

Identifying good practice: a survey of college provision in leisure, travel and tourism

This report details the aspects of provision for leisure, travel and tourism in colleges which enable post-16 learners to make good progress. Between September 2007 and March 2008 inspectors visited 17 colleges where provision in sport, leisure and recreation and travel and tourism had been judged outstanding or good at their most recent inspection. The report gives examples of good practice, and recommendations for improvement are made.

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Executive summary

Between September 2007 and March 2008, four of Her Majesty's Inspectors visited 17 colleges to survey good practice in leisure, travel and tourism. In 16 of the colleges programmes in sport, leisure and recreation and travel and tourism were offered and in one, sport-related programmes alone were offered. The range of programmes included GCSE, GCE and a wide range of certificate and diploma courses covering all the levels available. The colleges were selected because Ofsted had judged them outstanding or good in their most recent inspection of leisure, travel and tourism courses.

The survey focused on eight areas identified through inspection as being among the key factors affecting the success of courses in this sector subject area:

- opportunities used by learners to function in a realistic environment to develop their practical and technical skills
- organisation of progression
- the way in which practical activities underpin academic requirements
- teaching and learning, including using information learning technology, to meet all learners' needs
- incorporating external providers and employers into college provision to enhance and provide additional technical skills
- management of enrichment activities
- use of the curriculum to support local, regional and national workforce development initiatives and meet learners' needs
- strategies to ensure recruitment from under-represented groups.

In nine of the 17 colleges visited, the management of opportunities for learners to function in a realistic environment in sport was good. Colleges worked effectively with partners and the public to generate opportunities for learners to gain access to real clients and customers. However, in travel and tourism only four colleges had commercial retail travel operations, including travel shops. Much activity was simulated and not with real customers.

A common feature of the colleges visited was that they had fitness centres that functioned commercially for both the college community and the public. These provided a good opportunity for learners to function in a commercial setting, but did not always provide a suitable learning environment. The colleges visited that had a good range of realistic working environments for travel and tourism included mock aircraft cabins and check-in desks. However, learners did not have sufficient access to real customers in order to develop travel and tourism skills including sales and customer service.

Progression was good with many colleges offering qualifications at all levels from entry level, and in some cases, to foundation degree level. The promotion and support for progression to higher education was effective and progression to employment, particularly in the travel and tourism industry, was well established.

Practical activities and the development of performance skills in sport were well coordinated. These were incorporated effectively into the academic requirements of the programmes. An increasing number of the colleges offered sports academies in a growing range of sports. This provided learners with an opportunity to experience high-level coaching in their chosen sport as well as access to academic or vocational learning programmes.

Teachers were particularly skilled in drawing on their industry-related experience and, in the best sessions, frequent references to current working practices enhanced learners' understanding and motivation. The use of information learning technology to support teaching and learning varied. All of the colleges used a form of virtual learning environment, but these varied in both complexity and in their use to support learning. The better systems provided learners with an extensive range of technology which was used well to support them through their programmes. This technology included digital photography and video as well as movement analysis and game analysis software.

A high proportion of the colleges visited had good links with regional and national governing bodies of sport as well as local authority leisure departments. High-level, and sometimes elite-level, coaches were used to deliver coaching and training to learners on some programmes. In outdoor activities competent learners, often elite coaches themselves, were used well by staff to deliver high-level skills training to other learners.

The colleges surveyed also had good links with the travel and tourism industry. Employers were actively involved in, or influenced, curriculum development. Good links were maintained with airlines and tour operators, often providing learners with opportunities for international travel and work placements.

Nearly all of the colleges provided a broad range of enrichment activities. Opportunities to gain additional qualifications were often included in learners' programmes, but sporting activities were not always available to the entire college population. Colleges were active in local, regional and national inter-college leagues and competitions. Many learners on programmes performed at elite level in sport.

There was little evidence of initiatives to address participation by under-represented groups in travel and tourism. In sport, some examples were seen where existing stereotyping was challenged effectively and in some cases sports such as football were offered to both genders. Strategies to recruit from minority ethnic groups were under-developed. At one college some particularly effective actions enabled learners who were visually impaired to achieve qualifications.

Key findings

A number of factors contributed to good provision and to achieving high skill levels and work of good quality.

