



Education and Training
Inspectorate

Report of an Inspection of the
Further Education Provision up
to and including Level 3 in the
South Eastern Regional College

March 2011

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Quantitative Terms

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

Performance Levels

The Education and Training Inspectorate use the following performance levels in reports:

Performance Levels
Outstanding
Very Good
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate
Unsatisfactory

Key Performance Indicators and Quality Descriptors

Key Performance Indicators and Definitions		Quality Descriptors
Retention	Proportion of students completing their course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excellent (>89%)• Good (80% to 89%)• Satisfactory (70% to 79%)• Modest (60% to 69%)• Poor (<60%)
Achievement	Proportion of completers who gain their qualification.	
Progression	Proportion of successful completers who progress to further/higher education or employment.	

With the exception of the enrolment data supplied by the Department for Employment Learning, all the quality descriptors for retention, achievement and progression used in this report are based on data supplied and verified by the South Eastern Regional College.

PART ONE: SUMMARY

1. CONTEXT

1.1 The South Eastern Regional College (College) was formed in August 2007, following the merger of the former East Down Institute of Further and Higher Education, Lisburn Institute of Further and Higher Education, and North Down and Ards Institute of Further and Higher Education. The College has four main campuses located at Bangor, Downpatrick, Lisburn, and Newtownards, and a further two large campuses in Ballynahinch and Newcastle. All of the campuses are within the four Local Government Districts of Ards, Down, Lisburn, and North Down. The campuses in Ballynahinch, Downpatrick and Lisburn are all new buildings completed in 2011, and the Ards campus was renovated significantly in 2009/10, representing an investment of around £80 million by the Department for Employment and Learning (Department) to enhance the quality of the College's accommodation, education and training facilities, and learning resources.

1.2 The College's management and staff complement comprises the Principal and Chief Executive, Director of Corporate and Economic Development, Director of Curriculum and Information Services, Director of Learning and Customer Support, Head of Communications, Head of Finance, Head of Human Resources, three Heads of Quality, Excellence and Development, nine Heads of School, 36 Assistant Heads of School, and approximately 395 full-time equivalent lecturers.

1.3 Approximately 74% of the College's total enrolments are in further education (levels 0–3); 11% attending full-time professional and technical courses, 46% completing part-time accredited qualifications or recreational courses, and 17% completing an essential qualification in information and communication technology (ICT), literacy or numeracy. The remainder are enrolled on the College's higher education, training or employment programmes.

2. PROVISION

2.1 Over the last three years, the College's total number of enrolments has increased from 27,807 in 2007/08 to 29,556 in 2009/10, representing a 6% increase. The full-time further education enrolments increased by 19%, part-time further education enrolments by 26%, and further education essential skills enrolments by two and a half times. In particular, there has been a significant increase in the full-time enrolments in the Downpatrick and Lisburn campuses at 43% and 63% respectively.

2.2 At the time of the inspection, the College had 17,186¹ further education enrolments: 3,104 full-time further education enrolments; 6,924 part-time further education enrolments; 4,156 further education essential skills enrolments; 1,332 part-time 14 to 19 year old enrolments; 536 full-cost recovery enrolments; and 1,134 recreational enrolments.

2.3 The 3,104 full-time further education enrolments are spread across a wide range of professional and technical areas, including the Department's priority skills areas². Approximately 25% are in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related professional and technical areas, in line with the Department's target for STEM enrolments.

¹ Based on the Department's official enrolment data, November 2010.

² The Department's designated priority skills areas to support economic development include construction, electronics, information and communication technology, manufacturing, software engineering, and hospitality and tourism.

2.4 The 6,924 part-time further education enrolments are also spread across a wide range of professional and technical areas. Approximately 40% are in STEM-related areas. With the exception of the professional and technical area of ICT, which accounts for most (74%) of the part-time enrolments in the Department's priority skills areas, part-time enrolments to the priority skills areas are low, particularly in the professional and technical area of travel and tourism where there are no enrolments.

2.5 While the 1,332 enrolments of 14 to 19 year olds from the five local Area Learning Communities through the Entitlement Framework are spread across a wide range of professional and technical areas, with around 20% in STEM-related areas, the majority (51%) are in the occupational skills programmes, provided by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

2.6 The majority (66%) of the 536 full-cost recovery enrolments on courses to support local industry are within STEM-related areas, and within the Department's priority skills areas. Twenty-eight percent of the 1,134 recreational enrolments are in Preparation for Life and Work.

2.7 There are good progression opportunities within the College for students completing their further education to progress to higher education programmes, or to training and employment programmes.

