



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards
in Education

Brockenhurst College

CONTENTS

[Basic information about the college](#)

[Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

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

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

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

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

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

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

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

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

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

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Business, administration, management and professional](#)

[Information and communications technology](#)

[Hospitality, travel and tourism](#)

[Sport and leisure](#)

[Health, social care and public services](#)

[Visual and performing arts](#)

[Humanities](#)

[English and modern foreign languages](#)

[Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities](#)

[Literacy and numeracy](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

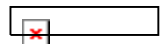
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

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

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

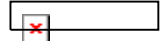
[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

Basic information about the college

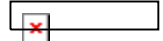


Name of college:	Brockenhurst College
Type of college:	Tertiary College
Principal:	Michael Snell
Address of college:	Lyndhurst Road Brockenhurst Hampshire SO42 7ZE
Telephone number:	01590 625555
Fax number:	01590 625526
Chair of governors:	Doug Wilson
Unique reference number:	130690
Name of reporting inspector:	Gloria Dolan HMI
Dates of inspection:	19-23 April 2004

Part A: Summary



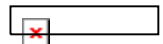
Information about the college



Brockenhurst College is a tertiary college situated in the New Forest. It attracts students from a wide geographical area including Hampshire, Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole, Wiltshire, Southampton and the Isle of Wight. The college offers courses in all areas of learning. Courses range from pre-entry to foundation degree. Most students aged 16 to 18 attend the main college site and take level 3 courses. The college provides courses for adults at Brockenhurst and also at more than 30 community locations. There are 2,230 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 107 full-time students over 19 years of age. More than 10,000 part-time students follow accredited and non-accredited programmes. Almost all part-time students are aged over 19. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds make up 1.6% of the total. The college has recently been awarded centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) status in applied information and communications technology (ICT) for business. In September 2003 the college was awarded a direct contract to provide adult and community learning in the local area.

The college's mission statement is: "to encourage, support and enhance learning by responding to the needs and demands of individuals and employers through high quality provision, collaboration and innovative practice. To increase and widen participation and achievement in education and skills training for all our learners".

How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the quality of education to be outstanding in four of the curriculum areas inspected and good in seven. Standards of teaching and learning are very good. The main strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

Key strengths

- outstanding leadership and management

- highly effective strategic planning

- strong focus upon continuous improvements

- clear accountability at all levels

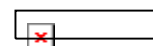
- high standard of teaching and learning
- high pass and retention rates
- extensive range of courses at level 3
- productive partnerships and external links
- good support for students
- inclusive culture.

What should be improved

- number of student grades higher than predicted by general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) scores
- key skills provision
- suitability of accommodation for theory, independent living skills and visual and performing arts students

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

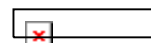


well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	Good. There are high retention and pass rates on advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) and general certificate of education (GCE) A2 courses. Teaching and learning, particularly in science, are good. Resources for teaching and learning are good and there is a wide range of AS-level and GCE A2 courses. There is some weak use of assessment to monitor and improve student progress. Staff demonstrate good commitment to continuous improvement.
Business, administration, management and professional	Outstanding. Most teaching is excellent, very good or good. There are high retention and pass rates on all courses and students produce work of a high standard. Very good use is made of up-to-date materials to support learning. The very good range of resources and good business intranet are well used but the use of information learning technology (ILT) within a minority of lessons is insufficiently effective.
Information and communications technology	Good. Retention and pass rates are good for students aged 16 to 18, but retention is low on accredited short courses for adults. Teaching is good and well planned for all students, and students work is of a good standard. Some unsuitable accommodation inhibits learning. The management of courses is good for students aged 16 to 18 and satisfactory overall.
Hospitality, travel and tourism	Outstanding. Pass rates on most courses in hospitality and travel are very high. Much teaching is outstanding or very good, imaginative and leads to very high standards of students' work. Students are very well supported, assessed and monitored throughout their course. Outstanding enrichment activities and good learning resources are well used to develop students' abilities.
Sport and leisure	Good. Most pass and retention rates are high, above national averages and improving. Students on GCE A2 PE do not achieve as well as predicted by their GCSE scores. Much teaching is good or very good, lesson plans are imaginative and good management ensures a strong focus on raising pass rates. Facilities for practical sport are very good but some accommodation for theory is cramped.
Health, social care and public services	Outstanding. Student retention and pass rates are high and above national averages on most courses. Most teaching is good or very good and students' work is of a high standard. Assessment is very thorough and actively involves feedback from employers. There is strong curriculum management.
Visual and performing arts	Good. There are very high pass rates across all areas of provision. Standards of students work are high in most areas. Much of the teaching is good and assessment is thorough and enables students to effectively improve their performance. Accommodation is cramped or restrictive for a significant number of full-time students.
Humanities	Outstanding. There are very high pass rates and high-grade attainment on AS-level and GCE advanced-level (A-level) programmes. Most teaching and learning is outstanding, very good or good and makes very effective use of paper-based and ILT resources to stimulate students' investigative skills. There is strong curriculum support for students. A minority of students have unsatisfactory punctuality which hinders learning in some subjects.
English and modern	Good. Much teaching is good or very good, with many lessons

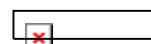
foreign languages	carefully planned to address students' individual needs. Retention and pass rates at A level are very high in most subjects. There is an appropriate range of courses at level 3, but level 2 provision in English does not adequately meet the needs of all learners. Curriculum management is firmly focused on improvement.
Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	Good. Achievement is very good for full-time and part-time students. Much teaching and learning are good or very good. Accommodation at the main college site is not always most effectively used to support learning. Provision for students aged 16 to 18 is inclusive and there is good progression to level 1 and 2 courses but individual learning plans are not always sufficiently detailed.
Literacy and numeracy	Good. There are high levels of achievement for students aged over 19 years, particularly, and high retention rates on all courses. Pass rates for the small numbers of students taking key skills are high at level 1 but they are low at level 2. There is much good and very good teaching with effective individual support for students. Comprehensive initial assessment for most students informs planning to meet their needs but individual learning plans are not always sufficiently detailed.