- The management of opportunities for learners to function in realistic environments in sport was good in nine of the 17 colleges visited. However, in travel and tourism, only four colleges had commercial retail travel operations, including travel shops.
- Many colleges had fitness centres that functioned commercially for both the college community and the public. In the colleges that had a good range of realistic working environments for travel and tourism these included mock aircraft cabins and check-in desks. However, learners did not have sufficient access to real customers to develop travel and tourism skills.
- Progression was good with many colleges offering qualifications at all levels from entry level and in some cases to foundation degree level.
- Practical activities and the development of performance skills in sport were well coordinated and incorporated effectively into the academic programmes.
- Teachers used their experience of working in the respective industries well to enhance learners' understanding and motivation. The use of information learning technology to support teaching and learning varied.
- Colleges had good links with regional and national governing bodies of sport as well as local authority leisure departments.
- The colleges surveyed had good links with the travel and tourism industry. Employers were actively involved in, or influenced curriculum development.
- Nearly all of the colleges provided a broad range of enrichment activities. Opportunities to gain additional qualifications were often included in learners' programmes, but sporting activities were not always available to the entire college population.
- Inspectors saw little that addressed participation by under-represented groups in travel and tourism. In sport, inspectors saw some examples where the college challenged existing gender stereotyping in specific sports.

Recommendations

The survey identified many aspects of good practice in the leisure, travel and tourism departments visited. To improve further the quality of provision the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, together with the Learning and Skills Council and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service should:

- take steps to disseminate further the good practice that exists in leisure, travel and tourism provision
- work with colleges to develop clear strategies to identify and remove the barriers to under-represented populations in the sport and travel sectors
- support the development of qualifications that provide the practical skills required for teaching sport and outdoor activities in conjunction with the sector skills councils and national governing bodies for sport.

Colleges should:

- develop further the opportunities for learners to access realistic learning environments, to enhance their understanding of industry requirements while working under supervision with as wide a range of participants as possible
- develop further the use of virtual learning environments and other technologies to support learners in these areas
- work with the full range of agencies to develop a better understanding of the barriers to participation and develop strategies to ensure that a wider variety of learner populations access these programmes
- encourage enrichment activities that provide a wide range and choice of activities and courses to promote physical activity beyond the age of 16, developing skills and understanding of the benefits of physical activities
- review the role that real work environments play in travel and tourism courses, in particular the opportunities available for learners to experience working in the industry
- ensure teachers keep up to date with industry practices.

Factors contributing to good-quality provision

Opportunities for learners to function in realistic environments to develop their practical and technical skills

1. Nine of the 17 surveyed colleges provided learners with opportunities to function or practise in realistic environments. They achieved this in a number of ways. Learners were given the opportunity to lead, instruct or coach relevant activities to external groups as well as those drawn from students attending the college. Often colleges made links with local primary schools that benefited both the college and the local school. Learners supervised play activities for young participants as well as more formal sports activities and coaching.
2. Nearly all colleges surveyed organised or included a placement opportunity for learners. Learners gained valuable opportunities to practise and gained useful insights into the real industrial working environment. These were particularly effective for learners on the range of Business and Technology Education Council programmes and National Vocational Qualifications. Placements ran either as one day each week or as a block release. The range of placements included commercial fitness centres and local authority leisure centres that included a variety of environments including fitness, aquatic and sports facilities.
3. Teaching staff provided learners with a wealth of personal examples from their industry backgrounds. Most staff were very well qualified and many were current practitioners in a range of activities, often at an elite level. They incorporated their experiences into their teaching well by drawing on relevant current examples of their involvement to illustrate and explain key theoretical aspects. Good use of real-life stories enhanced learners' understanding of the sport and fitness industry. In travel and tourism, this included using industry terminology and standards in air fares and ticketing and cabin crew lessons to prepare learners for working in industry. In a tour operations lesson, the teacher used her experiences of working in business travel for a local independent travel agency. This brought to life the potentially dull subject of the role of trade and regulatory bodies in working practices.
4. Good use was made of external funding, such as the European Commission Leonardo project, to support learners in accessing overseas activity centres such as those in Scandinavia and Spain, especially for outdoor education learners. Good use was also made of the natural physical resources in the locality around some colleges. These included moors, hills and mountains, rivers, lakes and reservoirs.
5. The majority of the colleges surveyed provided learners with good opportunities to develop their technical skill levels in a range of sports and activities.

Specialist outdoor education colleges promoted the development of personal skills in at least two activities to support learners with aspirations of achieving instructor status. The curriculum planning included a high percentage of practical activities to develop these skills. Good use was made of the local environment to support both the teaching and the learning of outdoor activities by providing realistic and challenging settings for learners to acquire the necessary skills.

