

20. STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES (DISCRETE PROVISION)

Performance Level: Very Good

Areas Inspected:

- Full-time and part-time further education courses and the Skills for Work strand of Training for Success.

CONTEXT

20.1 The College provides a good range of full-time and part-time courses across almost all campus sites to meet the diverse needs of students with barriers to learning. These include discrete provision, both in the College and the community, for learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties and disabilities, with appropriate progression opportunities: entry level employability and independent living programmes; Pathfinder provision with level 1 vocational studies; and Routeways Skills for Work with levels 1 and 2 accreditation. The College's centre for supported learning also contributes effectively to the widening participation agenda through tailored programmes which use learning as a means to support improved well-being for those with chronic mental ill health. There are nearly 500 learners registered across the programmes, 150 on full-time, and 350 on part-time courses.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

20.2 The head of school and curriculum area manager provide effective leadership and advocacy for their learners. They have a sound knowledge of the curricular provision which best supports the development of the personal, social and employability skills of these learners. The staff team work well together to support the effective co-ordination and collaborative working practices across the provision. There are effective links and partnerships in place with a range of appropriate providers to support the learning, and the social and physical needs of the learners. There is a need, however, for more strategic partnership working with a wider range of stakeholders, both internal and external to the College to: enhance the profile of the provision; support the further development of the provision and further refine the curriculum offer; increase the use of ILT and new mobile technologies to enhance learning; and secure more supported work placements. Self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes need to be developed further to prioritise and set targets for the wide range of work undertaken. The quality of the accommodation and resources across the campuses ranges from outstanding to inadequate and is mostly good or better.

The quality of provision for learning is very good.

20.3 The quality of the teaching and learning is a strength of the provision with all of the sessions observed being good or better; one-half of the sessions were very good and a further one-fifth were outstanding. The best sessions are well planned, include clearly defined responsibilities for support staff and are characterised by appropriate differentiation. In addition, they include a broad range of teaching and learning approaches and active learning, with effective one-to-one guidance and support for the learners. Good work-related learning is provided through work placements for some of the learners, and a comprehensive programme of visiting speakers and study visits extends the range and relevance of the learning experiences. An innovative entrepreneurship project provides further very good

opportunities for developing the learners' vocational and ICT skills. More systematic identification and sharing of the best practice would improve further the teaching and learning, and the overall experiences of the learners. There is a need for improved accommodation and wider resources in order to better facilitate opportunities for more practical, professional and technical training, and independent work. This will enhance further the learners' skills and preparation for independent living and working.

Achievements and standards are outstanding.

20.4 Almost all of the learners are well-engaged in their courses and motivated to develop good employability and independent living skills. Attendance is outstanding and the behaviour of the learners is of a high standard; they are polite and respectful of each other and members of staff. The learners develop effective and appropriate communication and social skills along with high levels of self-confidence and independence. They extend their team-working proficiency and a minority of them have achieved the competence to travel independently to and from the College. Retention and achievement rates overall on part-time and full-time courses are outstanding at 95% and 98% respectively.

Further Education: Table of Achievements (over the last two years)

Course Type	Completion Year 2011			Completion Year 2012			Two Year Average		
	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)
Part-Time Courses at Entry Level	-	-	-	95	97	92	95	97	92
Full-Time Courses at Entry Level	93	100	93	97	97	95	95	99	94
Full-Time Courses at Level 1	92	100	92	100	93	93	96	96	93
Overall	93	100	93	96	97	93	95	98	93

Work-Based Learning: Table of Achievements (over the last three years)

Programme Strand /	Numbers registered who completed 4 weeks training	Retention Rate %	Achievement Rate %	Progression rate for those who achieved full award %
Pathfinder Skills for Your Life	42	81	100	-
Routeways Skills for Life	203	83	98	98