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

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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Education and Training Inspectorate

Report of a Follow-up Inspection

North West Regional College
Jobskills Provision

May 2009

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%

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE (formerly TRAINING DIRECT) JOBSKILLS PROVISION

The inspection of Training Direct in 2007 highlighted strengths in the pastoral care arrangements for the trainees, the good quality of the provision in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and plumbing, the quality of directed training in most vocational areas, the quality of work-placements for most of the trainees, and the effective links with local post-primary schools.

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

- the quality of provision for the majority of vocational training under Jobskills Access;
- retention rates in wood occupations on the Modern Apprenticeship and Traineeship programmes;
- the outcomes and levels of achievement in vocational and essential skills programmes under Jobskills Access;
- the need to strengthen leadership and management of the Jobskills programme, particularly the use of management information to aid decision making;
- more collaborative working with essential skills tutors and vocational tutors;
- more effective involvement by vocational tutors with employers in setting and monitoring training plans; and
- the need to develop more effective use of information and learning technology (ILT) across most of the vocational areas.

In September 2007, the Jobskills programme was replaced with the Training for Success and Apprenticeships Northern Ireland programmes. The college has 76 trainees on Jobskills programmes in its Londonderry campuses. There are no trainees registered on Jobskills Access, three on the Traineeship and 73 on the Modern Apprenticeship strands of Jobskills.

There are nine Jobskills trainees registered in wood occupations; all are currently finishing their training on the Modern Apprenticeship programme. In the Derry campuses, there are also 78 trainees registered on Apprenticeships Northern Ireland programmes, and 21 trainees on the Skills for Work, and 119 on the Pre-Apprenticeship strands of Training for Success.

Since the inspection, the other main developments that affect the work of the college's training provision have been:

- in April 2007, the college was replaced by Rutledge Joblink, as the lead partner for the New Deal Consortium in Derry;
- the merger of the former North West Institute of Further and Higher Education and Limavady College in August 2007 to form the North West Regional College;
- the reduced provision of level 3 apprenticeship training in the college under Apprenticeships Northern Ireland, particularly in construction crafts, where the contracts were awarded to other training providers;
- the new provision of level 2 apprenticeship training under Apprenticeships Northern Ireland in the vocational area of health and social care;
- the appointment of a new training manager following the formation of the new regional college;
- significant improvements in the quality of accommodation in the Springtown campus, and
- more investment in ILT resources in the Springtown campus.

Since the original inspection, the Education and Training Inspectorate carried out a follow-up inspection in May 2009.

The action plan produced by the college in response to the inspection findings was of a good quality.

Good progress has been made in the areas for improvement identified during the original inspection.

The following are the most important improvements since the inspection:

- more effective administrative systems have been put in place to monitor and track the attendance of trainees in directed training and in the work-place;
- more coherence in the work of the administrative staff and vocational tutors to meet the needs of trainees effectively;
- increased opportunities for administrative staff and vocational tutors to meet and to share good practice;

- the effective use of curriculum development projects to enhance the use of ILT in work-based training programmes;

- improved retention on the modern apprenticeship and traineeship programmes in wood occupations at 66% and 59% receptively; and

- more effective delivery of the essential skills provision in wood occupations.

Further improvements are needed in the following area:

- the need to ensure that systems are in place for the vocational tutors to work with employers in setting and monitoring training plans for the remaining trainees on Jobskills programmes.

Since the inspection, the college evaluated the progress made in the areas for improvement identified in the original inspection. The Inspectorate recommends that the processes for self-evaluation are developed as a means to bring about improvement.

CONCLUSION

In the areas inspected the quality of education and training provided by the North West Regional College is now good. The college has important strengths in most of its education and pastoral provision. The follow-up inspection has identified some aspects of the areas for improvement still to be addressed but equally the college has demonstrated the capacity to address these.

Provision	Total no of Trainees	Original Grade	Revised Grade
Leadership and Management	76	4	3

Area of Learning	Total no of Trainees	Original Grade	Revised Grade
Wood Occupations	9	4	3
Careers Education and Guidance	76	5	3

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