6. Increasingly, colleges are developing sports academy structures in order to recruit and develop learners' skills in particular sports. At the time of the survey netball, football and rugby tended to dominate the sports offered. Academies provided learners with access to high-level coaching in their chosen sport. Coaching was provided by college staff who have high-level coaching qualifications and sometimes professional experience, or by locally based national governing body or professional club coaching staff.
7. A growing number of colleges were involved in delivering the relatively new advanced apprenticeship in sporting excellence.

One college was successfully managing an advanced apprenticeship in sporting excellence programme by distance learning. This allowed the athletes to train at specialist elite training centres while accessing their academic programme. Another ran a modular curriculum where practical sessions were repeated during the week allowing learners to access these as well as other academic programmes. This programme was identified as making a significant impact at the Beijing Olympic Games, where several learners accessing this programme competed and won Olympic medals.

8. Although the surveyed colleges provided good opportunities for travel and tourism learners to take part in simulated activities, there were fewer examples of learners functioning as realistic practitioners. Only four of the colleges surveyed had an on-site, fully functioning travel agency. The staff working in the college travel agencies usually included a trained teacher. Links between the curriculum and college travel agencies were strong. The travel shops were generally well-equipped. Learners valued the skills they developed in the college travel agency and being able to make bookings for customers. One college had introduced an employee of the month award for learners working in the travel agency, reflecting an industry customer service scheme. This college also extended the opportunities to work in the travel agency to business administration learners, increasing their confidence in working with the public.
9. The colleges surveyed had forged good links with commercial travel and tourism organisations, giving learners opportunities to observe and shadow industry practitioners. These included links with overseas tour operators that enabled learners to work alongside overseas representatives in resorts. In two colleges learners worked at external tourism events to develop and reinforce their customer service skills. Additionally, at one of these colleges learners

carried out a survey of customers visiting Tourist Information Centres on behalf of the Southern Tourist Board.

10. A key feature of the colleges surveyed was that they adopted a uniform policy for travel and tourism learners which helped prepare learners for working in the industry. Teachers reinforced the uniform policy well; many wore the same uniform as the learners. Learners liked the sense of identity that the uniform gave them, and were often proud to be seen as travel and tourism learners. One college reinforced industry standards through replicating a points system operated in industry. The learners set the ground rules and code of conduct for the points system. They began with 12 points, and lost them for breaches of the rules or code of conduct, for example if they were late or inappropriately dressed.

A learner at one of the colleges surveyed was employed by an airline as cabin crew while she completed her level 3 travel and tourism course. The college ensured that her course fitted in around her flying duties, and made good use of her experience within lessons.

11. The weaker colleges surveyed offered few, or short, formal work experience opportunities for travel and tourism learners. The colleges that provided good work experience found real benefits for their learners. Learners used their placements to help them choose their career paths. In one college, travel and tourism learners had gained part-time paid employment in the industry directly from their work experience.

Organisation of progression

12. Progression opportunities at the colleges surveyed were good. Many colleges had developed a programme for 14–16-year-old learners as well as delivering young apprenticeships to pre-GCSE learners in sport. These colleges provided programmes from level 1 through to level 4 and in some cases to higher national diploma, foundation and bachelor's degree level.
13. Good use was made of Aimhigher programmes to encourage progression to higher education, particularly in areas where aspirations for further study were traditionally low.

One college had clear progression routes, including work-based learning. The college provided much scope for learners to access other programmes to gain coaching qualifications. These were run at weekends and were often closely linked to local sports clubs and national governing bodies. The college offered the level 1 Business and Technology Education Council introductory diploma through to level 4 and a foundation degree in similar subject areas. An adult recruitment fair promoted progression to employment. This included the Register of Exercise Professionals to promote the continuing professional development and professional status of fitness instructors. Gateway coaching courses, aimed at learners not in

education, employment or training and those from non-traditional backgrounds, filled the gap and progressed learners to employment. Over two thirds of the Business and Technology Education Council learners progressed to higher education at the end of the 2006/07 year.

