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*The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement*



Providing Inspection Services for
**Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

East Tyrone College of Further and Higher Education

March 2007

Grading System

The Education & Training Inspectorate (ETI) is piloting a new 6-point grading scale to replace the original 4-point scale as set out below. Where a grade is recorded in this report, the grade is given on the revised scales.

ORIGINAL GRADE	REVISED GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
1	1	Outstanding characterised by excellence.
1	2	Consistently good; major strengths.
2	3	Important strengths in most of provision. Areas for improvement which organisation has the capacity to address.
2	4	Overall sound/satisfactory but with areas for improvement in important areas which need to be addressed.
3	5	A few strengths; significant areas for improvement which require prompt action.
4	6	Poor; major shortcomings which require urgent action.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FOCUSED INSPECTION OF EAST TYRONE COLLEGE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

As a result of the issues identified in the original inspection of East Tyrone College in November 2005, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has carried out three monitoring visits to evaluate the quality of the provision.

These visits confirm that the college has made good progress in addressing the key areas for improvement identified in the original inspection report. The provision has been graded 3 on the revised scale.

A copy of the report is enclosed.

The focused inspection in November 2005 highlighted strengths in the quality of provision in construction, hairdressing and beauty, health and social care, media and communication and for students with learning difficulties and disabilities (SLDD). The inspection also identified the need for improvement in the following key areas:

- the quality of the provision in business and management, essential skills, information and communication technology (ICT), sport and recreation, and student support;
- the variable rates of retention and achievement;
- the arrangements for the provision of tutorial support to the students;
- the embedding of information and learning technologies (ILT) to support and extend the students' learning; and
- the effectiveness of leadership and management, at all levels.

As a result, the Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) was commissioned to monitor the provision and a series of monitoring visits was completed between April 2006 and March 2007.

In the interval since the inspection, there have been significant staff changes at senior and middle management levels, including:

- the retirement of the Principal in August 2006, with the Vice-principal assuming an Acting Principal role; and
- the appointment of an acting Vice-principal, along with an acting head of department and four temporary appointments at head of school level.

The final phase of the new building programme has been completed and the high quality accommodation and resources are having a beneficial impact on staff and students' morale.

East Tyrone College of Further and Higher Education (the college) has received support, to

good effect, from a range of external sources, including:

- the Learning and Skills Development Agency Northern Ireland (LSDA NI);
- reciprocal visits by key staff to Angus College in Scotland; and
- participation by middle and senior managers in The Centre of Excellence in Leadership (CEL) programme.

Over the period of the monitoring visits, the college has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the original inspection, and the following are the most important improvements that have taken place:

- the willingness and determination of the staff, and in particular the acting Principal and Vice-Principal, to address the issues raised in the original inspection;
- the appropriate focus on enhancing the quality of teaching and learning across the college, including peer observation, mentoring arrangements and module evaluations, all of which are having a beneficial impact on classroom practice;
- the effective leadership of the Acting Principal and the collegial working of the senior management team, leading to increased transparency and a critically reflective management style;
- a more cohesive and effective middle-management tier;
- the more effective monitoring and evaluation of provision, including the use of accurate and up-to-date data to track students' progress, resulting in improved rates of retention;
- the very good progress made in the development of the provision for student services;
- the significant improvement in the quality of the leadership of the business and management curriculum area, including more collegial work and focused target-setting, along with a noticeable improvement in the standards of the students' work, and their levels of attainment;
- the implementation of a cohesive, effective cross-college tutorial programme;
- the improved quality of teaching and learning in business and management and ICT;
- the success of the staff in sport and recreation in improving their strategies for learning and teaching, and raising the quality of the outcomes for the students on the programmes;

- the improved strategic and operational management of the essential skills provision; and
- the investment in ILT, including new resources and effective staff development, which is resulting in significantly improved use of ILT in the classrooms.

The following issues require further development:

- the need for ongoing review and evaluation of the impact of the strategies for improvement within the essential skills provision, to ensure sustainable progress;
- the need for staff to update formally their industrial experience, and in some instances their qualifications; and
- to continue to review and develop further the curriculum provision on offer.

The follow-up inspection confirms that the college has made good progress in addressing the key areas for improvement identified in the original inspection report. The Inspectorate is confident that the actions implemented will result in sustained improvements in the quality of provision. No further monitoring visits are required.

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