



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards  
in Education

## Calderdale College

### CONTENTS

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[Basic information about the college](#)

[Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

[Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[How well is the college led and managed?](#)

[To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?](#)

[How well are students and trainees guided and supported?](#)

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

[Part B: The college as a whole](#)

[Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors](#)

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

[Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Construction](#)

[Business administration, management and professional](#)

[Information and communications technology](#)

[Hairdressing and beauty therapy](#)

[Health, social care and childcare](#)

[Visual and performing arts and media](#)

[English, languages and communications](#)

[Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

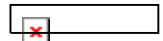
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

[Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age](#)

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

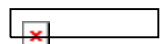
**Basic information about the college**



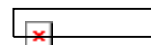
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Name of college:	Calderdale College
Type of college:	General further education
Principal:	Monica Box
Address of college:	Francis Street Halifax HX1 3BR
Telephone number:	01422 399308
Fax number:	01422 358821
Chair of governors:	George Richardson
Unique reference number:	130535
Name of reporting inspector:	Fred Brown
Dates of inspection:	1-11 March 2004

**Part A: Summary**

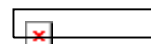


## Information about the college



Calderdale College is a medium-sized general further education (FE) college which is the sole provider of FE within the Metropolitan Borough of Calderdale, one of the largest in England by geographical size. Most of its 200,000 inhabitants live in the towns of Halifax, Brighouse, Elland, Todmorden, Sowerby Bridge and Hebden Bridge, but there are many far smaller rural settlements. The formerly established textile and engineering industries are now in serious decline with finance, public and other service sector employment forming the mainstay of the local economy. The average claimant unemployment level is 2.41%, but this rises significantly in the more disadvantaged wards. Several wards served by the college are in receipt of support from the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) initiatives aimed at improving economic and community cohesion. The college delivers programmes within 12 of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas of learning with courses available from pre-entry to degree level. Some 62% of students progressed in 2002/03 to further programmes of study or training prior to leaving to take up employment or higher education (HE). The college has strong links with the University of Huddersfield. The main campus in Halifax includes a newly built specialist Creative and Conservation Skills Centre opened in September 2003. Some 28 smaller learning centres in local villages enable the college to reach students who have difficulty in accessing FE and training opportunities. Over 200 work-based learners are supported on national vocational qualification (NVQ) and modern apprenticeship programmes. Around 200 young students aged 14 to 16 attend a range of vocational activities on one or more days a week through partnership arrangements with local schools. Calderdale Local Education Authority retains 2 grammar schools, 11 comprehensive schools catering for students aged 11 to 18, 1 special school for students aged 11 to 19 and 2 comprehensive schools for students aged 11 to 16. Achievement of five A\* to C grades at age 16 is 52.1%. At level 3, the borough average is nine points behind the national average point score for each examination entry. The college had about 17,200 enrolments in 2002/03. About two thirds of students attend on a full-time basis with the remainder being part time. Of these students, 59% are female and 41% are male. Some 1,409 students are aged 16 to 19 and 7,098 aged 19 and over. Some 18% of students in the college are of Asian heritage compared with a local average of 5.7%. The college holds the Investors in People award and its mission statement in 2004 is 'working together to achieve success in learning'.

## How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the quality of provision to be good in five of the curriculum areas inspected and satisfactory in four, with two curriculum areas unsatisfactory. Standards of teaching and learning are mainly satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The main strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

### **Key strengths**

- the open and responsive management style
  
- the strong focus on assuring the quality of teaching and learning

- the good learning support
- the scale and rapidity of improvements made since the last inspection
- the quality of provision for adult students
- the very strong support from staff for students
- the information and communications technology (ICT ) provision in the community
- the commitment to widen participation.

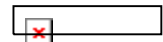
***What should be improved***

- the attainment of students aged 16 to 18
- insufficient specialist information technology (IT) for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- poor framework achievements in work-based learning
- the provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy and English and communications
- the volume of very good and outstanding teaching
- the range of provision in some curriculum areas, such as media

- the application of quality procedures in some curriculum areas
- the underdeveloped use of and access to ICT in the classroom.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

### Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

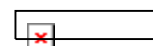


*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).*

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates are high on the general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) mathematics course, but very low in biology and chemistry subjects in 2003. Progression to HE was good in 2003. Student progress is monitored effectively and science students value the good technical support. There is a narrow range of general certificate of education advanced-level (GCE A-level) courses and student numbers are low. IT facilities are inadequate in teaching rooms and laboratories.
Construction	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning is <b>unsatisfactory</b> . Most retention and pass rates are at the national average, but framework achievements in work-based learning are poor. Students receive good support for literacy, numeracy and language, and teaching is well planned to meet individual learning needs. Some workshops have insufficient space and the monitoring of work-based learners' progress is unsatisfactory.
Business administration, management and professional	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning is <b>satisfactory</b> . There are good pass rates on management and professional courses, but low pass and retention rates on NVQs in administration and accounts. Retention rates are improving. There is low completion of frameworks by modern apprentices. Much of the teaching is good and students are well supported in their learning. The programme is well managed and responsive to the needs of learners and employers.
Information and communications technology	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates for adult students are very good, but there are low pass rates on the advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE). There is much good teaching and resources to support learning. The outreach provision has effectively widened participation by new groups of students. Punctuality and attendance are poor for students aged 16 to 18.
Hairdressing and beauty	<b>Unsatisfactory.</b> Work-based learning is <b>unsatisfactory</b> . Retention

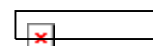
therapy	and pass rates are good on short courses for adults and pass rates improved for full-time students in 2003. Retention rates on the full-time level 2 hairdressing qualification are poor. Retention and pass rates for work-based learners are poor. Students are well supported and there are some good learning materials. Students' attainment is low and too much of the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Some assessment practice is weak.
Health, social care and childcare	<b>Good.</b> Work-based learning is <b>satisfactory</b> . There are good and improving retention and pass rates on many courses. There is poor achievement in work-based learning and some inadequate target setting. Much of the learning and attainment are good. Support is particularly strong for students in helping them prepare for HE and employment. Key skills teaching is weak.
Visual and performing arts and media	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are good on most courses in 2003, but retention rates are poor on some level 3 courses. Enrolments are declining. Some students' work in performance and the visual arts is of a high standard. There is much good teaching and learning, delivered in attractive new accommodation at the main site, but accommodation at the Todmorden centre is unsatisfactory. Insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance learning.
English, languages and communications	<b>Unsatisfactory.</b> There are good pass rates on some advanced level courses, but generally pass rates are low. On all courses, insufficient numbers of students achieve high grades. GCSE English retention rates are very good, but otherwise there are poor and declining retention rates on most courses. Some teaching is lively and innovative, but a number of lessons are not properly planned and students do not take an active role in their learning. The area is poorly managed.
English for speakers of other languages	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates are good and students develop appropriate listening, speaking and computer skills. Teaching and tutorial support are good. Students do not receive sufficient high-quality feedback on their written work and there are no vocationally linked courses. Advice and guidance on progression opportunities are ineffective. The programme is well managed.
Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good and much of the teaching and learning is very good. The standard of students' work is high and many progress to further studies. Academic and pastoral support for students are effective. There is insufficient availability and use made of ICT to enhance learning and a small amount of the teaching is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are good.
Literacy and numeracy and entry to employment	<b>Good.</b> Retention rates have improved and there is much good teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. Results on the new national tests in literacy and numeracy are low. Assessment practice is rigorous. Leadership and management of literacy and numeracy are good. On the entry-to-employment (E2E) programme, there is good progression to employment, but poor achievement overall. The E2E curriculum offer is narrow and resources are poor.

#### How well is the college led and managed?



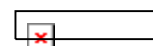
management of the principal and senior management team have helped to change the culture of the college. A stronger focus is given to the role of management in supporting learning and the student. There is a strong corporate identity and staff morale is high. The college has made significant progress in addressing weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The college works with partners collaboratively, and is effectively widening participation and progression opportunities for the 14 to 19 age range and adults. Good use is made of external funding to improve accommodation and resources. Staff development is linked well to appraisal, and meets strategic and personal needs, but the benefits of the training are not sufficiently evaluated. Overall curriculum grades have improved since the last inspection. The self-assessment process is thorough. Governance is now effective. There is good promotion of equal opportunities, but some aspects are not yet sufficiently embedded across the whole of the student experience. Strategic planning is satisfactory, but action to improve the low class sizes has not yet proved effective. There are still shortfalls in student recruitment. Financial management is good and the college has achieved category 'B' financial status two years into its recovery plan. Value for money is achieved through membership of a purchasing consortium, but classes are small and uneconomic. Learning support is good, but pass rates have not improved significantly.

### **To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?**



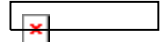
The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. There is a strong strategic commitment to widening participation in education and training. Students benefit from a variety of provision on offer at centres at Brighouse, Todmorden and North Halifax which meets the needs of local communities. There is a shortage of childcare provision for some outreach courses. The Optimum IT drop-in centres at Brighouse and Todmorden are particularly successful in encouraging new students to engage in learning. The college collaborates with 28 schools and community organisations to offer courses in areas of high social and economic deprivation. Some 18% of students are of Asian heritage, and 45% are drawn from geographical areas identified as having widening participation priorities. There is a clearly written equal opportunities policy and an associated equality and diversity strategy and implementation plan. Monitoring systems are relatively new, although trends in recruitment, retention and pass rates are analysed. A comprehensive staff development programme helps promote equal opportunities through the development of teaching materials and methods. Around 270 staff have attended awareness training on the Disability and Discrimination Act, from all areas of the college. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported, and a strategy is in place to meet the obligations of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act (SENDA) 2001. Access for students with mobility difficulties is generally good.

### **How well are students and trainees guided and supported?**



Guidance and support for students are good. Induction programmes successfully integrate students into the college and their courses. Students receive high-quality course information. There is good tutorial support for most students, but tutorials are not fully established in some community learning centres. There is a structured programme of careers education for students aged 16 to 18, but this is not as well developed for adult part-time students. Robust systems to improve punctuality and attendance have been introduced since the last inspection. Learning support for students is good, but is not always available for those on GCSE and advanced-level courses. Literacy, numeracy, language and dyslexia support are offered in class and on an individual basis. There is effective specialist support for minority ethnic groups including work with parents and travel support for refugees and asylum seekers. There are satisfactory arrangements to meet the childcare needs of students.

## Students' views of the college



Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

### ***What students like about the college***

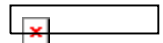
- the friendly and approachable staff
  
- the good tutorial support
  
- being treated as adults
  
- the interesting lessons
  
- the displays in classrooms
  
- the new creative and construction crafts centre
  
- the good computer facilities in the learning zones, learning resource centre and cyber café
  
- the positive atmosphere
  
- the sporting facilities
  
- the small size of teaching groups.



***What they feel could be improved***

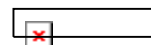
- the number and range of opportunities for enrichment
  
- the co-ordination of deadlines for assignments across subjects curriculum areas
  
- the greater choice of GCE A-level subjects
  
- the quality of resources at some outreach centres
  
- the size of the canteen - it is too small for the number of students
  
- the choice of vegetarian and halal food - there is not enough
  
- the amount of common room space and the length of opening times
  
- the level of tutor awareness of cultural differences of students
  
- the amount of curriculum space available for some subjects in the new building.

**Other information**



The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

## Part B: The college as a whole



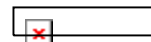
### Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	57	36	7
19+ and WBL*	67	29	4
Learning 16-18	53	41	6
19+ and WBL*	67	32	1

*Key: The range of grades includes: Excellent (Grade 1), Very Good (Grade 2), Good (Grade 3), Satisfactory (Grade 4), Unsatisfactory (Grade 5), Poor (Grade 6) and Very Poor (Grade 7).*

\* work-based learning

### Achievement and standards



1. Data on students' achievements drawn from the individualised student records (ISR) for 2001/02 were provided by the LSC. Data provided by the college were used for 2002/03. Data for 2000/01, the year of the last inspection, are unreliable and have not been included in the analysis. The separate reports on areas of learning in Part C give more details about achievement and standards on particular courses for the two years since the previous inspection. As tables 1 and 2 in Part D illustrate, almost 80% of the enrolments at the college are by adult students.
2. Retention and pass rates are showing signs of improvement since the last inspection and are generally around the national average, but key skills pass rates are low.
3. The attendance rate at the lessons observed during inspection was 75.4% which is around the national average. It is highest in visual and performing arts lessons and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The attendance rate is lowest in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) lessons, but it compares favourably with the national average for this area of learning and it has improved considerably since the last inspection. The attendance at English lessons is below average. Students are generally on time for lessons, but poor punctuality is an issue on full-time courses for students aged 16 to 18 in ICT.
4. Students' work is generally satisfactory or better. The standard of practical work is good in construction and in science where students are developing sound practical skills. Students in visual arts produce some highly creative work and the adult students at the Todmorden centre produce excellent fine art work which is regularly displayed in local galleries. Students' work on literacy and numeracy courses is often of a high standard and students on ESOL courses have developed good

listening and speaking skills. Students on English courses are confident when making oral contributions in lessons, but the quality of the written analysis carried out by advanced level students is generally poor. Students and work-based learners in health, social care and childcare produce work of a good standard. The work produced by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is of a high quality and a number of students have achieved a Duke of Edinburgh bronze award. They are the first students with learning difficulties and disabilities in West Yorkshire to do so. Students' attainment in hairdressing and beauty therapy is low.