14. The colleges surveyed had good progression between level 2 and 3 travel and tourism programmes. In one college progression rates were very high, at 94%. The provision offered at level 3 was carefully planned to ensure that duplication of learning was kept to a minimum. One of the surveyed colleges offered different pathways at level 3 to meet the learners' chosen careers. Few of the colleges surveyed offered a level 1 qualification in travel and tourism. Where a level 1 course was offered, a different department within the college often managed this. The more successful level 1 courses had good involvement of travel and tourism teachers in designing the curriculum.
15. In the colleges surveyed, around a third of travel and tourism learners progressed into higher education. Two of the surveyed colleges had much higher rates at over 60%. Success rates were very high at these colleges. Both of these colleges had established college-wide initiatives that were working well, including successful 'think higher' and Aimhigher schemes, visits and taster days at universities and former learners who were good role models.
16. Most travel and tourism learners were still tending to progress into industry, which is a well-established trend in this sector. The colleges surveyed could cite strong individual case studies of learners who had been successful in entering and progressing in the travel and tourism industry. However, few data are available about the types of jobs these learners are gaining.

The ways in which practical activities underpin academic requirements

17. A key feature of the colleges surveyed was that they included an extensive range of practical sessions as part of the learning timetable. These were used effectively to put theory into practice and to reinforce theoretical principles covered in classroom or laboratory sessions. Good use was made of both indoor and outdoor facilities for practical sports sessions including fitness suites, lakes and rivers, sports halls and other specialist facilities. At one college, staff made provision for learners to be observed for assessment purposes while performing in their own external team or sports activity outside the normal college timetable. This was good for the learners as it enabled them to perform in an environment that was both familiar and real.

At one college the staff were concerned about the first year learners on the National Diploma who were not working well as a unit. On-site team building and a series of social development sessions were all tried but the group did not respond. It was then decided to do something a little more powerful. Learners were told a team-building caving day had been arranged. While the group travelled to the site, a group of staff set up

another learner in a local cave with a number of simulated injuries. As the learners were about to start their caving activities the instructor, who was one of the cave rescue team, received a telephone call saying that someone was injured in a cave nearby and could he help? The instructor gathered the caving rescue gear and briefed the learners on what he had been told: that this was a real emergency and they needed to help evacuate the casualty.

The learners had to work hard together as a team to locate the casualty, provide first aid, put him on a stretcher and get him out from the cave. All the learners believed it was a real cave rescue until they emerged from the cave. The adversity of the situation established a good working relationship and a strong emotional bond among the group as they focused on helping the 'casualty'. During the review process after the event, most of the learners recognised and talked of the fear and responsibility they felt, both to each other as well as to the 'casualty'.

This was a powerful exercise and the learners had to work hard as a team, making them a more cohesive, motivated and purposeful group. While the exercise took the learners part way in improving their ability to work together they still had some distance to travel – but the session certainly helped.

18. Some of the colleges surveyed made good use of external staff to help with practical sessions. Specialist coaches delivered women's football academy programmes, specialist tutors taught Register of Exercise Professionals programmes and Sportscoach UK tutors delivered modules on the professionalisation of coaching.

In one college, highly qualified and experienced staff had been designated as technical advisers for the 35 activities run on- and off-site. They took responsibility for ensuring the risk assessments remained dynamic and up to date, ensuring all staff were trained and that minimum instructor qualifications were maintained by anyone leading an activity.

19. The better colleges in the survey had very effective mock travel and tourism working environments. Impressive simulated aircraft cabins and check-in desks provided realistic environments for learners to practise their customer service and language skills. One college had outstanding industry-standard resources for aviation learners, including an aircraft fuselage, trolleys, lifejackets, breathing apparatus and other aircraft equipment. The breathing apparatus was used well in college to develop learners' confidence before they used the equipment in a smoke-filled room at the local airport's fire training centre.
20. Nearly all the colleges surveyed had good and vocationally relevant teaching and learning in travel and tourism. This was particularly noticeable in subjects such as aviation, cabin crew, retail travel and overseas representative training.

Teachers made good use of simulated resources and role play to underpin the academic learning.

One college established study centres to promote practical activities. The travel and tourism study centre was well designed and particularly successful. Learners had access to all the relevant resources including library books, industry materials and manuals and computers within the study centre. Classrooms were changed and adapted to meet the theoretical or practical requirements of the topic. Teachers made good use of computers and information learning technology, which were readily available in the study centre. One of the classrooms had been converted into a realistic mock up of an aircraft cabin, which simulated well the space and height restrictions involved in working in this environment. The room was also used as a lecture theatre, as it had projection facilities, and for learners to practise using a microphone to simulate the introductory speeches and commentaries they would give to holidaymakers during their coach transfer from the airport to their accommodation. The study centre had a smaller room for group work, individual tutorials and support, and demonstrations and talks by external visitors; for example, make-up demonstrations by cosmetics representatives. Learners felt a sense of belonging to the travel and tourism area. They wore uniforms to attend college, and there was a professional, rather than academic, feel to the study centre. This college had good success rates, particularly in overseas representatives and cabin crew qualifications.

