

RE-INSPECTION DEWSBURY COLLEGE

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the curriculum area of business is now **satisfactory**.

Background

Dewsbury college was inspected in November 2002. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory or better in all areas inspected, except in business which was found to be unsatisfactory.

Ofsted and the ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum and/or work-based learning (WBL) areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum or WBL area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the unsatisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that the curriculum or WBL areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, all unsatisfactory provision will be re-inspected normally during one week.

If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum or WBL area or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grade for the area that continues to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection within the cycle. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and the reasons why.

Date of the Re-Inspection Visit

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection of business took place during the week commencing 10 May 2004.

Business

In the November 2002 inspection, the quality of overall provision in this area was judged to be unsatisfactory. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified in the inspection report:

Strengths

- Good pass rates on administration courses
- Well-planned administration lessons
- Good support for students in lessons
- Good specialist classrooms.

Weaknesses

- Declining and poor pass rates on business courses
- Ineffective provision for key skills
- Teaching and learning strategies poorly matched to students' needs in business

- Insufficient impact of quality assurance arrangements on the quality of teaching and learning.

Following the re-inspection, inspectors judged that progress has been made in addressing the above weaknesses and that overall provision in this area is now satisfactory.

Pass rates improved on many administration and business information technology courses in 2002 and 2003 and are now above national averages. In 2003 retention rates declined on the AVCE in business and the NVQ level 2 in administration, but current retention rates on all courses at the time of the re-inspection are high. The college is in the process of restructuring its business curriculum and is not currently offering the GNVQ courses at Foundation or Intermediate level.

Much teaching is good, and there were no unsatisfactory lessons observed at re-inspection. Teachers employ methods which engage and maintain students' interest. Learning is put into a business context and consolidated through relevant tasks and activities. Students develop a good range of business and personal skills and teachers ensure that the needs of individuals are met within lessons. In a minority of lessons the targets set for students were undemanding and inadequate checks were made on students' understanding. Key skills provision is good. The teaching of key skills is embedded within vocational assignments, and schemes of work, lessons plans and assignment specifications all clearly identify key skills. Support workshops, jointly managed by vocational and key skills tutors, help students to complete their portfolios. However, it is still too early to determine the impact of this approach on students' results in key skills.

Support for students is good. Tutors provide sound academic and personal support and flexible arrangements are made to meet the needs of individuals. Very good provision is made in lessons for students needing individual support for a learning difficulty or disability.

Curriculum management is effective. Quality assurance procedures are rigorous and effective in identifying areas for improvement. Course reviews are thorough and result in detailed action plans with clear target dates for achievement. Teaching and learning are given a high priority in teams' self-assessment reports and progress towards meeting targets and improving teaching and learning is regularly monitored at course meetings. A comprehensive lesson observation scheme is effective in identifying individual and team needs for staff development. The business curriculum area has undertaken a wide-ranging and intensive staff development programme since the last inspection. A senior tutor has been appointed to assist in the maintenance of good standards of classroom teaching.

There will be no further re-inspection of the college because there are no remaining unsatisfactory areas.