

## **CRICKLADE COLLEGE SOUTH EAST REGION**

### **Reinspection of engineering: January 1999**

#### **Background**

Cricklade College was inspected during November 1997 and the findings were published in inspection report 21/98. Provision in engineering was graded 4.

The strengths of the provision were: well-planned course documentation; well-designed learning materials in computer-aided design; good specialist resources for computing; good retention rates; the quality of teaching and learning on the national diploma in computer-aided design application courses. These strengths were outweighed by weaknesses which included: poor curriculum planning; lack of variety of teaching and learning methods; failure of teachers to motivate students or check their learning; poor marking of students' work; poor pass rates; lack of regular course team meetings; lack of staff development focused on the needs of the curriculum; and having a self-assessment report written in isolation.

The provision was reinspected by one inspector over two days in January 1999. The inspector observed seven teaching sessions, held meetings with senior managers and the programme area manager, examined students marked work and a wide range of documentation relating to the engineering area and its courses.

#### **Assessment**

The college undertook a fundamental review of its engineering courses following the last inspection. The review included the demand by prospective students and local employers for engineering courses and the colleges ability to offer courses of high quality. The college decided to stop offering all mechanical engineering courses. It now offers a limited range of engineering courses in motor vehicle and computer aided design. In motor vehicle it offers full and part-time NVQ courses at levels one to three. In computer aided design it offers a full-time national diploma and part-time courses computer aided design. Most teaching on these courses takes place in workshops. The motor vehicle and computing resources are now well managed. Teachers meet regularly to plan their work and to review student retention and achievement as part of a new college quality process. Course and lesson planning and the quality of teaching and learning have improved. Fifty seven per cent of the lessons observed were good, none were poor. Teachers structure their lessons well. They enter into discussion with students and in workshop sessions question and challenge them about their ideas and understanding and provide help and assistance when required. The standard of assessments and assignments is good. Students' retention and achievement have improved since the inspection and is now good on most courses. Good attention is paid to health and safety in all workshops. There are weaknesses still to be addressed: retention and achievement on some courses; poor punctuality on some courses; the quality of classroom teaching to ensure all students are challenged and learn; the need for staff development. Grading criteria are provided for assignments but they do not give students specific information about what is expected to achieve the various levels of success. Teachers should continue to improve their marking of students' work and provide clear information about how

their work could be improved.

Revised grade: engineering 3.