21. Teaching sessions observed during the survey were brought alive by the illustrations and examples that teachers gave from industry. Learners used brochures, manuals and paperwork from industry throughout their travel and tourism course, making the subject relevant and current. Where the surveyed colleges had college travel agencies, the resources, procedures and information sources used in lessons mirrored what the learners used in the on-site travel agency.

One college demonstrated exciting and dynamic learning on the national award in aviation operations. The teacher used a good range of resources and practical activities to reinforce theory and industry standards. During the survey visit learners took part in a learning session to prepare them for group interviews, which are standard practice in the aviation industry. Activities and individuals' positions in the room were frequently changed. Learners improved their understanding of how teams work, the role they play in teams and the impression they would make at interview through participating in, and observing colleagues participating in, a range of fun activities; for example coordinating the marketing strategy for the re-launch of the Brussels sprout. The teacher skilfully continued to change learners' expectations of their tasks, keeping them on their toes and encouraging them to develop as independent learners.

Innovative use of information and learning technology to support teaching and learning

22. A majority of the colleges surveyed had well-established virtual learning environments, which learners and teachers used confidently. The sites were up to date and well maintained. Learners used a good range of useful and timely information including calendars showing deadlines for assignments, detailed information on planned visits, discussion sites, materials used in teaching sessions and extra reading to support learning. In one college, where Moodle is particularly well used by learners, teachers had an expectation that learners would use the site daily. The teachers monitored the frequency with which individual learners used the site as well as what they used it for. Some sites were less well developed and acted as a document storage facility.
23. A good proportion of staff make good use of other technology such as digital cameras and video cameras to support their teaching. Performance analysis software was available and used at many colleges. Staff and learners made use of fitness analysis software to determine individual fitness levels.

In one college, A level physical education learners used video analysis software effectively to analyse their own body position and technique and compare this with the teacher and other top sports performers. This was done for badminton, football and weightlifting.

One college had exceptionally well-developed information and learning technology system to support staff and learners on courses. It was used effectively to manage the courses offered. It included both evaluation and feedback mechanisms for all courses and modules offered, and supported the move from paper-based resources to information technology. It was effective in enabling staff to share resources developed to underpin their teaching. This reduced duplication of both effort and resources. It also served as an effective resource finder. Lecturers used the system to record self-evaluations as well as peer observation reports. A 'Learnzone' virtual learning environment contained staff and learner sections with a learner-tracking database. This was particularly effective in tracking learner progress and grade profiles. The system for recording tutorials could be transferred with the learner to higher education institutions. Distance-learning programme resources: quizzes, tests and assignment management systems, were all utilised well and provided a good resource for learners.

24. The use of information and learning technology in travel and tourism lessons by teachers in the surveyed colleges was inconsistent. Some teachers made good use of commercially or locally developed travel and tourism packages to make lessons interesting and exciting. Learning activities that replicate well-known television programmes, such as 'The Weakest Link', were being used well for revision and to reinforce learning. At one college, travel and tourism learners'

existing knowledge of the cruise industry was assessed through this type of quiz. At another college the teacher used a television quiz format with well-planned graphics for selecting and highlighting learners' names when it was their turn to answer. Learners enjoyed this fun way of learning, and it helped to develop some of the teamwork and competitive approaches used within the travel and tourism industry.

At one college, technology was used well to simulate real work situations. Retail travel learners used the virtual travel agent software to simulate a conversation and booking transaction with a customer. The visual image of the customer in the travel agency was projected onto an interactive whiteboard. Learners listened to the customer speaking before selecting a follow up question from a multi-choice list. This generated a further response from the customer for the learner to follow up. This culminated in the learner finding a suitable holiday and calculating the cost for the customer. The transaction was realistic, developed good customer service and retail travel skills, and had excellent links into communication and application of number skills.