5. There are poor pass rates on the E2E course, but progression to employment is good. On work-based learning programmes, few learners complete their modern apprenticeships successfully. The overall completion rate improved by 2% last year from 10% to 12%, but this is still very poor. Retention rates are beginning to improve on work-based learning programmes in business.

### **16 to 18 year olds**

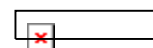
6. Retention rates are around the national average at levels 1 and 3, but the retention rate at level 2 fell to 7% below the national average in 2002/03. At the same time, the pass rate at level 2 rose by 9% to 75% which is above the national average. In 2002/03, pass rates were around or above the national average and the pass rate at level 3 rose by 11%. Retention rates are low on NVQ courses at levels 1 and 3 and on general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) courses at level 3. In 2002/03, pass rates improved significantly on NVQ level 1, GNVQ level 2 and advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) and GCE A-level courses.

7. The college subscribes to a national value added scheme which compares students' results at GCE A level with their performance at GCSE. The number studying individual GCE A-level subjects is very low, invalidating any comparisons between subjects or analysis of trends. The overall value added score for the GCE A-level programme suggests that students generally are achieving grades below those expected.

### **Adult learners**

8. Retention rates are generally satisfactory or better on long courses for adults, but the retention rate on short courses fell below the national average in 2002/03. In 2002/03, pass rates improved and were around or above the national average, except at level 1 where the pass rate was 7% below the national average. In 2002/03, the pass rate at level 3 increased by 6%, taking it 8% above the national average. Retention and pass rates are low on NVQ level 1 courses. There are good pass rates on NVQ and GNVQ courses at level 3, but retention rates are low on GNVQ level 3 courses. Retention rates on AS-level and GCE A-level courses are good.

## **Quality of education and training**



9. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 252 lessons. Teaching is good or better in 62% of lessons, satisfactory in 32% and less than satisfactory in 6%. This is about the national average awarded in general FE colleges. The percentage of good or better teaching and less than satisfactory teaching has decreased slightly since the last inspection in 2002. Some 61% of the learning grades are good or better, which is about the national average. The general standard of teaching and learning is more consistent across curriculum areas than in the previous inspection in 2002. Teaching and learning are better for adult groups than for students aged 16 to 18 in five curriculum areas, better for students aged 16 to 18 in two curriculum areas and of equal quality in the other four areas. For mainly adult groups, in 67% of lessons, teaching is good or better, compared with 57% for students aged 16 to 18. The best teaching and learning is for adult students on level 3 courses where over 66% of teaching is good or better. All students studying at level 3

theory and practice is better than those that separate theory and practice. The teaching in practical lessons is of a similar quality to the teaching of theory. Both teaching and learning are significantly better on GCE A level, NVQ level 3, open college network (OCN) courses, GNVQ intermediate and vocational GCE A level/GNVQ advanced programmes than on NVQ programmes at levels 1 and 2 and GNVQ foundation level programmes. Most unsatisfactory teaching and learning is on NVQ levels 1 and 2, where over 20% of lessons are unsatisfactory.

10. The best teaching is on ICT, visual and performing arts and foundation programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All training sessions in work-based learning are satisfactory or better. More than a third of the teaching on ICT and visual and performing arts is very good. Teaching is less effective for students aged 16 to 18 in science and mathematics, hairdressing and beauty therapy, English and communications. The teaching of students aged 14 to 16 is good. Students who were failing in their school studies are now learning and successfully completing programmes. Off-the-job training sessions in work-based learning are satisfactory or better in hairdressing and beauty therapy, construction, and health and social care. Over 70% of teaching and learning in visual, performing arts and media and foundation programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good or better. Only 41% of teaching in hairdressing and beauty therapy is good and nearly 15% is unsatisfactory. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in ICT, visual, performing arts and media and literacy and numeracy.

11. The best lessons are well planned and structured and include an appropriate range of teaching methods that keep students absorbed in their tasks. They have a practical focus which is linked to theory that encourages students to learn new or consolidate existing skills and knowledge. The intended outcomes of the lessons are made clear to students at the start of lessons and good use is made of focused questions to stimulate discussion. The better schemes of work make reference to different learning styles that match students' needs. In the best lessons, students are attentive, motivated and enthused. Skilful use of open questions gains contributions from groups and positive feedback encourages additional responses. For students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the teachers' good behaviour management, effective use of resources and a wide range of teaching methods enable students to achieve tasks successfully. In visual performing arts and media, through inspired teaching, students are able to develop their critical and analytical skills as well as their creative and practical abilities. Many project briefs include a wide range of activities to encourage students to become increasingly independent in their learning. For many students, learning is enriched by a good range of visits and opportunities to show their work publicly. Some teachers use their specialist expertise to inspire students and this greatly enhances their learning experience.

12. In less effective lessons, a narrow range of teaching and learning techniques is used. There is too little use of targeted questioning to check on learning and insufficient differentiation of teaching strategies and learning activities to meet the individual needs of students. Very little use is made of information and learning technology (ILT) by staff or students to support and enrich teaching and learning in many curriculum areas. In some lessons, the sequence of learning activities confuses rather than engages the students. Not enough time is devoted to checking that individual students understand the tasks they are set. In some theory lessons, students are not given sufficient opportunities to demonstrate clearly to the teacher that they have attained the required knowledge. Some students do not contribute sufficiently to discussion and in some lessons the same students repeatedly answer questions. Some practical lessons are not well managed and students who have completed tasks waste time waiting to be given further work. Individual learning plans in work-based learning in construction have only one target date, which is for the completion of the full framework and no intermediate milestones against which progress can be measured. Some theory lessons are uninspiring and rely too much on presentations by teachers with students not sufficiently challenged or engaged in active learning. Some sessions end without reviewing the work covered and fail to set the scene for next time. In pre-GCSE English lessons, students are rarely challenged and have a passive role in their learning.

13. In the teaching of key skills, teachers sometimes fail to emphasize their relevance to vocational practice. Key skills pass rates are well below national averages and there are low retention rates. There are moves towards integrating key skills into vocational areas and opportunities to develop key skills are generally identified on lesson plans and schemes of work. There was a slow start to the delivery of key skills for work-based learners in construction. Progress in communications is

effectively tracked; there is some good course, work produced and positive external verifier feedback. Attendance at lessons for access students is low and many do not appreciate why they are expected to achieve in key skills. Opportunities for the identification and assessment of key skills are often missed on both work-based training and college courses.

14. Most teachers are appropriately qualified and have current knowledge of the subjects they teach. Some 77% of full-time and 52% of part-time teachers possess a recognised teaching qualification. There is a clear commitment to professional development, updating subject knowledge and skills, and improving teaching and learning. Seven advanced skills teachers support this process, and have recently begun to work with teaching teams developing intranet and independent learning resources in curriculum areas. There is a flagship project in construction, and other projects in hairdressing and beauty therapy, teacher education and provision for students with difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff teaching on E2E courses have no training in the basic skills core curriculum. There is good technician support available.

15. The college offers courses at several sites, all of which meet the needs of students with mobility difficulties. The main buildings in Halifax have recently been augmented by a new creative and conservation skills centre, a major new build providing space for construction and art and design courses. The theatre is of a high standard, and has excellent lighting and sound facilities. Some accommodation is smaller than in the previous location and plumbing and electrical courses have recently increased numbers, but reduced space. The Optimum centres in Brighthouse and Todmorden offer drop-in IT facilities for a wide range of students and are well subscribed. In Brighthouse, the shop-front location is very accessible. Teaching space for art and design in Todmorden is in a poor state of repair. The Bright Sparks centre in north Halifax offers flexible accommodation for woodcrafts, IT, aromatherapy and basic skills courses in a socially deprived area of the town. Most teaching rooms are bright and well equipped, and there are many displays of students' work and relevant stimulus materials in classrooms, corridors and public areas. These are reviewed and replaced regularly and support learning.

16. Learning resources are good. There are four learning zones on the main college site, providing open-access IT facilities and a good range of print and audio-visual resources. Staff are well informed about the curriculum and 93% of survey respondents describe the service as helpful. The college has decided to concentrate IT resources in these zones rather than fully equip all classrooms, and aims to have a learning zone on each floor. This approach restricts opportunities to use the Internet during lessons. There is limited stock in the learning zones for lower ability readers, and E2E courses do not have appropriate software and videos to support students. The college intranet is comprehensive and offers access to a range of administrative and teaching resources, as well as an efficient online fault reporting system.

17. The monitoring and assessment of students' progress are satisfactory. All students who are on either a full-time or a substantial part-time course receive a thorough initial assessment. This includes a diagnostic assessment and an exercise to determine the students' preferred learning style. The assessment results are used effectively to plan learning programmes and to provide any appropriate learning support. Teachers use the learning styles findings when planning their lessons, but few students use the findings to improve their learning. All full-time and substantial part-time students have comprehensive individual learning plans. The quality varies, but they are particularly good in literacy and numeracy. Target setting and the tracking of students' progress is generally satisfactory. Targets are not always specific on courses for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, but there are comprehensive and effective tracking systems in ICT and for key skills.

18. The college has a clear assessment policy and appeals procedure. Many areas have a well-planned assessment timetable in which assignment deadlines have been carefully scheduled to meet the needs of the students. Students are given course information that includes assessment criteria, but this is not always written in simple language that the students can understand. The quality of the written feedback given to students varies within many of the curriculum areas. The college meets the requirements of the examination boards and the internal and external verification procedures are sound. Parents and employers are kept informed about students' attendance and progress where appropriate.

19. The effectiveness of the assessment and monitoring of learners' progress on work-based programmes varies. Assessment is good in business where learners are frequently assessed in the workplace. There are weak assessment practices, however, in hairdressing and beauty therapy, in childcare and in construction where the monitoring of learners' progress is also weak.

20. The college offers a wide range of courses, both full time and part time, to meet the needs of young people and adults in the local community. A thorough planning process ensures the curriculum is up to date and relevant for a diverse range of students. There are good progression routes in the curriculum areas allowing students to enter education and training at different levels and move on to more advanced studies and into employment or HE. There are low numbers enrolled on some courses including in some work-based learning, a restricted range of advanced level science options, and few lower level courses in visual and performing arts. There is a good range of enrichment and additional learning activities. Curriculum areas provide additional short courses such as first aid, and health and safety, allowing students to gain further skills and qualifications. There are several effective partnership arrangements with local education, community and business groups and umbrella organisations. There are good school links programmes available enabling pupils aged 14 to 16 to participate in vocational training, for example, in childcare, electronics, construction and visual and performing arts. Academic courses for students aged 16 to 18 are taught in the Princess Mary centre, where there is a focus on the needs of young students. The 'Recharge' centre, offering welfare advice and youth work support on a drop-in basis is housed in this centre. The local business community is well served, by a flexible and responsive employer liaison service to ensure high-quality training is designed and delivered to meet employees' needs. In one case, the college has equipped a training room for a local bus company to run courses on-site to fit in with drivers' work schedules. There are work-based learning opportunities in health and social care, hairdressing and beauty therapy, construction and business and administration. There are no work-based or vocational ESOL programmes offered.

21. The college offers courses in 28 community learning centres in addition to its own three outreach centres. These include primary schools, church halls and libraries, and are successful in encouraging students from socially disadvantaged groups. Courses on offer include basic skills, IT, accounts, art and design and lifeskills. Women-only courses are offered in three venues. Art and design courses at Todmorden are popular and successful. There have been some 1,400 enrolments in the nine months since the Optimum centre at Brighouse was opened.

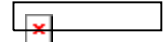
22. The college markets its programme successfully through a range of internally designed and produced resources. Promotional materials are informative and are effectively targeted to specific audiences including young people and local businesses. These materials fairly represent the college community. Analysis of recruitment is detailed and effectively informs the planning process. Since the last inspection, the college has worked hard to develop a positive presence in the local community, and it is now highly regarded by a wide range of users.

23. Guidance and support for students are generally good. Induction programmes are well organised and are successful in integrating students into the college and their courses. Students receive high-quality course information and they find the student book and diary very useful. There is effective support to help young people aged 14 to 16 to settle into college life quickly. There is good tutorial support for most students, but tutorials are not fully established in some community learning centres. Robust systems to improve punctuality and attendance have been introduced since the last inspection. Attendance has improved significantly in ESOL, literacy and numeracy, provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and visual and performing arts. There is some poor punctuality by students aged 16 to 18 in a few curriculum areas. There is a well-structured programme of careers education for students aged 16 to 18.

24. Learning support is generally good, but is not always available for students on GCSE and advanced level courses. Literacy, numeracy, language and dyslexia support are offered in class and on an individual basis. Support tutors tend to work with particular curriculum areas so that they build up knowledge of the subject and establish good links with the teaching team. There is effective specialist support for minority ethnic groups, including work with parents and travel support for refugees and asylum seekers. A peripatetic student support service is provided for students at Todmorden and at other community venues. Students who are at risk of dropping out of learning are

offered additional pastoral and study support. There are satisfactory arrangements to meet the childcare needs of students, but there is a shortage of registered childcare places in the area and some students have to wait before being able to start their courses.

## Leadership and management



25. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college has made significant progress since the last inspection under the clear direction and management of the principal and the senior management team. The consultative, supportive and open management style has gained the trust and confidence of staff. There is a stronger focus on learning and the student. Better information systems, prudent spending, efficiency savings on purchases, tight financial controls and training and support for budget holders have all resulted in the college reducing its deficit and it is now on target to achieve financial viability within the next year. Retention and pass rates are showing signs of improvement and are now around national averages, although there is still some fluctuation in individual courses and programme areas. Some 5 out of the 11 vocational areas are now judged to be good, compared to three in the last inspection; two are still unsatisfactory.

