



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards  
in Education

## Westminster Kingsway College

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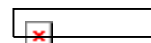
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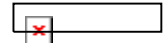
**Basic information about the college**



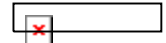
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Name of college:	Westminster Kingsway College
Type of college:	General further education
Principal:	Richard Williams
Address of college:	The Vincent Square Centre Vincent Square London SW1P 2PD
Telephone number:	020 7802 8354
Fax number:	020 7931 9480
Chair of governors:	Fra Cooke
Unique reference number:	130421
Name of reporting inspector:	Bernard McDonald
Dates of inspection:	10-20 May 2004

## Part A: Summary



### Information about the college



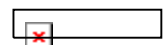
Westminster Kingsway College is a large general further education (FE) college in central London. The college was formed from the merger of Westminster and Kingsway colleges in September 2000. The college is based in three London boroughs: Camden, City of Westminster and Wandsworth. The college operates on eight main sites across these boroughs (four in Camden, three in City of Westminster and one in Wandsworth). The college also makes extensive provision in the community through a network of some 60 centres, mainly located in Camden, which it uses in partnership with the local education authority (LEA), the libraries service, social services and community organisations. The college is funded by London Central Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

The college enrolls approximately 19,000 students annually, of whom two-thirds study on a part-time basis. Of the total, approximately 15% are students aged 16 to 18. Over 75% of students are over the age of 21. There are a small number of work-based learners.

The college recruits a high percentage of students from disadvantaged areas. A significant number of students speak English as an additional language. More than half of the college's students define their ethnic origins as being other than white; there are over 60 nationalities and 54 different languages spoken by students. Some 58% of students are female.

The college offers courses that lead to a wide range of vocational, academic, professional and technical qualifications. It has some 700 enrolments on higher education (HE) programmes. Two-thirds of the college's enrolments are at national vocational qualification (NVQ) 2 or below. The proportion of basic education students, including many refugees and asylum seekers, is high, at 36% of total enrolments. Located in central London, the college recruits students from a wide geographical area. The college mission requires it to "support all of its students in realising their ambitions as learners within a diverse and fully inclusive educational community". The college is committed to maximising the "potential for learning and achievement" of every one of its students.

### How effective is the college?



Westminster Kingsway College has made good progress since it was inspected by Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate in May 2002, when it was judged to be inadequate. At that time, five curriculum areas were judged to be unsatisfactory. Provision is now good in one area and satisfactory in all of the other areas. Good progress has been made in work-based learning. The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

#### **Key strengths**

- very high retention and pass rates on level 1 courses
  
- significant improvements in most retention and pass rates since the last inspection

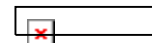
- successful widening of participation in education and training
- good support for individual students
- effective strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- strong leadership with clear strategic direction
- outstanding provision in hospitality.

***What should be improved***

- pass rates for adults at level 2
- the quality of teaching and learning in some curriculum areas
- students' attendance and punctuality
- the use of information and learning technology (ILT) to enhance learning
- the quality of accommodation
- access for people with restricted mobility
- the provision of key skills.

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

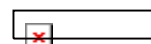


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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 on part-time vocational courses and in general certificate of education advanced-level (GCE A-level) biology are high. Pass rates on some level 3 full-time courses are low. There is poor punctuality and attendance and insufficient use is made of information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance learning. Students are well supported. Changes to bring about improvements have been effectively managed. Data for the current year indicate several improvements in retention and/or achievement.
Business administration, management and professional	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are high pass rates on many courses. Much of the teaching is good, but there is insufficient use of ILT. Students generally produce good written assignments. The range of part-time professional courses is narrow. There is effective team management of full-time business courses. Tutors lack commercial up-dating.
Information and communications technology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are high retention and pass rates for full-time students, however, achievements remain unsatisfactory in some part-time courses. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but some lessons fail to inspire students. Assessment is used very well to encourage full-time students' progress. Managers have been effective in improving attendance, retention and pass rates.
Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel	<b>Good.</b> Hospitality <b>outstanding.</b> Work-based learning <b>good.</b> Students' achievements in hospitality, leisure and tourism are outstanding. There are low pass rates in advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE). Most of the teaching in hospitality is very good or excellent but insufficient checks are made on students' learning in travel. Resources for learning in hospitality are good. There are outstanding enrichment opportunities and students make very good progress to employment in hospitality. There is strong and highly effective curriculum management.
Health and social care	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are high retention and pass rates on the general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) foundation course but pass rates on the NVQ level 2 early years and GNVQ intermediate courses are below national averages. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection, but punctuality continues to be poor. Arrangements for supporting students with additional needs are good and equality of opportunity is promoted effectively. Good practice is not shared sufficiently between curriculum teams.
Visual and performing arts	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Overall, retention and pass rates are high and students

and media	produce good standards of work on many courses. There is poor retention on some courses. There is much good teaching; however, poor attendance and punctuality adversely affect learning. There is poor accommodation and a lack of some specialist facilities. The range of courses is very wide. Implementation of some aspects of quality assurance is weak.
Humanities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The retention and pass rates are consistently high on access courses and the pass rates on most GCE and general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses are much improved. There is much good teaching which encourages students to contribute and develop their own responses, but many classes are adversely affected by poor attendance and punctuality. Students are well supported in their learning. There has been insufficient development in using ICT in learning on GCE courses, and some weaknesses in teaching and learning have not been addressed purposefully.
English and modern foreign languages	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention rates on a number of courses across the provision are low. There are high standards of oral work. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, with some particularly imaginative revision lessons. There is unsatisfactory teaching in a minority of foreign language lessons. The range of language courses offered is very broad, but the provision at level 2 in English is narrow. Assessment policies and procedures in English are good, but the learning needs of individual students are not always met.
English for speakers of other languages	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Students make good progress in developing their literacy skills. At higher levels they become independent learners and make good use of ICT. However, at lower levels, students' oral communication skills are weak. Effective assessment practice supports learning. The students are well supported in lessons and through tutorials.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Students' achievements are good. Project-based teaching is innovative. However, there is insufficient challenge for a minority of students within lessons. Individual learning plans are used consistently to ensure individual targets are achieved. There are insufficient opportunities for adults to progress to mainstream provision. Curriculum management is good.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There is good teaching on part-time adult literacy and numeracy courses. Few students achieve their key skills qualifications. Students who receive basic skills support are well supported and make good progress towards completing their individual learning plans. There is good support for dyslexic students. Management of key skills provision across the college is ineffective.

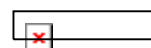
### How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college is well led. Governors and senior staff set a very clear agenda for change and improvement. This clear direction is understood and supported by staff. A good team spirit has been established across the college. Many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report have been addressed. There is now no unsatisfactory provision within the college. A thorough and systematic quality assurance system includes a very extensive

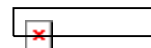
system is applied to both curriculum and business support teams. Management information has been unreliable but data on students' enrolment, attendance and achievements are now generally accurate. The data are used well by senior managers but some middle and junior managers are not sufficiently aware of the historical data or national averages when setting targets. The college is highly complex with a large proportion of part-time staff. However, there are many effective lines of communication. Some weaknesses within curriculum management include inconsistent use of internal verification, insufficient sharing of good practice and poor use of value added data. The policy on improving attendance and punctuality is not sufficiently effective. The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is good. Staff are well informed on equality of opportunity issues and a number of working groups have remits to ensure the college meets its statutory requirements. The appraisal process is well implemented. A comprehensive staff development plan helps the college achieve its strategic goals. Governors have a thorough understanding of the work of the college and are well aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Financial management is satisfactory even though a deficit is forecast for the current year. The college's cash holdings have declined. Space utilisation is poor and staffing costs are high.

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



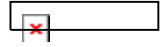
The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is good. It has a student population derived from areas with high levels of social deprivation. The cultural diversity of the city is reflected in the college student and staff populations. More than half of the college's students are from minority ethnic groups, which is considerably higher than the proportion in the local community. The college has a strong commitment to equality and diversity. There are clear rules of behaviour and good relationships are established. It is considered a safe place to work and study. The promotion of equal opportunities in the college is good. There is a range of policies and implementation plans that satisfactorily meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA), and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. However, it is recognised in the accommodation strategy that many of the college's buildings are inaccessible to students with impaired mobility. The equal opportunities forum, which is a sub-committee of the academic board, monitors progress with action plans. The college analyses student retention and achievement by gender and race. Questionnaires to students are also analysed by ethnic background. However, these analyses are not always followed up with clear action plans. The college's literacy and numeracy provision is satisfactory.

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



Guidance and support for students are good. Policies for supporting students are communicated effectively to all staff. Pre-entry advice and guidance is satisfactory. Induction programmes enable students to settle in well to the college. Individual learning needs are assessed well and students receive good additional support. This is particularly good for students with dyslexia. The tutorial system is very effectively planned, managed and operated. There is a good range of support measures for people with sensory impairments. Students, whether full time or part time, receive good pastoral support. Good procedures are in place for identifying and acting upon poor punctuality and/or non-attendance by students. Attendance is measured regularly and the effectiveness of resulting action analysed. Counselling services, supplied by specialist partners, are available but some students are unclear how to access this support. Satisfactory arrangements are in place for supporting people with mental health difficulties. A good range of financial support is available to students. They find this service valuable, although for some, applications take too long to process. Arrangements to support students' progress into employment or HE are satisfactory.

## 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***

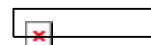
- tutorials and tutor support
  
- good teaching
  
- good learning resource centres
  
- visits abroad
  
- homework.

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

- the cost of food in the canteen
  
- facilities for sport and recreation
  
- the number of computers
  
- the availability and cleanliness of toilets
  
- the provision of lifts.

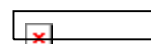


## Other information



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 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 LSC. The 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



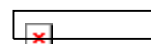
### Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

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	66	27	8
19+ and WBL*	64	31	5
Learning 16-18	62	30	8
19+ and WBL*	64	33	3

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. Summary data for students' achievements indicate that pass rates for most learners were above the most recent national averages for colleges of a similar type in 2002/03. Over the 3-year period to 2002/03, pass rates at level 1 rose significantly. At level 2, there has been some improvement, although, for adults, the pass rates have remained below the national average. At level 3, there have been significant improvements in pass rates for all age groups and pass rates are now above the national average. The retention of students at level 1 has improved over the last three years, significantly so for adults. Retention rates at level 2 have been fairly constant and they comfortably

unsatisfactory. Overall attendance in the lessons observed was 74%, which is just below the national average. However, this is an improvement on the figure recorded at the last inspection, in May 2002. Attendance was highest in the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, at 84%. By comparison, in English and modern foreign languages the attendance rate was 65%. Attendance by adults is slightly better than that by 16 to 18 year olds. Poor punctuality was noted in several areas of learning.

2. With the exception of the GCE and AVCE provision, the college does not make much use of measures that compare data about students' prior attainments with their results. The college is planning to make greater use of value added measures in vocational areas.

3. The separate reports on areas of learning in Part C provide more detail about students' achievements and standards reached on particular courses.

### ***Students aged 16 to 18***

4. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 have improved steadily over the past three years. They are well above the national average at levels 2 and 3. The improvement at level 3 has been significant, with pass rates moving above the national average from a point well below. There has been an overall improvement in the retention of students on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 in the three-year period ending in 2002/03, and they have remained comfortably above the national average throughout. By contrast, retention rates on short courses were below the national average until 2002/03. There has been an improvement in the retention and pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 at GCE A level, GNVQ levels 1 and 2, and NVQ levels 1 and 2. However, pass rates at advanced subsidiary level (AS level) for this age group remain below the national average and have fallen by comparison with 2001/02.

5. A good standard of students' work is produced in several areas. For example, in visual and performing arts and media, at level 1, the students produce highly expressive large-scale drawings. Performing arts students skilfully convey their feelings in drama sessions. In health and social care, students demonstrate considerable maturity in the way they can work both independently and in teams, and respect the views of their peers.

### ***Adult learners***

6. A significant majority of the students at the college are aged 19 and over and are attending part-time courses. At the time of the last inspection, pass rates were low. Over the last two years, pass rates have risen markedly at level 1 and they are now significantly above the national average. There has been insufficient improvement in pass rates at level 2 and the rates have remained below the national average for the last three years. However, pass rates at level 3 have risen steadily and now exceed the national average. There are around 11,000 short course enrolments each year. Pass rates have risen each year and now comfortably exceed the national average.