Incorporating external providers and employers into college provision to enhance and provide additional technical skills

25. In nearly all the colleges surveyed good links existed between the college staff and a wide range of external organisations. These included local authority sports development teams, school sports partnerships, employers and a growing number of national governing bodies of sport. Colleges with individual sport academy structures regularly accessed high-quality coaching expertise from local professional clubs, and this provided learners with a high-quality learning experience.
26. Other involvement included work with community groups. One college worked with the local football club to attract and work with young people not in employment, education or training and with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteering on environmental initiatives. These links helped broaden learners' understanding of how programmes in this area affect a range of social and environmental issues.
27. Colleges with Centre of Vocational Excellence status were particularly active in linking with external organisations and employers. One college had made extensive links with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. This provided an opportunity for the learners to develop a greater understanding of the organisational aspects of a sporting event as well as the range of other skills and vocational areas that are involved in the organisation and planning of a major sporting event.
28. Many colleges surveyed had good arrangements with airlines and tour operators to support learners into employment. Learners participated in mock and live interviews run by employers, often on college premises. In one college

a well-established link with a tour operator and airline guaranteed all learners who completed their course an interview. This college had many examples of past learners who had been recruited by the company. Many of the surveyed colleges used airport and airline facilities for specialised training, such as aircraft evacuation training. In one college, one of the local airlines sponsored this training. Some colleges had structured their courses to meet the recruitment patterns of industry, for example finishing the aviation courses at the Easter holiday.

29. Most of the full-time travel and tourism teachers in the surveyed colleges had good academic and vocational qualifications, but not all had had sufficient recent industrial updates. Teachers who had updated their industry skills tended to be working in colleges that had good links with the travel and tourism industry. Some of the surveyed colleges employed part-time teachers for specialist subjects who were still working in the industry. The quality of advice and guidance was stronger in colleges where teachers had current industrial experience and strong industry links. Learners benefited from the advice and guidance being given by travel and tourism subject teachers who understood the industry. Learners also received some realistic advice and guidance, which took account of industry requirements for employees' appearance, height and weight in some careers.

One college had excellent links with a local tour operator. These were used to particularly good effect with the tour operator being involved in one of the tourism destinations assignments. Tour operator staff, including ex-learners who worked for the company, devised and assisted in marking the assignment, which was relevant to industry. The learners were asked to produce a brochure for a new destination for the tour operator. The assignment brief, including the destination to be researched, was attractively packaged in the tour operator's ticket wallets. One of the directors and two ex-learners visited the college to introduce the assignment and set the scene. The ex-learners gave a motivating talk to the current learners about their experiences since starting work. They also described how the college course helped to prepare them for future employment in the industry. They showed examples of the work that they completed for the assignment to demonstrate the expected professional standard. The tour operator offered prizes for the best three assignments. As a local employer, the tour operator benefited from this link, having recruited many learners from the college.

The management of enrichment activities

30. Enrichment activities at most of the surveyed colleges were good. A wide range of sporting activities was offered and these provided both career and leisure development opportunities. Nearly all colleges provided visits to relevant centres and facilities, some of which were residential, and some were overseas. At one college with a high number of resident learners, good use was made of

local outdoor activities including a full descent of the river Exe in kayaks and rafts to raise funds for the Devon Air Ambulance Service.

31. Many colleges offered additional qualifications which could be studied alongside the learners' main programme of study. These included AS- and A-level courses in physical education as well as a range of fitness-related qualifications such as Central YMCA qualifications and pool lifeguard qualifications. Studying for the vocational qualifications enhanced learners' preparation for employment. Success rates for these qualifications were good and often higher than those for the main qualification.
32. An increasing number of the colleges were placing an emphasis on healthy college standards and some were working towards established targets. The enrichment activities were often rotated in order to allow maximum access by learners on all programmes.
33. The level of involvement in organised leagues and competitions was generally high and some colleges had returned to the designated Wednesday fixture day where all students across the college were able to access the range of enrichment and competitive opportunities. Learners at the colleges visited were often involved in regional- and national-level competitions and many learners performed at elite national and international level competitions.

One college visited had appointed a designated sports development officer specifically to develop the sports enrichment programme. This officer was very active in promoting the sports activities to all learners, not just those on sports programmes. A modular system allowed a rotating timetable of activities to enhance access opportunities for all learners. In the year 2006/07 over 200 sports fixtures were provided. Female-only gym sessions were included and these were staffed by female operatives.

34. Most colleges surveyed offered their travel and tourism learners the opportunity to study for qualifications in addition to their main programme. Learners greatly valued these opportunities, which included cabin crew, passenger handling, air fares and ticketing, languages (including sign language) and tour operations. Learners' career aspirations were met well through access to these qualifications. They were motivated by the variety of courses and their relevance to industry. Many learners felt these qualifications gave them confidence when applying for employment in this competitive industry.
35. The colleges surveyed offered a wide range of travel and tourism visits, overseas residential activities and external speakers. These enrichment activities added great value to the learning programme. Teachers related these visits well to the curriculum. Learners were frequently involved in planning and organising the visits and residential activities, which helped them to develop their travel research and booking skills. Learners used enrichment activities productively to practise their skills, including conducting guiding and

introductory speeches that they would give to holidaymakers during their coach transfer from the airport to their accommodation.