26. Governors have improved their effectiveness since the last inspection, although they still have insufficient involvement with individual curriculum areas. Attendance at meetings has improved and is now over 80%. Committees meet regularly, and the audit committee is now very effective in monitoring the financial health of the college. Governors bring a wide range of appropriate skills to the board, and these have been strengthened through recent appointments. However, there is still no minority ethnic member. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities comprehensively, and are well informed about the key strengths and weaknesses of the college and areas for improvement. Governors work well with the executive team. Clerking duties are carried out effectively with clear, concise, and informative minutes and governing body papers. The planning and structure of meetings have improved, allowing more time to be given to the key agenda items.

27. Strategic planning is satisfactory overall, although the college has been slow to develop effective strategies for increasing class sizes and to address shortfalls in recruitment. Governors and senior management have set a clear mission and strategy for the college which is monitored and updated annually. Most staff are familiar with the college's strategic priorities. Detailed one-year implementation plans underpin the strategic plan. These contain measurable milestones and the responsibility for implementing these are clearly allocated to each member of the executive team. The strategic plan sets measurable targets for 2003 to 2006 and emphasises the importance of maintaining and developing strong links with external stakeholders. It also prioritises areas for development including provision for pupils aged 14 to 16; levels 1 and 2 provision for students aged 16 to 18; level 2 provision for adults; the expansion of provision in access, visual and performing arts, construction and joinery, hair and beauty, health and social care, and work-based learning.

28. Precise targets are set at college and faculty level for recruitment, pass and retention rates. Performance is well monitored at various levels in the organisation. Retention and pass rates are showing signs of improvement over the previous two years. Data are now trusted by the college and the LSC following the introduction of a new management information system. Up-to-date data are accessible to staff on the college intranet and used by course teams to monitor course and individual progress. However, the data are not always used adequately to identify performance trends or to take prompt action on such issues as falling numbers or slow achievement. Monitoring of student attendance is rigorous and absences are followed up quickly by telephone.

29. The college has strong partnerships with local schools, HE institutions, local businesses, the Connexions service, the youth service and local learning and strategic development networks. Good use of the partnerships has resulted in collaborative approaches to widening participation by under-represented and disadvantaged groups. Some have resulted in significant funding for capital projects such as the £3.3 million new build creative and conservation centre, recently opened by a

member of the royal family and the investment in a significant amount of computer equipment at the main site and outreach centres. The principal maintains a high regional profile as a non-executive member of many partnerships. External stakeholders praise the college's proactive approach to networking and the way it has helped partners to work collaboratively rather than in competition. Over 200 school pupils aged 14 to 16 attend the college for one or two days a week for vocational training. There are good links with local universities to support progression to HE. Young disengaged people at risk of dropping out of education are being supported by the youth service to take vocational qualifications run by the college at an outreach centre.

30. There is comprehensive staff development linked to appraisal and self-assessment, but evaluation of the impact of staff training and development is generally weak. Appraisal is carried out rigorously throughout the organisation, starting with senior management. Individual objectives and targets are set for staff work performance. Training is linked to strategic priorities, to outcomes resulting from teaching observations, and to personal needs. The comprehensive programme of in-house staff development includes training on teaching techniques, managing difficult behaviour, management information systems, equality and diversity, and recent legislation such as the Race Relations Amendment Act, Disability and Discrimination Act and SENDA. Staff with additional training needs identified through lesson observations are supported by advanced skills tutors who are used extensively to improve teaching, learning and attainment. Lesson planning, teaching and learning methods and design of materials have improved. However, whilst grades for many curriculum areas have improved since the last inspection, the teaching, learning and attainment lesson observation grades have not improved overall. There is less unsatisfactory teaching, but also less good and better teaching. There is a need for more industrial and commercial updating of staff.

31. Communication throughout the college is satisfactory. The sense of corporate identity and staff morale have improved significantly. The management structure is clearly understood by staff. Effective communications are supported by regular college-wide briefings, timely meetings and informative weekly newsletters. Staff are kept informed of progress against the summary strategic plan and college targets. Key policies and procedures and college data are given to staff and students. The college intranet is widely used to disseminate information, for consultation and management information system (MIS) reports. Staff and student governors are actively involved in board meetings. Staff have the opportunity to attend board meetings as observers.

32. Most accommodation and resources are satisfactory and some are good. The college has a well-established programme of investment in its accommodation in line with its strategic priorities. Good use has been made of additional funding, and there are particularly good resources in visual and performing arts and construction and joinery.

33. Although quality assurance has improved since the last inspection, and the revised quality assurance framework covers all key aspects of the learning process, there is still too much inconsistency in quality across curriculum areas. Course progress reviews vary in quality. In spite of good involvement by students and staff, reviews are not always sufficiently self-critical and do not always contain clear action points or name the person responsible for taking action. Many action plans lack specific outcomes, and make little reference to relevant performance indicators such as attendance and punctuality, progression, and equality and diversity impact measures. Internal verification is satisfactory. There are many good features of course management in curriculum areas, but in two curriculum areas it is weak, and there are instances of weak assessment practices, inadequate monitoring of student progress and weak target setting. The quality of work-based learning is poor. There are low retention and pass rates, particularly low achievement of key skills, and insufficient involvement of employers in the training process. The standard of teaching, learning and attainment varies widely across curriculum areas and has not improved significantly since the last inspection. The self-assessment process is thorough. Staff are fully involved and there is a thorough validation process. The findings of inspectors matched many of the judgements in the self-assessment, but there is overemphasis of the strengths and comparatively little exploration of some key weaknesses. Inspectors identified some additional weaknesses.

34. The college has set targets for equality and diversity issues. Equal opportunities are promoted widely through attractive displays on cultural diversity and the college equal opportunities policy is displayed in all main areas. Students feel safe. There is a service available to students where they



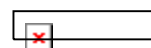
can report any incidents of racial harassment or bullying and this is used effectively. The college has successfully recruited 18% of students with an Asian heritage, compared to a local community profile of 5.7%. There is increased involvement by minority ethnic parents in parents' evenings as a result of sustained initiatives. The college has a strong focus on equality and diversity and has recently incorporated an equality and diversity perspective into all its policies and procedures. However, equal opportunities are not sufficiently embedded in all aspects of the student experience. A college steering group was set up in September to monitor equal opportunities, but is not yet fully effective. All publicity materials for courses and support services are in English, and ESOL students are not sufficiently aware of arrangements for obtaining advice or support from translators. There are no courses in Urdu or Arabic and no vocational courses for ESOL students. There is insufficient careers guidance and tutorial support in some community centres. The Millennium Volunteers project considerably enhances the curriculum, but it is at risk because of short-term funding. Many students have a poor understanding of equal opportunities, and students would like tutors to be more aware of cultural differences. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to explore equal opportunities issues in lessons and some use inappropriate language. Although 23% of students are from minority ethnic communities, the college has been slow to recruit sufficient staff to reflect the diversity of the student profile in terms of ethnicity and gender. Little use is made of data at course level to target unrepresented groups or to plan strategies to improve the achievement of underperforming groups of students. However, a project is starting to investigate why young men of Asian heritage are underperforming.

35. The college is in the third year of the recovery plan and has been given category B financial status. Recent audits have shown that the college has appropriate risk management, control and governance to achieve its objectives. However, the college has not met recruitment targets in the current year and is taking action to address this. The college provides good value for money in its purchasing procedures. There are regular meetings between members of the finance team and budget holders to review the use of resources. However, class sizes are small and numbers are declining. During the inspection, class sizes averaged 8.4 which is well below the national average. In some classes, the average number of students is as low as 6.5. The college plans to change the curriculum offered at level 3 from September 2004 to improve average class sizes while maintaining progression routes through to HE and employment. There has been insufficient analysis to ascertain what impact the high levels of additional learning support are having on retention and pass rates.

### Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



#### Science and mathematics



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

#### **Strengths**

- high retention and pass rates in GCSE mathematics
  
- good progression to HE in 2003

- good technical support
  
- effective monitoring and target setting for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- very low pass rates in biology and chemistry subjects in 2003
  
- low and declining numbers on GCE A-level courses
  
- inadequate IT facilities in teaching rooms and laboratories
  
- narrow range of GCE A-level provision.

### ***Scope of provision***

36. The college offers AS-level and GCE A-level courses in biology, chemistry and mathematics, to both students aged 16 to 18 and adult students. There is also an AS-level course in environmental science. There are currently 54 students studying AS level and only 12 students studying GCE A level in these subjects. GCSE mathematics and human physiology and health are available both during the daytime and evenings for 16 to 18 and adult students. At present, there are 91 students studying mathematics and 23 students studying human physiology and health at GCSE level. The college re-introduced GCSE science (single award) this year, and there are currently 7 students enrolled on this course. The college also offers pre-GCSE mathematics courses and key skills application of number courses mainly for students aged 16 to 18. Numbers of students studying at GCE A level are low and AS-level and GCE A-level courses in physics were discontinued because of low numbers. Several local schools offer similar courses at AS level and GCE A level. There are no vocational courses at any level.

### ***Achievement and standards***

37. Retention and pass rates in GCSE mathematics are good and improving. Retention rates are well above the national average and the pass rate rose to 67% in 2003, 28% above the national average. The pass rate of 82% for adult students is considerably better than the pass rate for students aged 16 to 18. Pass rates for the pre-GCSE mathematics course is improving, but few students currently progress on to the GCSE mathematics course. Pass rates at both AS level and GCE A level have shown considerable variation, but are at a satisfactory level overall. Pass rates in AS-level human biology and chemistry and GCE A-level chemistry are low. Retention rates at AS level and GCE A level are variable, but satisfactory overall.

38. Students develop good practical skills in science and they pay high regard to health and safety issues. Written work is mostly satisfactory, although some of the better students produce high-quality

coursework. Students are able to make good use of specialist scientific and mathematical terms in discussion. Progression to HE was very good in 2003 and 87% of advanced level students who studied at least one science or mathematics course went to university. An increasing number of students progress on to foundation degree courses after AS level.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2002 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003
GCSE maths pass rate A* to C	2	No. of starts	103	81
		% retention	74	83
		% pass rate	50	67
AS-level biology	3	No. of starts	18	10
		% retention	83	90
		% pass rate	67	44
AS-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	17	10
		% retention	82	90
		% pass rate	36	67
AS-level maths	3	No. of starts	23	12
		% retention	61	83
		% pass rate	57	60

Source: ISR (2002), college (2002/03)

***Quality of education and training***

39. Most teaching and learning are satisfactory or better, but the proportion of good teaching is lower than national averages for the sector. Intended learning outcomes are generally made clear to students at the start of lessons and good use is made of focused questions to stimulate discussion. Good lessons are well structured and teachers use a variety of approaches to keep students interested and involved. For example, in a lesson on the structure and function of joints, the students were directed to build a paper skeleton on the whiteboard. They then helped the teacher dissect a chicken leg and could easily identify joints, ligaments and cartilage. The teacher followed this with some well-prepared visual material downloaded from a relevant website. In a GCSE mathematics revision lesson on basic number, adult students collaborated in small groups to produce different 'mind maps' on the four areas to be covered by the imminent external module examination. They then produced a series of questions for the 'rival' groups, ably assisted by the teacher. The students enjoyed the resulting competition and could answer most questions successfully. However, in many lessons, teachers stick to routine teaching methods and students do not adapt their approaches to ensure that all students are working purposefully. There are few opportunities for group work and in some lessons, with low numbers, students work in isolation and this adversely affects the quality of their learning. Some students complete easier tasks readily, but shy away from addressing more difficult ones. Insufficient attention is given to encouraging students to work together on more difficult tasks.

40. Excellent technical support and adequately resourced laboratories make a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers can rely on apparatus being well prepared for their practical sessions. IT facilities are inadequate in classrooms and laboratories. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT in their teaching although they often refer to the learning materials available on the college intranet. In one lesson analysing data to produce a report on land usage, students made good use of spreadsheets prepared by the teacher and a graph plotter to investigate different transect profiles. Teachers are well qualified and many regularly attend sessions run by relevant examination boards and other external trainers to update their knowledge and subject specific

teaching skills.

41. Assessment is carried out frequently and is generally thorough. At best, the feedback given to students is effective in improving standards, but the quality of feedback is not always sufficiently focused and detailed. Students generally value the guidance from staff and the prompt return of marked homework. Most students are fully aware of their target grades on AS-level and GCE A-level courses. Progress is regularly monitored against these targets and students believe that the monitoring system helps them to improve.

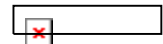
42. The range of courses at GCE advanced level is narrow and limits student choice. Some students claim to be frustrated that they are unable to pursue the course of their first choice and the most appropriate subject. Low numbers of students progress from the pre-GCSE mathematics to GCSE mathematics. There is a good range of enrichment activity in science and mathematics. For example, students regularly enter the British mathematics challenge and visits are arranged to local universities so that students can carry out experiments not available within a college laboratory.

43. Advice on science and mathematics courses given to prospective students is generally comprehensive and helpful. Students' individual needs within science and mathematics are diagnosed during the induction. Once diagnosed, the needs of individual students are generally well supported in the classroom and through subject-specific workshops. For example, a dyslexic student is given all the handout material on coloured paper. Careers guidance and help with HE choices are comprehensive and valued by the students.

### ***Leadership and management***

44. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The management of the programme has improved and has many good features. The area has clear objectives aimed at continued improvement in teaching and learning. Regular curriculum team meetings are used to consider student attendance and progress. The area has developed its own software to support the use of value added data, providing students with a clear graphical representation of their progress. This process has had a positive impact on the performance of students in the last two years. All staff, including support staff, are involved in the production of the self-assessment report and fully understand the resulting action plans. The area monitors achievement for different ethnic groups and the findings are used to inform schemes of work. The programme area has recognised that pass rates on many courses are very low and that low numbers in some lessons adversely affects teaching and learning.