How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are outstanding. Governors, the principal and senior managers provide excellent leadership and set a clear strategic direction. Retention and pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are considerably above the national average. Retention and pass rates for adult learners have improved and are at or above the national average. The college actively develops the curriculum to fulfil its mission of serving the needs of individuals, employers and the community. Staff are enthusiastic. They share common values and purpose in serving the best interests of students and focus strongly on raising standards. There are rigorous quality assurance arrangements leading to improvement. Self-assessment grades closely matched the grades awarded at inspection. Staff development is good and prioritised to support the college's corporate objectives. The college has made a good response to the Race Relations (amendment) Act and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). There are good arrangements for monitoring the academic performance of different groups of learners. Financial management is good and the college provides good value for money.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



The college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. A wide range of programmes is offered at the main site and in the local community. Courses and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good and available on a full-time or part-time basis. Teaching staff take into account the individual learning styles and other particular needs of students when planning their teaching. The proportion of learners enrolled from black and other minority ethnic backgrounds is 1.6%, which is slightly higher than the proportion in the New Forest. Pass rates, retention and achievement of students is analysed by gender, disability and ethnicity each year, both at subject team and whole college level. The equal opportunities policy has been reviewed in light of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the SENDA. Wide consultation with students, staff and governors informed the review. Almost all parts of the college and community centres can be used by students with mobility difficulties.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?

The college provides good support and guidance for students and good advice on careers and higher education. The college has a caring ethos and a strong, supportive community. Support services are well managed and readily available to all full-time and part-time students. All students appreciate the quality of both pastoral and academic support. Pre-entry information is clear and initial guidance and selection procedures are thorough. Induction is good and there are very effective arrangements for identifying students with literacy and numeracy needs, and students with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Additional learning support is effectively provided in classes and contributes to an improvement in retention and pass rates. Good specialist support services, including mentors, are available to all students. Students value the tutorial arrangements. Procedures for monitoring students' attendance are good.

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

- relaxed, friendly community atmosphere

- good support from caring teachers and support staff

- being treated as an adult and with respect

- wide range of courses and enrichment programme

- good links between college and university

- absence of bullying

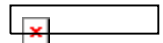
- meeting people from a wide variety of backgrounds

- support workshops to extend knowledge.

What they feel could be improved

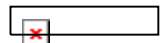
- toilets in older buildings
- car-parking and slippery road surface when wet
- size of refectory
- transport.

Other information

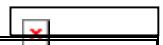


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The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

Part B: The college as a whole



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors



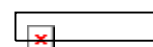
Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
-----------------------	---	---------------------------------	---

Teaching 16-18	80	17	3
19+ and WBL*	83	15	2
Learning 16-18	76	21	3
19+ and WBL*	74	24	2

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. Brockenhurst College offers a wide range of courses on a full-time or part-time basis. Courses are offered in all areas of learning except land-based studies. Retention and pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are high and have been consistently above national averages over the last three years at levels 1 to 3. The percentage of high grades at GCE A2 and AS level has increased over the last three years and GCE A2 high grades have improved from 36% to 41% in 2003. The percentage of high grades at GCSE is around the national average. Pass rates for adults taking level 1 and 2 long courses are much higher than national averages. Pass rates at level 3 are higher than national averages for two of the three years up to 2003 but were 3% below national averages in 2002. Pass rates on short courses are around national averages. Students produce good written and practical work. Many students have good oral skills, are able to sustain an argument and develop a point of view well. They are able to analyse and evaluate topics effectively and tackle complex information confidently. Progression onto further courses or related employment is good. Of the students wishing to go onto higher education in 2003, 95% succeeded in progressing onto higher education courses.

Students aged 16 to 18

2. Most students are on level 3 programmes and follow courses leading to AS-level and GCE A2 qualifications. Pass rates on these courses have continuously improved over the last three years and have been significantly above national averages for the three-year period 2001 to 2003. The college calculates how well students are achieving in their AS-level and GCE A2 qualifications compared with their previous GCSE results. Overall 89% of students are achieving at least as well as predicted and sometimes better than predicted. In 2003, 17% of students achieved at a higher level than expected from their GCSE results and 11% achieved at a lower level than predicted. Last year 39% of all AS-level passes were high grades (A or B) and 41% of all GCE A2 passes were high grades. In the three-year period 2001 to 2003 there has been a 10% increase in the number of GCE A2s taken and a continuous improvement in the percentage of high grades achieved, from 36% to 41%.

3. Overall pass rates for level 1 and level 2 qualifications are significantly higher than national averages for the three-year period to 2003. The percentage of high grades in GCSE subjects, where students achieve grades A to C, is around or above national averages. Pass rates for general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) and national vocational qualifications (NVQs) are significantly higher than national averages.

4. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 are high. They have been consistently above national averages at all levels over the three years to 2003 and are particularly high for students on level 3 programmes.

5. Of students wishing to go onto higher education in 2003, 95% succeeded in progressing onto higher education courses. Attendance during inspection was 84%, the same as observed at the last inspection and well above the national average for tertiary colleges of 76%.