Reviewing the curriculum to support local, regional and national workforce development initiatives

36. The colleges surveyed in sport were all developing strong links with local, regional and national organisations to coordinate curriculum content, qualifications and programmes to meet the developing needs of employers and other stakeholders. Many colleges were involved in initiatives based on the 2012 Olympics.
37. Many of the surveyed colleges created partnerships with employers which focused on developing a healthy workforce. One college was responsible for creating a range of bespoke training courses to meet such diverse needs as nutritional advice, physical activity awareness for dieticians and a chronic respiratory disease exercise instructors' qualification.

One college surveyed was particularly active in local and regional developments, in particular with links to the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (the Committee). A learner was represented on the 2012 Podium Student Action Group and the Centre of Vocational Excellence manager was undertaking a secondment to the Committee. The college was well positioned to benefit from the Committee's initiatives to engage learners in the 2012 games. The sector skills council (SkillsActive) was represented on the Centre of Vocational Excellence steering group and advised on new qualifications and employer-led pathways. The Centre of Vocational Excellence manager chaired a local coaching forum (a sub-regional arm of the national governing body forum) and co-chaired the foundation degree forum funded by the South London Lifelong Learning Network. The college was promoting demand-led pathways through initiatives such as Train to Gain to qualify event stewards with the National Vocational Qualification 2 in spectator safety.

38. Most colleges surveyed had extremely well-developed links with the travel and tourism industry. Employers were actively involved in, or influenced, curriculum development. Some good examples were seen where courses had been adapted to meet employers' needs. One college had introduced a unit into its travel and tourism course to meet the growing needs of the cruise industry in the locality, while another had introduced a chalet work unit to meet a local employer's need. Most of this activity was directed at learners attending full-time college courses. However, one college had delivered guiding qualifications at a local museum for mature learners. The course was developed with considerable involvement of the employer and met the learners' needs well.
39. One college made good use of its 'innovation fund' for travel and tourism teachers to research new qualifications and carry out appraisals of the local market needs.

One of the colleges in the survey was part of the consortium of three colleges forming the National Gaming Academy. This met an identified national and local need in the hospitality and tourism industry for trained croupiers to work in casinos. The course was attracting new learners to the programme, many of whom had been unemployed for some time. The academy, which was sited off the main college campus, had impressive resources alongside a formal classroom setting. Learners were enjoying the innovative way of learning, and were positive about their employment prospects on completion of the course.

Strategies to ensure recruitment from under-represented groups

40. The best colleges surveyed had been successful at supporting learners from under-represented groups. It was particularly welcome to see that colleges were successful in supporting learners with a range of physical impairments to access sports programmes. These included deaf learners, supported at all sessions by a signer, as well as learners with sight problems or reduced mobility.

One college was particularly successful at supporting learners who were blind and those who were wheelchair users. The college organised staff training and liaison with relevant external support agencies to develop teaching styles to meet these specific learning needs. Specialist curriculum resources were developed and teaching staff amended their usual teaching styles effectively to cater for these learners. This included developing their skills to describe both theory and practical activities with much less reliance on visual examples. Both the staff and the other learners on the programme responded well to meeting this very difficult challenge. The process resulted in all learners successfully achieving their learning goals. Another college provided a signer for a deaf student who was following an adventure education programme.

41. In examples of the best practice, colleges successfully utilised the curriculum to challenge existing stereotypes and to identify barriers to specific groups in accessing sports. Good use was made in one session observed of clips from films such as 'Billy Elliot' and 'Bend it like Beckham' to initiate discussion about stereotypes and barriers.

In one college, programmes had been developed to widen participation in the surrounding area which built on the success and expertise of provision at the main college site. Strong links between the college and parks at five urban sites resulted in provision to engage young people in learning in more informal settings. Working closely with councils and local football clubs, the college offered opportunities for learners to progress from entry to level 3 programmes. The college was developing a foundation degree in football for these groups. The college, which also offers land-based

programmes, was keenly aware of how some minority ethnic groups feel disengaged and uncomfortable looking for employment and accessing recreation opportunities in the countryside. The college used sport with these groups effectively to engage with them and to develop and improve their employment opportunities.