### **Construction**



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### ***Strengths***

- good pass and retention rates on the certificate in plumbing and construction crafts NVQs at level 3
  
- good attainment by plumbing students on full-time certificate programme

- good learning support for students
- good curriculum planning to meet students' individual needs.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass and retention rates on electrical installation and intermediate construction award
- poor framework achievements in work-based learning
- inadequate plumbing and electrical workshop space for students
- inadequate monitoring of work-based learners' progress
- inadequate involvement of employers in work-based learning.

### ***Scope of provision***

45. There are 526 students in construction. There are 14 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 52 full-time students aged over 19. Of the 309 part-time students, 270 are aged over 19 and 39 are 16 to 18. Schools links courses in carpentry and joinery, brickwork and construction operations are provided for 28 young people aged 14 to 16. In work-based learning. There are 25 advanced modern apprentices, 84 foundation modern apprentices and 14 NVQ learners. There are also eight clients following Jobcentre Plus programmes. All the modern apprentices are employed.

46. Courses in construction are available in five areas; brickwork, carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating, electrical installation and plumbing. These can be taken as full-time, part-time or evening-only options. There are level 1 courses in all areas. These are used to provide entry to either work-based learning courses or level 2 college-based courses. Level 2 courses are also offered in all areas. A small number of construction crafts NVQs are available at levels 2 and 3 for students with existing vocational experience.

### ***Achievement and standards***

47. Retention and pass rates are improving and most are now at or above national averages. The retention and pass rates of the certificate in plumbing and level 3 NVQs in construction crafts are considerably higher than national averages. There are poor pass rates on the electrical installation

award parts 1 and 2 and the part 2 qualification also has retention rates 33% below national averages. The retention rate is improving on the NVQ plumbing course, which is now at the national average, but is still below 50%. The intermediate construction certificate was replaced by the intermediate construction award in 2002. At the time of replacement, there were 40 students registered on the course. Only 12 of them transferred on to the new course and only 2 passed. Retention rates in the current year are good, but there has been significant numbers of withdrawals of students aged 16 to 18 from full-time level 1 carpentry and joinery and brickwork courses. The standard of students' work is mostly satisfactory, but is better in practical classes. The standard of attainment of the full-time certificate in plumbing is high in both practical and theoretical work.

48. The framework completion rates and NVQ pass rates for modern apprentices are poor. Work-based learners do not complete their key skills or their occupational qualifications. In 2001 and 2002, only 4 learners out of 81 had completed the full framework. Attendance at lessons in the college is poor and well below the national average. Work-based learners make slow progress. Key skills are often taught only in the latter stages of the programmes. Assessments are not done early enough and portfolios are introduced too late. These weaknesses have been recognised by the college. Retention rates are satisfactory at around 50% and are improving. The quality of learners' work is satisfactory, with most learners demonstrating a commercially acceptable standard of work both in the workshops and on site.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2002 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
City and Guilds certificate in plumbing	1	No. of starts	16	28
		% retention	56	89
		% pass rate	78	88
Intermediate construction award**	1	No. of starts	*	12
		% retention	*	67
		% pass rate	*	13
City and Guilds 2360 electrical installation	1	No. of starts	30	26
		% retention	33	77
		% pass rate	61	55
NVQ construction crafts	2	No. of starts	69	35
		% retention	54	69
		% pass rate	69	74
NVQ mechanical services	2	No. of starts	30	14
		% retention	17	49
		% pass rate	88	70
City and Guilds 2360 electrical installation	2	No. of starts	30	19
		% retention	83	53
		% pass rate	13	20
NVQ construction crafts	3	No. of starts	15	16
		% retention	60	87
		% pass rate	25	89

*Source: ISR (2002), college (2003)*

\* 40 started on ICC

\*\* *Intermediate Construction Certificate replaced by Intermediate Construction Award*

### **Quality of education and training**

49. Teaching is mostly satisfactory or good. The teaching of work-based learners is satisfactory. The planning for practical workshops is good, with each student having an individual plan for the session. Students start work promptly and teachers monitor their progress. The planning for work-based learning is inadequate. Teachers meet the needs of different student groups effectively. In one innovative session, a 'university challenge' style quiz was used to provide and test occupational knowledge for plumbers. Key skills are integrated into vocational programmes, but are introduced too late into work-based learning. Work-based learners are not taught how to produce evidence for their portfolios early enough in their programme.

50. Teaching staff are well qualified and have relevant industrial experience, but in some cases it is not sufficiently up to date. This is an area which has been prioritised for staff development. There is insufficient space in the electrical and plumbing workshops to meet students' needs. There are not enough tools for plumbing students. Students in carpentry and joinery do not have enough space to store their work and some take their work home to avoid losing it. Some technicians are shared by curriculum areas. Some teaching time is lost with tutors carrying out technician activities. Inspectors observed occasional examples of poor safety practices such as a student sawing a copper pipe against his knee.

51. Assessment is well planned, rigorous and comprehensive. Initial assessment is consistently applied and includes key and basic skills testing. The results are used effectively to develop support for students. Portfolios, assignments and practical exercises are effectively marked with clear feedback given to students. The internal verification is satisfactory. Students' progress is well recorded. Most students are aware of the progress they are making towards achievement of their qualification. There is inadequate monitoring of work-based learners' progress. The learning plans have no short-term targets against which progress can be measured. Learners are not clear as to how much progress they have made. Targets are not always set at reviews and are not detailed. Targets that are set are often not monitored at the next review. There is insufficient assessment in the workplace.

52. The recent introduction of foundation courses has provided a good opportunity for students to progress from level 1 introductory courses on to full-time and work-based learning courses. The college also provides schools links course. This has been successful in encouraging students to apply for apprenticeships.

53. Employers are inadequately involved in the training of work-based learners. They are not familiar with the NVQ frameworks. They are rarely present at the reviews. There is insufficient co-ordination of learning at the college and activities at work. There are few training plans in the workplace.

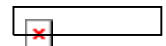
54. There is good student support for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages. All students have an initial assessment to establish whether additional learning support is required. Where this need is identified there is good cooperation between college support and construction staff to integrate learning support discretely into classroom activities. Support is delivered with sensitivity and progress is well tracked. Support tutors operate in both classrooms and workshops.

### **Leadership and management**

55. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum leader provides a clear direction for staff. Targets are set for the curriculum area and for course teams. These are well monitored through the course review and evaluation process. Retention and pass rates, and attendance are thoroughly monitored, with results fed back to teams using the 'traffic light system'. Areas in need of action are coded red, those causing concern are coded amber and green indicates that there are no

concerns. No target grades are set for the quality of teaching, but there are regular lesson observations, which are linked to appraisal and staff development. Where staff development needs have been highlighted, these have been addressed. There are many courses with low numbers of students, although some have been merged to make them viable. The average class size is slightly less than the national average for construction. There is good communication between the work-based learning and the curriculum team. Inspectors agreed with much of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report. The inspection grades for teaching generally matched the college's grades for teaching. Strategies are in place to address weaknesses in the area. For example, good progress has been made in improving retention and pass rates, but it is too early to assess the impact of other strategies.

## **Business administration, management and professional**



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on management, professional and law courses
  
- much good teaching
  
- effective support for students
  
- good curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on NVQs in administration at levels 1 and 2 and accounting level 3
  
- poor completion of modern apprenticeships.

### ***Scope of provision***

56. There are 542 students in the business administration, management and professional area. There are 101 full-time students, 35 of which are aged 19 and over. There are 411 part-time students, of which 32 are aged 16 to 18. The wide range of courses include GNVQ, AVCE, AS-



level/GCE A2 business studies, NVQs in administration at levels 1 to 4, accounting, marketing and management courses. There are a range of legal secretarial and executive courses and two courses in licensed conveyance. There are a number of short courses in office skills. Some courses have low numbers of students. Students can progress from foundation qualifications to degree level programmes. There are 31 work-based learners working towards foundation and modern apprenticeships with local employers. There are 15 Jobcentre Plus clients working towards units of the administration NVQ at levels 1 and 2. Most courses take place at the main college centre. Students are supported by 10 full-time staff including two advanced skills tutors and six part-time staff.

### ***Achievement and standards***

57. There are good pass rates on management, professional and law courses which are above national averages for 2002/03. There are some good retention rates. The retention and pass rates for GNVQ intermediate business and AVCE business were above national averages for 2002/03 with pass rates of 100% and 93%, respectively. There are low pass rates on administration NVQs at levels 1 and 2 and accounting NVQs at level 3. The pass rate for administration NVQ at level 2 in 2002/03 was 27%. The retention rates for work-based learners have improved during 2000/01 and 2002/03 and are now satisfactory. There are poor framework pass rates for apprentices. In 2001/02, only 12% of foundation modern apprentices completed their framework and in 2002/03 only 9% completed. Only a quarter of all advanced modern apprentices completed their frameworks during both years.

58. In most lessons, students make satisfactory progress. Standards of students' work are also satisfactory and good on some law and accounting courses. The overall attendance rate for students is satisfactory and is around the national average.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in business administration, management and professional, 2002 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Book-keeping and accounts 1 (short course)	1	No. of starts	29	84
		% retention	93	85
		% pass rate	27	75
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	18	8
		% retention	78	100
		% pass rate	21	100
NVQ administration	2	No. of starts	65	12
		% retention	58	58
		% pass rate	82	27
AVCE business	3	No. of starts	27	16
		% retention	96	93
		% pass rate	50	93
NVQ accounting	3	No. of starts	25	26
		% retention	92	77
		% pass rate	17	75
Certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	29	11
		% retention	86	82
		% pass rate	100	88

Source: ISR (2002), college (2002/03)

### **Quality of education and training**

59. Teaching is mostly good. Lessons are well planned and schemes of work are well prepared. In the most effective lessons, students participate fully in discussion and develop a good understanding of the topic. In one lesson, students researched and presented on a wide range of law topics, from murder to negligence. In a good AVCE lesson, the teacher used tinned tuna to successfully illustrate and examine marketing strategies. Students demonstrate good communication skills and clearly identify the importance of evaluating information. Part-time students display good analytical skills on management and professional courses when relating concepts and theories to the workplace. Teachers encourage part-time students to reflect on their work experience during lessons. In most lessons, teachers maintain a good pace and check students understanding regularly. Some lessons for part-time adult students cover a wide range of office skills and levels and are particularly well managed. In the less effective lessons, students are not sufficiently involved and there is a lack of topic development. Teachers take too great a lead in discussion and do not encourage the students to use their initiative.

60. The off-the-job training for work-based learners is satisfactory and well structured. Most learners attend the college for one day each week. The new technical certificates for modern apprentices have recently been introduced. Support for learners in the workplace is good, with regular visits from training officers to monitor and review progress and from college staff for assessment. The area was without a training officer for several months which hindered the development of the programme.

61. Resources are satisfactory. Students have access to some good electronic business resources and classrooms have attractive and stimulating displays on a wide range of business and management topics. However, many of the displays are not used in lessons. Staff are appropriately qualified and part-time staff have good commercial links. There are a range of visits for students to local companies throughout the year and some lessons have employers as guest speakers. There is insufficient use of ILT in some lessons to support learning and missed opportunities to use powerpoint presentations by staff and students. A small number of rooms are cramped for space, with wall displays obscured by excess furniture and screens.

62. Assessment and monitoring of students progress are satisfactory. Students' work is regularly and accurately marked, although some of the written feedback from teachers is too brief and lacks detail. The work-based learning team maintain a useful summary of the learners' progress on a wallchart which is easily shared with staff. Some inconsistencies in the marking of the legal executive assignments have been addressed.

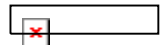
63. There is good support for students, which meets both additional learning and pastoral needs. Additional support tutors work well in lessons. One tutor worked unobtrusively in a small group, helping two students with literacy and numeracy, as the business tutor taught the whole group about methods of filing. Tutorials are effective and relevant to the needs of the individual and groups of students. Tutors make good use of value added measures when guiding and supporting students and setting targets. Some tutors have developed the standard tutorial forms further by adding an agenda and a record of discussion. Lessons start promptly, but adult students with work or childcare commitments are allowed to arrive later than others. Tutors celebrate the progress of level 1 students with attractive displays of their achievements in the classrooms.

### **Leadership and management**

64. The area is well managed. Staff morale is good and teachers are enthusiastic about their subject areas. Teams meet regularly to discuss students' progress and curriculum development. Staff have identified new areas to develop such as retail and added a legal course at level 2 where there was previously a gap in the curriculum. The NVQ administration courses performed poorly over recent years and have been replaced with a new certificate in administration and IT. The new quality framework has helped teams review student pass and retention rates and the quality of teaching and

learning regularly. Advanced skills tutors have helped teachers to develop lesson plans and schemes of work effectively and consider classroom management, such as meeting the needs of students with a variety of abilities and creating a stimulating teaching environment. Staff are regularly appraised and set performance targets. Training has taken place on diversity and equal opportunities. Attention to equal opportunities is part of the lesson planning, but staff do not adhere to this process. The management of work-based learning is satisfactory and the training officer regularly attends curriculum meetings. The co-ordination of training and assessment in the workplace has improved over the last six months since the training company moved on to the college's premises. The retention rate of work-based learners has also improved. The self-assessment report is more evaluative than descriptive and inspectors agreed with the grades proposed by the curriculum team.