3. THE INSPECTION

3.1 The Education and Training Inspectorate (Inspectorate) carried out an inspection of the College's further education provision in March 2011. The inspection focused on the College's full-time and part-time further education provision up to and including level 3. A representative sample of professional and technical courses within the following main sector subject areas was inspected: art, media and publishing; business management and travel and tourism; health, public services and care; language, literature and culture; leisure and recreation; preparation for life and work; retail and commercial enterprises; and science and mathematics. The further education essential skills provision was also inspected. The inspection sample did not include the recently evaluated priority skills areas³. A team of 23 inspectors and eight associate assessors (AAs) observed 238 lessons. Discussions were held with the Principal and Chief Executive, members of the Governing Body, members of the College Management Team, Heads of School, Assistant Heads of School, course team leaders, managers with cross-college responsibilities, students, Chair of the South Eastern Workforce Development Forum, and a sample of employers. The inspection team examined samples of the students' work, individual student learning agreements, minutes of team meetings, course planning and recording documentation, quality improvement planning documentation, and other relevant documentation, policies, and reports.

3.2 The arrangements for the student care, guidance and support, including safeguarding of vulnerable groups, were also inspected. The inspection of these arrangements included the opportunity for the students to complete a confidential questionnaire prior to the inspection, as well as interviews by the inspection team with groups of students. Four hundred and fifty questionnaires were issued, 342 (76%) of which were returned to the Inspectorate. The returns show that most of the students are positive about their learning experiences in the College; they are well-informed about their courses, have opportunities to learn in different ways, find their course interesting and challenging, and feel safe in the College. Just under 80% of the

³ An Evaluation of the College's Provision for Level 2 Priority Skills Areas, April 2009; and An Evaluation of the College's Provision for Level 3 Priority Skills Areas, March 2010.

students agree that they are provided with good advice and guidance on career progression. Just over 50% agree that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities available for them, and 66% are aware of the College's complaints and grievance procedures. The Inspectorate has reported the outcomes of the questionnaires and discussions held with the students to the college management.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

4.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

4.2 The main strengths are the:

- good leadership and management, particularly the collegial approach within and across the various management teams;
- very good to outstanding quality of most of the accommodation and specialist facilities;
- good or better quality of the teaching and learning across most (86%) of the lessons observed, with the majority (72%) being either good or very good;
- good or very good standards of work achieved by most of the students;
- good quality of the care, guidance and support provided for the students, particularly the College's very good pastoral care arrangements;
- outstanding range of links established with employers and external agencies to support workforce development and innovation, and the very good links with post-primary schools to improve the breadth and balance of the curriculum available for 14 to 19 year old pupils; and
- excellent average student retention rate for the part-time courses inspected, and the good average student achievement rate for the full-time professional and technical courses inspected.

4.3 The main areas for improvement are the:

- student retention rates across a significant minority of the full-time professional and technical courses inspected;
- student achievement rates for a minority of the part-time courses inspected;
- quality assurance and improvement planning processes; and
- analysis and interpretation of data to inform quality improvement planning.

4.4 Table of Performance Levels

	Performance Level
OVERALL	Good
Contributory Areas:	
Leadership and Management	Good
Achievements and Standards	Good
Quality of Provision for Learning	Very good
Subject Areas:	
Art, Media and Publishing	Good
Business Management and Travel and Tourism	Good
Essential Skills	Good
Health, Public Services and Care	Very Good
Languages, Literature and Culture	Good
Leisure and Recreation	Very Good
Preparation for Life and Work	Very Good
Retail and Commercial Enterprises	Very Good
Science and Mathematics	Good

PART TWO: OVERALL QUALITY OF PROVISION

5. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 Overall, the quality of the leadership and management across the areas inspected is good.

5.2 The Principal and Chief Executive, together with the Governing Body, and the College Management Team have established a good range of strategic core goals, with an appropriate emphasis on the curriculum. These include: developing the College's scientific and technological capabilities; professionalising the workforce; overcoming educational disadvantage; nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship; and supporting career development. While the College's curriculum planning process reflect these core goals, these processes would benefit from a broader range of quantitative and qualitative strategic targets to inform and monitor the College's progress in achieving the core goals through its ongoing developments in the curricular provision.

5.3 The Principal and Chief Executive, the Governing Body's Educational Committee, and the College Management Team have a clear understanding of the need to align the College's curriculum to meet better the existing and emerging educational needs of the College's local communities and employers. This is evidenced in the College's good progress in providing a coherent curriculum across the main campuses, improving enrolments from areas of socio-economic disadvantage, and in providing new curricula to meet better the needs of employers and their employees. Examples of the new curricula include: bespoke engineering courses for manufacturing employers; a new pharmaceutical provision for technicians employed in the public sector; and a new training facility for the installation and maintenance of sustainable and renewable energy technology. The analysis and reviewing of the College's current and future curriculum offer is, however, not informed sufficiently by the whole college self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes. As a consequence, the curriculum development process, to improve further the College's effectiveness in supporting economic development and social cohesion, is not developed fully across the professional and technical areas.

5.4 The Principal and Chief Executive, and the College Management Team are developing a suitable range of channels of communication with the staff and the students, through a variety of fora and media. There are regular staff team meetings, and College Management Team briefings through staff newsletters, the College's intranet, and email. The Students' Union, student fora, student newsletters and the College's virtual learning environment (VLE) support regular communication with the student body.

