



*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 Training for Success  
and ApprenticeshipsNI provision**

**in**

**Transportation Operations and Maintenance**

**Southern Regional College**

**September 2014**

## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE IN THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE**

The original inspection in November 2013 highlighted strengths in the provision, including the: broad curriculum offer, matched well to the needs of local economy; outstanding specialised training resources for vehicle body repair; good to very good standards of work achieved by most of the learners; positive learner progression rate to higher training programmes; and the appropriate balance of practical and theory in the directed training.

The inspection identified the need for improvement in the following areas:

- the maintenance of a more consistent approach to health and safety in the workshops and during practical training sessions;
- the greater use of information and learning technology (ILT) to support and enhance the apprentices' and trainees' training and assessment;
- the assessment arrangements to ensure that the apprentices' and trainees' progress and achievements across all aspects of their programme are assessed, recorded and monitored in a timely and cohesive manner, to inform planning for future training and assessment;
- the quality improvement planning process to ensure that the departmental quality improvement plan reflects more accurately the findings from the course teams' self-evaluations, including the essential skills; and
- the strategic planning of the provision to ensure that the specialist resources, the curriculum offer, the college's careers provision, and staff development are utilised fully in meeting the needs of the apprentices and trainees.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) evaluated the improvement plan which was submitted by the Southern Regional College following the original inspection, and reported to the Chief Executive that it was appropriate. The first interim follow-up visit was carried by the ETI in May 2014.

In the interval since the inspection, the following actions which affect the work of the College have taken place:

- the development and implementation of revised health and safety policies and procedures in order to provide a safer learning environment;
- the restructuring of the college management team, resulting in new head of school for this professional and technical area;
- the benchmarking of the provision against more effective practice in other colleges;
- an audit of the ILT capabilities of the lecturers in order to inform professional development in this area, including more effective pedagogy;
- an investment in appropriate specialist resources for this professional and technical area;

- the implementation of revised arrangements for assessing, monitoring and reviewing learners' progress and achievements;
- a realignment of the curriculum to meet better the needs of industry and the learners, particularly for heavy vehicle maintenance and repair and vehicle body repair; and
- the increased range of careers activities, including the provision of visiting speakers, careers information, and interview preparation.

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

- the implementation of comprehensive health safety protocols for workshop training, leading to safer working practices and a safer overall practical learning environment;
- the very good start in the use of revised tracking and monitoring systems to inform the more comprehensive reviews of the learners' progress and achievements;
- the effective use of a boarder and more relevant range of ILT resources to improve the quality of the teaching, training and learning;
- the revised self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes which are inclusive and used well to bring about sustained improvement;
- the well-advanced strategic review of the curriculum provision, which is informing effectively the planned and ongoing investment, and curriculum development, in this professional and technical area; and
- the notable increase in the overall learner achievement rate during the last year, to 98%.

The areas which require further improvement are:

- the further embedding of the use of the new ILT resources in enhancing the quality of the teaching, training and learning; and
- the roll-out of the revised and well-planned arrangements for timely workplace assessment of the learners' occupational competences.

## **Conclusion**

In transportation operations and maintenance, the quality of training provided by the Southern Regional College is now very good. The College has important strengths in most of the training and pastoral provision in this area. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress in the areas for improvement.

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