### **Information and communications technology**



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

#### ***Strengths***

- very good retention and pass rates for adult students
  
- much good teaching
  
- good resources to support learning
  
- effective widening of participation.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor punctuality and attendance for students aged 16 to 18
  
- poor pass rates on AVCE course.

#### ***Scope of provision***

65. The college offers a range of ICT courses for full-time and part-time students. These include GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses in ICT, AVCE single and double awards, AS-level and GCE A-levels and many part-time and higher qualifications. There are part-time courses in Comptia A+ computer maintenance programme and Internet, access to IT, networking and CISCO. Other

part-time courses include new computer literacy and information technology (new CLAIT) and the European computer driving licence (ECDL). The introduction of the NOW! centre at the main site and the two Optimum centres have broadened the range of provision, giving students greater access to a range of qualifications. There is also provision for young people aged 14 to 16. Effective links with a local bus company enable the college to offer foundation level computer courses in the workplace. There are 583 students aged 16 to 18 and 2,319 adults on courses within this area.

### **Achievement and standards**

66. There are very good retention and pass rates on courses for adult students. There are very good retention and pass rates on ECDL and CLAIT courses. In 2002/03, the retention rate on the GNVQ intermediate course improved and is now significantly above the national average, but retention rates on the GNVQ foundation and the AVCE courses fell significantly below the national averages. Pass rates on both the GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses improved significantly in 2002/03, but the pass rate on the AVCE single award has been consistently low for two years. Attendance at lessons during the period of inspection is 70.4% which is slightly low. Punctuality at lessons is poor for students aged 16 to 18. Students regularly arrive as much as 30 minutes late which is disrupting the learning of other students as the teachers repeat the first part of the lesson again. Most students demonstrate good practical skills and they have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Assignment work is of a generally high quality.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2002 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
CLAIT and new CLAIT short	1	No. of starts	532	410
		% retention	89	78
		% pass rate	85	61
GNVQ intermediate	2	No. of starts	30	26
		% retention	79	100
		% pass rate	4	96
ECDL 1 year	2	No. of starts	290	238
		% retention	82	88
		% pass rate	91	87
AVCE single award	3	No. of starts	40	20
		% retention	100	70
		% pass rate	28	36
Access to IT	3	No. of starts	8	18
		% retention	88	61
		% pass rate	100	100

Source: ISR (2002), college (2003)

### **Quality of education and training**

67. There is much good teaching and learning. There are good lesson plans and schemes of work. Most lessons are well planned. In the best lessons, students are attentive, motivated and enthused. Tutors regularly check the students' understanding using skilful questioning and short quizzes. An appropriate range of activities is used to maintain interest and stimulate learning including demonstrations using computer programmes and images, individual and group exercises,

discussions and presentations. In one lesson where few learning resources were available, the tutor used a skilful combination of practical exercises and group discussions to successfully involve the students in the learning process. In another lesson, a crossword puzzle was very effectively used to revise the terminology that the students needed in order to complete their main activity. Students actively participate in class discussions. In lessons for adults, the students are highly motivated and are quick to relate their learning to their work and outside interests. They are keen to help each other and to share ideas.

68. There are good resources to support learning. Accommodation across all college sites is very good. The quality of equipment in classrooms is good and all students have access to the Internet. In most ICT classrooms there are modern computers with flat screen monitors, scanners, printers and digital cameras. There is ample room on computer desks for students to place their workbooks and exercise papers. Computer projectors and interactive whiteboards are also available and are well used. In one learning centre, an easy to operate mouse, specialist software for students with visual impairments and an adjustable workstation for wheelchair users are available. Most teachers have a degree or equivalent and many have a teaching qualification. Teachers demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of the workplace and are aware of current industrial practice. The use of topical exemplars is a feature of most sessions. The college provides a wide range of support facilities and services. This includes careers advice, counselling and welfare support and a good learning resource centre. Students can access learning notes, handouts and assignments on the college intranet or from the Internet if they are at home. Students value and make good use of this facility. Technical support is good and the staff are helpful.

69. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress are effective and marked work is returned quickly. Assessment procedures meet the requirements of the awarding bodies. Assignment briefs are clear, well structured and challenging. The teachers make good use of checklists for marking assignments and students receive written and oral feedback that gives clear guidance for improvement. Assessment at community venues is appropriately matched to the needs of the students and standards are rigorously moderated by the centre tutors. Students' progress is carefully tracked and recorded and progress charts are displayed on the notice board.

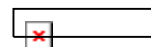
70. The college has effective strategies to widen participation. The new Optimum centres are very welcoming and offer flexible provision which meets the needs of students who have family and work responsibilities or commitments. A wide range of taster courses are available, with opportunities to progress to higher level courses such as CLAIT Plus and ECDL. Tutor support is readily available for those who require assistance. The centres are very successful. There have been over 1,400 enrolments in the first nine months and progression rates are good.

71. Guidance and support for students are satisfactory. Full-time students have an initial literacy and numeracy assessment and additional support is offered where appropriate. Not all part-time students have their literacy and numeracy skills assessed. All students receive a college induction on starting their course. Students with identified learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by learning support assistants. The college's support team provide a wide range of support from help with writing CVs, job applications, interviewing techniques and advice on how and where to access job vacancies.

### ***Leadership and management***

72. Leadership and management are good. Clear direction is given by management and this is communicated very effectively to the staff. Course reviews provide a satisfactory quality assurance mechanism. Regular staff meetings are held that are attended by both full-time and part-time staff. Staff are kept abreast of developments from awarding bodies. Internal moderation is used to manage appropriate courses effectively and external verifiers have commended the quality. There is an extensive and effective staff appraisal and development programme. Staff are observed on an annual basis and the results are used to inform their personal development plan through the appraisal process. There is a good continuous professional development approach to improving staff's qualifications, knowledge and expertise. All lesson plans and assessments make reference to equality of opportunity and this is also promoted in the classroom. Within ICT, there is a good representation of ethnic minority groups that reflect the local community.

## **Hairdressing and beauty therapy**



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### ***Strengths***

- good retention and pass rates on short courses for adults in 2002/03
- improved pass rates on full-time courses in 2002/03 for completers
- good learning materials
- good support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on level 2 hairdressing
- poor retention and pass rates for work-based learners
- too much unsatisfactory teaching and learning
- low student attainment
- some inadequate resources
- weak assessment practice.

### **Scope of provision**

73. There are 394 students in this area studying on courses that include NVQ hairdressing and beauty therapy at levels 1, 2, and 3, holistic therapies at level 3 and specialist courses such as reflexology and nail techniques. There are 250 students on beauty and holistic therapy courses and 77 on hairdressing courses. There are 24 modern apprentices and 4 work-based adult learners. Taster courses are offered in the community in Indian head massage. Around 40 school pupils aged 14 to 16 attend a course leading to an NVQ at level 1. There is a full-time holistic therapies course which the department has developed from a number of different awards. Part-time courses are offered in anatomy, physiology and massage, manicure, pedicure and Indian head massage. Nearly 80% of students are aged 19 and over.

### **Achievement and standards**

74. Retention and pass rates on short courses for adults are good and were above the national averages in 2002/03. There are improving pass rates on hairdressing courses for full-time students. The pass rate on the NVQ level 1 hairdressing course has improved from 60% to 88% which is around the national average. There are poor retention rates on the level 2 hairdressing course which accounts for half of all full-time students, although retention rates improved between 2002 and 2003. Retention and pass rates in work-based learning are poor. In 2002/03, only 3 out of 12 foundation modern apprentices remain in learning. Some 60% of advanced modern apprentices left the programme without achieving a qualification. During the three-year period 1999 to 2002 only 2% of foundation modern apprentices achieved the full framework. The current work-based learners are making slow progress.

75. The progression rate from level 2 to level 3 courses in both hairdressing and beauty therapy is poor. In 2002/03, only 20 out of 58 NVQ level 2 hairdressing students progressed on to level 3 in the following year. It is better in beauty therapy where in 2002/03, two thirds of the NVQ level 2 beauty therapy students progressed on to level 3 in 2003/04.

76. The level of students' attainment is unsatisfactory in too many lessons. Some students do not have sufficient understanding or skill in the fundamental aspects of hairdressing, such as blow drying, use of conditioner and use of brushes. There are not always enough suitable clients to enable students to practise relevant skills. Students are repeatedly carrying out the same services when they need other types of clients to complete their qualifications. Some students lack direction in lessons and are unsure of what is expected of them until their client arrives. Some lessons are poorly attended and disrupted by students being late.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 2002 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
NVQ hairdressing	2	No. of starts	46	58
		% retention	28	41
		% pass rate	54	96
NVQ beauty therapy	2	No. of starts	21	17
		% retention	62	76
		% pass rate	77	100
NVQ hairdressing	3	No. of starts	16	12
		% retention	25	100
		% pass rate	100	90

Manicure and pedicure	2	No. of starts	39	56
		% retention	79	86
		% pass rate	100	92
Anatomy, physiology and body massage diploma	3	No. of starts	23	36
		% retention	83	92
		% pass rate	47	100
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	15	8
		% retention	100	88
		% pass rate	93	86
Indian head massage	3	No. of starts	31	32
		% retention	87	97
		% pass rate	100	97

Source: ISR (2002), college (2002/03)

### **Quality of education and training**

77. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching. Too many teachers fail to check the students' understanding of theory throughout the lessons. Teachers do not ask students enough questions about their work and when they do ask questions the same students answer each time. Some practical lessons are not well managed with students and teacher being insufficiently prepared and wasting time that should be used for learning. In less effective lessons, clients are kept waiting for too long before receiving attention. In a significant minority of lessons, teachers miss the opportunity to evaluate learning. Often in group work or in one-to-one discussions during practical lessons, teachers are too quick to offer advice rather than ask questions of the students. Other opportunities for learning are missed when students are working in small groups. The findings of the group are shared with the teacher, but not with the rest of the class. Students' answers to questions are not recorded and shared. In the more effective lessons, teachers provide a comprehensive review of the previous lesson and introduce the session clearly. They reinforce the theory with the practical aspects of the teaching and learning effectively. Some lessons are lively and stimulating. One anatomy session made good use of a board game to check the students' understanding and create a healthy sense of competition between the students. Lesson plans are satisfactory. Teachers plan a range of teaching and learning strategies to engage students and support students with a variety of abilities. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject. There are good resource materials for students to support their learning, which are produced by the staff. Students use workbooks to help them understand necessary background knowledge and develop independent study skills, but many students spend too much time answering questions in workbooks during lessons. One lesson involved students using the workbook throughout the lesson and opportunities were missed for group discussion and checking of students' understanding. There is insufficient emphasis on good hygiene, health and safety in teaching. For example, students were observed mixing chemicals without gloves.

78. There are some poor resources in hair and beauty which do not reflect good professional practice. One salon does not have sufficient shampoo basins. There is no appropriate chair for cutting children's hair and they have to stand. One of the workstations in the salon is next to a door and students are regularly disrupted while cutting. The preparation area for colours is too small and often crowded with staff and students going from one salon to the other. The reception area to the salon is unwelcoming as clients are greeted from behind a glass screen. The beauty salon is crowded and cluttered. Some practical lessons do not have sufficient clients for the students to practise the necessary skills. Where this occurs, students use task sheets, based on client case studies, to plan and carry out a range of practical activities, such as drying long hair to achieve volume in the style. Often, students rely too heavily on direction from the teacher before using the task sheets or starting their practical activity. The salon is dated, but just adequate to meet the



needs of students. There is insufficient use of ICT in lessons to support learning. One classroom has an interactive white board which is not used. The salon does not use a computerised till. Students have access to a range of professional products and there are retail products that students promote to clients. Staff are well qualified and experienced within their occupational area. Most staff hold appropriate teaching and assessor qualifications. New staff have target dates for achieving appropriate awards. All staff maintain good records of continual professional development.

79. The assessment of theory and practice is not adequately co-ordinated. There is too long a period of time between the assessment of practical skills and the assessment of students' knowledge. There is not enough oral questioning of students and an over-reliance on written answers to underpinning knowledge questions. A significant minority of students are not using their work experience effectively towards assessment and completing unnecessary pre-assessments to prove competence in advance of summative assessment on each skill area. There is a lack of assessment in work-based learning. Students have to wait for assessment opportunities at college on skills that they demonstrate on a daily basis in the salon. For example, most students have extensive reception experience, but have to wait for assessment until they are in the college reception. Work-based learners do not take their portfolios to the workplace to enable them to familiarise themselves with the contents of the qualification. All students have an initial assessment of their basic and key skills and receive prompt feedback on the results.

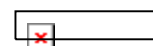
80. Courses meet the needs of students and the community effectively. Students enrol throughout the year and at a variety of venues. The department has devised their own holistic therapy course and students can take additional qualifications such as Indian head massage and barbering. Students enhance their development through a range of enrichment activities.

81. There is good support for students. Tutorials set clear targets and help students manage their tasks effectively. Additional learning support needs are clearly identified and good support is given to students during lessons. Too many adult students do not use the additional learning support which is available.

### ***Leadership and management***

82. The leadership and management of the curriculum area and work-based learning are unsatisfactory. There has been a lack of co-ordination between the curriculum team and the work-based learning team. The work-based learners' pass rates are poor and they are making slow progress. Too much teaching, learning and attainment is unsatisfactory. Course teams meet on a regular basis and share information and discuss emerging issues. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and are involved in development planning. It is too early to assess whether the new course review and evaluation process will improve performance across the department. Data are starting to be used effectively. However, the findings from the data by the department are overly positive and do not match those of inspectors. Targets are set for retention and pass rates, but not for student progression. The self-assessment report is clearly written, but fails to accurately identify many of the key weaknesses. There is good representation of minority ethnic students across the department.

