

RE-INSPECTION OF HASTINGS COLLEGE OF ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

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Outcome of Re-Inspection

The overall provision in the curriculum area of humanities, including English and modern foreign languages, is now **satisfactory**.

Background

Hastings College of Arts and Technology was inspected in January 2003. 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 humanities, including English and modern foreign languages which was found to be less than satisfactory.

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 where leadership and management are unsatisfactory or very weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory leadership and management, or less than satisfactory provision in solely WBL, inspectors from Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of the less than satisfactory areas. As a result of the re-inspection monitoring visits, inspectors may judge that previously less than satisfactory areas of provision, or leadership and management, are now satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Where leadership and management are satisfactory, but there is curriculum provision that is less than satisfactory, there will be no monitoring visits. All less than satisfactory provision will be re-inspected, normally during one week, within two years of the original inspection.

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

In accordance with the above procedures, re-inspection of humanities including English and modern foreign languages took place on 17 - 21 January 2005.

Humanities including English and modern foreign languages

In the January 2003 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 individual support for full-time students
- effective initiative to attract new students
- good teaching of English as a foreign language and modern foreign languages.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on GCSE and GCE A-levels
- insufficient opportunities for written work on full-time courses
- poor standard of work in humanities
- poor quality assurance of courses in the sixth form centre.

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

Pass rates on AS, A2 and GCSE English and on OCN modern foreign language courses are much improved and now exceed national averages. The access to HE course also has high pass rates as well as good retention rates. However, pass rates and retention rates on AS psychology and sociology are poor. Retention rates on AS English are also well below the national average. The college has decided to discontinue advanced level GCE courses from September 2005.

On all English and humanities courses, teachers regularly set appropriate written work for students which is carefully marked and assessed. Standards of students' work have risen. In English, teachers pay close attention in lessons to the improvement of essay writing by careful analysis of the requirements of the examination questions. This is particularly so for GCSE English work. On modern language courses teachers are now more focused on OCN examination pathways and this has led to more effective monitoring of students' progress. However, in humanities lessons teachers do not pay sufficient attention to the improvement of writing skills.

Teaching has improved across the curriculum area. Lessons are well prepared and teachers successfully use a variety of teaching strategies. Students are actively involved in their learning through effective group or pair work. In the majority of language lessons teachers make effective use

of the taught language and standards of oral competence are good on many language courses. In a small number of lessons both teachers and students speak too much English.

Leadership of the modern language provision is good. The part-time manager has given priority to providing opportunities for the team of eighteen part-time teachers to develop effective schemes of work and share good practice. However, the college is not making sufficient use of linguistic expertise for observations of language lessons. Courses in English, access to HE and the International Baccalaureate are well managed. Quality assurance arrangements involve close and effective analysis of achievement and retention data through detailed course reviews. These reviews are less successful in identifying weaknesses in teaching and learning.

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

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