6. Students produce good written work and many have practical skills which are being developed to a high standard. Many students are enthusiastic, have good oral skills, are able to sustain an argument and develop a point of view well. In humanities students are able to analyse and evaluate topics effectively and tackle complex information confidently. In hospitality and travel students work productively, both individually and in small groups. They relate theory to practice well and use ICT skilfully for research and independent study. In many subjects students' work is impressive. In visual and performing arts many AS-level students produce work that is imaginative and bold. Public service students show clear understanding about the impact of terrorist attacks on the lives of services personnel. Childcare students very effectively apply their knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication. Business students demonstrate very good knowledge of current events and economics. Students are good at applying what they have learnt to real business situations. Although in most subjects the standard of practical work is good, drama students do not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the links between practice and theory. Aspects of practical skills are underdeveloped.

7. Students on level 1 key skill courses achieve very good results in application of number and communications. Retention rates are also high. Students taking information technology (IT) key skills at levels 2 and 3 achieve high pass rates on national tests but few complete the full award. Application of number and communications key skills at levels 2 and 3 are not well integrated into most study programmes.

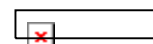
8. Students from a range of courses have gained awards and recognition in a variety of external activities. The college fields sports teams in football, rugby, netball, badminton, volleyball, shooting, basketball and hockey. Students achieved national recognition in American football, skiing and netball in 2002/03.

Adult learners

9. A small number of adult learners, 107, currently follow full-time courses. Ten thousand adult learners follow a large number of long part-time and short courses. Not all of these courses lead to qualifications. Most students take level 1 and level 2 courses at one of the college's four main centres or 30 community venues. Pass rates for level 1 and 2 long courses have continuously improved over the three years to 2003 and are much higher than national averages, particularly at level 1. Pass rates at level 3 are higher than national averages for two of the three years up to 2003 but were 3% below national averages in 2002. Pass rates on short courses are around national averages.

10. Retention rates over the past three years have improved at both level 1 and level 2 and they are now at or slightly above national averages.

Quality of education and training



11. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 207 lessons. The overall quality of teaching was very good and it was graded good or better in 80.2% per cent of the lessons observed. A satisfactory grade was awarded to 17.4% of lessons and 2.4% were graded as less than satisfactory. For lessons taught by full-time teachers, 85% were graded good or better, compared with 74% of lessons taught by part-time teachers. Teaching was best in hospitality, travel and tourism, health, social care and public services, humanities and literacy and numeracy, where

enthusiastically to complete prescribed tasks. They participated well in a range of lesson activities and were highly motivated to develop their learning. Most teachers were aware of the differing needs of their students and used a wide range of strategies to help them learn effectively.

12. Teachers show real enthusiasm for their subjects. Many lessons are lively, with good momentum, use of humour, anecdote and a variety of activities to stimulate learning. Most lessons are thoroughly prepared, well structured and have clear objectives. There is very effective use of the target language in most language lessons. Teachers produce good quality materials and use learning aids particularly effectively in many lessons. In a business lesson the teacher brought in a range of products including paper nappies, tobacco and children's snack products, which provided a good focus for discussions on business ethics. Teachers' knowledge and technical competence support learning well in ICT. Questioning is often used skilfully to check students understanding and to extend their thinking. Team teaching and group work are effectively used and in some adult classes very good use is made of students' own experiences. In an excellent psychology lesson, ILT was used very effectively. Students completed a work sheet on various psychological approaches. Their work was marked on-line; students obtained their results and then worked on a more detailed investigation of psychological approaches. Students learn how to be analytical and critical and have a sound understanding of the technical language of their subjects.

13. The average class size observed was 10.4, which is slightly above the average of 9.8 for tertiary colleges. In a few lessons where aspects of teaching were unsatisfactory, there was little interaction and students were insufficiently involved in lessons, theory and practice were not well linked and developed and there were a few examples of inappropriate classroom management.

14. Teachers are well qualified and experienced in their subjects and almost all teachers are qualified to teach. Staff development is clearly linked to individual training needs and to college priorities.

15. The learning resource centre is well stocked with books, journals and CD-ROMS and computers are readily available for students' use. Sufficient space is provided for silent individual study and group work. Careers materials are plentiful and resources for students with a visual impairment are clearly displayed.

16. The ratio of computers to students is very good at 1:1.5. Most teaching rooms have a computer and several classrooms in all areas have digital projectors and interactive whiteboards. A number of curriculum areas have a computer suite for students' use. Teachers frequently use the networked computers in staff workrooms. IT resources for adult and part-time students at community centres are also good.

17. Student social and restaurant facilities are modern and attractive. Science laboratories and teaching rooms have been upgraded. Access for people with restricted mobility has been improved along with reception facilities and car parking. However around 8% of the main site remains inaccessible to those with restricted mobility. Access is limited in a small number of the community venues.

18. The college estate is well kept and pleasant. Facilities for outdoor sports are good and well used. The large sports hall and the fitness centre are excellent resources for students and the local community.

19. Classrooms and corridors are well maintained and have good displays of students' work. Resources for learning are good and students have the use of good specialist equipment. Many curriculum areas have developed interesting and stimulating intranet materials for students. However, there is some cramped and unsuitable accommodation in ICT, classrooms used for theory teaching in sport, business and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at the main site. In ICT, lighting and seating arrangements are unsuitable in several rooms and there is insufficient room for students to take notes, refer to paper resources or to take part in group activities.

20. Good assessment procedures and practice are well developed and effective across the college. The marking of students' work, setting of relevant assignments and regular homework and the use of clear assessment criteria which is well understood by students, are particularly effective in health, social care and public services, sports, hospitality and travel, English, humanities and business. Teachers provide clear, prompt and informative written and oral feedback with a good focus on making improvements and there are many examples of good practice across curriculum areas. However, there is some weak use of assessment to monitor and improve the progress of students in maths and science, and ICT for students aged 16 to 18. In some adult community learning courses, including the language provision, assessment does not sufficiently inform lesson and course planning. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to place students on appropriate key skills courses. Effective use is made of on-line assessment in business and there is an e-tutoring pilot in the sixth-form college. Effective internal verification and good external verifier reports confirm the rigour of assessment. Quality assurance of the assessment process, and moderation of standards, is good and well developed across most areas.

