

19. STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES (SLDD)

Performance Level: Very Good

Areas Inspected: Further Education (Discrete) and Work Based Learning Provision in:

- Full-time and part-time further education courses at levels 1 and below, and courses for learners with additional support needs.

CONTEXT

19.1 As part of an inclusive curriculum policy, the College provides a very good range of further education and work-based learning courses to meet the diverse needs of learners with barriers to learning. This aims to ensure that all learners are placed on the programme which best meets their needs. These include full-time and part-time recreational, independent living and discrete employability programmes ranging from entry level to level 1. Forty-four full-time and 249 part-time learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties and disabilities are registered on programmes. In 2013, the College introduced a bespoke further education programme for 27 learners with significant histories of disengagement from education. The Learning Support team contributes very effectively to the College's widening participation and inclusion agenda through supporting effectively the individual needs of learners throughout the College.

The quality of leadership and management is very good.

19.2 The Assistant Director for Learning Support demonstrates very effective leadership for the planning, introduction and development of the inclusive curriculum across the College provision. The head of school along with the deputy heads with responsibility for the discrete provision, work collegially and effectively. Together with their staff they have a sound knowledge of the curricular provision and the delivery models which best support the development of the personal, social and employability skills of those learners with moderate and severe difficulties. The Learning Support Manager provides very effective leadership for the learning support services, including the learning support assistants, mentors, specialist tutors and note takers through a well-organised system of learning support co-ordinators. There is effective and regular engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to inform the quality and further development of the provision. While very good progress has been made in enhancing the knowledge and skills of lecturing staff across the College, there is a need for better strategic oversight of the provision for all learners with difficulties and or disabilities, to ensure that the individual needs of learners, particularly those on work-based learning programmes, are more consistently identified and met. The quality of the accommodation and resources across the campuses ranges from good to outstanding.

The quality of provision for learning is very good.

19.3 The quality of the teaching, training and learning is a strength of the discrete provision in the College, with most of the sessions observed being good or better; 45% of the sessions were very good and a further 41% were outstanding. Key strengths of the best sessions observed included good pace and challenge, effective planning and skilful differentiation and questioning. The specific individual learning needs of learners are noted in the lecturers' planning files and reflected in the planning and teaching sessions. The systematic identification of staff development needs underpinned by well-targeted professional development sessions, have ensured a shared understanding and use of a

broad range of teaching and learning approaches for the discrete provision groups. Targeted additional learning support which is well- matched to the needs of individual learners across the mainstream provision is a strong feature of the provision of student services. Further systematic sharing of the best practice observed would improve further the teaching and learning, and the overall experiences of the learners across the College.

Achievements and standards are very good.

19.4 Almost all of the learners in the discrete provision are very well- motivated and achieve good employability and independent living skills. Attendance is very good and the behaviour of the learners is of a very high standard. The learners are able to communicate well about their learning and develop very good levels of team and paired work, self-confidence and independent skills. Most of the learners benefit from their work experience placement programme which further enhances their self-confidence and skills development. The College has also included a number of learners with difficulties and disabilities in their international study programmes and five of the learners have had the opportunity to undertake work experience placements in Malta. The learners with histories of disrupted education re-engage very well and demonstrate improved self-confidence and aptitude for learning. Retention rates overall on part-time and full-time discrete courses are outstanding at 92% and achievement is very good with an overall rate of 88%. Over the past three years, most of the learners on the Skills for Your Life and Skills for Work strands of Training for Success are retained and almost all of these achieve.

Table of Achievements (Over the last three years)

Further Education

Course Type	Completion Year 2010/11			Completion Year 2011/12			Completion Year 2012/13			Three Year Average		
	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)	Ret (%)	Ach (%)	Succ (%)
Full-Time Courses at Level 1 or below	100	95	95	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	98	98
Part-Time Courses at Level 1 or below	93	93	87	91	77	70	87	96	84	91	87	79
Overall	94	93	88	92	79	72	88	96	85	92	88	80