5.5 Since the formation of the College, the Principal and Chief Executive and the College Management Team have worked hard to establish and embed common ways of working, underpinned by increasingly unified processes, across the College's campuses. This is evidenced by the range of systems and processes established to improve collaborative working and to share good practice. Key features of these arrangements include: 'know and show' presentations for staff to exchange ideas and good practice with senior managers; online team sites for staff to share learning and assessment resources; the provision of a knowledge management system to enable staff to access up-to-date data; and regular, well-structured management meetings. This is further enhanced by the College's development of a strong corporate identity both internally and externally through its marketing and promotion, inter-campus competitions, enterprise co-operatives, and celebration of achievements and success.

5.6 The Principal and Chief Executive and the College Management Team are implementing a range of appropriate measures to improve the College's self-evaluation and quality improvement planning capability, which are timely. These include: improving the use of electronic student registers; in-year student impact surveys; appropriate revisions of the College's knowledge management system to produce retention rates for two-year programmes; staff development for course teams in writing evaluation abstracts; use of 'know and show' meetings for peer moderation; and monthly management performance meetings to review progress against individual school quality improvement plans. While these revised structures and procedures support ongoing developments in the College's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes, the inconsistent use of an appropriate quality framework across the College, and the inadequate use of key performance data within the College's current self-evaluation reports, limits the effectiveness and reliability of the quality improvement planning process. Although the current whole college self-evaluation report is aligned to the Inspectorate's quality framework 'Improving Quality: Raising Standards' (IQ:RS), it is overly descriptive and fails to report adequately on the key performance data for retention and achievement, particularly for two-year courses.

5.7 It is clear that within the professional and technical areas inspected, the course teams have sufficient knowledge of the main strengths and key areas for improvement, but these are not articulated clearly enough within the current self-evaluation reports. These reports make insufficient use of the IQ:RS framework, contain only limited evaluation of the quality of the teaching and learning, and the use and reporting of the key performance indicators to inform and to support their evaluations is under-developed. Consequently, there is an inconsistent match between the findings of the inspection and the College's self-evaluation findings, which needs to be addressed urgently by the Principal and Chief Executive and the College Management Team.

5.8 Across the areas inspected, all of the lecturers are well-qualified, demonstrate high levels of expertise, and are suitably experienced, in their appropriate professional and technical areas.

5.9 The College's programme for staff development is very good. The College has given this a high priority within its strategic planning and has implemented a range of workforce development strategies, which are targeted appropriately at improving the quality of teaching and learning. These strategies include: an excellent information and learning technology (ILT) pedagogy mentorship programme to develop the lecturers' pedagogic skills, including the effective use of ILT; a continuous professional development entitlement for full-time staff; an induction programme on teaching and learning for all new staff; and a full-time teacher tutor to promote and support good pedagogic practice.

5.10 The mandatory staff training in the use of the College's well-developed VLE, is contributing to a more consistent approach in the use of this resource for course delivery across all of the campuses. The introduction of peer lesson observations is a good start to the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning, and to support the provision of tailored staff development to address identified workforce development needs in key pedagogic areas.

5.11 The quality of the College's accommodation and learning resources are either very good or outstanding, including specialist learning facilities, such as computer laboratories, engineering and construction workshops, hairdressing and beauty therapy salons, training kitchens and restaurants, science laboratories, art and design studios, and sports gymnasiums. All of the classrooms are bright, spacious and well-equipped with specialist

learning resources, including ILT equipment. The College's accommodation and facilities also include suitable student social areas, good quality learning resource centres, and a well-resourced VLE, all of which contribute much to the students' learning experiences. On a few occasions, there are insufficient computers in the essential skills classrooms and science laboratories to support the students' learning.

5.12 Through the College's business innovation and development unit and through the course co-ordinators and lecturers within the professional and technical areas, the College has established an outstanding range of links and partnerships with employers, sector skills councils and other agencies, such as the South Eastern Workforce Development Forum. These links and partnerships with key stakeholders provide increased opportunities to enrich the students' curriculum and learning experiences, and to provide bespoke training programmes to support economic development. The bespoke education and training programmes include: specialist computer-programming staff development; up-skilling engineering programmes for existing employees; and knowledge and technology transfer projects with small to medium enterprises. While the business innovation and development unit has made a very good start in supporting the Department's Economic Engagement Strategy, the uptake of bespoke education and training programmes at level 3 is insufficient, as most of the recent uptake is at level 1 or level 2.

5.13 Links and partnerships with the local post-primary schools are very good. The College has established productive and collaborative relationships with 43 local post-primary schools; it is an active member of the five local Area Learning Communities. The curriculum manager with responsibility for school partnerships is very committed and responsive in improving the breadth and balance of the curriculum available for the 14 to 19 year old pupils.