21. Initial assessment including literacy, numeracy, learning styles assessment and additional support requirements are thorough. Diagnostic assessment is provided when appropriate. The college is using, and further developing, a progressive electronic information system to support regular and comprehensive monitoring and assessment of students' progress. It includes personal information about students, their prior achievements, results of initial assessment, target grades and other academic information. Individual learning plans are readily available to tutors through the system. It also includes up-to-date information about lesson registration and student attendance. The system currently does not sufficiently include the setting of short-term targets. This inhibits achievement at an optimum rate for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The system provides up to date data on student progress against a range of targets. However a few areas are not fully using the system to inform lesson and action planning.

22. The college offers a wide range of courses from pre-entry level to level 4 for full-time and part-time students. Over 2,400 students follow full-time courses and over 10,000 are taking part-time courses. Courses are offered in all areas of learning except land-based courses. Most students follow level 3 programmes. The numbers of students in construction, engineering, retail and hairdressing and beauty therapy are small. A wide variety of GCE A2 and AS-level subjects are taught along with advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE), Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) and NVQ qualifications at level 3. There is a good range of vocational programmes at entry level and levels 1 and 2. Provision for learners with basic skills needs in literacy and numeracy, and for students aged 16 to 18 and adult learners with specific learning difficulties and disabilities, is extensive. Part-time and adult courses take place at the main college sites and at 30 community-based locations in the New Forest. Students also study NVQ in the workplace. The college has recently been awarded CoVE status in applied ICT for business.

23. The college provides NVQ level 1 courses in engineering, public services, hospitality and sport and recreation once a week for 30 pupils from local secondary schools, and it has assisted the development of Pathfinder vocational GCSEs in ten local schools. Effective marketing by the college and contacts with employers have increased the number of adult students by 6,000 (150%) the past 4 years. Vocational programmes have been developed to more closely meet the needs of learners. For example, the BTEC national IT for practitioners diploma increases choice in IT. A variety of sport, leisure and travel options are available and the course for Bournemouth Football Club apprentices also offers a range of study options.

24. Over 670 students participated in a wide range of enrichment activities in 2002/03. Activities ranged from life drawing, first aid and community volunteering to debating, kickboxing, drama and reflexology. The college actively fields teams in sports such as football, rugby, netball and badminton. Students achieved national recognition in American football, skiing and netball in 2002/03.

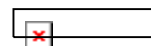
25. The college provides good support and guidance for students, including part-time adults, who contribute to their own records of progress and identification of support needs. There is a range of high quality pre-entry advice and guidance including a website, open evenings and interviews by course specialists. The schools liaison team works effectively with a range of schools across a wide

area. Adult students are offered advice and guidance by trained course advisors. There are good arrangements for careers advice, welfare, counselling, finance, travel and general support. Pastoral support for students is very good. Students value the personal support they receive from caring and considerate subject teachers and support services staff. Induction is good and prepares students for their studies. It includes systematic initial assessment including additional learning needs. Students value and appreciate the college diary containing key information about college services and procedures.

26. Tutorial support is good. Strong leadership of the system by senior managers has supported the implementation of new practices. It provides effective and detailed individual student support including attendance monitoring. Tutorial staff use the information on the electronic individual record system to continuously up-date information about students' overall performance. However the information provided is not always fully used during tutorial support. A minority of sessions are too focused on long-term targets rather than developing more manageable short-term objectives. Students are beginning to use the system within tutorials and they are well supported to achieve their aims through a range of activities including provision for able students, revision sessions, the supported education programme and individual support organised by the skills development team. Students are frequently informed about college life through the student bulletin. The college responds well to the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good specialist resources and effective mentor support are readily available for students. Learning support assistants provide very good support across the curriculum. Literacy and numeracy support is provided effectively in vocational classes, in individual sessions and in provision for adults, in a wide range of community venues. However data relating to initial assessment and support is not always analysed sufficiently to ensure students' programme level is appropriate.

27. Student attendance is closely monitored and at 84% it is 8% above the national average.

Leadership and management



28. Leadership and management are outstanding. Governors, the principal and senior managers provide excellent leadership and strategic direction. The college has given high priority to improving the quality of teaching, learning and achievement. It has continued to improve accommodation and resources and introduced new programmes to meet the needs of a wider range of students and employers in the local community. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 have been consistently well above the national average for the last three years at all levels. Retention rates for adult learners have improved and are at the national average. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are significantly above national averages. Pass rates for students aged over 19 have improved over the last three years and in some cases are significantly above the national average.

29. The college mission is to provide a range of opportunities to meet the needs of individuals, employers and the local community. Corporate objectives sharply reflect this and place the needs of students at the centre of the college's activities. The college development plan clearly identifies specific actions to improve performance. This plan is meticulously updated each term. Progress is discussed thoroughly and reported to governors. The strong commitment of governors, managers and staff to raising standards, creates a shared sense of purpose and high expectations across the organisation.

30. Governance is strong. Governors work productively with the principal, senior managers and staff to set a clear strategic direction. They effectively and systematically monitor the academic performance of the college, celebrating areas of good practice and seeking assurance that issues are being addressed. Governors have wide-ranging skills that benefit the college. They rigorously review their own performance and ensure that they are up-to-date and knowledgeable about the college and its students. Training is excellent and includes short monthly sessions on a range of issues. Newly appointed governors attend the academic board and its sub-committees. Governors

meet staff several times each year and discuss strategic issues with groups of staff at the annual stewardship day.

