches to monitoring and reporting quality assurance are inconsistent. In addition, the monitoring of actions from various processes is not systematically reported on. The college's internal verification system has improved and it has been given a quality assurance kitemark from an awarding body. The college appraisal system has recently been revised but to date many staff have not been appraised. Many of the weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report.

Revised grade: quality assurance 4.