5.14 The College's links and engagement with the wider community are very good. The College's community development officers link well with community organisations, and there is an effective College promotion and communication strategy. This is reflected in the significant increase in enrolments in the Downpatrick and Lisburn campuses. Through the Department's Learner Access and Engagement programme, the College is also delivering further education programmes in 14 community venues with enrolments exceeding the College's own targets.

5.15 The College provides equality of opportunity for students across its main campuses; most of the main professional and technical courses are provided on all of the main College campuses to meet the further education needs of the students and their respective local communities.

6. ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

6.1 Overall, the quality of the achievements and standards across the areas inspected is good.

6.2 Across the professional and technical areas inspected the standards of work achieved by the students are mostly good to very good. In art and design, child development and well-being, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, hospitality and catering, modern languages, music, sport, travel and tourism, and university access the standards are very good. In business management, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), essential skills, and in science the standards are good. In media and communications they are satisfactory.

6.3 Where the standards of the students' professional and technical work are very good, the students are developing a broad range of industry relevant practical skills and knowledge, which they are able to apply and use confidently within realistic professional and technical settings. They are, for example, able to create commercial standard craft products, operate effectively as a part of a music production team, work confidently to support children's care learning and development, interact competently with customers to provide industry standard hairdressing and beauty therapy treatments, and prepare and serve gourmet food. The students are also developing a broad range of employability skills; they are motivated, demonstrate high levels of initiative and independence in their own learning, are able to work collaboratively with their peers to successfully complete tasks and projects, and are able to use their skills and knowledge to cope with a variety of circumstances or contexts.

6.4 Where the standards of the students' professional and technical work are good, the students have a sound understanding of the key principles and the practical procedures within their professional and technical area. They are able to use and apply these skills to carry out routine procedures to industry standards. These include, for example, undertaking routine scientific procedures, producing video using industry standard equipment and techniques, demonstrating a good understanding of current business management practices, and communicating functionally in a foreign language. In media and communication, while most of the students are developing a suitable range of appropriate skills and knowledge, a minority of them have limited ability to learn independently or work collaboratively to develop creative solutions to challenging problems across a range of contexts.

6.5 Most of the students are developing good literacy skills; they are able to use an extended vocabulary that incorporates terminology associated with their professional and technical areas or personal interests. They are able to read and interpret information from a wide range of formats, which they use well to communicate effectively in writing, make verbal presentations to, and conduct discussions with, a range of audiences. For a minority of the students, however, their writing skills are just satisfactory; they lack confidence in their independent writing to produce well-structured reports using their own vocabulary with accurate grammar and spelling.

6.6 The standards of the students' ICT skills are mostly good or better; they are confident in their use of a wide range of digital applications, which include web browsers, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation software. In addition, across most of the professional and technical areas inspected, the students are able to use proprietary software to a suitable level. This includes software for image manipulation, electronic diaries, finance and accounting systems, music mixing, and graphic design.

6.7 Most of the students are developing good numeracy skills; they are able to manipulate and process data, including the use of key arithmetic functions, and use charts and graphs effectively to present information. Most are able to extend their use of key arithmetic functions to solve problems relating to their professional and technical area, which include calculating areas, volumes, ratios, and percentages.

6.8 Most of the students work at a good pace, meet deadlines, develop productive relationships with their peers and lecturers, and maintain good attendance at their lessons. They have a good understanding of how they can apply and develop further their professional and technical skills within higher education or within employment. For a small number of the areas inspected, the attendance by a minority of the students is overly variable, and as a consequence their pace of work is too slow.

6.9 As a consequence of the good support provided by the College's seven part-time Enterprise Champions, groups of students across the majority of the professional and technical areas inspected are provided with the opportunity to develop good entrepreneurial skills through specific projects. For example, the students are able to plan and organise craft fairs and exhibitions locally and internationally, run retail food stalls at local markets and festivals, manage commercial beauty therapy salons in hotel premises, and produce commercial marketing material.

6.10 Over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, across the full-time professional and technical courses inspected, the average student retention and achievement rates vary considerably from poor to excellent. Of the total 2,233 full-time students enrolled across these areas, 1,724 of them completed their course and 1,480 achieved their target qualification, representing an overall satisfactory student retention rate and good student achievement rate. The student progression rate to further and higher education and/or employment is excellent.

6.11 Over the same period, the average part-time student retention and achievement rates vary from poor to excellent across the part-time professional and technical courses inspected. Of the 3,251 part-time students enrolled across these areas, 2,962 of them completed their course and 2,080 achieved their target qualification, representing an overall excellent student retention rate and satisfactory student achievement rate.

6.12 Of the 8,352 students enrolling on essential skills programmes during the period 2007/08 to 2009/10, 6,791 of them completed their programme and 5,340 achieved their targeted qualification, representing an overall good student retention rate and satisfactory student achievement rate.