31. The college has been reorganised to provide stronger focus on the needs of particular student groups. The change was well managed and its objectives have been met. Accountabilities are clear and staff confidently take decisions within their areas of responsibility. Communication in the college is very good. Staff value the open and consultative management style and they are well informed. Meetings focus on achieving college objectives. Senior and middle managers meet monthly to assess college progress against targets.

32. Curriculum management is good or outstanding with a culture of continuous improvement. Team meetings effectively support improvements in achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. They include the setting of realistic and challenging targets, curriculum reviews to meet the needs of students and the sharing of good practice.

33. Quality assurance arrangements are rigorous and lead to improvements in retention and achievement. The quality policy clearly articulates staff responsibilities and recognises thorough self-assessment as the central process in developing a culture of constructive evaluation. The self-assessment report is well written and comprehensive. It frequently compares performance with the best in the sector. The thorough validation process involves students, staff and governors. The views of students, parents and employers are part of the self-assessment process. Development plans arising from the self-assessment report set out clear actions and targets.

34. The college has a well-established lesson observation scheme that provides constructive feedback to teachers and identifies development needs. Each year staff are observed and graded by their line manager. Additionally, senior and middle managers review curriculum areas, and lessons are graded as part of this process. Observers are trained in lesson observation and feedback is thorough. In some areas, grades awarded for lessons judged to be good or better are generous. Staff new to teaching are observed by mentors. Peer observation takes place within departments.

35. Staff development and training are good. The annual staff development and training plan reflects corporate and departmental objectives. Particular attention is given to ensuring changes taking place in the college are supported by appropriate training. For example, tutors received training to support changes in the management of the pastoral system. Induction and review for newly appointed staff is comprehensive. The academic board and the governors receive regular reports of staff development activities undertaken. The college has reviewed its appraisal scheme and introduced a pilot scheme to link the process more closely to organisational objectives.

36. The college has a range of successful partnerships with other organisations. It leads a CoVE in applied ICT for business. Partnership arrangements exist with a number of higher education institutions. The college leads an extensive Increased Flexibility programme for students aged 14 to 16, and is part of a Pathfinder project for students aged 14 to 19. The college works in partnership with employers in the area to address skills shortages. Arrangements include training staff in the workplace.

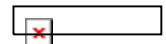
37. The college's response to equality of opportunity is good. Staff and students understand their responsibilities. The equal opportunities and diversity policy is well written and supported by a code of practice. The college complies with the requirements of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and the SENDA. All staff receive appropriate awareness training. A clear action plan is produced annually and progress is systematically reported to governors and the academic board. The college actively monitors and evaluates the academic performance of different groups of learners. As part of the lesson observation scheme, observers report on equal opportunities. This provides examples of good practice in teaching and learning. Careful attention is given to the needs of individual students and support for all learners is good. The basic skills strategy is well developed. The policy relating to harassment is clear and the complaints procedure is detailed. Complaints are handled quickly and an annual report is presented to governors.

38. The management information system provides staff at all levels with easily available and

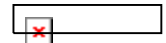
accurate information. Good use is made of data at curriculum level to plan courses and monitor performance. Students can view their individual learning plans and attendance record electronically.

39. Financial management is very good and governors receive clear and comprehensive information upon which to monitor performance. Curriculum budgets are delegated to managers who all receive appropriate training. Budgets are well managed and income and expenditure is monitored on a frequent basis. Staff are efficiently deployed. Retention and pass rates are generally well above the national average. The college provides good value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Science and mathematics



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

Strengths

- high retention and pass rates on AS-level and GCE A2 courses
- much good teaching and learning in science
- good resources for teaching and learning
- wide range of AS-level and GCE A2 courses
- good commitment to continuous improvement.

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of students in mathematics lessons
- lack of timely monitoring of progress of all students.

Scope of provision

40. The college offers a wide range of science and mathematics courses. AS-level and GCE A2 courses are offered in biology, human biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, further mathematics, environmental science and geology. The college also offers an AS-level course in uses of mathematics. GCSE courses are offered in mathematics, science (single award) and astronomy. Students can also study freestanding mathematics units at levels 2 and 3. GCSE mathematics and astronomy are offered as evening provision. There are 840 students aged 16 to 18 and 29 students aged 19 and older on full-time courses. Of the 47 part-time students, 34 are aged over 19.

Achievement and standards

41. Retention rates and pass rates on all GCE A2 courses are high and are above national averages. There are high retention and pass rates on most AS-level courses. The pass rates in AS-level mathematics have improved from 51% in 2001 to 81% in 2003. Overall, AS-level and GCE A2 students achieve grades that are broadly in line with those expected from their GCSE results. Retention and pass rates in GCSE astronomy are high and they are satisfactory in GCSE science and mathematics.

42. The standard of all students' work is at least satisfactory and it is good in many lessons. Students recognise links between different areas of the curriculum and apply their knowledge effectively to new situations. Students frequently demonstrate good use of scientific terminology and communicate scientific ideas in writing to a satisfactory or good level. Many students ask incisive and relevant questions during discussions and demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of their subjects.

