



*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

Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

following an

Inspection of the Essential Skills Provision in Further Education

in

North West Regional College

October 2014

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS IN FURTHER EDUCATION IN NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE

The North West Regional College was inspected in April 2012. A follow-up inspection of the essential skills provision took place in October 2013. The follow-up inspection identified improvements in the essential skills provision including:

- the more effective implementation of the dispersed leadership model;
- the revised and improved timetabling arrangements for the delivery of the essential skills; and
- the improved outcomes in the information and communication technology (ICT) essential skill.

The follow-up inspection also identified the need for further improvement in the following key areas:

- the implementation of strategies by senior management to address the significant inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning across the essential skills; and
- the further development of the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes within the provision to support more robust evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.

In the interval since the follow-up inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the organisation have taken place:

- a comprehensive, well-informed review and evaluation of teaching and learning has been carried out across the provision;
- a cycle of tutor observations has been developed and implemented;
- a substantial programme of internal and external staff development and appropriate curriculum initiatives, matched to the outcomes of the tutor observation process, have been introduced to support changes in teaching and learning practices;
- increased resources have been invested in the provision, including the development and embedding of the mentor support role in each of the essential skills;
- a stronger and more innovative focus has been placed on the use of technology enhanced learning;
- a revised approach to the evaluation of the essential skills, with a strong focus on teaching and learning, has been introduced into the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- a range of opportunities has been provided for staff to observe best practice in the development of literacy and numeracy in other countries;

- a self-reflective on-line tool has been developed for tutors to review and evaluate systematically their practice and to help tutors to plan for improvements; and
- the centrality of the essential skills to the core curriculum offer of the College has been strengthened through the significant involvement of the senior management, including the director of curriculum, in the management of improvement across the provision.

The following are the most important improvements that have taken place since the original inspection:

- the better consistency, and the improved quality, of the teaching and learning in the essential skills provision; and
- the improved evaluation of the quality of the teaching and learning within the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes.

The area which requires further improvement is:

- the further embedding, and ongoing monitoring, of the teaching and learning practices to sustain and build on the progress made to date.

Conclusion

In the essential skills, the quality of education and training provided by the North West Regional College is now good. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor North West Regional College's progress on the areas for improvement.

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