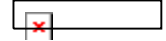
7. Retention rates have improved since the last inspection. At all levels, the rates of retention were above the national average in 2002/03. At levels 1 and 3 the rise in retention rates has been significant. Pass rates at AS level and in GCSEs remain below the national average and have fallen when compared with 2001/02. There have been consistent improvements in retention and pass rates on NVQ's at levels 1, 2 and 3 over the last three years.

8. In several curriculum areas inspectors found that students are achieving good standards in the work they produce. For example, in hospitality, students develop a high level of practical skill and produce menus and service levels of a professional standard. In humanities, many students write well and make positive contributions to discussions in lessons. In modern foreign languages, students speak confidently in the target language. However, in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) lessons, students are quite weak in their use of spoken English.

9. There are 18 young people and adults undertaking work-based learning, all in hospitality, working towards qualifications in food preparation and cookery. Since the original inspection, the rate of

completion of apprenticeship frameworks has improved significantly. In 2002/03, over three-quarters of those who started the foundation modern apprenticeship completed all aspects successfully.

## Quality of education and training



10. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors observed teaching, learning and attainment in 210 lessons, including 6 group tutorials and a number of one-to-one meetings and work-based learning sessions. Overall, in 65% of the lessons the teaching was good or better, in 28% it was satisfactory and in 7% it was unsatisfactory. This represents a 10% improvement in good or better teaching since the last inspection in May 2002. Teachers who are directly employed by the college in a part-time capacity were observed to have a higher proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and learning grades than their full-time and agency-supplied colleagues. Around 65% of teaching at entry level was graded good or better, 26% satisfactory and 9% unsatisfactory. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching of students aged 16 to 18 at entry level was higher than that for adults. At level one, 73% of the teaching was judged to be good or better and 7% unsatisfactory. No teaching of adult students was judged to be unsatisfactory and the proportion of good or better teaching to students aged 16 to 18 at level 1 was 76%. Teaching at level 2 was judged to be the least satisfactory by inspectors with just over half of these lessons graded as good or better, 32% satisfactory and 14% unsatisfactory. In this case, the teaching of adult students was substantially poorer than that of students aged 16 to 18. At level 3, two-thirds of the lessons were judged to be good or better, with almost one-third satisfactory and only 2% unsatisfactory. At this level the teaching of adult students was graded substantially higher than the teaching of students aged 16 to 18.

11. In 63% of the 210 lessons observed, students' learning was judged to be good or better; it was satisfactory in 31% of lessons and unsatisfactory in 6%. In a very small proportion of lessons, students' learning was judged to be outstanding. Students learned best and made most progress in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel and humanities lessons. Learning was least effective in literacy and numeracy lessons. Level 1 students made good progress and inspectors judged that learning was good or better in three-quarters of the lessons observed. Learning in around 64% of lessons at entry level and level 3 were graded good or better. However, students on level 2 courses make the least progress and only 54% of lessons were judged to be good or better.

12. The best lessons are well planned with clear objectives and the teaching takes into account the range of individual needs and abilities. The teachers are confident and have good subject knowledge and vocational expertise. Learning is best in lessons that have practical activities or contain a mixture of theory and practical work. The highest proportion of unsatisfactory learning was observed in theory-only lessons. Students also make good progress in learning-support sessions. The lessons are lively and interesting and ICT is successfully integrated into the activities. Teachers are careful to check learning and students make good responses to direct questions. Outstanding teaching and learning were observed in hospitality and sport. Very good links between theory and practical work are established and key skills are well integrated into everyday student activity. Students produce a high standard of work in practical sessions and students at level 3 successfully take on some responsibility for students at level 2. The teaching of literacy and numeracy, whether in-class or in a study centre, is relevant and well focused on students' needs. Energetic and innovative teaching takes place in lessons for students with learning difficulties and / or disabilities. For example, good group work in a numeracy pre-entry lesson was based around successful teacher-devised physical games. In several humanities lessons students were given good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Students made successful presentations and effective group work enabled them to prepare good responses to set tasks.

13. In the unsatisfactory lessons teachers often talk too much and there are insufficient opportunities for students to contribute or to reflect and develop their own ideas. Some schemes of work are inadequately planned and inspectors found evidence of some major topics not completed just prior

to public examinations. In some lessons, teachers fail to take enough account of the individual needs of students. Common features of these lessons are the failure of teachers to ask specific questions to individuals, to make regular checks on students' learning or to ensure that extension or catch-up materials are used to meet individuals' needs. Sometimes poor use is made of resources through lack of planning. For example, a video had to be completely rewound in a foreign language lesson. In addition, too little use is made of ILT to enthuse students and to allow them to research topics independently.

14. In most curriculum areas key skills provision is weak. Many students do not realise the relevance of key skills to their courses. The college has a clear policy on key skills but it is not consistently followed across the college. Students' attendance at key skills lessons is poor and successful outcomes are low. There is some unsatisfactory teaching of key skills at entry level and level 1. Teachers use a narrow range of strategies in their teaching and do not always have the skill to help students to improve. However, in some areas such as hospitality, key skills are well integrated into the vocational elements of courses.

15. Teachers are well qualified and experienced and most have degrees and teaching qualifications. Professional development has been planned to ensure an appropriate focus on improving teaching and learning, including ILT and teaching and learning strategies, to address the needs of students of differing abilities. There are insufficient opportunities for industrial updating and secondment. New staff are well supported through induction, training and mentoring. Technicians support practical work and learning very effectively. The college has reduced the proportion of part-time agency teaching staff over the last year. Just over one-third of staff belong to minority ethnic groups. This is higher than the comparable figure of one-quarter for the three local boroughs and is similar to the proportion of students belonging to minority ethnic groups.

16. There are good learning resources and classrooms are well-equipped. A wide range of teaching and learning resources is used by teachers. Students have good access to computers. Computer rooms are spacious with good resources, many having been refurbished and updated recently. Learning resource centres are well used and reflect the needs of students at each of the different sites. Specialist software and equipment is readily available for visually impaired students and students with dyslexia. Work-based learners train in good quality establishments with a wide range of work. The college has an ILT strategy, which is in the early stages of implementation. A virtual learning environment has recently been introduced. However, the use and development of ILT is underdeveloped in most subject areas.

17. The college has some poor-quality accommodation, in particular at Grays Inn, Regent's Park and Kentish Town. The quality of classrooms varies across the college, ranging from rooms which are well furnished and decorated to cramped rooms that are inadequate for the group size or subject. The science laboratories, dance studios, staff rooms and student support services have been refurbished within the last year to a high standard. Where classrooms are satisfactory, many do not offer a stimulating learning environment. The students' toilets, refectories and some public areas are uninviting and in a poor state of repair and decoration. There are few sports and exercise facilities for students. Room usage rates are low, and particularly poor at Battersea and Peter Street. Only two of the seven college sites are easily accessible for learners with restricted mobility. On some sites, learners with mobility difficulties cannot access classrooms, computer rooms, toilets, refectories, common rooms and learning resource centres. The college recognises many of these issues and has extensive plans and strategies to redevelop the college accommodation.

18. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress are good. The college's assessment policy is thorough and has been effectively communicated to all staff. A review of assessment has taken place at each site. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified and clear recommendations for improvement developed. There is good monitoring of students' progress on most courses. Planning of assessments has improved over the past two years. Students have a good understanding of the progress they are making. Written feedback on assignments and coursework is good on a number of courses and programmes. It is unsatisfactory in some modern foreign languages and travel and tourism courses. Initial assessment is satisfactory and students' learning styles and vocational skills are diagnosed on entry. However, tests for the literacy and numeracy needs of some students are inadequately interpreted. Internal verification is satisfactory, but some students are still unaware of

the appeals procedures. Parents or guardians of students aged 16 to 18 are informed of progress at parents' evenings and adult students feel that the feedback they receive is useful. Students feel that assessment is fair and carried out regularly on all courses.

19. The college provides a broad range of full-time and part-time courses for young people and adults, in most areas of learning. Courses are offered across the college's main sites, and in the local community. They range from entry level through to level 3 in many areas, and to level 4 in some. Specialist qualifications are available in a number of areas, for example, pharmacy technician courses, and at level 3 in visual and performing arts and hospitality. There is a particularly broad range of modern foreign languages. Franchise arrangements with 10 work-based learning providers extend this type of learning into areas that are not available within the college, for example, NVQ in beauty therapy and veterinary nursing. The college's publicity materials include a clear progression map for courses which explains the various levels and how students can progress through them.

20. The college works closely with employers, external agencies and other providers in developing courses to meet the specific needs of employers and other groups. Good school links have been established as part of the increased flexibility initiative. Just over 100 year 10 and 11 students, from 4 schools, are on first and second year programmes in NVQ level 1 in hospitality and vocationally related GCSE courses in leisure and tourism or applied business. The college contributes to two local post-16 consortia of schools and colleges that are working together to ensure a balanced and accessible GCE A-level provision for students in the area. Effective developments with three health service trusts have supported initiatives to develop literacy, numeracy and language skills in the workplace. The college's involvement in adult and community learning is extensive. Many of the developments identified support the college's intention to widen participation and inclusion.

21. A wide enrichment programme is offered in almost every area of learning. Students benefit from visits abroad, master-classes in specialist skills, participation in specialist festivals, work placements and links with universities. For example, a visit to Prague enabled national diploma students in information technology (IT) to develop their systems analysis skills. A number of programme areas offer work experience. In hospitality, this is particularly well developed. Successful work-placements have led to many students gaining high quality employment. A few areas of learning, for example, in science and maths, do not offer sufficient course-related enrichment activities for full-time students. The college has recently introduced a one-day 'try something new' programme in the spring term. Students were offered a wide range of opportunities, including some that are not usually found in the college, for example, street dancing and aromatherapy. However, some sessions were not well attended.

22. In business administration and professional studies, the range of professional courses has declined, and there are insufficient part-time specialist courses. There are few opportunities at level 2 in visual and performing arts, English and humanities. Progression to mainstream vocational courses for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities is limited. The college has examined its curriculum offer in the strategic review and development plan. The needs of ESOL students have been recognised through the 'Next Steps' programme which provides language support alongside vocational qualifications.

23. Guidance and support for full-time and part-time students are good. The college tutorial system provides clear guidelines for teachers and is well implemented across the college. Teachers are allocated sufficient time to monitor and support students' progress very effectively. Initial advice and guidance for students, when applying to the college or during enrolment, is satisfactory. Students report that induction arrangements help them settle into college well. There have been a number of staff development days dedicated to developing tutorial and guidance skills.

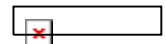
24. Student support is planned effectively. There is good support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students who receive additional support make good progress. There are drop-in centres that students can access to receive additional support and one-to-one support in lessons is also available. Child-care facilities and learning resource and IT centres provide good services to support learners. A child protection policy has been developed and progress has been made in improving the support for students with mental health difficulties. There is counselling support and welfare advice available, but on some sites students are unclear how to access

counselling.

25. The college has recently reviewed and substantially improved the system for monitoring attendance and punctuality. Managers regularly receive attendance and punctuality reports and the initiative is having a positive effect. Student attendance at the last full inspection was 67%. It has now improved to 74%. Students are not punctual on a number of courses and this disrupts the learning of others.

26. There is good financial support for students enduring hardship, who need childcare or help with living costs. Students find this service valuable. However, some students complain that applications are processed slowly and payments are late. Overall, good support is available for students. They feel they have access to the full range of support services.

## Leadership and management



27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college is well led. Governors and senior staff have set a very clear agenda for change and improvement. The management style is open and consultative. Since the merger between Westminster and Kingsway colleges in 2000, senior staff have worked together well and a good team spirit has been established throughout the college. Many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed through a well-considered post inspection action plan. For example, the teaching observation profile has improved and is now at the national average for colleges of FE. Similarly, the retention and pass rates have improved each year and are now comparable with the national averages. The proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds is high, at around three-quarters. When this is taken into account the college's retention and pass rates are above those for similar colleges.

28. The overall leadership of the college is strong. A very clear direction has been set which is understood and supported by most staff. Governors and senior staff have determined that the college will remain a general FE college with substantial provision at all levels from entry through to level 3. There is a need to reduce the number of buildings and the first part of an accommodation strategy includes closing a substantial building in Battersea. The risks have been carefully analysed and good relationships established with other providers to ensure that students in that area are not disadvantaged. There are also good links with the LSC and local schools in each of the three London boroughs in which the college operates. The main aims and objectives in the three-year development plan are achieving a satisfactory outcome of the re-inspection, rationalisation of the college's curriculum, improving retention and pass rates, securing financial stability and an operating surplus and implementing the estates rationalisation. The financial position of the college remains fragile with deficits forecast for the current year. Implementation of the estates strategy is at an early stage. Operational planning linked to these aims and objectives is thorough and effective. The post inspection action plan has been well implemented and there have been improvements in most areas of the college's activity.