7. QUALITY OF PROVISION FOR LEARNING

7.1 Overall, the quality of the provision for learning across areas inspected is very good.

7.2 In the majority of the professional and technical areas inspected, the curriculum provision is very good. In art and design, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, hospitality and catering, child care and well-being, languages, music, sport, and university access, there is a broad range of courses that are matched well to the educational needs of the students and employers. There are coherent curriculum pathways, which provide clear progression opportunities for pupils who progress from the local post-primary schools to gain industry-relevant qualifications, for part-time students seeking to improve their employability skills, and for existing employees to enhance their technical skills and knowledge. In health and social care, and in hospitality and catering, for example, there is a broad range of full-time and part-time courses matched well to the wide range of educational needs of the students and employers. The level 3 programmes in these areas include optional units, which enable the full-time students to progress to relevant Foundation Degrees or Higher National Diplomas within the College, or to university programmes elsewhere.

7.3 With the exception of media and communication, the curriculum provision in business management, ESOL, science, and in travel and tourism is good. While the existing range of courses in these areas is designed well to support economic development and social cohesion, there are, however, some gaps in the curriculum provision. In particular, there is a limited range of part-time courses in business management and in travel and tourism, and

insufficient standardisation of qualifications offered to ESOL students. In media and communication, the curriculum provision focuses mainly on electronic media production for full-time students with only limited provision in related areas such as journalism, publishing and communications, and insufficient opportunities for employees who work in the industry to gain recognised qualifications on a part-time basis.

7.4 In hospitality and catering, the quality of the students' learning experiences is outstanding; the students have excellent opportunities to develop industry standard skills in the College's kitchens and restaurants, to learn from visiting chefs, to work in industry for short periods, and to visit a range of hotels and restaurants.

7.5 In art and design, business management, child care and well-being, ESOL, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, languages, music, science, sport, travel and tourism, and university access the quality of the students' learning experiences is very good. The students have very good opportunities to become independent students, to achieve beyond the minimum required for their qualification, and to develop an appropriate range of employability skills. These employability skills include: the development of entrepreneurial skills; team working on commercial and external projects; participating in internal and external competitions; gaining an understanding of industry through good quality work placements; and develop relevant occupational skills through using industry standard training equipment and software.

7.6 Across the professional and technical areas inspected, groups of students have additional opportunities to enrich further their learning experiences. These include exchange visits to European partner Colleges for computing and media students; bursaries to enable full-time science students to have suitable work placements; and opportunities for sport students to support and promote the 2012 Olympic Games.

7.7 The quality of the teaching and learning in the professional and technical areas inspected is good or better in most (86%) of the lessons observed, with the majority (70%) being either good or very good. In these lessons, the lecturers plan and prepare well an appropriate range of learning activities, which suitably challenge and motivate the students. They deploy effectively a broad range of teaching and learning approaches, which includes group work with peer learning, student discussions and questioning, information research and critiquing using online resources, industry related projects, and practical tasks using industry standard technology and practices. In most of these lessons, ILT is used well to support and enhance the students' learning; the lecturers and the students make effective use of the College's VLE to organise and access lesson notes, assessment briefs, and additional learning material. Through the support of the College's ILT mentorship programme, there is also evidence of improving use of the advanced features of ILT, such as whole class quizzes using the interactive white board and effective distance learning using the VLE.

7.8 In the remainder (14%) of the lessons observed across the professional and technical areas, the quality of the teaching and learning is mostly satisfactory. In these lessons, the teaching and learning is characterised by excessive exposition by the lecturer, with limited active engagement by the students in their learning. As a result, the students' pace of work is too slow, with insufficient use of practical learning tasks and projects to enable them to apply and consolidate their learning. In addition, there is only limited use of ILT to enhance and support the students' learning.

7.9 In most (85%) of the essential skills lessons observed, the quality of the teaching and learning is either good or very good. The lecturers use to good effect a wide range of strategies to engage the students in their learning. These include: learning tasks that are contextualised to the students' professional and technical area; well-organised group work;

effective use of ILT; active and practical learning activities; and effective questioning to consolidate learning. The students are well-supported in their learning, with additional lessons to support those who are making insufficient progress in their learning through poor attendance.

7.10 In the majority of the professional and technical areas inspected, the quality of the students' assessment is very good; there are well-structured assignments which are standardised across campuses, good use is made of a range of assessment techniques, and assessment schedules are well-planned. Feedback to students is timely and used effectively to promote improvement in their work. In the remaining professional and technical areas inspected, while the quality of the assessment is mostly good, feedback for improvement is not well enough developed and assessment schedules are ineffectively implemented. As a result, in a minority of professional and technical courses the students are not adequately informed of the progress they are making on their programmes of study. Across the areas inspected, internal verification procedures are mostly rigorous, with evidence of cross-marking and moderation.