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	169	200	216
		% retention	66	71	71
		% pass rate	46	44	46
GCSE astronomy	2	No. of starts	22	24	37
		% retention	82	67	86
		% pass rate	56	63	84
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	175	171	216
		% retention	83	80	79
		% pass rate	51	62	81
AS-level physics	3	No. of starts	105	85	104
		% retention	90	84	89
		% pass rate	82	89	74
GCE A2 biology	3	No. of starts	*	59	63
		% retention	*	98	94
		% pass rate	*	93	92
GCE A2 mathematics	3	No. of starts	*	63	70
		% retention	*	95	95

		% pass rate	*	96	90
--	--	-------------	---	----	----

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

* indicates course not offered in that year

Quality of education and training

43. There is much good teaching in science. In the best lessons teachers actively involve students at every stage. Resources are used creatively to support students' learning and reinforce their understanding of lesson topics. Students sorted specially produced cards to summarise the function of a synapse in a biology lesson. Imaginative use of ILT and photographs enhance presentations in geology and astronomy. Well-planned revision summaries consolidate students' understanding at the end of many lessons. In a minority of mathematics lessons students listened passively for long periods and questions to check their understanding were used too infrequently. Many lessons include good individual help for students. Students' work is praised and they are encouraged to work towards achieving correct solutions. However, in some cases, too long is spent on a single activity to make most productive use of student time. Teachers occasionally provide too much guidance to students when discussing examples.

44. Resources for teaching and learning are good. Teaching staff are well qualified and experienced. There is good support from technicians and learning support assistants. Two advanced lecturers provide effective support to teaching staff, which includes training in ILT and general teaching advice. Science laboratories are spacious and generally well equipped. Most teaching accommodation is pleasant and contains wall displays relevant to the curriculum. The college has an observatory and a specialised camera to capture images from the telescope in the observatory. Staff and students have good access to ICT facilities. Students make good use of a wide range of resources in the learning resource centre. There are some useful resources available to students on the college internet and intranet.

45. Assignments are set regularly, are suitable for the courses and are appropriately rigorous. Marking of assignments meets the requirements of awarding bodies. However, not all assignments are completed by students in good time. Monitoring student progress and developing timely action plans for improvements for a sizeable minority of students is disrupted. In some teaching groups over a third of set work is still outstanding. General problems encountered in assignments are frequently discussed within lessons but written feedback is not always sufficiently detailed. Action plan targets in progress reviews are not always sufficiently specific for all students.

46. There is a good range of level 3 academic courses in science and mathematics including advanced extension awards. In addition to biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics, the college offers provision in human biology, geology, environmental science, further mathematics, AS-level uses of mathematics and freestanding mathematics units. The uses of mathematics qualification provides an alternative level 3 option for students with a grade C in GCSE mathematics. The range of level 2 academic courses is satisfactory. In 2003, the college introduced level 2 freestanding mathematics units as a useful alternative to GCSE mathematics. Approximately one-third of students following a level 2 course in mathematics are now appropriately taking the freestanding units. Students have access to a satisfactory range of enrichment activities related to their main programme. These include visiting lecturers who speak on specialist subjects, field trips and a recently established astronomy society. Evening classes are currently provided in GCSE mathematics and GCSE astronomy, but there has been little demand for other provision.

47. Support and guidance for students is satisfactory. Students receive appropriate information, advice and guidance in relation to courses and programmes and career progression. Teaching staff are aware of the individual learning needs of students, but insufficient use is occasionally made of this information in course planning and teaching. Students on level 2 courses receive effective support within lessons from learning support assistants. There is good support in mathematics workshops and an increasing focus on individual support in chemistry. Teachers willingly offer informal support to students outside lessons and additional revision classes are provided before

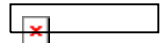
examinations. Tutorials are satisfactory. A recently introduced tracking system has improved the monitoring of attendance and communication between members of staff.

Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management are good. Managers set a clear direction and there is good commitment to continuous improvement among all staff. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and has been modified to meet the needs of students. There is a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, and good use has been made of advanced lecturers to share good practice and develop staff. Communications are effective and there is good teamwork within the division.

49. The promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Equality of opportunity is monitored during lesson observations. Teachers provide appropriate individual support within most lessons and additional help is provided on level 2 courses by learning support assistants. Books that highlight the achievements of female scientists are available in the learning resource centre. There is, however, little explicit promotion of equal opportunities in schemes of work and lessons. Participation and success of students is monitored by gender, disability and additional learning needs.

Business, administration, management and professional



Overall provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Strengths

- high pass and retention rates on all courses

- much good teaching

- high standard of students' work

- very good use of current business topics in lessons

- very effective assessment

- good range of successful courses

- very good support for students' individual needs

- strong curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- insufficiently effective use of ILT in a few lessons.

Scope of provision

50. The College offers full-time and part-time courses in business studies and administration at levels 1 to 4 and teaching qualifications for both post-16 teachers and classroom teaching assistants. A range of GCE A-level courses and AVCE Business are offered along with a BTEC first diploma. Full-time and part-time courses in administration at levels 1 to 3 and part-time courses in Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), Institute of Legal Executives (ILEX), word processing and computerised bookkeeping are offered. There are 374 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 10 students aged over 19. Part-time students are mainly aged over 19, with 748 part-time students aged over 19 and only 10 aged 16 to 18.

Achievement and standards

51. Pass rates are high on all courses. Pass rates on most programmes are well above the national average. The percentage of high grades achieved by students on most programmes is also well above the national average. Most students achieve better grades than predicted by their GCSE results, with the exception of students on the AVCE (double award). Retention rates are high and well above the national average on almost every course.