### **Health, social care and childcare**



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on many courses
- good and improving retention rates on many courses
- much good learning and attainment
- good preparation for HE and employment
- effective support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor completion of modern apprentice frameworks
- insufficient short-term target setting in work-based learning
- ineffective teaching of key skills.

### ***Scope of provision***

83. There are 207 full-time and 380 part-time students in this area. Of these, 133 are aged 16 to 18 and 454 are aged 19 and over. In addition there are 19 work-based learners working in early years care. A school-links programme provides opportunities for seven young people aged 14 to 16. The programme extends over six weeks and gives the students very good information regarding all aspects of the NVQ process. Full-time care courses are offered at levels 1 to 3, but there was no recruitment to level 2 in 2003/04. Full-time early years courses are offered at levels 1, 2 and 3. There are programmes at GCSE, GNVQ, AS level, GCE A2, and NVQ. Counselling training and NVQs in care and early years at levels 2 and 3 are available as part-time programmes in the day and evening. Additional qualifications offered to students include first aid, food hygiene, counselling skills and practical craft. There is a substantial access to HE programme in health and social care and early years care. There are few courses offered at community venues. Excellent placements are available for students at local schools, private day nurseries, residential care homes, hospitals and the law courts.

### ***Achievement and standards***

84. There are good pass rates on many courses. Pass rates are above national averages on the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) certificate, counselling certificate and

access to HE certificate. There are significant improvements on the GNVQ intermediate award from 64% to 100% and the progression award in play work from 57% to 100%, from 2001 to 2003. The foundation award in caring for children had a pass rate of 89%; all at a distinction grade. There are good retention rates on the GNVQ intermediate, progression award in play work and counselling and a significant improvement on the CACHE certificate, rising from 64% to 87%, which is well above national averages. Enrolments on the CACHE diploma have increased significantly from the low level in 2001. The retention rate in 2002/03 is 82% and is well above national averages. There is poor completion of the modern apprentice framework. Since 2000, only two foundation and one advanced modern apprentice have completed their programme. However, retention rates have improved at foundation level over the last three years from 41% to 85%.

85. The standard of most students' work is good and meets awarding body requirements. The majority of the work is word processed and contains useful illustrations, references and bibliographies. Candidates' evidence for NVQs is relevant to their workplace

***A sample of retention and pass rates in health, social care and childcare, 2002 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003
Foundation award in caring for children	1	No. of starts	*	10
		% retention	*	90
		% pass rate	*	89
GNVQ intermediate	2	No. of starts	17	10
		% retention	82	80
		% pass rate	64	100
City and Guilds progression award in play work	2	No. of starts	17	14
		% retention	82	93
		% pass rate	57	100
CACHE certificate in child care and education	2	No. of starts	28	15
		% retention	64	87
		% pass rate	100	92
CACHE diploma in child care and education	3	No. of starts	6	22
		% retention	100	82
		% pass rate	83	83
Counselling skills in the development of learning	3	No. of starts	24	25
		% retention	92	96
		% pass rate	100	92
Access to HE health	3	No. of starts	53	55
		% retention	79	73
		% pass rate	98	95

Source: ISR (2002), college (2003)

\*course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

86. Learning and attainment in lessons are good and above national averages. Teaching is good or

better in most lessons. Lesson plans and schemes of work are sufficiently detailed and cross referenced to assessment criteria. In the most effective lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable, using their vocational experience to illustrate key learning points. In one theory lesson on research ethics, the teacher used background music to create a purposeful and stimulating atmosphere. Students tested their analytical and critical thinking skills by examining a range of ethical dilemmas on such topics as teenage pregnancy and gay rights. In another physiology lesson, students blew through straws to grip a chocolate sweet. This helped the students appreciate how people feel when trying to breathe during an asthma attack. Learning was re-enforced through playing a card game where pictures were matched with names to illustrate a variety of infectious diseases. In the less effective lessons, there are insufficient activities to interest students and a lack of questioning to check students' understanding. Key skills are not sufficiently linked to health or childcare practice in learning, although they are identified on lesson plans and schemes of work.

87. There are good practical resources in the classrooms to support teaching and learning and a clearly identified base room for student groups. The library has an up-to-date stock of books and CD-ROMs, although students on work-based learning do not often take advantage of the library. There is a high proportion of staff new to the college who are well qualified in their vocational area and teach to their particular area of expertise. New staff have a mentor to support their development. There is insufficient use of computers to support learning, although there is a computer in each classroom. Students' work is displayed prominently in classrooms. Students are well prepared for HE and employment. For example, access students use a learning journal to reflect on their performance and experience in the workplace and identify potential links to HE and a career.

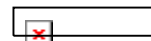
88. There is good initial assessment for full-time courses and substantial part-time courses which informs learning support needs. Students contribute to the tracking of their gold card progress file. Work-based assessments are well planned, with good student involvement. There are some inconsistencies in written feedback which have not been addressed, leading to some generalised comments which do not support future improvement.

89. There is effective support for students to support learning. Teachers and learning link tutors work effectively to assist students with identified literacy or numeracy needs. Students receive informative pre-course advice at interview and are appropriately matched to courses. There are good progress reviews to monitor attendance, punctuality, effort and assignment grades and achievement of practical competencies. There is insufficient short-term target setting to monitor unit achievement or identify slow progress. Students work effectively in groups and are well supported by a learning link tutor to monitor progress and completion of individual tasks. All employers are well informed and support student learning in the workplace and there is effective integration of on-the-job and off-the-job training. Most work-based students undertake extra programmes such as paediatric first aid and food handling.

### ***Leadership and management***

90. Many features of curriculum management are good. Course teams work well together and are clearly accountable for their programmes. The staff are strongly focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The team have already responded to weaknesses identified from external verifier reports, the shortage of staff and the need to qualify more staff as assessors and verifiers. Staff regularly review students' attendance, retention and achievement and share good practice. Staff appraisals are regular and are informed by lessons observations and course evaluation. The programme team are working to expand the range of courses offered in the area, through links with employers and local universities. A foundation degree in health and social care will be available later this year. New systems are being developed by the curriculum team to effectively respond to the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.

### **Visual and performing arts and media**



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- high quality of public performances, fine art and drawing
- good pass rates on most courses in 2003
- much good teaching and learning
- very good accommodation for visual and performing arts at main site
- good provision in response to local needs at Todmorden.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on AS-level courses and national diplomas in design and drama
- insufficient use of specialist IT on art and design courses
- inadequate resources in media, the dance studio and at the Todmorden centre
- declining enrolments on most courses.

### ***Scope of provision***

91. Of the 493 students in visual, performing arts and media all but 12% attend courses in the visual arts. Provision is made on three different sites. The centre at Todmorden caters entirely for adult art students. At the main campus, the Princess Mary Centre houses media courses, but the majority of courses in performing arts, dance and visual arts take place in the new Creative and Conservation Skills Centre. In performing arts, all courses are at level 3 and there is a 14 to 16 schools link programme once a week. In media, in addition to GCE A and AS levels, there is also an intermediate GNVQ in media, communication and production. In the visual arts, there is a wider range of level 3

programmes including an access to HE in art and design and national diplomas in three-dimensional design, in graphic design and in photography. Several level 2 courses are offered including City and Guilds creative studies stage 1 - ceramic skills, practical craft skills stage 2, intermediate certificate in multimedia design foundation, intermediate certificates in creative craft, and OCN pre-access to art and design. There are no foundation or level 1 full-time courses. The provision is managed by a programme manager who has responsibility for the visual arts, and there are curriculum leaders for the performing arts, media and arts in the community.

### **Achievement and standards**

92. Performing arts students have good opportunities to demonstrate the high standards of their work through public performances. Dance and drama students contribute to 12 productions a year, some of which go on tour in the community. A production of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* was performed in local stately homes. Students from the dance award course performed confidently and skilfully before an audience which included a member of the Royal family at the opening of the new creative and conservation crafts centre. Much of the students' lively art work is displayed around the college and many students have their work shown at public exhibitions and productions. Many students achieve high standards in their drawings which combine creativity and fine attention to detail through careful observation. Adult students at the Todmorden centre produce very good fine art work, and observational drawing, particularly of the life model, is very strong at both centres. Much student art work is displayed around the college and students at Todmorden regularly display their art in local galleries. There is a regular final year show of art and design in the main college building and at Todmorden. In a few lessons, students' design work is pedestrian and lacks originality.

93. Pass rates are good in 2003 on most courses for both students aged 16 to 18 and adult students. Pass and retention rates on the GCE A2 art and design course are good and over a third of students achieved high grades in 2003. The AS-level art and design course also has good pass rates and high grades (60%). Pass rates in the national diploma in drama were good, 19% above the national average, in 2003, but retention rates were poor. The AVCE media had good pass and retention rates in 2003.

94. Retention rates on AS-level and national diploma courses in drama and design were poor in 2003. Retention rates on the intermediate art and design, access to HE in art and design and performing arts courses are above the national average. Retention rates are below the national averages on AS-level performing arts, media and art and design courses, and the national diploma in design and drama courses.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in visual and performing arts and media, 2002 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
OCN art and design	2	No. of starts	58	52
		% retention	67	85
		% pass rate	97	68
National diploma in drama	3	No. of starts	15	29
		% retention	73	55
		% pass rate	91	88
GCE A2 art and design	3	No. of starts	30	17
		% retention	83	94
		% pass rate	92	94
Access to HE - art and design	3	No. of starts	26	41
		% retention	73	90

		% pass rate	95	81
National diploma in design	3	No. of starts	53	25
		% retention	45	68
		% pass rate	75	76
AS-level media	3	No. of starts	31	17
		% retention	68	76
		% pass rate	67	85

Source: ISR (2002), college (2002/03)

### **Quality of education and training**

95. There is much good teaching. Learning is well planned to enable students to develop their critical and analytical skills as well as their creative and practical abilities. Project briefs are well written, and most include a good range of activities to encourage students to become increasingly independent in their learning. Essential skills and contextual studies are integrated into practical projects. Vocational relevance is provided through the inclusion of 'live' briefs, the provision of work placements for graphics students, and public productions for the performing arts students. Learning is enriched with a good range of visits to galleries and theatres including visits abroad.

96. Staff at Todmorden have created a vibrant atmosphere that encourages students to explore different media and to experiment with different materials. Courses are organised through drop-in workshops which adult students join according to the direction their work is taking, and their personal commitments. For part of the week, full-time students at the main centre explore many different approaches by working with staff from different disciplines. This gives them a wider repertoire of skills for developing their projects.

97. Insufficient use is made of specialist IT in the classroom and studio to enhance students' work. Where it does exist, access to specialist IT is not always easy. Digital imaging equipment is not available in studios, and has to be booked in the MAC centre, which is heavily timetabled for teaching. This inhibits the development of students' IT skills in art and design. There is insufficient photography equipment and what there is needs upgrading. There are not enough digital cameras across the curriculum area in all disciplines. There is no interactive whiteboard in the new resource centre, and the teacher is required to use a projector on a trolley with trailing cables and a low-quality projection screen. There are insufficient computers and editing equipment in the media area and equipment is often inadequately serviced.

98. The main college has new purpose-built arts accommodation. Lighting and sound equipment is of a professional standard, and art, design and performing arts studios, and workshop facilities are well equipped and attractive. The dance studio, though well resourced, with an excellent sprung floor and mirrors, is far too small. Facilities at the Todmorden centre are poor, and there are insufficient book resources and no digital imaging software. Printmaking equipment is poor at both centres and there is insufficient technical support in media, art, design and photography. Technical support is good in 3D and for the IT suite. Some teaching rooms, and the film studio, are very cold and lack natural light. Access to the film studio control gallery for students with disabilities is inadequate.

99. In most areas, the level of resources meets the needs of existing students, although in media improvements in resources recommended in the previous inspection have still not been implemented.

100. Students speak very highly of the staff, many of whom are practising artists, designers or performers and all of whom voluntarily put in many hours overtime in support of their students.

101. Student work is regularly assessed and students are given regular oral feedback on their

progress. The quality of written feedback is variable. Until recently, there was no standardised feedback form used across the curriculum area. Some written feedback is detailed, positive, and gives clear advice on how work may be improved, and interim assessments are done in the course of a project; some lacks sufficient detail and does not relate clearly to grading criteria. All students receive ongoing tutorial and course advice, and good use is made of group critical discussions on work. Students are aware of their progress and what is needed to improve. Regular tutorials are used effectively to monitor and inform students of their progress.

102. There is good provision of appropriate full-time and part-time courses for adult students, however, there are no foundation or level 1 courses, and insufficient level 2 full-time courses for students aged 16 to 18. Enrolment numbers have fallen sharply, by over 50% on most courses.

103. The Todmorden centre has developed excellent adult community provision in response to local need, and offers progression from pre-access through to HE in a community where travel to other towns is difficult. The same courses run at the main centre, where there are also successful access to performing arts courses. However, there is poor uptake on these courses by the students from minority ethnic communities and the college is trying to design courses which might attract new students from these communities.

104. Learning support is well planned and delivered sensitively and discretely. All students are screened for their preferred learning style and learning support needs on entry to the college. Where necessary, they are assigned to a learning support tutor. One support worker attends a computer-aided design course to enable him to better support a dyslexic student on a graphic design course.

105. Each student has a course tutor who also acts as a subject tutor. This enables the advice given to be either pastoral or academic. Individual targets, which are agreed on entry to the course, are monitored by the student in the individual learning file. Tutorial support for performing arts students on the access courses is largely given informally, with progress reviews and target setting taking place in production meetings. Good advice on careers or HE applications comes from the course tutors, who are supported by a careers advisor.