29. There is a systematic and thorough quality assurance system. There are many areas of good practice. A very extensive internal lesson observation scheme has ensured that managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers. The internal lesson observation profile for the college matches the findings of the inspection team. However, there are examples within some curriculum areas where insufficient use is made of these findings. The quality assurance system is based on a thorough self-assessment regime. This is applied to curriculum and business support teams. The latter have quality standards against which they measure their performance. These self-assessments are not as well established as those within curriculum teams. The judgements made within the college's self-assessment report agree with the findings of the inspection team. Quality improvement plans are good and their implementation is carefully monitored by senior managers. Many areas have improved considerably since the last inspection. There is now no unsatisfactory provision within the college.

30. Management information has been unreliable and in many cases inaccurate. Much work has been undertaken to improve the situation. In previous years there has been considerable difficulty in agreeing the individual learner's record (ILR) data. This has resulted in considerable claw back of funds, exacerbating the college's financial position. In 2003/04, the ILR was agreed on time. Data on students' enrolments, attendance and their achievements are now generally accurate and are used effectively by senior managers to set targets, monitor progress and make appropriate decisions. There remains considerable inexperience in the use of these data by middle managers.

31. The management structure is well understood by all. The college is highly complex with sites spread over a wide geographical area of London. This, along with a high proportion of part-time staff, poses communications challenges. However, there are many effective lines of communication including extensive use of e-mail and a college-wide newsletter 'e-zine' which is available both as a paper document and on the college's intranet. Another useful process is the way staff are informed and asked for their views on changes planned for the college. A document circulated through the intranet called 'team talk' informs all staff of important aspects and they are able to give their views immediately. The response to these informative circulars is disappointing.

32. Curriculum management is satisfactory. All of the curriculum areas inspected have been judged to be at least satisfactory. Teams work effectively and there is a good spirit amongst staff. Many internal lesson observations have led to considerable improvement in the quality of the teaching. Course reviews and evaluation are implemented well across all of the areas. Internal verification (IV) is not so consistently applied and, although satisfactory, has some weaknesses. For example, in visual, performing arts and media, issues were identified through the IV process but were not followed up. In addition some assignment briefs were poor and others had not gone through the IV process. All teams have reviewed and improved the documentation used and meetings are well run. There is very good communication within curriculum teams. However, the sharing of good practice is not consistent across a number of teams and there is too much variation in the quality of teaching. Although attendance and punctuality are monitored carefully and staff are concerned about the implementation of the attendance policy, attendance and punctuality remain poor across the college. Measures which compare data about students' prior attainments with their results are not well developed or used.

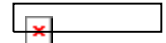
33. The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is good. Much of the student population derives from areas with high levels of social deprivation. The cultural diversity of the city is reflected in the college's student and staff populations. More than half of the college's students belong to minority ethnic groups, which is considerably higher than the proportion in the local community. The college has a strong commitment to equality and diversity and to widening participation. Staff are well informed on equal opportunity issues. A detailed equal opportunities monitoring report is produced annually. There are frequent bulletins on the disability discrimination act, and briefings to staff and governors from a number of working groups with remit to ensure that the college meets its statutory requirements. Clear rules of behaviour and good relationships are established. It is considered a safe place to work and study. There is a range of policies and implementation plans that satisfactorily meet the requirements of SENDA, and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. However, it is recognised in the accommodation strategy that many of the college's buildings are inaccessible to people with impaired mobility. The equal opportunities forum monitors progress with action plans. The college analyses student retention and achievement by gender and race. Questionnaires to students are also analysed by ethnic background. However, this analysis is not always followed up by effective action plans. The college's literacy and numeracy provision is satisfactory.

34. The appraisal process is well implemented. Approximately one-third of managers use a team appraisal approach followed by meetings with individuals. The remainder hold individual appraisal meetings with their staff. All new teachers are observed within the first few weeks. They comment on the constructive nature of the feedback received. Individual development plans are agreed and a number of objectives are set for the forthcoming year. The staff appraisal system identifies the staff development needs of individuals. A comprehensive staff development plan has been produced that helps to achieve the strategic goals of the institution. The development of middle managers and team leaders has been a high priority. Staff speak highly of the good development activities and the support they receive from the team responsible for the work.

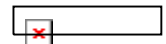
35. Governors set a clear direction for the college through their involvement in setting the mission and the strategic plan. Monitoring of the achievement of the strategic objectives is thorough and regular. Governors are all linked to particular sectors of the college. They have a thorough understanding of the work of the college. The quality and standards committee of the governing body scrutinises student data carefully and members have a good grasp of the main strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The self-assessment report identified that governors felt they did not have good links with students or sufficient information to evaluate the inclusiveness of the college. The latter has been partly met through a number of new reports they have received.

36. Financial management is satisfactory. A relatively new but experienced finance team produces detailed reports for senior managers and governors regularly. The college's financial health is categorised as group B. There were large operating deficits in 2001/02 and in 2002/03, of £4.2 million and £2.7 million respectively. It was originally planned to break even in 2003/04. However, the current forecasts indicate a shortfall of £800,000. The college's cash holdings have declined considerably since May 2002. This is particularly concerning in view of the planned substantial redevelopment of the estate. In 2002/03 the college achieved its LSC funding target for the first time since the merger. Although the accommodation strategy aims to improve space utilisation it currently remains very poor. A benchmarking exercise also found that the college's operating costs for the same volume of activity is greater than for other comparative colleges. This is partly due to the expensive accommodation but also because the staffing cost is high. The average class size of 9.4 observed during the inspection is below that seen nationally in colleges of FE. As a consequence of these findings it is not possible to state that the college is giving good value for money.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Science and mathematics



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

#### **Strengths**

- high retention rates on level 2 full-time courses and vocational part-time courses
  
- high pass rates on part-time vocational courses
  
- effective support for students
  
- good management of the curriculum area.



### **Weaknesses**

- low pass rates on a number of full-time advanced courses
  
- insufficient use of ILT in lessons
  
- poor attendance and punctuality.

### **Scope of provision**

37. About 300 students study mathematics and over 500 study science courses, including 150 students on specialist pharmacy courses. At the Gray's Inn Centre, there are courses in science and mathematics leading to GCSE and advanced level qualifications, including AS level, GCE A level, and the AVCE. There is also a foundation year course leading to a science degree course linked to City University. Students can study on GCSE mathematics courses at either of two college centres.

### **Achievement and standards**

38. The retention rate is above national averages on part-time vocational courses such as NVQ level 3 pharmacy. Retention improved in 2003 to 89% on the National Certificate science (pharmacy). In addition retention has been good on AS-level chemistry and GCE A-level biology over the past two years. In AVCE science the retention rates were poor over the past 3 years but have significantly improved with the current cohort of students.

39. The pass rates on part-time vocational courses are high. All national certificate science students who completed the course over the last two years passed the qualification. The pass rate and the proportion of high grades achieved by AS-level and GCE A-level biology students have also been above the national average over the past 2 years. Over the past 3 years AS-level chemistry pass rates were about 20% below the national average. In some subjects, current cohorts of students have pass rates on individual modules that are much improved over previous years. Adults perform better than students aged 16 to 18 on AS-level and GCE A-level courses in chemistry and mathematics but less well on biology and physics courses. Pass rates have been consistently low in GCSE mathematics over the past 3 years.

40. Most students are attentive in lessons. They are generally accurate in their calculations and can explain how they have achieved their results. Few make any systematic attempt to check their working and rely too heavily on the teacher and pre-prepared answer sheets. Science students work well in practical lessons. They operate safely, making careful observations and recording results. Few students attempt to derive working hypotheses prior to starting their practical work or take note of risk assessment information before starting work.

41. Attendance in the lessons observed during the inspection was 74%, a little below the national average. Attendance varies considerably, with some students' attendance as low as 50%. There are, however, many students who never miss lessons. A small number of students are not punctual and take little notice of the attempts by teachers and tutors to change this.

42. Progression rates are generally satisfactory. About one-third of the students who took GCSE maths last year have progressed on to advanced courses in science and mathematics and over half of the advanced level students' progress to university. A number of students on advanced level

courses choose to take the foundation year of a City University degree course and remain at Westminster Kingsway College for this course.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	367	244	163
		% retention	88	67	78
		% pass rate	30	43	35
AS-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	71	75	39
		% retention	92	85	85
		% pass rate	26	50	36
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	124	99	104
		% retention	97	75	78
		% pass rate	25	28	38
GCE A-level biology/human biology	3	No. of starts	16	30	21
		% retention	44	97	86
		% pass rate	29	83	89
AVCE science	3	No. of starts	1	28	26
		% retention	100	65	42
		% pass rate	0	10	45
Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) national certificate science (pharmacy)	3	No. of starts	28	27	27
		% retention	75	37	89
		% pass rate	90	100	100

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

***Quality of education and training***

43. Teaching in science and mathematics is satisfactory. In the better lessons teachers inspire students and encourage them to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers make good use of a range of activities. These include quizzes, group work, completion of past exam questions and demonstrations. In one good science practical lesson, pharmacy technician students took great care in weighing ingredients and preparing ointments. In a successful mathematics lesson, students had to sort 'prompt cards' to show how they would solve mathematical equations. They then used this information to successfully solve a number of related problems.

44. Some lessons lack variety and teachers do not always take sufficient account of the different experience and abilities of the students. The use of IT in lessons is underdeveloped. Students attend a mathematics workshop each week for extra support but this is inadequately resourced for the purpose. There are weekly workshops for each science subject, which are valued by students.

45. Induction for full-time students is thorough. They undergo initial assessment to identify learning support needs and their preferred learning styles. However, a small number of students take up additional learning support.

46. Mathematics is mainly taught at the Gray's Inn Centre. Many of the classrooms are inadequately

resourced for the teaching of mathematics. The science laboratories have recently been refurbished and are clean and bright. The equipment is adequate but the rooms lack sufficient computers to provide a research facility for students. Students make good use of the learning resources and IT centres for research for assignments and for writing up reports.

47. Teachers are well qualified. They undertake regular professional development including updating on curriculum changes, key skills development and the use of IT. Effective use is made of classroom assistants to support students with specific learning difficulties. Technicians are well-qualified and work closely with teachers to provide good support for students. They also supervise students who use laboratories for coursework development.

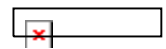
48. Subject teachers keep personal tutors well informed of full-time students' progress. This information is effectively used by students and tutors during the termly progress reviews. Students are set personal targets for improvement. All full-time students are set minimum target grades for each subject. Students speak positively about target setting and report that they find the targets motivating.

49. Teachers make good use of links with local schools, employers and a local university. The college is responsive to the training needs of technicians employed in local pharmacies and provides the underpinning knowledge for work-based training leading to NVQ qualifications. However, little use is made of these links to provide visits or work experience for other science students.

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

50. Science and mathematics are well managed. Teachers and managers are working well together and contribute to the self-critical course review and annual self-assessment process. There have been improvements in the retention and pass rates of full-time students. Initial advice and guidance are rigorous and have improved markedly over the past two years. There are systems in place to challenge poor attendance and punctuality but these remain ineffective. Teachers are regularly observed and recent staff development activities have focused on improving teaching skills. The internal verification of coursework has also recently been improved.

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



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on many courses
  
- much good teaching on level 3 courses
  
- effective team management of full-time courses.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient range of part-time courses
  
- insufficient use of ILT to enhance learning
  
- lack of commercial up-dating for staff.

***Scope of provision***

51. The college offers a variety of full-time and part-time courses in business administration, management and professional studies. Both daytime and evening courses are provided at Gray's Inn, Battersea and Vincent Square. The centre at Battersea is due to close at the end of the current academic year and courses will transferred to the other two centres. Courses include GNVQ, AVCE, AS-level and GCE A-level business studies, certificate in personnel practice, the certificate in marketing and a course for barristers' clerks. There is also a range of secretarial courses. At the time of inspection there are 1,486 students taking business related courses. Around 380 are students aged 16 to 18 and 303 are full time.