42. One college offered unit certificates as part of an individualised programme aimed at learners with a range of disabilities.

One college was at an advanced stage of discussions with the Wealdstone Football Club about starting a girls' football scholarship. The college already had good expertise to support this development through women's football teams and coaching. The current programme successfully attracted learners from a wide geographical, and particularly deprived, area. A high proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups were now on the football programme and the college was developing a mentoring programme to support these learners.

In one college, two European Social Fund projects – Women into Coaching and Success for Sport were specifically targeted at under-represented groups to develop coaching and sports leadership skills. Representatives of the Women's Sports Foundation sat on the coaching forum to advise on the best ways to promote activities to women. The sports development officer surveyed the current learner population to identify barriers preventing under-represented groups participating in sport. The Inclusive Fitness Initiative had conducted an audit on the sports facilities to assess accessibility for disabled sports participants. The college ran a Women's Get Set Go course during the summer to encourage female learners to take sports courses.

43. Inspectors saw little that addressed participation by under-represented groups in travel and tourism. In one college with an international department there were good initiatives to bring two groups of Korean learners onto the cabin crew programme. In another college, male travel and tourism learner ambassadors were being used to good effect in visits to schools to promote the travel and tourism industry and courses to potential learners. The school children's perception of the industry being mainly for women was challenged well by seeing male learners in travel and tourism.

Notes

Four of Her Majesty's Inspectors conducted the survey visits between September 2007 and March 2008. A sample of 17 colleges was selected from colleges where provision in leisure, travel and tourism had been judged to be outstanding or good at the most recent inspection. In all but one of the colleges visited they offered both leisure and travel and tourism courses. In the other college they offered only leisure-related programmes. Inspectors observed 54 lessons; held meetings with learners, teachers and managers; scrutinised policies, schemes of work and self-assessment reports and reviewed examples of learners' written work.

Useful websites

The Department for Children, Schools and Families provides links to a range of learning resources useful in the teaching of physical education and school sport and travel and tourism courses at Key Stage 4 and post-16:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/resourcematerials>.

The Qualification and Curriculum Authority is a good source of a range of information. The leisure, travel and tourism section of the website contains details on the wide range of qualifications in the subject and useful links to relevant awarding body websites: http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_8505.aspx.

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service's website has useful information on innovation and excellence in the post-16 learning and skills sector:

<http://www.lsis.org.uk>.

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service's Excellence Gateway is for post-16 learning and skills providers. It hosts the Ofsted Good Practice Database together with information on self-improvement and suppliers of improvement services plus materials to support teaching and learning including leisure, travel and tourism subjects:

- <http://excellence.qia.org.uk>
- Excalibur Good Practice Database
<http://excellence.qia.org.uk/page.aspx?o=100800>.

The Sector Skills Councils for leisure, travel and tourism include SkillsActive for active leisure and People 1st for hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism. These sites provide a useful range of strategy, information and resources:

- the SkillsActive site: <http://www.skillsactive.com>
- the People 1st site: <http://www.people1st.co.uk>
- Institute of Travel and Tourism: <http://www.itt.co.uk>.

Another useful site for up-to-date information regarding the development of coaching in the UK is Sportscoach UK at <http://www.sportscoachuk.org>.

Other useful sites containing a wealth of information are the sports councils, the British Olympic Association and the CCPR:

- UK Sport site: <http://www.uk sport.gov.uk>.
- Sport England site: <http://www.sportengland.org>.
- The CCPR: <http://www.ccpr.org.uk/>.
- The British Olympic Association: <http://www.olympics.org.uk/home2.aspx>.

Colleges participating in the survey

Bicton College, Budleigh Salterton, Devon

Bishop Burton College, Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire

East Riding College, Beverley, East Riding of Yorkshire

Dearne Valley College, Rotherham, South Yorkshire

Derwentside College, Consett, County Durham

Eastleigh College, Eastleigh, Hampshire

Hastings College of Arts and Technology, Hastings, East Sussex

Loughborough College, Loughborough, Leicestershire

Myerscough College, Preston, Lancashire

North Hertfordshire College, Stevenage, Hertfordshire

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, Nuneaton, Warwickshire

Park Lane College (pre merger), Leeds, West Yorkshire

Richmond upon Thames College, Twickenham, Middlesex

South Trafford College, Trafford, Manchester

Stanmore College, Stanmore, Middlesex

Stockton Riverside College, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees

Worcester College of Technology, Worcester, Worcestershire.