52. Student attainment is high. The standard of students' work is very good and all students have a good knowledge of business terminology, which they use precisely and accurately. GCE A-level accountancy students have a very good knowledge of accounting terminology and conventions. Students are able to accurately calculate complicated payback periods and students are able explain the disadvantages of using payback as a method of investment appraisal. Students demonstrate a very good knowledge of current events and economics such as the most recent employment figures. AS-level economics students are able to produce logical, extended and articulate answers. For example, in one lesson students were able to explain how high employment would lead to an increase in demand, wage costs and inflation and the potential influence on increasing interest rates. Students are good at applying what they have learned to real business situations. In one GCE A-level economics and business lesson students were able to identify the costs and benefits of a proposed dockland development. Students made some sophisticated arguments such as the 'multiplier effect' that would result from the original increase in employment. Students produce some well-written and well-researched assignments on the AVCE programmes, with a higher than average level of analysis and evaluation. In administration courses students produced work of a professional standard. In the teacher training courses students made very good use of their work experience to add flavour to the discussions. Average attendance in lessons observed was very good at 89%.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Word processing level 1 short P/T	1	No. of starts	86	89	125
		% retention	74	87	94

		% pass rate	91	77	73
AS-level business studies	3	No. of starts	99	118	99
		% retention	80	92	88
		% pass rate	94	95	89
GCE A2 level business studies	3	No. of starts	*	37	76
		% retention	*	100	93
		% pass rate	*	100	97
AVCE (double award) in business	3	No. of starts	25	26	21
		% retention	72	100	55
		% pass rate	61	100	82
Teachers' certificate (post 16) P/T short	3	No. of starts	16	50	42
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	100	96	93
AS-level accounting	3	No. of starts	37	49	41
		% retention	84	85	85
		% pass rate	84	76	77

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

* indicates course not offered in that year

Quality of education and training

53. There is a significant amount of good and very good teaching. All staff make excellent use of topical information such as recent articles from newspapers. In one lesson, the teacher made particularly good use of stimulating materials; a range of products including tobacco and children's snack products provided a good focus for a discussion on business ethics. Team teaching is effective on the teachers' training courses. In one session, a video of a lesson was used very effectively to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching that was observed. Issues on diversity and equal opportunities are well addressed in lessons and teachers make good efforts to include all students in the questioning process. In the best lessons teachers skilfully use questions to test understanding and extend students' thinking. Whole class debate is used to actively develop students' evaluative and analytical skills. In a few lessons use of information learning technology was insufficiently effective. However, information learning technology was well used in other lessons, particularly in accounting.

54. Teaching and learning resources are very good. The department's intranet includes a very good range of impressive resources written by staff alongside some high quality commercial resources. These are used effectively to spread good practice amongst teachers, and by students to supplement their notes and catch up with any work they may have missed. Students make good use of the internet to research their work. Accommodation is satisfactory but there are some cramped rooms which make it difficult for teachers to circulate and carry out informal assessment

55. Assessment is very good. Work is frequently and accurately assessed and there are clear marking schemes. The majority of feedback includes detailed comments on how students can improve their work. The internal verification systems are excellent. Good use is made of on-line assessment, which is accessible to students and parents and from which students obtain rapid feedback. Students have an above average understanding of assessment criteria used by the examining boards and they make good use of the exemplar answers provided to measure the standards they are presently achieving. Students' progress is carefully monitored.

56. The range of provision on the GCE A-level courses is very good and it is good at level 2. The college does not offer a foundation course in business. There are some very successful teacher training and teacher assistant courses. College provision is well matched to local needs especially in accounting, business administration and through the offer of a range of single subjects such as word processing. Enrichment within the curriculum area includes some good external visits to support learning such as visits to the Bank of England, but there is limited use of visiting speakers.

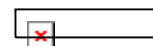
57. Students receive very good guidance and support on both academic and personal issues. Accurate information is given to students on the range of course options available to them. Teachers maintain careful records of the individual needs of students and adapt their teaching to meet these needs. They readily provide extra teaching time to support students in difficulties. Good guidance on progressing to higher education or employment is provided to all students.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are very good. Communication is effective and all staff are fully involved in the self-assessment process. There is a rigorous analysis of data to identify issues in attainment, retention and attendance and challenging targets are set and carefully monitored. Quality assurance is effective across the department. Senior managers are very aware of the strengths of their staff and this knowledge informs operational planning. Good practice is shared through peer observation and the sharing of successful lesson plans and other high quality resources on the department's intranet.

59. Curriculum leaders have a clear vision for the department, which includes the development of new courses to address gender imbalances, expansion of industrial links and an increase of the business experience of the staff.

Information and communications technology



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

Strengths

- good pass rates on GNVQ, AVCE, AS-level and GCE A-level courses

- good retention rates on GNVQ, AS-level and GCE A-level courses

- much good and well planned teaching

- good curriculum management on 16-18 programmes.

Weaknesses

- o low retention on accredited short ICT courses for adults

- o some inappropriate accommodation on the main site which impacts on learning.

Scope of provision

60. The college offers a range of courses in ICT from short taster sessions to two-year advanced level programmes. Courses are available at a number of venues across a wide geographical area. There are currently 1,278 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 31 full-time students over 19 years of age on GNVQ foundation, GNVQ intermediate, AVCE, BTEC introductory diploma, BTEC national diploma, GCSE, AS-level and GCE A2 computing, AS-level and GCE A2 ICT and key skills ICT courses. Students studying on a part-time basis consist of 2,633 students aged over 19 and 28 students aged 16 to 18.

61. Approximately half of the part-time students follow externally accredited courses such as new computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), the European computer driving licence (ECDL) and other unitised programmes. Other students follow college certified courses.

Achievement and standards

62. There are good retention and pass rates on full-time courses but retention on part-time externally accredited courses is below the national average. Pass rates on GCE A-level computing, AS-level computing and AS-level ICT have been good over the last three years, with the pass rate for GCE A-level computing at 100% for two of the three years. The proportion of high grades for foundation and intermediate level GNVQ is significantly above the national average. Generally, advanced level students achieve grades predicted by their GCSE results, but AS-level computing students do significantly better. Retention on CLAIT courses has been significantly below the national average over the last 3 years. Retention on the ECDL course has improved dramatically from 10% to 97% over 3 years. Attendance at classes is good at 89%.