***Achievement and standards***

52. There are high pass rates on many courses including GNVQ foundation in 2002 and 2003, AS-level and GCE A-level business in 2001 and 2002, the certificate in personnel practice over the past 3 years and English for business in 2001 and 2002. Retention rates have improved particularly on the GNVQ intermediate over the past two years, whilst they declined in 2003 on the AVCE business, to 51%, and on AS-level business from 96% to the national average of 78%. The pass rate on AVCE business improved to 91% in 2003 and 37 of the 53 students who completed the course progressed to HE. Attendance during the inspection was below the national average which reflected the college's own statistical information. There was poor punctuality in several lessons. Many students produce good assignment work and contribute well to discussions in lessons. They are confident in developing their IT skills and not afraid to seek help and confirmation. Secretarial students with little prior business experience make good progress and adult students on the computer aided media course achieve high grades on course assessments.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in business administration, management and professional, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
GNVQ foundation business	1	No. of starts	31	51	50
		% retention	90	88	84
		% pass rate	82	91	93
Office procedures (short)	1	No. of starts	47	40	51
		% retention	74	80	80
		% pass rate	34	16	41
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	89	75	77
		% retention	79	83	88
		% pass rate	26	74	68

English for business	2	No. of starts	165	87	64
		% retention	91	93	83
		% pass rate	77	74	85
AVCE business (double award)	3	No. of starts	*	101	104
		% retention		75	51
		% pass rate		73	91
CIPD certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	37	39	38
		% retention	100	92	95
		% pass rate	92	92	89
AS-level business	3	No. of starts	55	47	41
		% retention	93	96	78
		% pass rate	71	96	88

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

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

53. There is good teaching on level 3 general business studies courses. In the most successful lessons teaching, learning and assessment are carefully planned. Effective use is made of individual learning plans for full-time learners at all levels and these inform most teaching and learning. Differentiated learning materials are well planned and effectively used to accommodate individual learners' abilities. However, there is under-developed use of ILT in lessons to promote and enhance learning. Tutors are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and offer good support to all learners. The teachers use a variety of methods including paired and group work, role play and quizzes to appeal to the needs of individual learners. For example, national certificate students' read a recent newspaper article, which then formed the basis of a very successful debate about barristers' fees. This discussion led into a role play designed to develop skills in negotiation required by the course. In a GNVQ foundation class students brainstormed possible venues for a group visit and then proceeded to plan, budget and organise the event. However, insufficient use is made of contemporary business practice in lessons. There is also insufficient emphasis and planning for effective delivery and integration of key skills into the business curriculum.

54. Most students are enthusiastic and interested and apply themselves to tasks and activities. However, in a small number of the lessons a minority of students did not participate fully. This resulted in some lower grades awarded for learning and attainment during the inspection. Poor attendance in a few classes also contributed to unsatisfactory attainment.

55. Accommodation is generally satisfactory but a number of rooms are in poor decorative condition and at Gray's Inn some rooms are cramped. There are few displays of students' work. Students have good access to IT and library facilities. Staff development is readily available and recently has been effectively targeted to strategic and individual needs. An external consultant has provided staff development on differentiation strategies. Activities to widen the use of information learning technology have taken place but have yet to impact on teaching and learning. There is a lack of opportunity for teachers to take up work placements or secondments in commercial or business organisations. Although staff are well qualified few have recent commercial or industrial experience.

56. There are effective systems in place to monitor and assess student progress. All full-time students receive an initial assessment and the results are used effectively to identify those students who may benefit from additional learning support. Individual learning plans are updated at least five times during a year. These plans provide a good focal point for students and tutors to identify and

monitor learning goals. Assessment practices are satisfactory. There is a relatively new college-wide assessment strategy and all staff in the business area are aware of and work within these guidelines. Prompt marking of students work with comprehensive feedback clearly identifies how students may attain higher grades.

57. There is an insufficient range of part-time professional courses. Association of Accounting Technician qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4 are no longer offered neither is the Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX) course. No students were recruited to the barristers' clerks course in 2003 and the Institute of Leadership and Management introductory team leader course has run only once. Discussions are underway to plan the introduction of other professional level qualifications. The college is involved in a Business Traineeship Programme with the Corporation of London, which represents a number of key city employers.

58. There are good links with businesses and employers including improved feedback to employers of part-time sponsored students. A successful activity day took place for GNVQ Intermediate students and a schools link group, using a guest consultant. The programme of work experience now includes level 3 students at Gray's Inn.

59. A partnership arrangement with a local secondary school has led to students aged 14 to 16 attending the college twice a week to study a vocational GCSE. The students also visit a number of city firms and attend special workshops designed to help the young people understand more about work in the city of London.

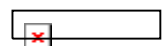
60. There is an effective individual tutorial system and learners speak highly of the support received from personal and subject tutors. Many tutors offer students mobile phone numbers so that they can be contacted outside usual course hours. Students on a part-time marketing evening course use email to communicate regularly with their tutor. A finance tutor made special arrangements for students to receive one-to-one support on a Saturday to ensure time lost through sickness would not adversely affect progress. Additional learning support is available on all the sites and this support usually meets the needs of individuals. A student with dyslexia was given one-to-one support to assist with editing skills in a word processing script. The full-time students also have a group tutorial and whilst there is a college wide tutorial framework most of these tutorial sessions are used to provide a workshop in which students gain specific support to complete assignments. The students value the opportunity to work on assignments but it does mean that wider tutorial topics such as health and personal finances are not always covered in a systematic way.

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

61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Cross-site and cross-course meetings are held regularly and are well attended. The curriculum team leaders hold planning meetings, and also specific business forum meetings. There is joint planning, which includes initiatives to promote 'common' curriculum design and assignment programmes, course handbooks and cross-centre moderation and verification. Most issues in the post inspection action plan have been addressed. For example, assessment feedback is vastly improved and there are increased links with businesses and employers.

62. Good attention is given to equal opportunities in induction programmes. Students who successfully gained university places in 2003 are celebrated in classrooms under 'U-CAN-2' promotional material. There were examples of gender stereotyping in some materials used in secretarial studies.

### **Information and communications technology**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and excellent pass rates on GNVQ foundation and national diploma in software development
  
- wide range of courses
  
- good use of targets to encourage progress and learning
  
- good curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on City and Guilds 7261 and one year European computer driving licence (ECDL) courses
  
- poor attendance on part-time courses
  
- lack of challenge in a minority of lessons.

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

63. The college offers a wide range of programmes in ICT to around 450 full-time and 2,500 part-time students. Courses are offered at six sites in Westminster, Camden and Wandsworth. Full-time courses are available at Battersea Park and Gray's Inn and there are part-time courses at all centres. Courses range from entry level IT to higher national certificate (HNC) and higher national diploma (HND) and cover programming, networking, business applications, web technologies and computer-aided design (CAD). The qualifications available include GNVQ foundation and intermediate, AS level and GCE A2, AVCE, BTEC national, computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) and ECDL. In addition, courses in computer applications, CISCO and other business applications are offered alongside computing for beginners.

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

64. Over the past three years pass rates and retention rates on long courses improved and are above or close to national averages at levels 1 and 3, and for students aged 16 to 18 at level 2. Retention on GNVQ foundation improved to 92% in 2003 and in the same year the pass rates was

excellent, at 98%. Students on the GNVQ intermediate and AVCE progress well. They achieved retention and pass rates in 2002/03 that were significantly above national averages. However, students on the GCE A-level and AS-level courses make poorer progress relative to their prior attainment. Retention and pass rates on short courses have also improved and are now satisfactory. In 2002/03 the average retention rate for all courses in ICT was 85% and the pass rate 68%. Some popular courses have low pass rates. For instance the City and Guilds 7261 course had a pass rate of only 64% in 2002/03. This is significantly below the national average for this course. The rate of attendance in classes observed was low at 77%. Attendance on part-time courses was particularly low, with some courses showing attendance rates below 70%. Full-time students' punctuality is greatly improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory.

65. The standard of students' work generally matches their learning goals. For instance the majority of full-time students can use the Internet effectively for research. A GNVQ intermediate group showed good design skills in creating clear and well presented graphs, but few were able to evaluate their work effectively. Part-time students demonstrate good individual learning skills.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GNVQ foundation in IT	1	No. of starts	31	52	48
		% retention	87	87	92
		% pass rate	93	89	98
Certificate for IT users (CLAIT/New CLAIT) short	1	No. of starts	335	287	149
		% retention	84	77	76
		% pass rate	56	65	73
GNVQ intermediate in IT	2	No. of starts	78	71	64
		% retention	68	76	84
		% pass rate	83	83	76
ECDL (1 year)	2	No. of starts	36	275	244
		% retention	72	61	85
		% pass rate	85	37	51
GCE A-level ICT	3	No. of starts	*	41	35
		% retention	*	66	94
		% pass rate	*	63	70
National diploma computing	3	No. of starts	*	31	33
		% retention	*	100	73
		% pass rate	*	97	96

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

66. Most teaching is good. It has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Some teaching on vocational programmes is very good. The best lessons use well-designed learning materials and a variety of activities that engage the interest of students and help them to develop appropriate skills. In these lessons students work well in groups, share ideas and are encouraged to



exercise initiative through work on their own. In a short course for adult secretarial students and another for students with visual impairment, sensitive teaching and well-prepared learning materials were very well used. The students made very good progress and produced text and spreadsheet work of good quality. In a good GNVQ foundation lesson students worked well on their own and in groups, recording the outcomes of meetings to plan visits to sites of interest in central London. They used the Internet to provide additional information on costs and travel arrangements. The teacher and a learning support assistant supported them patiently and sensitively. The quality of lesson planning is generally good but it is not consistent across the provision.

67. Less effective lessons are characterised by a lack of challenge. In some theory lessons students are too passive and insufficiently engaged, for instance during over-long presentations. Some teachers provide insufficient extension materials to extend the learning of more able students. In other courses learners use workbook exercises that fail to engage the students' interest.

68. The majority of computing rooms are clean and well decorated, but are difficult to access for those with impaired mobility. Workstations are sufficiently spacious to allow for workbooks and student notes, and have appropriate furniture. The computers meet current industrial standards, and an appropriate range of software is available. The majority of rooms on the main sites are equipped with computer screen projectors and good use is made of these by staff to demonstrate key teaching points and to illustrate complex information. Assistive technology provided for learners with visual impairments is good. There are sufficient teachers with the appropriate technical skills to teach the courses on offer. Teachers place learning materials on the college networks, but students at some sites cannot access these away from the main site. Full-time students have sufficient access to computers for independent study even at busy times. However, part-time students who do not own computers receive insufficient advice about where they can access computers in their own time.

69. Teachers assess the learning of full-time students regularly and fairly. They make very good use of targets to monitor progress and encourage learning. They identify potential underachievement quickly and effectively and provide appropriate extra support. Students understand the feedback they receive and are able to use it to improve. Assessment practice and procedures meet external requirements. Initial assessment is used appropriately to identify literacy and numeracy support needs. Initial assessment of vocational skills is appropriate for part-time students studying courses in computer applications. Monitoring of part-time students' learning is unsatisfactory. Although progress is reviewed in lessons there is insufficient support for those with poor attendance.

70. Managers use assessment information well to review course performance and guide programme development. However, they are not effective in analysing performance of different groups of students. For example, although they monitor the retention rates and final attainment of different ethnic groups they do not use this information to improve the performance of specific groups.

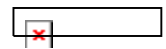
71. Students have access to a wide range of courses and programmes that take into account community and employers' needs. Recruitment is good, particularly to many part-time courses. There are good opportunities for progression to further ICT courses throughout this provision. Full-time students have good enrichment opportunities. For example, national diploma students recently visited Prague to study systems relating to public transport. Many vocational courses have good work experience integrated into the programmes. Multi-site provision has recently been reviewed and revised in line with agreements being developed with other key providers in central London.

72. Full-time students receive good guidance and support. Progress reviews at tutorials are detailed and thorough. Support for learning is very effective. Teachers review the progress and performance of the students against challenging target grades, and against the progress expected of them. They also review attendance, punctuality and progression plans constructively. They agree detailed action plans with students and good advice is available when students want to access specialist support services. Teachers support students with additional learning needs well. Initial assessment identifies needs rigorously. Take up of the additional support offered is good. Many adult students on these courses do not speak English as a first language and teachers support them through materials that allow them to improve their language skills as well as developing their IT skills. Initial advice given to prospective students is helpful and accurate.

### **Leadership and management**

73. Leadership and management in ICT are good. Courses are managed effectively and teachers work well in teams to share ideas and resources. Staff teams have met regularly to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Action plans are clear and the meeting minutes are well recorded. The curriculum self-assessment is thorough and evaluative. Course outcomes are reviewed against challenging targets. All staff are appraised regularly. Managers identify and meet staff development needs well. College procedures to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality are closely followed. However, attendance and punctuality are still unsatisfactory. In addition insufficient strategies are in place to address lower achievement by some groups. Through the provision of ICT courses in the community, the college is successfully fulfilling its commitment to widen participation.

