

Outstanding in every way

A summary of the Ofsted report on
City and Islington College – May 2008

City and Islington College, one of England's largest general further education colleges and London's leading college, has joined a small handful of colleges to have been judged by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' in every single measure.

The inspectors reported that: "The overall quality of provision is outstanding, and highly skilled teachers motivate and bring out the best in their students through outstanding teaching and learning. In addition to this, students enjoy their time at the College and speak highly of their teachers, with many exceeding the expectations they had when enrolling."

Ofsted noted: "Overall success rates for students of all ages and levels are significantly above the national averages for similar colleges."

As well as the learners' achievements, it was recognised that students' overall experience of the College is key to City and Islington's success. The report acknowledged that the College encouraged: "excellent involvement of students and response to their views"; and this was identified as a key strength. In addition to this, the report also found that: "The views of students are highly valued and acted upon" and "Students are very pleased to study at the college and feel it is a safe place to learn".

The College serves the London Borough of Islington, rated as the sixth most deprived borough in the country. It is an ethnically diverse area and this is reflected in the student cohort; 55% of students studying at City and Islington College classify themselves as belonging to a minority group, and 47% do not have English as their first language.



Inspection report findings

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Outstanding: Contributory Grade 1</i>

The inspection results build on the national recognition the College has recently received including; Learning and Skills Beacon status for excellence in innovation within further education, the Queen's Anniversary Prize for exceptional achievement in creating pathways to employment and higher education in the sciences, and the recent selection as one of ten outstanding further education and skills providers from across England to form the Technology Exemplar Network.

The Ofsted inspectors found much to praise. Here are some of their comments:

“City and Islington College provides outstanding education and training.”

“Overall success rates for long courses are high, particularly for students aged 16-18.”

“The college’s approach towards meeting the needs and interests of the students is outstanding.”

“The college is a highly inclusive institution with outstanding equality of opportunity.”

“Guidance and support for students are outstanding.”

Frank McLoughlin, Principal, commented: “This is a major achievement, a culmination of 15 years of dedicated work by the exceptional staff of this college. This is a college which has the highest expectations and aspirations of every student. We celebrate and learn from the rich diversity of our students and this prepares all students for life in a global society and work in a global economy. We have demonstrated that inner city education can be outstanding - the inner city is a context not an excuse!”