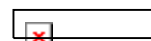
### ***Leadership and management***

106. Management of the provision is satisfactory and there are some good features. Weekly team meetings between staff and the programme manager are used to address problems and to identify appropriate actions. There are regular course planning and review and evaluation meetings. The outcomes of this are used to inform the self-assessment report and action plans. A range of staff development activities is available and part-time teachers are paid to attend. Imaginative timetabling of staff from all disciplines enables teachers to teach to their strengths across all courses. Communication is a strong feature within the faculty teams and there is much sharing of good practice.

107. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Materials used for performance are culturally diverse and students are cast according to their strengths in open auditions. The number of students from minority ethnic communities is low in the visual arts disciplines, but better in graphics and media. There have been discussions with community leaders on the provision of courses for minority ethnic groups, but this has not yet resulted in any changes to the course offer.

108. Staff are able to get access to and to use accurate retention and pass rate information. Recent internal lesson observations have been effective in bringing about improvement and the accuracy of judgements are validated by external advisers.

### **English, languages and communications**





Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### ***Strengths***

- innovative approaches to teaching and learning in GCSE English
  
- effective monitoring of students' work.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on many courses
  
- poor and declining retention rates on most courses
  
- insufficient use of IT in teaching and learning
  
- ineffective programme management.

### ***Scope of provision***

109. There are 668 student enrolments on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3. Numbers continuing from AS-level courses on to GCE A-level courses are low and GCE A-level English literature and language and literature students are taught together. Students aged 16 to 18, who have previously achieved a grade D, take a one-year GCSE course. Students with lower grades take adult literacy at levels 1 and 2 and have an opportunity to develop the skills they will need to progress to GCSE the following year. Adult students take diagnostic tests to determine whether they should take GCSE English or a basic skills course. Of the 59 students aged 16 to 18, half are taking GCSE English language and the remainder are taking the one-year adult literacy course. Some 26 students take AS-level English language and literature, the only AS-level English course offered by the college. Only 11 students have continued to GCE A-level from the 42 who started the AS-level courses the previous year. There are 423 students aged 16 to 18 and 123 adults taking communication key skills courses which are offered at levels 1, 2 and 3. Sign language courses at levels 1 and 2 are offered in the evening.

### ***Achievement and standards***

110. Pass rates are low on many courses. Pass rates of 100% were achieved by students in 2003 in AS-level and GCE A-level English literature and AS-level English language. The pass rate for AS-level English language and literature, the course for which most students were entered, was poor, at 36% below the national average. On all courses, the percentage of students achieving the higher grades is significantly below national averages. Pass rates at A\* to C grades on GCSE English language are very low. Pass rates in communication key skills at both levels 2 and 3 are low.

Retention rates are below national averages on most advanced level English courses and on communication key skills at level 3. Retention rates in GCSE English language are regularly well above the national average.

111. Students produce lively and imaginative original writing at GCSE and advanced level. Second-year GCE A-level students display impressively detailed knowledge of literary history talking confidently about Aristotle and 18th century philosophers. In writing about language, many advanced level students identify linguistic features rather than analysing their use. Written work produced by students on the pre-GCSE course often lacks ambition and is dull. At 72%, the average attendance for the week of the inspection is below the national average.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in English, languages and communications, 2002 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
GCSE English language A* to C	2	No. of starts	73	52
		% retention	86	79
		% pass rate	41	37
Communication key skills	2	No. of starts	286	127
		% retention	26	80
		% pass rate	55	19
AS-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	*	18
		% retention	*	67
		% pass rate	*	50
AS-level English literature	3	No. of starts	22	13
		% retention	86	69
		% pass rate	63	100
GCE A-level English language	3	No. of starts	21	10
		% retention	95	80
		% pass rate	90	88
Communication key skills	3	No. of starts	21	41
		% retention	81	71
		% pass rate	6	14

Source: ISR (2001/02), college (2002/03)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

112. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In some lessons, students are engaged and self-motivated, and stimulated by lively and innovative teaching. Practical group work is used to bring theory alive. For example, in analysing instructional language in a key skills communication lesson, groups of students played children's games before being asked to write appropriate instructions. In advanced level lessons, students are highly motivated by lively delivery and a variety of learning activities. In one English lesson, however, key terms had not been sufficiently clarified by the teacher and the students' subsequent analysis of narrative structure revealed some confusion in their understanding. In a few lessons, students are unclear what is expected of them and make little progress because of poor lesson planning and insufficiently detailed schemes of work. In most

GCSE classes, group work is well structured and organised and stimulates learning. Students have their own mini-whiteboards which are used effectively for recapping exercises at the start of a lesson. In classes where there are a mix of adults and students aged 16 to 18, teachers successfully include all the students and use the diversity of the group to enrich the learning of all. In pre-GCSE classes, students are rarely challenged and have a passive role in their learning. A number of disconnected activities confuse rather than engage the students. Very little use is made of ILT by staff or students to support teaching and learning. ILT was only used in one lesson. In one lesson, students were writing their curriculum vitae, and learning would have been enhanced through the use of IT.

113. English and communication rooms are bright and spacious and a combination of current student work and commercially produced posters give them a positive subject identity. While there is good access to computers for individuals and small groups across the college, there are few computers in classrooms. There are no smart boards or data projectors in the curriculum area and IT spaces suitable for whole class teaching can not be booked.

114. Simple, clearly written tracking sheets are used effectively by teachers to record the building of students' key skills' portfolios. There is good communication between students, key skills staff and course tutors. GCE A-level English coursework is monitored effectively, however, students do not receive a uniform experience in terms of formal progress reviews and target setting. While some staff conduct regular, formal, progress reviews, others use informal systems which are less rigorous and effective. On the pre-GCSE adult literacy course, there is no review system in place. Marking of, and feedback on, students' work is also varied in quality. The best practice is found in GCSE English where detailed and constructive comments are attached to a grid setting out the assessment criteria.

115. The area offers flexible provision at levels 1, 2 and 3 for full-time students aged 16 to 18 and part-time adults. Numbers continuing on to GCE A2 courses are low, and GCE A2 English literature, and language and literature students are taught together to make the group viable. Supportive arrangements are in place to enable students aged 16 to 18 with low grades in GCSE to prepare thoroughly before entering for the examination again. Adult students take diagnostic tests to determine whether they are ready for a GCSE English or a basic skills course. A combined AS-level English language and literature is now the only English course offered by the college. The delivery of key skills is well organised and integrated into course schemes of work. There are regular classes to prepare students for end tests and to support them in portfolio building. The area also runs sign language courses at levels 1 and 2 in the evening. There are a number of theatre trips available to students which enrich their learning.

116. Students feel well supported by their course teachers. The limited additional learning support available is mainly concentrated on level 1 students. All students take a diagnostic test on entry and additional learning support is offered to students identified as needing it. Learning assistants work alongside teachers in level 1 classes, but in two lessons there was little evidence of effective communication between the teacher and the assistant. There is no system to refer advanced level students, other than those with dyslexia, for additional support. Academic tutorials are built into the advanced level timetable. Teachers are very supportive of part-time adult students who miss lessons, and make direct contact with them at home to enable them to keep up to date with the course.

### ***Leadership and management***

117. Programme management has been ineffective and uncoordinated. While there are some examples of good practice, key systems and policies are not applied systematically. Individual staff write their own schemes of work which are variable in quality. A new adult literacy course for pre-GCSE students was introduced in 2003 without a scheme of work for the year having been produced and this has created significant difficulties for new part-time staff who have been appointed in the middle of the year. Curriculum review meetings enable the team to develop the self-assessment report and action plan. The action plan and key pass rate data are regularly monitored by the college's quality committee. While the system itself is rigorous, the self-assessment report does not sufficiently analyse key weaknesses and some of the national average data used are inaccurate. There is no readily available statistical analysis of retention rates. The self-assessment report makes

no reference to student views and none of the data is benchmarked against national averages. Retention rate data, which are 10% below the national average, are quoted as supporting a judgement listed as a strength. The action plan contains insufficient practical detail of how improvements are to be achieved. The college has recognised weaknesses in the management of the area and has established a programme manager post to address them. Course teachers have little understanding of value added and do not use it coherently. All staff have attended training sessions on equal opportunities. In their choice of literary texts, teachers attempt to reflect the cultural diversity of their students. The performance of students from minority ethnic groups has been analysed, but there is no evidence of any actions resulting from this analysis. Equal opportunities are included in the scheme of work for tutorials. The learning styles of students are identified in personal tutorial sessions, but these preferences are not systematically passed on to course tutors.

### **English for speakers of other languages**

Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good retention and pass rates
  
- good development of student computer, listening and spoken skills
  
- good teaching and learning
  
- effective tutorials on college-based ESOL programme
  
- effective monitoring of attendance and punctuality
  
- good management of the programme.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient high-quality feedback to students
  
- insufficient opportunities for students to gain language and vocational qualifications at the same time

- o ineffective progression advice and guidance.

### **Scope of provision**

118. There are 367 students attending ESOL courses. Just over half of the students are based at the main site. Courses are also offered at six community venues where there are separate classes for men and women. Most of the students attending courses in the community are female and over half of those attending courses at the main college site are male. Just over 30% of the students are refugees and asylum seekers. Over 100 of the ESOL students also attend numeracy classes. The majority of the courses are at entry level with a few level 1 courses. The classes are run for 35 weeks of the year and students can join at any time during the year. Two evening classes are offered at the main site.

### **Achievement and standards**

119. Retention rates are good and improving. There is good achievement of qualifications. All students work toward external examinations and pass rates are above the national average. Attendance and punctuality rates are high and have improved considerably since the previous inspection. Progression rates to other courses are good and about 16% of the students who attended ESOL classes in 2002/03 have progressed to other vocational courses, mainly in ICT. Over 55% have progressed to an ESOL course at a higher level.

120. The standard of the students' work is good. There is a successful and concerted effort to develop students' learning skills. Many of the students have no previous experience of learning even from their mother countries. Students develop good listening and spoken skills and they are making good progress in reading and writing. Their folders are well organised. Students on numeracy courses learn the language of mathematics and develop their numerical skills to a good standard. Students are using their newly acquired language skills to benefit themselves in their daily lives both at work and at home. They also gain confidence and self-esteem and are developing independent study skills. There is effective development of students' computer skills and a quarter of all teaching on ESOL programmes is delivered through ICT. This enhances the learning experience and opens a whole new world of learning and employment opportunities for them. It also enables the students to word process their work which is often displayed in the classroom.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in English for speakers of other languages, 2002 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Pitman's basis ESOL (short)	entry	No. of starts	11	36
		% retention	73	94
		% pass rate	88	76
Pitman's basis ESOL (1 year)	entry	No. of starts	29	8
		% retention	52	88
		% pass rate	73	71
Pitman's elementary ESOL (1 year)	entry	No. of starts	19	5
		% retention	89	80
		% pass rate	94	50
Pitman's higher ESOL (short)	1	No. of starts	9	24
		% retention	67	92

		% pass rate	83	77
OCN basis ESOL (short)	entry	No. of starts	*	132
		% retention	*	77
		% pass rate	*	55
OCN basis ESOL	entry	No. of starts	*	279
		% retention	*	66
		% pass rate	*	82

Source: ISR (2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

### **Quality of education and training**

121. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers produce well-designed schemes of work and plan their lessons carefully so that they meet the needs of all the students. They use a variety of teaching methods and include activities that will develop reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Teachers challenge and inspire students and lessons progress at a good pace. There are positive working relationships in the classes. Lateness and punctuality issues are handled fairly and firmly. The students work well in groups and help each other in a supportive learning environment. They also develop learning skills such as effective group work and presentation skills. The standard of students' work is generally good.

122. The resources are satisfactory overall. The rooms are well decorated and include good display materials as well as students' work. Posters are displayed which reflect the cultural diversity of the students. The accommodation at some of the community centres is mostly satisfactory, but there are shortcomings. For example, in one centre the room was not big enough for group work and in another there were two classes in one big hall which adversely affected the learning. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced staff. Teachers use a satisfactory range of learning materials including tape recorders and CD players. Teachers are using the 'Skills for Life' learning materials effectively. Handouts are well produced and colour photographs and culturally appropriate worksheets enhance the students' learning experience. Bilingual dictionaries and simplified readers are not available to some ESOL students.

123. The assessment and monitoring of students' progress are satisfactory. The initial assessment is thorough and identifies the students' level of ability correctly and students are allocated to a course at an appropriate level. Students are given good oral feedback in lessons, but the quality of feedback on written work is patchy. Feedback on standard assignments is satisfactory, but most students do much more written work than the teachers set and this work is not always marked. When it is marked, it does not give sufficient high-quality feedback to enable students to correct their mistakes.

124. The courses meet the requirements of the examination boards. All students work towards nationally accredited qualifications. Students are developing their ICT skills alongside their language skills, but there are no vocationally linked courses. The students do not have the opportunity to gain language and vocational qualifications at the same time. The gap between entry level ESOL classes and entry level vocational qualification is too big for many students. There is a limited number of evening classes. Some of the courses are not meeting all the needs of the students. For example, a group of male students want to develop their literacy skills in order to get a job, but their course does not include sufficient form-filling and job-related language development. There is no weekend provision and no family learning or work-based ESOL courses.

