

17. MUSIC

Performance Level: Very Good

Areas Inspected:

- Full-time further education level 2 and level 3 courses in music and music technology.

CONTEXT

17.1 The curriculum offer provides the learners with very good pathways into higher level courses, either within the College or in other institutions, and also into employment. Enrolments to the level 2 programmes have remained steady over the past two years, but there has been a decline in enrolment to the level 3 programmes. There are excellent working relationships across staff and learners with an ethos of mutual respect.

The quality of the leadership and management is very good.

17.2 The head of school, well supported by the curriculum area manager, leads effectively the development of music provision within the College. The curriculum area manager and course co-coordinators work effectively together to create a collegial approach to the effective management and improvement of the provision. There are clear lines of communication between the curriculum area manager and course co-ordinators to support and adapt the provision to meet the needs of the learners. The staff team have identified appropriate areas for development through self-evaluation and are creative and innovative in their approaches to bring about sustained improvement.

The quality of the provision for learning is very good.

17.3 The lecturers are well-qualified, highly motivated and respected practitioners. The quality of the teaching and learning in the sessions observed ranged from good to outstanding, with most (82%) being very good or better. The most effective practice observed is characterised by the excellent use of practical activities to embed theoretical learning, the use of high level questioning to develop the learners' thinking and the effective use of paired, small group and team work which enhance their ability to work well with one another. In the less effective practice, there were missed opportunities for peer-evaluation to develop more critical active listening. The learners respond positively to the appropriate balance of lectures, tutorials and performance sessions and report that they are well supported in their learning. The staff engage well with the learners through verbal and written feedback which informs them about specific areas of their work and how to improve it further. There are excellent links with employers and industry professionals through the practical weeks and also through the learners' daily use of the Oh Yeah Music Centre, based in Belfast city centre.

Achievements and standards are very good.

17.4 The learners work very effectively both independently and collaboratively and are able to apply their acquired knowledge across their learning. They demonstrate high levels of confidence and engage well in a range of appropriate performance opportunities. Over the last two years, while the rate of retention is good overall, the College is working to sustain and further improve the rate of retention on the level 3 programmes. Over the same period, the achievement rate is outstanding. Progression by learners into further study or employment is very good.

Table of Achievements (over the last two years)

Course Type	Completion Year 2011			Completion Year 2012			Two Year Average		
	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)
Full-Time Courses at Level 2	89	88	79	88	93	82	89	91	81
Full-Time Courses at Level 3	67	97	65	74	96	71	69	97	67
Overall	73	94	68	78	95	75	75	95	71