### **Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel**



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

Contributory grade for hospitality is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **good (grade 2)**

#### **Strengths**

- excellent achievement on hospitality and most leisure and tourism courses
- outstanding teaching and learning in hospitality, leisure and tourism
- good resources for learning in hospitality
- outstanding enrichment in hospitality
- very good progress to employment in hospitality
- strong and highly effective curriculum management.

#### **Weaknesses**

- low retention and pass rates on AVCE travel and tourism

- o insufficient checks on students' learning in travel.

### **Scope of provision**

74. The college offers a range of courses in hospitality, sports, leisure, tourism and travel for full-time and part-time students. Currently there are 3,185 students, around 70% of whom are on hospitality courses. Around 420 students are taking full-time courses in hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism. These courses range from NVQ at levels 1 to 4 in hospitality to an entry level diploma and GNVQ and AVCE in leisure, travel and tourism. Over 2000 students attend a range of part-time courses. Students also take additional qualifications such as food hygiene, health and safety and airline ticketing. There are currently 18 work-based learners following programmes in food preparation and cookery. The college has recently been awarded funding to develop a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) in hospitality and catering.

### **Achievement and standards**

75. Achievement on hospitality and most leisure and tourism courses is outstanding. Retention rates on mainstream hospitality NVQ and foundation GNVQ leisure and tourism programmes are very high, consistently 20% above national averages. Pass rates on hospitality NVQ and leisure and tourism courses are very high, all over 20% above national averages. Foundation modern apprenticeship framework achievement has improved from no achievement in 2001/02 to 77% in 2002/03. Achievement on short courses is very good. Students' progression through course levels and on to employment and HE is good.

76. Coursework and portfolios are well produced and students demonstrate good IT skills. Hospitality students produce a high standard of practical work. First year students work exceptionally well alongside second year and level 3 students in a realistic work environment. Apprentices develop a high level of skills both at college and in the workplace. They recently achieved first and third places in a Norwegian seafood competition.

77. Leisure and tourism students demonstrate good oral communication skills. In a customer service lesson students successfully acted out the role of travel agent. They assisted customers in identifying specific requirements for a holiday. The lesson concluded when pairs of students effectively evaluated their work.

78. Key skills' assessments are well integrated into work. However, attainment in key skills tests is poor. Overall attendance on programmes is satisfactory. The average attendance during the inspection week was 81%. Punctuality in some travel courses is poor, and attendance at key skills lessons in travel is also poor.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, 2001 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
NVQ food preparation and cooking	1	No. of starts	95	129	96
		% retention	76	85	79
		% pass rate	90	89	89
GNVQ foundation leisure and tourism	1	No. of starts	16	15	25
		% retention	81	87	92
		% pass rate	38	100	100

NVQ food preparation and cooking - 1 year	2	No. of starts	174	162	151
		% retention	85	90	93
		% pass rate	76	86	84
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	46	45	20
		% retention	85	69	75
		% pass rate	72	65	100
NVQ food preparation and cooking	3	No. of starts	76	59	40
		% retention	82	89	98
		% pass rate	87	100	90
AVCE travel and tourism*	3	No. of starts	47	33	51
		% retention	60	64	55
		% pass rate	93	67	68

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism in 2000/01

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

79. Teaching and learning in hospitality, leisure and tourism are outstanding. A very high proportion of lessons observed were good or better, with no unsatisfactory teaching. Lessons are well planned and meet the needs of individual students. Learning outcomes are clearly communicated to students. High quality learning resources are effectively used to engage learners in activities to develop their skills of critical evaluation and problem solving. Teachers use questioning very well to check understanding and learning. In a good tourism lesson, students with a variety of language needs presented their ideas on how the tourist trade should take into account culture, religion and disability. Teachers regularly help students to place theoretical concepts into a vocational context. The industry experience of both teacher and student are used to clarify points and create interest. Teachers are supportive yet demanding of their students and work hard to raise standards.

80. In travel there are insufficient checks on some students' learning. Learning objectives are inadequate with insufficient checks on students' understanding. There are insufficient strategies to enable the less able to participate effectively. Resources for learning in hospitality are good. Large specialist kitchens are fully equipped to industry standards. A bright spacious restaurant is open to the public and there is a fine dining restaurant together with a canteen for students and staff. These provide a realistic working environment for students. Students use exceptionally high quality ingredients during lessons. In one lesson, each student was able to practise preparation skills on live crabs. There is, however, a shortage of small equipment. Hospitality staff are well qualified and have appropriate qualifications and experience. Resources for leisure, tourism and travel are satisfactory. Staff all have teaching qualifications but lack recent industry experience. Good use is made of ILT in the classroom. Students can access the comprehensive intranet, which contains a wide variety of activities and resources. There is a very good range of library books and reference material.

81. Assessment is satisfactory. Feedback to students is constructive. Good use is made of additional evidence including photographs, witness statements and products of work in level 3 portfolios. In travel courses, information on students' progress from one-to-one reviews and individual learning plans is not recorded systematically. Work-based learning assessment is well planned and fully involves the learners. Outcomes are well recorded and learners are aware of the progress they are making.

82. In hospitality there is an extensive range of courses and qualifications, with many opportunities to gain additional awards. The college has consulted employers to identify industry needs and

courses adapted accordingly. There is good progression through courses from level 1 to level 3. In hospitality there are successful external links with the industry, which enable students to participate in a very good work experience programme. There are strong partnerships with employers, industry representatives and schools. Students take part in a comprehensive range of enrichment activities. These are often sponsored by industry and individuals and involve visits abroad, visiting patrons, speakers, demonstrations and competitions. Development is currently underway for foundation degree courses in hospitality, travel and tourism. The range of additional part-time courses in leisure, travel and tourism is narrow. Travel students at levels 2 and 3 have insufficient opportunities to operate in the commercial environment.

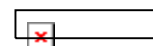
83. The college has recently become a CoVE in hospitality and catering. It is able to use the excellent range of vocational courses already available in hospitality and catering and is developing courses for metropolitan firms. Staff are well qualified and have recent industrial experience. There are clear progression opportunities to level 4 within the college.

84. Students receive satisfactory individual support. They receive good advice and guidance prior to selecting their course. They attend a satisfactory induction. Students benefit from good one-to-one support and excellent communication. On travel programmes students are given insufficient support to raise their achievements.

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

85. Overall leadership and management are very good. Quality assurance has been effective in supporting improvements in teaching and learning within hospitality, leisure and tourism. Staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process. There is good communication among staff. Strategies to improve a number of weaknesses within the travel courses relating to teaching and learning and tutorial support are yet to have much impact and there is insufficient sharing of good practice between leisure tourism and travel teams. Internal verification practice across the curriculum is satisfactory. Course organisation in hospitality, leisure and tourism is highly effective. Modern apprenticeship programmes are well managed. Apprentices are set, and meet, challenging targets for unit achievement. Staff development is very good. Teachers are encouraged to broaden their skills and experience and all new staff have mentors. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The provision in leisure, tourism and travel has contributed to widening participation by providing an entry level course for many students for whom English is an additional language. Students belonging to minority ethnic groups are well represented on all courses. However, there is restricted access for students with mobility difficulties.

### **Health and social care**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- very high retention and high pass rates on the GNVQ foundation course
  
- good progression from foundation and access courses
  
- effective support for students with additional learning needs

- highly effective promotion of equality of opportunity.

**Weaknesses**

- low pass rates on NVQ level 2 early years and GNVQ intermediate courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- poor punctuality.

**Scope of provision**

86. The college offers courses in health, social care and early years on two sites and in community locations. It has increased its provision for adults, particularly at entry level and level 1. Of the 345 students enrolled, just over half are adults. About 190 students are studying full time at levels 1 to 3. Access to nursing is available at both sites. NVQ 2 in early years care and education is offered part-time at a community site. Other courses in the community include a level 2 programme in childcare with English as an additional language and short courses in working in the community and childminding practice.

**Achievement and standards**

87. Achievements are satisfactory. Retention is very high and pass rates are consistently high on the GNVQ foundation course, which has increasing enrolments. Pass rates on the NVQ level 2 early years course have been low but are improving. There is a broad range in the standard of students' work. In assignments of the highest quality, students are able to conduct research effectively and they collate information from primary and secondary sources. Many students make effective use of IT to demonstrate skills such as producing leaflets and writing reports that combine text and images. Students collect relevant evidence for key skills as part of their course assignments. Students on a part-time evening course in signing are able to take part in discussions and respond to humour without resorting to spoken language. However, not all level 3 students show an appropriate understanding of specialist terminology and some have not attained the necessary study skills to enable them to conduct effective research.

88. Progression from GNVQ foundation and access to nursing is good. A large number of students progress to GNVQ intermediate or to employment. Guidance and support for students who apply for HE is good. Nearly all access to nursing students gain places on nurse training programmes.

89. Punctuality was a weakness at the last inspection and it continues to be poor. Teachers deal with latecomers briskly. However, there is still disruption to learning for the late arrivals and the rest of the group.

**A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care, 2001 to 2003**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
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GNVQ foundation health and social care	1	No. of starts	19	22	32
		% retention	100	82	88
		% pass rate	95	89	100
Basic health and safety certificate (short)	1	No. of starts	384	1,350	580
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	100	100	93
NVQ early years care and education	2	No. of starts	20	31	15
		% retention	30	39	67
		% pass rate	33	58	60
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	33	47	34
		% retention	67	77	79
		% pass rate	59	56	67
AVCE health and social care	3	No. of starts	*	39	38
		% retention		64	66
		% pass rate		44	92
Access to nursing	3	No. of starts	44	44	48
		% retention	73	89	85
		% pass rate	59	67	92

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* low number of starters

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

90. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers set tasks clearly and students settle to them quickly. Learning resources, such as hand-outs and worksheets, are used well to support and test students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers question students carefully to check their recall, and elicit explanations. Latecomers are appropriately challenged and teachers seek to minimise distractions to other students by managing individuals and groups authoritatively. All teachers maintain a friendly and professional rapport with students. They encourage students to relate theory to their experiences on work-placements. A small number of teachers have additional activities for students who complete tasks quickly. Students' learning styles are analysed but there is little evidence of teachers allowing for these differences in their classroom practice. In a minority of lessons, explanations are unclear or the teacher lacks the necessary practical skills to provide accurate instruction and ensure students' safety.

91. Resources are satisfactory. Staff have relevant academic qualifications but some lack appropriate vocational skills for their areas of teaching. Computers are readily accessible for independent study. Students demonstrate good skills in the use of IT in assignments at all levels. The range of text-books and other learning materials at the Gray's Inn site is satisfactory, with a more comprehensive selection of learning resources available at the Battersea site. Few learning resources are available in classrooms. Accommodation for practical creative activities is inappropriate and some sites are poorly maintained. There are trip hazards on some stairs and corridors.

92. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress are satisfactory. Most students' work is accurately graded and returned promptly with helpful comments. Students develop a wide range of skills in the workplace and these contribute towards the achievement of their learning goals. Well-

structured workbooks enable students to record evidence of practical skills and for staff to monitor progress. NVQ students provide appropriate supplementary evidence through witness statements, written accounts and questions, but some are not observed sufficiently often in their workplaces.

93. The needs and interests of the learners are sufficiently met by the courses offered by the college. The college responds effectively to the local needs of the community by combining ESOL at entry level with vocational qualifications in health and social care. This is appreciated by adult students. The college no longer provides early years courses at level 3 and will further reduce its provision by discontinuing the AVCE in health and social care in July 2004. As part of the three-year development plan the college is liaising with other local colleges who can provide appropriate progression routes. The college has secured compact arrangements with local National Health Service (NHS) Trusts so that all students successfully completing access to nursing courses are guaranteed an interview.

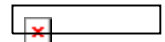
94. Support for students with additional learning needs is well planned and effective. Additional needs are appropriately identified at the start of courses through tests and self-referrals. Some teachers make comprehensive analyses of learning needs and use this information to plan appropriate support. Additional tutors in GNVQ foundation and NVQ 2 classes actively contribute to learning by challenging students to describe and explain their ideas. Teachers on the NVQ 2 early years course clearly identify achievable targets and keep detailed records of students' progress towards meeting these. Students make good use of the homework club. If students are late for lessons, teachers support them by giving additional time to explain the work missed.

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

95. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and accurately identifies some of the key issues for improvement. However, good practice is not sufficiently shared. The lesson observation process is rigorous in clearly identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Nevertheless, although improvements since the last inspection have been observed, wide variations in the quality of teaching remain. There are also marked differences in the effectiveness of practice relating to target setting and record keeping.