7.11 The quality of the pastoral care provided for the students is very good. At all levels in the College, there is a strong commitment to provide a caring and supportive learning environment for the students. This is evidenced through: the provision of a dedicated pastoral care manager and team; a dedicated support unit ('SERC Extra') to provide specialist intervention for students experiencing difficulties in learning; and regular tutorial sessions for all the full-time students. While these intervention measures are effective in addressing specific pastoral support needs for individual students, the provision of an effective tutorial system to record, monitor and review the progress and achievements of all the students is not fully embedded; the electronic individual student learning agreements, for example, are not used consistently to set targets against which student progress can be reviewed and monitored, within their tutorial system.

7.12 Through the work of the College's Students' Union, a significant minority of the students have very good opportunities to develop their personal and social skills. While the Students' Union President represents the students in the College's Governing Body, the effective involvement of the class representatives across the College in student feedback is not developed fully, and as a result the effectiveness of the Students' Union in representing student views to the college management is not exploited fully.

7.13 While the arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable groups comply satisfactorily with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007, the following area for improvement needs to be addressed: information relating to the College's arrangements for protection of children and vulnerable adults and its complaints and grievance procedures need to be made accessible to all students and parents/guardians.

7.14 The quality of the support provided for students with additional learning needs is good. Through the College's learning support information system, the learning support staff are able to identify accurately and respond promptly to provide appropriate intervention strategies for students. This intervention includes the learning support staff liaising with the Education and Library Boards transition officers to plan necessary adjustments, provision of assisted technologies, appropriate external support, and general study support workers for the students. However, the arrangements to monitor and review the impact of these interventions are under-developed, and as a result there is insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of the additional learning support provision across the College.

7.15 The quality of the careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) is mostly good. The College has invested in a dedicated team of well-qualified and experienced careers officers who have access to regular professional development activities, which ensures they have up-to-date careers information. While the careers officers make good use of this information to support students making university course selections and applications, the links between the careers officers and the curriculum teams to integrate CEIAG within the students' professional and technical learning are under-developed. The recently developed online careers education programme to support the integration of CEIAG within the students' professional and technical learning, including the tutorial system for full-time students, is generally under-exploited.

PART THREE: SUBJECT AREA REPORTS

8. ART, MEDIA AND PUBLISHING

8.1 Professional and technical areas inspected:

- Art and Design
- Media and Communication
- Music

8.2 In art, media and publishing, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

8.3 The main strengths are the:

- very good provision for art and design, and for music;
- good links and partnerships, which are used effectively to enrich the students' curriculum;
- effective leadership of the Heads of School and their Assistant Heads of School;
- good or better quality of the teaching and learning in most of the lessons observed;
- very good standards of work achieved by most of the students; and
- very good resources and accommodation for the art and design, media and communication, and music technology programmes.

8.4 The main areas for improvement are the:

- self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes; and
- satisfactory provision in media and communication, particularly the curriculum provision that is not matched well to the range of the students' abilities and aspirations.

8.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Art and Design	Full-time	satisfactory	excellent	excellent
	Part-time	excellent	good	excellent
Media and Communication	Full-time	satisfactory	satisfactory	good
Music	Full-time	satisfactory	excellent	excellent
	Part-time	excellent	satisfactory	excellent

9. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND TRAVEL AND TOURISM

9.1 Professional and technical areas inspected:

- Business Management
- Travel and Tourism

9.2 In business management and in travel and tourism the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

9.3 The main strengths are the:

- good or better quality of the teaching and learning in most of the lessons observed;
- effective use of ILT to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and to support students in their work in most of the lessons observed;
- very good quality of the learning experiences for full-time students in travel and tourism, particularly the innovative and extensive use of work-related learning to enhance their learning experiences and to raise the standards of their work;
- commitment and the effective support by lecturers for the pastoral care of the students; and
- good or better standards of work achieved by most of the students in their professional and technical units.

9.4 The main areas for improvement are the:

- timetabling arrangements for full-time students;
- quality improvement planning process, particularly in the use of data to identify areas for improvement; and
- limited range of part-time courses and the under-developed curricular connections across the professional and technical areas inspected.

9.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Business Management	Full-time	satisfactory	satisfactory	excellent
Travel and Tourism	Full-time	modest	excellent	excellent

10. ESSENTIAL SKILLS

10.1 Curriculum areas inspected:

- ICT
- Literacy
- Numeracy

10.2 In essential skills, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

10.3 The main strengths are the:

- good or better quality of teaching and learning in most of the lessons observed;
- good use of the ILT mentorship programme to support the essential skills provision;
- good standards of work achieved by most of the students;
- good overall student retention rate; and
- good student achievement rate in literacy.

10.4 The main areas for improvement are the:

- student attendance, and the student achievement rates in ICT and numeracy; and
- quality improvement planning process, particularly to monitor and review the impact of the revised College procedures across the essential skills provision.