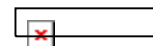
125. Support for students is satisfactory. Pastoral support is good especially for refugees and asylum seekers. The students benefit from good crèche facilities. There are effective tutorials to support students and develop their study skills on an individual basis. Effective attendance and punctuality strategies have improved attendance, punctuality and poor performance. Induction is

satisfactory and meets the needs of the students. Learning link tutors give satisfactory support to the identified students in class. There is no effective career guidance and advice for ESOL students particularly in the community. Many of the students have aspirations to enter professions and have good skills acquired in their mother countries. They are referred to ESOL classes, but their long-term aspirations and goals are not identified and planned for. Most students are expected to improve their language skills first and then move on to vocational courses.

### ***Leadership and management***

126. Leadership and management of the programme are good. The staff team are given clear direction and the management style is open and consultative. Quality assurance is good and course reviews are thorough. All staff are regularly observed teaching and they are given helpful feedback. Staff development is good and is planned to address any issues identified in lesson observations. The schemes of work and lesson plans are standardised which helps tutors to plan their lessons. There is good professional support for all tutors. All staff have received equal opportunities training. They celebrate cultural diversity and promote equal opportunities in their teaching. Single sex classes are offered in response to community need and bilingual link tutors have been appointed to support students. Communications within the team are good and there are good partnerships with community organisations.

### **Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates
  
- much good teaching and learning
  
- good student attainment and progression
  
- effective academic and pastoral support
  
- good leadership and management.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient availability and use of IT.

### ***Scope of provision***

127. There is a comprehensive range of 17 accredited courses from pre-entry to entry level 3. The range of programmes includes options to study, essential skills, lift off and transition from school. The courses are offered up to 48 weeks of the year. The purpose of the courses is to develop a range of skills such as independence, personal, social, literacy, numeracy, life and work. There are currently 68 students enrolled on courses and those on full-time courses are predominantly aged 19 or over.

### ***Achievement and standards***

128. There were satisfactory retention rates on most courses in 2002/03. Pass rates were mostly good on the independent living skills and the profile of achievement courses in 2002/03. Of the 33 students who were enrolled on programmes in 2002/03, 23 progressed to FE, training or employment. The students are successfully developing a range of personal and vocational skills that are increasing their confidence. They are becoming more socially responsible and have increasing respect for others. Student attainment is good and students are completing tasks successfully. The standard of the students' work is mostly good and students are aware of their achievements. The average attendance for the current year is 91%.

### ***Quality of education and training***

129. There is much good teaching and learning and the students are well motivated, interested and confident. Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning approaches that motivate the students and enable them to complete tasks successfully. Teachers have good behaviour management skills. The better lessons are well planned and managed and take account of the individual learning needs of students. In a home management lesson, students were encouraged to choose whether to go shopping, tidy the flat, iron clothes or do the washing. Students had to plan their time effectively, work as a team and work to a deadline. All the students completed their tasks successfully and sat down together to eat what had been bought at the shop. Lesson plans and schemes of work are closely linked to individual learning plans. This ensures that the targets on the individual learning plans are met. The literacy and numeracy targets for all students are set, monitored and tracked. These targets are reviewed in both vocational lessons and in specific literacy and numeracy lessons. In one numeracy lesson, the teacher successfully linked an earlier woodwork activity to an exercise in buying products off the Internet. Students are able to see the link between what they are producing in practical lessons and how much it would cost them to produce commercially viable products.

130. ICT facilities are not available in most classrooms and ICT is not used sufficiently in lessons. There is limited specialist hardware and software both within the section and the learning zones. In one lesson, a student could not send an e-mail to a friend due to lack of appropriate specialist software and hardware. The accommodation is spacious and consists of a flat that is used effectively to develop independent living skills. The section is adequately staffed and currently there are 18 teaching staff and 30 learning assistants. Staff are suitably qualified or they have had appropriate staff awareness training. Most staff have attended literacy and numeracy training.

131. The accommodation for dyslexia support is inappropriate and in an unsuitable area of the college. The accommodation is small and students have to go through staff areas to get to the room. It is situated in the staff accommodation area of support staff. The quality is poor the room is cramped.

132. Assessment and monitoring of student progress are satisfactory. The systematic approach to monitoring students' achievements enables staff and students to identify added value and distance travelled. The students have personal and social targets and targets for literacy and numeracy. These are monitored, assessed and recorded on all courses. Specific, individual, vocational targets are identified and monitored on the essential skills course. However, specific individual vocational



targets are not set for students on the 'options to study' and the 'transition' courses. It is therefore difficult for students and staff to assess what has been achieved.

133. There is good attainment and progression for students. The progression routes for students are well planned and managed effectively by the course managers and course teams. The students progress from pre-entry through to entry level 3, and on to other college courses, training or employment. Students have the opportunity to be involved in a number of enterprise activities such as trolley shop, helping hands, café, crafty hands, Pennine Magpie, woodwork and the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The students operate the café successfully and it has been registered as a business. Students on the essential skills course take orders for food and beverages and then prepare refreshments and serve customers. Students on the options to study course produce high-quality wooden objects for the garden such as bird tables and planters which are then sold by the students who develop their vocational, personal and social skills.

134. There is good academic and pastoral support for students. Personal tutors are allocated to support students with either learning needs or personal issues. One student with severe emotional difficulties received effective support from the tutor enabling her to attend a drama workshop. The workshop gave her the confidence to consider drama as an option for the future. Access workers support students as and when required enabling students to achieve their personal targets. The induction process helps students settle in to their programme quickly and prepares them for college life. The students receive good advice and guidance from the college, Connexions, social services and schools. The support for students who have been identified as dyslexic is effective.

### ***Leadership and management***

135. Leadership and management are good. Challenging targets are set for recruitment, retention and pass rates and they are monitored effectively. All teaching staff are involved in the production of the self-assessment report through course review, course evaluation and dedicated meetings. The self-assessment report for 2002/03 adequately reflects the provision. There is good communication and regular team meetings. Staff are appraised annually. Appraisal is effective and highlights staff development needs which are then addressed. Equality and diversity are actively promoted throughout the section. Students are encouraged to question their own attitudes and to respect others and themselves. Both students and staff challenge inappropriate behaviour and language.

### **Literacy and numeracy and entry to employment,**

Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

#### ***Strengths***

- improved retention rates in literacy and numeracy
  
- good teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy
  
- good student attainment in literacy and numeracy
  
- rigorous assessment in literacy and numeracy

- effective leadership and management in literacy and numeracy
- good progression into employment from the E2E programme.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates on national tests in basic literacy and numeracy in 2003
- poor pass rates on the E2E programme
- weak management of the E2E programme.

### ***Scope of provision***

136. A wide range of courses is offered in literacy and numeracy from entry level to level 2. The courses lead to qualifications from the OCN or they prepare students for the new national adult literacy and numeracy tests. Many courses are available during both the daytime and the evening and at several learning centres in the community. The E2E programme is sub-contracted to Calderdale College by Huddersfield Technical College as part of a broader offer by a consortium of FE providers. This provision is housed in the main Calderdale College site. At the time of the inspection, there were 624 students enrolled in the area, 584 on literacy and numeracy courses and 40 on the E2E programme. There were 376 students enrolled on literacy courses and 208 on numeracy courses at various levels.

### ***Achievement and standards***

137. There are improved retention rates in 2003 in literacy and numeracy. Retention rates on all major courses have been close to or above national average rates in the past two years. Achievement is generally satisfactory in literacy and numeracy, but the pass rates in the national adult tests in basic literacy and basic numeracy were below the national average in 2002/03. The college has implemented strategies to address this, but at the time of the inspection it was too early to judge their effectiveness.

138. The retention rate on the E2E programme is satisfactory, but pass rates are poor. At the time of the inspection, 27% of students had achieved since September 2003 and 30% of students had left without completing the minimum aims of the course. There is good progression into employment and since September 2003, 17% of students have progressed into full-time employment.

139. In literacy and numeracy, attainment is often good and many students acquire necessary skills. For example, in an adult basic literacy lesson, level 2 students demonstrated a good grasp of different text types and styles of writing and they showed good writing skills in changing the style of a fairy tale to that of a tabloid newspaper.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in literacy and numeracy and entry to employment, 2002***

to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003
Achievement tests - literacy (1 year)	1	No. of starts	125	6
		% retention	79	100
		% pass rate	93	100
Individual learning programme - English (Calderdale College)	1	No. of starts	123	125
		% retention	51	85
		% pass rate	71	100
Individual learning programme - mathematics (Calderdale College)	1	No. of starts	118	113
		% retention	47	63
		% pass rate	58	100

Source: ISR (2002), college (2003)

### **Quality of education and training**

140. There is good teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. Lesson plans are clearly written and learning objectives are shared with students. The lesson plans often incorporate a range of different activities to enhance learning, including good use of ICT. For example, in a literacy lesson, entry level students first learnt how to recognise adjectives, and then took part in an oral activity in which they described a series of pictures using as many adjectives as possible. They then completed an interactive adjective quiz on the Internet and finally used word processing to begin a piece of original writing.

141. Teachers have a lively and humorous approach which fosters good relationships with students and creates a purposeful learning atmosphere. On the few occasions where there is potentially challenging behaviour by students, the situation is well managed by the teacher to avoid disruption of other students' learning. Teachers make good use of questions to check that students are learning effectively and to ensure that all students are involved in lessons.

142. Resources are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy. Teachers are well qualified and have been trained in the literacy and numeracy core curriculum. Classrooms are of a suitable size both at the main college site and in community learning centres and most have attractive displays including students' work. There is good access to computers with a range of software to support teaching and learning. Teaching rooms are well stocked with reference books such as dictionaries and thesauruses. However, there is an insufficient range of books in the learning resource centre suitable for adults with a low reading age. Two groups sometimes share a large learning area without adequate screening and the learning in each group is disrupted by noise from the other. Resources for the E2E programme are unsatisfactory. Teachers have not yet completed training in the literacy and numeracy core curriculum. Accommodation is adequate, but there is little computer software to support teaching and learning in the area and few appropriate videos to assist students in clarifying their ideas about the requirements of particular areas of employment.

143. Assessment in literacy and numeracy is rigorous. Written work is thoroughly marked, with all significant errors corrected, and returned with helpful feedback which clearly indicates areas for improvement. Information from initial assessment is used to build students' individual learning plans and to set learning targets.

144. An extensive range of courses have been established in literacy and numeracy in response to the needs of the local community. However, the consortium has failed to ensure that the curriculum offered on the E2E programme is sufficiently broad and few students enrol on courses in vocational areas.

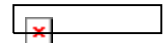
145. There is good support for students on discrete literacy and numeracy courses. The literacy and numeracy support offered to students in vocational areas is good, but students on the E2E programme do not receive this support.

**Leadership and management**

146. The leadership and management of literacy and numeracy are good. The self-assessment report clearly indicates actions to be taken, by whom, and within what timescale. Progress towards these targets is regularly reviewed. Staff are involved in the forward planning process and communication is good. Staff meet regularly and they share good practice very effectively. There is an extensive staff development programme and teachers have good access to internal and external training. Schemes of work are clear, detailed and highlight opportunities to address the different needs of individual students. All staff have been trained in the new equal opportunities legislation and include the promotion of equality and diversity in their teaching. Staff appraisal is rigorous, setting achievable targets which are regularly monitored and there is a wide-ranging lesson observation programme, although grades awarded by the college are higher than those of inspectors.

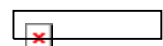
147. The E2E programme is managed separately from literacy and numeracy provision. The management arrangements of the E2E programme through the consortium are weak. There is no comprehensive monitoring of employers' equal opportunities policies for students on work placements and links with the Connexions service are inadequate and are not formalised. The reviewing process lacks sufficient rigour and thoroughness. There is no lesson observation programme. Not all students are assessed to ascertain their learning style preferences and a skills profile is not assembled for each student.

**Part D: College data**



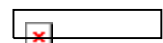
**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age**

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	23	25
2	26	21
3	33	13
4/5	0	1
Other	18	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>



*Source: provided by the college in 2004*

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age**



Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	159	277	4
Land-based provision	0	0	0
Construction	82	182	2
Engineering, technology and manufacture	5	98	1
Business administration, management and professional	164	1,715	16
Information and communication technology	242	2,691	24
Retailing, customer service and transportation	3	29	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	200	700	7
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	119	280	3
Health, social care and public services	383	882	10
Visual and performing arts and media	179	404	5
Humanities	189	148	3
English, languages and communication	132	130	2
Foundation programmes	501	2,164	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,358</b>	<b>9,700</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2004

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	570	489	376	3,384	2,690	1,484
	Retention rate %	55	71	79	66	71	74
	National average %	76	75	76	73	69	70
	Pass rate %	79	71	74	85	77	80
	National average %	65	69	71	66	68	71
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	732	746	591	2,175	2,205	1,756

	Retention rate %	60	73	70	65	77	73
	National average %	72	70	72	70	68	68
	Pass rate %	67	66	66	71	72	77
	National average %	67	69	71	64	68	72
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	691	999	1,046	1,728	1,251	1,195
	Retention rate %	51	68	72	56	66	65
	National average %	67	71	77	69	68	70
	Pass rate %	74	80	63	71	69	73
	National average %	75	77	79	66	69	75
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	100	101	69
	Retention rate %	*	*	*	41	50	59
	National average %	66	73	71	67	67	67
	Pass rate %	*	*	*	73	64	49
	National average %	65	54	53	58	55	56

Note: summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared with national averages for colleges of the same type (that is general FE/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1999 to 2001: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.

2. College rates for 2000 to 2002: College ISR.

\* numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

**Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level**

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	66	32	2	92
Level 2 (intermediate)	59	34	7	68
Level 1 (foundation)	58	33	9	33
Other sessions	63	31	7	59
<b>Totals</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>252</b>

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