96. The promotion of equality of opportunity is highly effective. Through induction and teaching in lessons, students develop a very good awareness of the rights of individuals to be treated with respect, and of the college's commitment to this expectation. Students understand how to access the procedures for ensuring anti-discriminatory practice. Staff recruitment reflects the diversity within the local community.

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



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on many courses
  
- good standards of students' work



- much good teaching
- wide range of courses with good progression.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention on some courses
- poor attendance and punctuality affecting learning in many lessons
- poor accommodation and specialist facilities
- weak implementation of some aspects of quality assurance.

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

97. There are currently 813 students studying visual and performing arts and media of whom 450 are full time. There are over 500 students aged 16 to 18 and nearly 300 students aged 19 and over. Most of the provision is located on three sites: art and design at Kentish Town and Battersea, and performing arts and media at Regent's Park. The courses include level 1 in art and design, and level 2 in performing arts and art and design. At level 3 there is an extensive range of AS-level and GCE A2 courses, including art, dance, music, media, photography, film, drama and theatre. There are 14 specialist national diploma courses including innovative new courses in musical theatre and design crafts. Part-time City and Guilds craft courses and professional development courses are also available. The college offers a programme of visits and overseas trips to enrich and extend students work. Art and design students were using a recent trip to Berlin as stimulus for much of their work. There are regular trips to the theatre for performing arts students.

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

98. Good standards of students' work are achieved on many courses. Photography at both Battersea and Kentish Town is of a high technical standard and students develop a good knowledge of contemporary photography. GNVQ foundation art students are producing large-scale drawings and collages that are very expressive. On the three-dimensional design national diploma courses, students use the design process thoroughly to explore and develop their solutions. The textiles work and graphics at Kentish Town is strong. Textiles' students used the Berlin visit as a stimulus to develop surface pattern designs. The use of colour and media in their visual research was of a high standard. Dancers are developing good style and discipline in their work. Drama students are confident in their vocalisation and character work. A group of national diploma students from several ethnic backgrounds were rehearsing a powerful play about racism, *Our Country's Good*. This was performed with considerable feeling and skill. There were some enthusiastic and expressive performances in popular music.

99. There are high retention and pass rates on many courses. All of the GNVQ foundation students who started the course in 2002/03 achieved the qualification, as did students on the national diploma in performing arts. On many other courses, such as first diploma performing arts, national diploma design photography and foundation studies in art and design, there were pass rates above national averages in 2003. However, retention rates were low in AS-level dance, and on the national diplomas in dance and media. There was also low retention on some GCE A2 courses and part-time City and Guilds courses.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in visual and performing arts and media, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
GNVQ foundation art and design	1	No. of starts		13	16
		% retention		92	100
		% pass rate		92	100
BTEC first diploma design	2	No. of starts	16	23	39
		% retention	81	91	85
		% pass rate	92	71	70
BTEC first diploma performing arts	2	No. of starts	25	15	16
		% retention	100	93	75
		% pass rate	64	93	100
BTEC national diploma design photography	3	No. of starts	22	33	22
		% retention	73	70	68
		% pass rate	91	96	93
AS-level film and video production	3	No. of starts	31	24	34
		% retention	94	83	82
		% pass rate	86	80	82
BTEC national diploma media	3	No. of starts	32	20	16
		% retention	38	65	56
		% pass rate	100	100	100
BTEC national diploma performing arts	3	No. of starts	34	27	13
		% retention	76	56	100
		% pass rate	81	100	100

*Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)*

***Quality of education and training***

100. Much of the teaching is good. Staff make good use of their professional expertise to enliven lessons. Schemes of work and lessons are mostly well planned. Challenging assignments list clear tasks linked to assessment criteria. Good differentiation of individual students' needs is taken into account in many lesson plans. Most teachers are enthusiastic, supportive and motivational. They work hard to keep students on task, through a well-paced and balanced range of learning activities. External visits enrich learning, and help students to develop primary research skills. One group has had five visits, including visits to galleries, museums and a river trip, over the last six months. The river excursion resulted in some very effective designs. Drawings of the London Eye were being used to create delicate linear patterns for screen-printed textile pieces. There was some outstanding teaching on the level 1 foundation courses. Teachers use good sensitivity in helping students to

realise their potential. In the less successful lessons there is insufficient challenge for students. They are allowed to work at a slow pace and to rely too heavily on secondary sources. Many sessions are disrupted by lateness and the structure of some lessons, for example, group activities in drama and music, are affected significantly. In one unsatisfactory lesson none of the students was present at the start. There was poor attendance and little work was done.

101. The overall quality of accommodation is poor. There is very little storage space for staff or students. The Kentish Town site, formerly a Victorian school, houses most of the art and design work. It has very narrow corridors and poor decoration. The canteen and public spaces are uninviting. Good displays of students' work help lift the appearance. Many studios are small, lack sufficient basic furniture and are not fit for purpose. Regents Park, which accommodates the performing arts and media courses, is a converted office block. There are new dance studios with sprung floors. These are of a high standard. The performing arts spaces are satisfactory overall. The music room lacks adequate soundproofing. The resources at Battersea are generally adequate, although there are good photography, video and fashion and textiles resources. Battersea and Kentish Town and parts of Regents Park are not accessible to students with restricted mobility. There is good technician support on all sites and students value their support and technical help. In some areas there is insufficient specialist equipment. Many computers are not of industry standard and do not support specialist music and graphics applications. Staff are well qualified. Most are professional artists, musicians, dancers or actors.

102. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Written feedback by teachers on completed work is detailed and indicates how students can improve. The monitoring of students' progress is thorough. On some courses there is a good use of peer group assessment, and regular use of group critiques. This helps students to develop their critical understanding. Although most assignment briefs are well written, others are less clear and do not identify the full assessment requirements. Formative assessment and feedback are not well developed. Most courses do not use progress reviews effectively to monitor progress and set clear targets. In performing arts, students' assessed work is often returned late. While most assignments and assessments are internally verified, there are inconsistencies. One assignment brief contained glaring spelling errors that were not identified in the internal verifier's report. Another was too difficult for the students at that stage of the course. Only one student out of twenty managed to complete it successfully. In one course there is no internal verification of final grades.

103. There is a very good range of courses. Many students have successfully progressed within the college from level 1 through to level 3. There is good progression to HE. Most national diploma students gain degree places, many at highly regarded institutions in London.

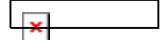
104. Support for students with specific support needs is good. Hearing-impaired students are effectively supported within the lesson by communicators and note-takers. This enables them to be fully involved in discussions. Students with dyslexia, or for whom English is an additional language, receive effective individual learning support every week. All students have regular weekly group tutorials and individual tutorials every fortnight. These are not always well recorded or involve the setting of clear targets. Some students do not regularly attend their tutorials or learning support sessions.

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

105. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff are mutually supportive and work well in small teams with generally well organised course schemes of work. Staff development on assessment and teaching issues has been welcomed by staff. There has been an improvement in the overall retention rate. In-year retention at the time of inspection was 89%. Staff appraisal takes place at Battersea and Regent's Park, but has not been taking place at Kentish Town. Management of staff changes has been weak. This has affected the quality of students' work and morale on some courses. Some aspects of quality assurance are weakly implemented. This extends beyond internal verification. Observation of teaching and learning has been taking place and there is evidence of general improvement in teaching and learning grades since the last inspection. However, there is an absence of effective action plans for some teachers who require further professional development in relation to classroom practice. Staff are aware of targets and they are involved in course reviews.

There is a clear link between the course review process and the self-assessment report. The report was broadly accurate and has a clear action plan. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted. In three-dimensional design crafts, students were using primary stimulus materials from a variety of cultures, such as Asian beadwork and gold work.

## Humanities



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

### **Strengths**

- consistently high pass and retention rates on access courses
  
- much good teaching, especially on access courses
  
- well-informed and confident contributions by students in lessons
  
- good support for students.

### **Weaknesses**

- poor punctuality and some poor attendance
  
- insufficient development of ICT in learning on GCE courses
  
- ineffective measures to address some weaknesses in teaching and learning.

### **Scope of provision**

106. The college offers access courses with three options. There is a one-year full-time course, a two-year course for part-time students in employment, and a two-year pathways programme aimed at younger students who need to begin at intermediate level. There are 125 students on access courses. The GCE A-level and AS-level provision is in economics, government and politics, history, law, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. There are GCSE courses in geography and sociology. Approximately 380 enrolments on these courses are for full-time students, most of whom are students aged 16 to 18.

### **Achievement and standards**

107. Students contribute well in many lessons. They are often well informed and articulate, especially those on access courses. In many lessons students are able to construct good responses to the tasks set. They usually work well in groups or in pairs. Attendance is poor on some courses. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the attendance rate was only 69%. Many students arrive late for lessons. Written work varies in quality. Much of it is thorough and shows real enthusiasm for the subject. Often work is word-processed and well presented. Students' ability to organise ideas and express them clearly and accurately varies considerably especially at GCSE and AS level. Achievement, retention and progression to HE have been consistently good on access courses over three years. A high proportion completed courses successfully in 2003 and all of the successful students obtained places at universities.

108. Achievement has improved substantially in most GCE courses over the last three years, often from well below the appropriate national averages to reach, or exceed, them. In sociology, for example, the pass rate at GCE A level was well above the national average, at 95%, in 2003. The analysis of results in 2003 indicates that, on many courses, a substantial number of students gained higher grades than those predicted by their GCSE achievements on entry. In philosophy and AS-level law, pass rates remain below the national average. Retention rates on most GCE A-level courses are high, often above national averages, but they are below average in law and philosophy.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 2001 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Access to HE (humanities)	3	No. of starts	91	70	123
		% retention	79	83	72
		% pass rate	80	88	87
AS-level psychology	3	No. of starts	64	87	74
		% retention	90	95	93
		% pass rate	48	54	74
AS-level sociology	3	No. of starts	59	58	56
		% retention	86	95	82
		% pass rate	60	40	72
AS-level government and politics	3	No. of starts	30	32	45
		% retention	93	88	78
		% pass rate	79	61	83
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	78	30	41
		% retention	57	80	85
		% pass rate	56	67	94
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	62	29	22
		% retention	62	66	91
		% pass rate	76	74	95

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

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

109. Most teaching is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is higher on access courses than on GCE and GCSE courses. In the better lessons teachers successfully encourage students to

participate in learning. In several lessons students gave good presentations. In an access history lesson a profoundly deaf student gave a very well organised presentation on President Roosevelt, clearly explaining his importance in reviving the American economy after the depression. A signer assisted in the presentation. Another student in the same group evaluated Salazar's role in establishing modern Portugal. He drew on his own family's experiences in Portugal, supplemented by a wealth of additional research. In a GCE A-level government and politics lesson, students worked in groups to prepare responses to questions relating to the increased power and status of the expanded European Union. The subsequent presentations were confident and well informed. The teacher intervened only to draw out or clarify occasional issues. An access history lesson was devoted to an examination of the background and causes of the present Arab-Israeli conflict. In a culturally diverse class this provoked lively but mature discussion, which the teacher managed very well. In many lessons, students have opportunities to construct responses either collectively or individually. This provides good practice for coping with examination questions. By contrast, some teachers are too dominant and restrict learning by their students. In some lessons there is little scope for students to work and contribute in different ways that match their varied individual abilities. Lateness disrupts learning in many lessons. It distracts those who are on time and undermines attempts to establish clear objectives and a sense of purpose at the start of lessons.

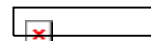
110. Information technology is not used sufficiently to enliven GCE lessons. Access courses have specific IT units that are taught in collaboration with the learning resources centre at the Gray's Inn site. Some of the teaching accommodation at Gray's Inn is poor. Classrooms, including two that were recently allocated to this area, are dreary and uninspiring. In rooms shared by several subjects there is little display of students' work or relevant information and a consequent lack of subject identity. Most subject tutors are both well qualified and experienced and many have valuable past experience of other occupations.

111. Students are given much help and good support. They are encouraged to realise their full potential. Teachers are sensitive and responsive to the needs of individual students and give much extra help and encouragement where it is needed. A number of students receive very effective additional support. On most courses there are good quality study guides and topic sheets. Students value the personal progress reviews conducted individually by tutors. They gain clear indications of the standards they are achieving. In most cases they receive clear advice about how they can improve. Sometimes the personal targets set are too vague to be useful in measuring future progress. Written work is carefully marked and usually students receive clear guidance on how to improve. Sometimes the written comments are too brief and lack reinforcement through the annotation of answers.