10.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention and achievement rates, over the period 2007/08 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Retention	Achievement
ICT	good	satisfactory
Literacy	good	good
Numeracy	good	satisfactory

11. HEALTH, PUBLIC SERVICES AND CARE

11.1 Professional and technical areas inspected:

- Child Development and Well-being
- Health and Social Care

11.2 In health, public services and care, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is very good. The College is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the students; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

11.3 The main strengths are the:

- very good leadership and management at all levels;
- breadth and flexibility of the curriculum provision;
- good or better quality of the teaching, learning and assessment, of which the majority is very good or better;
- good or very good quality of most of the students' work placements, which are effective in enabling the students to integrate theory and practice and develop their occupational skills;
- good or better quality of the students' written work and their verbal responses; and
- well-qualified and highly motivated multi-disciplinary team of lecturing staff.

11.4 The main area for improvement is the:

- student retention and achievement rates in the full-time child development and well-being courses inspected.

11.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Child Development and Well-being	Full-time	satisfactory	satisfactory	excellent
	Part-time	excellent	excellent	excellent
Health and Social Care	Full-time	good	good	modest
	Part-time	good	excellent	not available

12. LANGUAGES, LITERATURE AND CULTURE

12.1 Professional and technical areas inspected:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Modern Languages

12.2 In languages literature and culture, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

12.3 The main strengths are the:

- good or better quality of the leadership and management across the professional and technical areas inspected;
- coherent and appropriate range of modern language programmes which offer progression and meet the needs and interests of the students;

- good or better quality of almost all of the teaching and the innovative support provided to ESOL students through SERC Extra;
- good or better standards of work achieved by most of the students in almost all of the lessons observed;
- very good enrichment activities offered to language students and the high levels of uptake; and
- high levels of motivation and engagement of the students, which is supported by a strong ethos of inclusion and respect.

12.4 The main areas for improvement are the:

- further embedding of ILT to enhance the students' learning;
- standardisation of the ESOL qualifications across the College to ensure transferability and progression; and
- student achievement rate in the ESOL provision.

12.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention and achievement rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement
ESOL	Part-time	good	poor
Modern Languages	Part-time	excellent	satisfactory

13. LEISURE AND RECREATION

13.1 Professional and technical area inspected:

- Sport

13.2 In leisure and recreation, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is very good. The College is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the students; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

13.3 The main strengths are the:

- effective leadership in supporting the students' learning and development;
- committed and hard-working lecturing staff who use a wide range of strategies to motivate and actively engage the students in their learning to achieve very good standards in their work;
- effective use of ILT to support teaching and learning;

- effective integration of the students' essential skills development within their learning;
- good or better quality of the teaching observed; and
- excellent student achievement rates.

13.4 The main area for improvement is the:

- quality improvement planning process to promote good practice across the College's whole sport provision.

13.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Sport	Full-time	satisfactory	excellent	excellent

14. PREPARATION FOR LIFE AND WORK

14.1 Professional and technical area inspected:

- University Access

14.2 In preparation for life and work, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is very good. The College is meeting very effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the students; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

14.3 The main strengths are the:

- very good leadership management provided by the Head of School;
- very good provision of the university access programmes on each main campus;
- good or better quality of the teaching and learning in most of the lessons observed;
- very good quality of the students' pastoral care and support provided by the committed lecturing staff;
- excellent student achievement and good or better progression rates.

14.4 The main area for improvement is the:

- student attendance and retention rates on the part-time programme.

14.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
University Access	Full-time	good	excellent	excellent
	Part-time	poor	excellent	good

15. RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES

15.1 Professional and technical areas inspected:

- Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
- Hospitality and Catering

15.2 In retail and commercial enterprises, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is very good. The College is meeting effectively the educational and pastoral needs of the students; and has demonstrated its capacity for sustained self-improvement.

15.3 The main strengths are the:

- very good quality of the leadership and management;
- very good standards of work demonstrated and achieved by almost all of the students;
- very good or outstanding quality of the teaching and learning in almost all of the lessons observed;
- very good range of additional training and learning opportunities provided for the students;
- excellent student retention rate in part-time hairdressing and beauty therapy, good student achievement rate in full-time hairdressing and beauty therapy, good student retention rate in hospitality and catering, and excellent progression rates overall; and
- excellent standard of the accommodation and physical resources available to support teaching and learning.

15.4 The main area for improvement is the:

- quality improvement planning process, which lacks sufficient emphasis on achievements and standards, including variations in key performance indicators that range from satisfactory to excellent.

15.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy	Full-time	satisfactory	good	excellent
	Part-time	excellent	satisfactory	excellent
Hospitality and Catering	Full-time	good	satisfactory	excellent

16. SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

16.1 Professional and technical area inspected:

- Science

16.2 In science and mathematics, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the College has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

16.3 The main strengths are the:

- inclusive, caring and supportive learning environment;
- teaching and learning which is good or better in most of the lessons observed;
- the hard work and commitment demonstrated by the Head of School and the lecturers;
- good student achievement rate; and
- excellent student progression rate.