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

112. Leadership and management are satisfactory, overall, but there are some aspects of management that are weak. Very serious consideration has been given over the last two years to improving achievement and teaching and learning. Pass rates have improved significantly on many courses. Greater consistency is achieved in the way lessons and courses are planned. On some issues there has been insufficient progress. Self-assessment reports and lesson observations underline the need to address the needs of students with a wide range of abilities and to make better use of ICT in teaching and learning. Planning and development days have resulted in very little progress in these areas, especially on GCE and GCSE courses. The lesson observation scheme has identified good and unsatisfactory practice but some teachers have not had sufficient supportive feedback. There are not enough opportunities for tutors to share good practice and for the more experienced and successful teachers to support new or part-time colleagues. Measures taken to improve punctuality are ineffective. The self-assessment report identifies many general issues but does not highlight weaknesses in particular courses. A few teachers involved in both access and GCE and GCSE courses are unable to attend all of the team meetings, as they are often scheduled simultaneously.

### **English and modern foreign languages**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good standards of oral work in English and modern foreign languages
  
- effective and imaginative revision lessons
  
- good assessment practices and procedures in English
  
- particularly broad range of languages.

### ***Weaknesses***

- individual learning needs not met in English
  
- low retention rates on some courses
  
- poor teaching in a minority of foreign language lessons
  
- narrow range of courses at level 2 in English.

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

113. The college offers a range of language courses, providing for beginners leading to Awarding Body Consortium (ABC) certificates at entry level and level 1, and to GCSE and GCE qualifications for more advanced learners. The courses attract students from a wide range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. There are courses in GCSE English language and advanced level language and literature. There are currently 838 students enrolled.

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

114. Retention rates on English courses are around the national average, except on the intensive one-year GCE A-level English language and literature course, where retention is below the national average. On many courses in languages, retention rates are low, and on some, for example GCSE

Spanish, they have declined over the last three years.

115. There have been some low pass rates over the past three years. In English, pass rates on many courses are now rising, and they are around the national average, although pass rates in evening and adult GCSE day provision remain low. Pass rates in modern foreign languages at level 1 and in GCE A-level French have improved steadily over the past three years.

116. Students at all levels have good oral and listening skills. In foreign language lessons the majority showed good understanding of the language even when it was spoken at speed. They have good accents. The more able students spoke at length and used a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. In English, students discussed texts competently and used linguistic and critical terminology accurately. In foreign languages at GCE A2 and AS level the writing skills of many students were less well developed than their oral skills. Their work was messily presented and contained careless and often elementary errors. A small amount of written work in English was unsatisfactory. It contained spelling errors, poor grammar and weak expression, and showed a lack of understanding of essay structure.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in English and modern foreign languages, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Practical languages ABC	1	No. of starts	208	177	266
		% retention	66	60	51
		% pass rate	37	52	84
GCSE Spanish	2	No. of starts	60	68	37
		% retention	95	71	76
		% pass rate	37	71	54
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	318	180	119
		% retention	87	79	73
		% pass rate	32	56	55
AS-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	50	50	35
		% retention	60	78	74
		% pass rate	73	62	77
AS-level English literature	3	No. of starts	45	12	16
		% retention	73	67	94
		% pass rate	88	88	87
GCE A-level French	3	No. of starts	22	27	25
		% retention	73	85	60
		% pass rate	62	74	100
GCE A-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	40	29	76
		% retention	80	93	95
		% pass rate	72	100	93

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

***Quality of education and training***

117. In English all of the teaching is satisfactory or better. Teachers have a good knowledge of the



curriculum and its demands, and this is reflected in schemes of work and lesson plans. Lessons are thoroughly planned. Most teachers are aware of the preferred learning styles and differing abilities of their students, and take them into account. For example, in several lessons they provided a range of exercises to help both the faster and slower workers. Across the provision stronger students were often set to work with those who were weaker, to the benefit of both.

118. In modern foreign languages the majority of lessons were at least satisfactory. Most teachers made consistent use of the foreign language in lessons and expected students to do the same. There were a number of skilfully planned and taught revision sessions both in languages and English. In a particularly successful GCSE Italian lesson a series of brief tasks on a variety of topics enabled students to review a wide range of vocabulary and structures in a short time. They approached their work with enthusiasm and enjoyment and gained confidence for the forthcoming examination. In a GCSE English lesson groups of students were given poems of different levels of difficulty to analyse. The groups produced sophisticated diagrams, flowcharts and spider graphs showing their findings and methods of analysis. They did this with a minimum of intervention from their teacher.

119. There was some weak and poorly organised teaching in a minority of modern language lessons. Preparation was insufficiently thorough and led to much time being wasted. Students carried out tasks that were well below the level at which they should have been working. Questions were unclear and confusing.

120. Modern language teachers use a wide range of teaching aids, with televisions, video and audio recorders and overhead projectors being readily available. Students and teachers make frequent use of the internet as a research tool and as a source of teaching materials. Language laboratories are well used. The learning centre at the Gray's Inn centre is well stocked and students value the helpfulness of staff. In English there is too much reliance on paper-based resources and IT is scarcely used in teaching. Teaching rooms at the Gray's Inn centre, where the majority of English and foreign language lessons take place, are shabby and some are cramped.

121. Assessment in English is particularly thorough. All work is marked to examination standards and using examination criteria. Well-designed cover sheets link assessment objectives to each piece of marked work. Teachers enter helpful comments alongside each objective and provide a useful summative assessment. However, their comments do not include practical strategies for improvement as often as they should. There are frequent meetings to moderate marks for coursework and other assignments. Across the provision, staff who share the teaching of a course plan homework to ensure that students are not overloaded. Assessment practice in modern languages is weak. Teachers are aware of the awarding body's marking criteria but apply them only to pieces of written work submitted for assessment. Their comments lack detail. Weaknesses in the assessment of coursework identified by the awarding body have not all been tackled.

122. A particularly broad range of languages is offered. Currently, 13 languages are taught, with a choice of levels, times and venues to suit the needs of many students. The range of courses in English, particularly at level 2, does not meet the needs of all students, including those on vocational courses who need to improve their English.

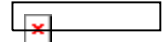
123. Students receive particularly good curriculum support in English. Teachers across the provision give freely of their own time to help students. In modern foreign languages, help is available when it is needed. However, the support places insufficient emphasis upon the development of study and language skills.

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

124. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum team leaders for English and for modern languages are managed by a head of division. Lines of communication are clear, and are effective in ensuring that, especially in modern languages, the large team of part-time teachers who do not meet in the normal course of their work receive the information they need. English teachers have a great deal of informal contact and discussion, which promotes good team working.

Insufficient prominence is given to improving the quality of teaching and learning. Formal meetings of teachers are held at regular intervals, and part-time teachers are paid to encourage attendance. The meetings are narrowly focused on immediate curriculum issues. Areas identified as needing improvement are discussed but problems are seldom tackled. There is a well-established system of lesson observation. The grades from the college's observations largely match those given by inspectors. Findings from observations are not always used to drive up quality.

## English for speakers of other languages



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

### **Strengths**

- good use of IT to develop students' skills
- thorough assessment practices
- effective support for individual students.

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient emphasis on developing oral skills
- insufficient opportunities for students to achieve external qualifications.

### **Scope of provision**

125. The college has extensive ESOL provision at all of the entry levels and level 1, and there are some level 2 courses. ESOL classes are offered in six of the college's main sites and there are some entry level classes in community venues. There are over 1,000 students studying at entry levels 1, 2 and 3. About one-quarter are at Castle Lane and the others are fairly evenly divided between the Gray's Inn, Peter Street, Regent's Park and Kentish Town sites. Battersea and the community venues account for 139 students between them. Level 1 classes are mainly at offered at Gray's Inn, Peter Street, Regents Park and Kentish Town. Level 2 classes are held only at Gray's Inn and Peter Street. Most of the students are adults.

### **Achievement and standards**

126. Students demonstrate good levels of attainment in literacy, but their oral communication skills can be quite weak, especially at beginner levels. At levels 1 and 2 and entry level 3, independent

learning skills are well developed and students use a variety of sources to gain information, discuss current issues and develop an ability to articulate their opinions. At beginner levels English-speaking skills develop slowly. Students' communications are hampered by poor pronunciation.

127. Attendance during the inspection was above the national average. There has been a marked improvement in attendance over the last two years. There are effective procedures to enable staff to monitor attendance on a monthly basis at each centre. There is some variation in attendance across different sites.

128. There are insufficient opportunities for students to gain external qualifications. Very few adult ESOL students have the opportunity to gain external accreditation and all students get a college ESOL certificate. There are some opportunities for progression from ESOL to vocational courses. There are insufficient data relating to externally accredited qualifications to produce a table of students' achievements.

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

129. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is in line with the national average. There is some very good teaching. The best lessons are well planned with a clear focus on grammar and the use of language in context. The activities are varied and enjoyable with an appropriate emphasis on students using language in relevant contexts. In one lesson, a group of level 1 students developed a Peoples' Charter for an imaginary country and they then researched human rights news articles, using the internet. Good use is made of IT to develop students' skills. Many courses have an IT component and this is used effectively to access new information on websites, to check spellings and to produce accurate text. Effective use of ICT supports independent learning skills. In one lesson, beginners used clip-art to produce a poster. In a successful lesson for beginners, the teacher used a variety of methods to introduce new language concepts. The students participated enthusiastically and enjoyed learning. The relationship between teachers and students is good and a purposeful atmosphere is fostered in class.

130. There is insufficient emphasis upon developing oral skills in some lessons. In some of the weaker lessons teachers spend too much time talking about the language and they introduce too many grammatical structures or words at once. Presentations lack focus and there is not enough time for students to practise new language skills themselves. In one lesson, some students said little and a few were allowed to dominate proceedings. In beginners' lessons, too much of the teaching involves the whole class and the needs of individual students are not adequately addressed. There are too many hand-outs and too little checking of learning by teachers.

131. Resources are satisfactory. All of the provision is accommodated in old buildings. Most rooms are large and appropriately equipped for language learning. All classrooms have displays that are culturally appropriate and reflect the diversity of students. All college staff in this subject area possess teaching qualifications, but not all of them are trained to teach ESOL.

132. Assessment practices are thorough and they support learning in all centres. All of the students' work, including homework, is marked regularly and students get useful feedback that helps them to improve their skills. Diagnostic, formative and summative assessments are rigorously planned by teams of staff from all centres, and all programmes follow the same procedures. Assessment tasks are internally verified thoroughly to ensure they are fit for purpose. All assessments are internally moderated to help ensure parity of standards across all centres. Diagnostic assessments are used appropriately as a basis for setting individual targets for students. However, some short-term targets are not sufficiently specific. They do not state exactly what a student has to do. They can be quite imprecise: for example, advising a student to improve their speaking or reading skills.

133. The range of provision is extensive. There are good curriculum developments designed to support ESOL students who wish to progress to vocational programmes. The college has developed 30-hour vocational tasters in health and social care and retail, and these students work towards an externally accredited award in Skills for Life. Some students have been enrolled on a Helping Your Child at School programme this year. However, these opportunities are not widespread.

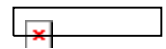
134. Effective support is provided for individual students. There is an effective procedure for admissions. Students have access to good advice and guidance on entry. Students can start their course at any time of the year. Students are well supported both in their learning and their personal needs. All new entrants have an initial diagnostic test before being placed on a course. All four skills are tested and this is effective in placing students on the appropriate level of course. The results of these assessments form the basis of an individual learning plan. Short-term and long-term targets for individual learners are identified but specific short-term targets are too vague. Students have three academic tutorials each term in which their individual learning plans are reviewed. They are also encouraged to book pastoral tutorials for careers advice, progression to other courses, help with writing curriculum vitae, and jobs advice. Some centres have a student forum and suggestions from students are acted upon. For example, at one centre students have asked for clothes pegs and prayer rooms and these have been made available.

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

135. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. Staff development days have been effective in improving the curriculum, planning assessment and moderating assessments. Teams from different centres work well with each other and share good practice. An effective teaching and learning observation process has helped to drive up standards.

136. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report. Staff promote equality and diversity issues effectively.

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



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good students' achievements
  
- innovative project-based teaching
  
- good use of individual learning plans
  
- good curriculum management.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient challenge within some lessons for the more able students

- insufficient access for wheelchair users
  
- insufficient progression opportunities for adults from discrete provision.

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

137. Courses specifically provided for students with moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities are offered at entry level on a full-time and part-time basis. Some of the adult learners have spent most of their lives in long-stay institutions, many still live with their family, some are partially supported and some live independently.

138. Most of the provision is based at three of the college's sites, although some is based in the community and the college operates in partnership with local agencies. There are 196 students of whom 28 are aged 16 to 18. Most of the full-time students aged 16 to 18 are based at Gray's Inn. There are three programme pathways - an externally and internally accredited pre-vocational pathway for employability, an internally accredited essential skills pathway and an adult education pathway. All students have an individual learning plan based on diagnostic assessment. There is an increased emphasis on practical activities in the catering, IT, visual arts, woodwork, gardening, music, and pottery modules. Within the employability pathway there is some work experience and voluntary work with external agencies.

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

139. Students' achievements are good. Retention rates are high. Most full-time students aged 16 to 18 are on externally accredited Skills for Life or Skills for Working Life courses and are achieving entry levels 1 or 2. Until this year most adults were following college certificated courses but many are now taking externally accredited Skills for Life qualifications. These enable students to progress to higher levels of qualification. Achievements in art, computing and catering are good. All students make good progress in their personal development. They gain confidence and achieve their personal goals.

140. Progression opportunities for full-time students aged 16 to 18 to move to mainstream vocational courses are good. A high percentage of these students progress after one year. Some adults gain additional experience in voluntary or paid employment, or by undertaking work experience, often in partnership with a range of local agencies. There has, however, been insufficient progression, particularly onto mainstream provision, for the majority of adults. With the imminent closure of the Battersea site, alternative provision has been secured for the students in other colleges.

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

141. Teaching is satisfactory or better. Project-based teaching is innovative. In the best lessons a good variety of teaching methods is used. In one lesson the teacher devised a series of games which included movement to help an adult group learn basic numbers. Practical sessions in catering, media, gardening and computing, give students the opportunity to develop and practise skills. Teaching is often enthusiastic and innovative in project-based activity such as the production of a London guidebook for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Integrated assignments enable students to produce newsletters, meals for fellow students, booklets and guides for visitors to London. Adult students planned and produced a musical and are preparing for a summer garden party. In a minority of lessons the more able students are not sufficiently challenged, although in computing, essential skills and catering, teachers provide additional work.

142. All students have individual targets, which include personal curriculum-related targets and, in

some instances, behavioural targets. These are monitored at least weekly by tutors and, in the best lessons, reviewed at the end of the lesson. Targets are, in most instances, challenging. For a minority of students, however, there is insufficient challenge within lessons.

143. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory for the group size and activity being undertaken. There are good visual displays of students' work in most rooms. This not only brightens the room but also celebrates the achievements of students. At the Battersea site, there is good specialist accommodation for the catering and art options as well as a base room. These facilities are valued by the students, many of whom eat the food prepared by their peers. The computing modules are taught in appropriate accommodation. Overall, there is poor accessibility for wheelchair users. The productive links with external agencies ensure that students have good access throughout their course to interviews, visits to local job centres, and voluntary work placements at café, gardening, housing and arts projects, Excursions are an integral part of the curriculum for all pathways, informing the project work, and encouraging the development of confidence and life skills. The London Guide project for adults has been developed following visits to attractions, in which students travelled on public transport, took photographs and noted details prior to using computing skills to produce an attractive booklet.

144. There is a clear assessment schedule with peer review and internal verification. Assessment methods are appropriate and at the right level. Student work is clearly marked with appropriate feedback and it is returned regularly.

145. Good use is made of individual learning plans. Initial assessment of students' learning needs is comprehensive and specific to the skills required in the vocational options within the course. All students have an individual learning plan and lesson plans clearly specify the individual targets and how these are to be achieved. Teachers monitor progress regularly in team review meetings and individual tutorials.

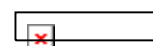
146. Individual support for students is good. Group sizes are small and there is an effective team approach by tutors and learning support assistants to respond to individual and group needs. There are clear roles and responsibilities for learning support assistants and, in the best lessons, teachers outline their in-class support activities.

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

147. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear strategy for improving the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the college. Much progress has been made since the last inspection. The development of the curriculum pathways has given a clear framework for this area. The assessment policy is understood and implemented. Curriculum management and communications are good. There has been extensive staff and curriculum development. There is now a consistent approach to lesson planning with clear, targeted individual learning plans, which are systematically reviewed. Course teams conduct regular course reviews. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection.

148. Appraisal of staff is conducted regularly and targets are clearly related to the improvement strategy. Area of learning staff development days have helped teachers across the college to achieve a consistent approach to curriculum development, as well as a common understanding of individual learning plans and their use. The sharing of good practice is well established. Staff contributed to the self-assessment process. Their report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Equality and diversity has a high profile within the area. Curriculum materials are all inclusive and wall displays celebrate diversity.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good teaching and learning on adult literacy and numeracy courses
- effective provision of learning support within well-resourced study centres
- good support for dyslexic students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory management of key skills
- unsatisfactory teaching of literacy and numeracy in some vocational areas
- ineffective initial assessment procedure.

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

149. Courses for adults in literacy and numeracy are offered in a variety of venues. These include the college, community centres, libraries, local hospitals and employers' premises. There is also individual, small group, in-class and one-to-one literacy and numeracy support for students on other college programmes. At the time of the inspection there were 771 students receiving literacy or numeracy support, 170 students receiving support for dyslexia, 224 adults were enrolled on basic skills programmes and over 1,700 students were taking key skills qualifications. The teaching of key skills is the responsibility of the various curriculum centres in the college. The programmes in the community include provision at The Royal Courts of Justice where courses are provided to improve the literacy skills of employees of the court system. The college also works with local hospitals where they prepare unemployed adults for work in the NHS. Most adults taking literacy or numeracy courses enrol upon internally certificated college courses.

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

150. Retention and pass rates for adults on a range of literacy and numeracy courses are high. In 2002/03, of the 263 students who enrolled on literacy and numeracy courses, retention rates were very high, at 92%, and pass rates were high, at 86%. Most students enrol on a termly basis, achieve a college certificate and enrol again for the following term. Students produce work of a high standard and take pride in their individual progress and achievements.

151. Full-time students aged 16 to 18 work towards key skills qualifications. Some students make good progress, complete their portfolios and are entered for their external tests. However, few

students actually achieve their key skills qualifications. In 2000/01, 345 students achieved a key skills qualification in either literacy or numeracy. This declined to only 126 in 2002/03.

152. Students receiving learning support make good progress towards meeting their agreed targets following diagnostic assessment. Achievements are recorded and reviewed in detailed individual learning plans. Many of these students make significant improvements in their literacy and numeracy skills. Students with dyslexia are well supported and make good progress to improve their literacy skills through effective support received in the study centres. College data for 2002/03 show that students who receive basic skills support are likely to complete their course.

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

153. Teaching on part-time adult literacy and numeracy courses is good. Students are well taught by qualified and experienced teachers. The students make good progress towards achieving challenging targets. They are well motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. In one evening class, part-time students who had previously struggled with their writing skills were improving them whilst reading John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* and writing their own profile of one of the characters in the novel. They found the lesson to be demanding yet greatly rewarding. The work produced by the students was of a good standard and clearly showed the significant progress they had made since commencing their studies. In an adult numeracy class in college, students who had previously found numeracy to be challenging were taught how to use a 24-hour clock. The teacher skilfully introduced and taught the topic. By the end of the lesson the students were able to read a train timetable competently.

154. There is some unsatisfactory teaching of key skills. Teachers do not adopt appropriate strategies to enable students to learn effectively and the needs of students of differing abilities are not addressed. In most key skills lessons tutors are aware of their students' low levels of literacy and numeracy skills. However, teachers do not have a clear understanding of how students learn and do not utilise effective techniques to improve students' literacy or numeracy. In some lessons there is an over reliance on work sheets. Students learn few new skills. In one key skills lesson, the students were taking practice papers in preparation for their key skills tests the following week. Out of the eleven students who took the test, only one passed. In a communication key skills lesson, students' work which had been previously submitted for marking was returned to the students with a number of spelling and grammatical errors which had not been corrected.

155. Support for dyslexic students is good and learning support is effective. Additional literacy and numeracy support is provided either within the lesson or in the one of the study centres which are located at each of the main campuses. This support is relevant and is focussed on the needs of individuals. In one support session, a student with profound dyslexia developed her reading skills by matching a large number of word cards with similar structures (e.g. where, while, whip) whilst saying the words out loud. This enabled the student to gain greater confidence in her use of written text. The well-equipped study centres contain a good range of resources. Staff in these centres are enthusiastic and have good relations with their students. The centres also have dyslexia support areas equipped with a range of specialist software to support student learning. Students speak highly about the support that they receive.

156. Staff have received training in the teaching of key skills. However, this has yet to have an impact on the quality of teaching across the curriculum areas. Some of the literacy and numeracy key skills lessons at Gray's Inn take place in computer suites that do not provide students with sufficient work space. Most classrooms are well decorated with clear helpful posters showing relevant literacy or numeracy techniques to support students' learning. In the part-time adult classes students are provided with relevant textbooks, thesauruses and dictionaries. These are well used by the students to improve their learning. In one numeracy class for part-time adults the teacher provided a wide range of numeracy resources to support his students' learning.

157. The arrangements for initial assessment in literacy and numeracy are ineffective. Vocational teachers use a college-devised screening test and form their own interpretation of the students' performance. This practice results in inconsistent interpretations of students' abilities across the college. Some students are then enrolled on inappropriate literacy and numeracy courses. In one



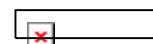
level 2 numeracy lesson, students struggled with calculations appropriate for level 1. The college is aware that its screening process requires improvement and is investigating an alternative. Adult students on part-time literacy programmes undertake a diagnostic test to determine the level of their provision and to construct their individual learning plans. These are regularly monitored to determine their individual progress. Students who are identified as potentially dyslexic are initially assessed and then, if appropriate, receive a full dyslexia assessment. These students agree short-term targets with their support teacher so that they can make effective progress in their vocational area. These students value this support.

### **Leadership and management**

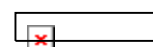
158. In courses for adults and learning support management is good. There is clear direction from the curriculum managers on staff training and development. Curriculum teams meet regularly, targets are reviewed and student progress is closely monitored. Lesson observations inform staff development and self-assessment reports are clear and focussed. The college has recognised that it needs to increase the number of students achieving external accreditation and has started to enrol students onto these courses. There are emerging links with employers through the courses being provided for the NHS. Over 60 students have enrolled onto these courses, which enable unemployed students to return to work through an effective programme of literacy and personal development. The management of learning support is good. Many students receive effective support, which enables them to succeed on their learning programmes. Through the provision of effective support for dyslexic students the college is taking steps to ensure that these disadvantaged students have the support required to enable them to succeed on their courses.

159. The management of key skills across the college is unsatisfactory. Few students on full-time programmes achieve their qualifications. There is little evidence of student progression. There are clear procedures for managers to follow relating to the key skills policy but there are variable practices across the curriculum centres.

### **Part D: College data**



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



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	22	41
2	34	34
3	38	15
4/5	1	3
Other	5	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: provided by the college in spring 2004*

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

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	499	198	3
Land-based provision	11	39	0
Construction			0
Engineering, technology and manufacture	5	126	1
Business administration, management and professional	575	1,454	8
Information and communication technology	511	2,278	10
Retailing, customer service and transportation	208	735	4
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	487	1,957	9
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	257	341	2
Health, social care and public services	195	1,461	6
Visual and performing arts and media	370	400	3
Humanities	484	259	3
English, languages and communication	631	2,951	13
Foundation programmes	203	1,481	6
Unknown area of learning	1,074	7,430	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,510</b>	<b>21,110</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in spring 2004

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
1	Starters excluding transfers	341	417	562	2,224	1,218	2,626
	Retention rate %	85	87	87	69	74	83
	National average %	75	75		73	74	
	Pass rate %	84	92	89	55	71	91

	National average %	64	66		68	69	
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1,500	1,345	1,148	1,743	1,833	1,834
	Retention rate %	80	77	82	77	73	76
	National average %	70	70		70	69	
	Pass rate %	69	76	75	56	67	65
	National average %	67	68		65	69	
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	2,478	1,967	1,744	1,852	1,697	2,162
	Retention rate %	70	77	80	73	74	83
	National average %	67	75		67	70	
	Pass rate %	64	70	76	59	69	73
	National average %	70	73		65	69	
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	133	80	51
	Retention rate %				64	88	89
	National average %				65	70	
	Pass rate %				34	51	66
	National average %				49	49	

*Note: Summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is General FE and tertiary colleges with a high number of students from disadvantaged areas).*

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 2000 to 2002: Retention and Pass Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2003.

2. College rates for 2003: College ISR for 2001 to 2002.

\*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	91
Level 2 (intermediate)	54	32	14	50

Level 1 (foundation)	73	20	7	30
Other sessions	69	23	8	39
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>210</b>

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