16.4 The main areas for improvement are the:

- student retention rate; and
- quality improvement planning process to focus more consistently on the monitoring and evaluation of learning, teaching, assessment and target-setting.

16.5 The performance indicators for the average student retention, achievement and progression rates, over the period 2008/09 to 2009/10, are as follows:

Area	Full-time/Part-time	Retention	Achievement	Progression
Science	Full-time	satisfactory	good	excellent

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION AND KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

17. CONCLUSION

17.1 In the areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the South Eastern Regional College is good. The College has important strengths in most of its educational and pastoral provision. The inspection has identified areas for improvement which the organisation has demonstrated the capacity to address. The Education and Training Inspectorate will monitor the College's progress on the areas for improvement.

18. KEY PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

18.1 Key strengths have been identified in the quality of the provision across the professional and technical areas inspected, however, the inspection has identified the following key priorities for development:

- the consistent and more effective, including the use of the IQ:RS framework, self-evaluation and quality and improvement planning, at all levels across the College, to bring about sustained improvement; and
- the more effective use of the College's data management system for reporting and monitoring of key performance data including attendance, retention, achievement and progression, to support quality improvement planning.

BREAKDOWN OF THE COLLEGE'S FURTHER EDUCATION ENROLMENTS⁴.

Table 1: Breakdown of full-time further education enrolments (November 2010)

Sector Subject Areas	Enrolment Breakdown ⁵
Administration	2%
Agriculture	2%
Animal Care & Veterinary Science	2%
Building & Construction	4%
Business Management	6%
Child Development & Well-being	7%
Crafts, Creative Arts & Design	8%
Engineering	2%
Health & Social Care	4%
Hospitality & Catering	3%
ICT Practitioners	9%
Manufacturing Technologies	3%
Media & Communication	3%
Nursing & Subjects & Vocations Allied to Medicine	3%
Performing Arts and Music	7%
Politics	3%
Preparation for Life and Work (University Access)	9%
Science	3%
Service Enterprises (Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy)	8%
Sport, Leisure & Recreation	8%
Travel & Tourism	4%
Total	3104

⁴ Based on the Departments official enrolment data, November 2010.

⁵ Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

Table 2: Breakdown of part-time further education enrolments (November 2010)

Sector Subject Areas	Enrolment Breakdown
Accounting & Finance	2%
Administration	2%
Building & Construction	2%
Business Management	1%
Child Development & Well-being	2%
Crafts, Creative Arts & Design	14%
Engineering	2%
Health & Social Care	2%
History	2%
Horticulture & Forestry	1%
Hospitality & Catering	3%
ICT Practitioners	25%
Languages, Literature & Culture (ESOL and Modern Languages)	13%
Manufacturing Technologies	2%
Mathematics & Statistics	4%
Nursing & Subjects & Vocations Allied to Medicine	3%
Performing Arts and Music	1%
Politics	1%
Preparation for Life and Work (University Access)	3%
Science	4%
Service Enterprises (Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy)	8%
Sociology & Social Policy	2%
Sport, Leisure & Recreation	1%
Teaching & Lecturing	1%
Total	6924

Table 3: Breakdown of entitlement framework enrolments (November 2010)

Sector Subject Areas	Enrolment Breakdown
Building & Construction	4%
Business Management	2%
CCEA Occupational Studies	51%
Crafts, Creative Arts & Design	4%
Engineering	6%
Health & Social Care	1%
Hospitality & Catering	3%
ICT for Users	2%
ICT Practitioners	4%
Mathematics & Statistics	1%
Nursing & Subjects & Vocations Allied to Medicine	3%
Performing Arts	1%
Politics	4%
Science	2%
Sociology & Social Policy	1%
Sport, Leisure & Recreation	4%
Teaching & Lecturing	3%
Travel & Tourism	4%
Total	1332

Table 4: Breakdown of full-cost recovery enrolments (November 2010)

Sector Subject Areas	Enrolment Breakdown
Nursing & Subjects & Vocations Allied to Medicine	12%
Health & Social Care	4%
Mathematics & Statistics	4%
Engineering	19%
Manufacturing Technologies	2%
Building & Construction	15%
ICT Practitioners	28%
Retailing & Wholesaling	4%
Hospitality & Catering	5%
Languages, Literature & Culture	4%
Administration	4%
Business Management	1%
Total	536

Table 5: Breakdown of recreational enrolments (November 2010)

Sector Subject Areas	Enrolment Breakdown
Horticulture & Forestry	11%
Engineering	1%
Manufacturing Technologies	2%
Transportation Operations & Maintenance	5%
Building & Construction	8%
ICT Practitioners	1%
Hospitality & Catering	9%
Sport, Leisure & Recreation	7%
Performing Arts	10%
Crafts, Creative Arts & Design	9%
Other Languages, Literature & Culture	3%
Teaching & Lecturing	6%
Preparation for Life and Work (Essential Skills)	28%
Accounting & Finance	1%
Business Management	1%
Total	1134

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