63. Students have confidence in their practical skills and answer questions clearly and accurately, using correct terminology. Work is well presented and appropriate to the level of the course. However, the proportion of outstanding and very high quality work is low. Opportunities to gather evidence for key skills are clearly identified in schemes of work and students' communication skills are generally good. The pass rate for level 2 key skills ICT has improved in the last year. The proportion of women taking full-time courses is low but their standard of work is equal to the standards of male students' work.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
CLAIT (short)	1	No. of starts	913	772	141*
		% retention	66	69	48
		% pass rate	74	62	91
ECDL (one year)	2	No. of starts	10	158	36
		% retention	10	52	97
		% pass rate	100	67	66
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	20	29	31

		% retention	80	90	87
		% pass rate	38	96	89
AVCE IT single award	3	No. of starts	37	40	35
		% retention	86	80	80
		% pass rate	91	81	71
AS-level ICT	3	No. of starts	58	114	78
		% retention	90	82	86
		% pass rate	58	74	78
GCE A-level computing	3	No. of starts	37**	33	29
		% retention	54	97	93
		% pass rate	100	94	100

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

* new CLAIT results as this replaced CLAIT in 2003

** 2 year A Level in 2001

Quality of education and training

64. The majority of teaching is good or very good. Teachers demonstrate thorough knowledge of their subject and skilfully make the technical content clearly understandable for students. Interesting exercises are designed and ILT is used effectively to motivate and stimulate learning. In one very effective lesson, deriving a specification for application software was made more interesting through a group approach. This resulted in the production of a presentation using ILT. In another lesson, in which students had to determine characteristics of software, students worked in pairs and were highly motivated by the use of on-line checking which generated their score. Teachers use directed question and answer techniques well in lessons to widen involvement and effectively check students' understanding.

65. Lessons are well planned, making good use of time and resources to provide stimulation and challenge. Students work with enthusiasm and share ideas with confidence.

66. Inappropriate accommodation on the main site inhibits good teaching and learning. Several of the computer rooms have insufficient space and there is little room for students to take notes or rest learning materials. Two rooms have poor lighting and inappropriately arranged seating. The computer rooms are well equipped with software and ILT facilities. Most rooms have air-conditioning and digital projectors, and some have interactive whiteboards. Community centres are welcoming and well equipped with resources to support the needs of students. Centres cater effectively for students with restricted mobility, and a range of study materials appropriately supports independent learning. The library provides a satisfactory range of books to support the subject, but limited books to encourage wider reading. Computers and software are readily available for students. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced.

67. The assessment and monitoring of student work is satisfactory. Work set for students is well marked and student work is generally good, but feedback from tutors varies in quality. A minority of review documentation for adults in the community does not provide adequate information for tracking learner progress

68. There is an appropriate range of full-time courses and the range of adult courses effectively promotes participation by a wide age range of students. Students may progress from foundation level to advanced level and then onto higher education. Progression from GCE A-level computing to

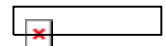
higher education is very good, but progression from GNVQ intermediate into further education or related employment is low. There is good progression from entry to level 2 but there are limited opportunities for adults to follow advanced level qualifications at community centres.

69. The overall support given to students is satisfactory with on-line attendance checks and individual action plans. Targets are often general and insufficiently precise. Poor examples include "attend" and "hand in some work". Teaching staff are approachable and very willing to give students time for extra help. There is effective support for students with personal issues. Full-time students benefit from additional workshops provided by staff. Adults have good information about the support available and are confident of getting the help they need.

Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good management of full-time programmes and effective tracking of students aged 16 to 18 result in high pass rates. Regular staff briefings and meetings ensure good communication and that staff are well informed. There is good teamwork and staff share teaching resources. The management of the adult provision and the effectiveness of tracking student progress vary in quality between centres. Some centres have effective systems that enable good tracking of attendance and progress, but others do not. The self-assessment report is developed from detailed course reviews, it critically evaluates the provision and identifies appropriate issues. Well-documented lesson observation schemes promote good teaching. All staff receive training and this has helpfully supported recent curriculum changes. There is no overall review of training plans for individual students. There is little evidence of action to address the low proportion of female students aged 16 to 18 in IT lessons. Appropriate action has been taken to meet the needs of students with mobility difficulties and computers have been adapted to meet the needs of students who have a visual impairment.

Hospitality, travel and tourism



Overall provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Strengths

- high pass rates on most courses

- highly imaginative teaching and learning

- high standard of student work

- very good use of resources to develop learning

- thorough and effective assessment and monitoring of students' progress

- outstanding enrichment opportunities
- very good management and quality assurance of programmes
- high levels of staff morale and commitment that benefit students.

Weaknesses

- there are no key weaknesses in this provision.

Scope of provision

71. The college offers a range of hospitality, travel and tourism courses to students aged 16 to 18 and over 19. There are 207 full-time students. There are 149 students aged 16 to 18, 67 in hospitality and 82 in travel and tourism. There are 576 part-time students who are all over 19 years old. The college offers NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3 in food preparation and cooking and the AVCE in hospitality and catering. In travel and tourism the AVCE double award and on-tour manager certificate are offered at level 3 and a GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism is offered at level 2. The BTEC foundation certificate, introduction to tourism, is offered. A wide range of short courses includes resort representatives, Galileo, travel agents primary certificate and air fares and ticketing courses. School pupils aged 14 to 16 take NVQ level 1 in food preparation and cooking.

Achievement and standards

72. Student pass rates are very good. Pass rates on most programmes are consistently at or significantly above the national average for the last 3 years. Student retention is good or very good and above the national average for the last three years on most courses.

73. Students are highly motivated, always punctual and their attendance, at 94%, is excellent. They make thoughtful contributions in theory and practical classes, have good research and analytical skills and consistently produce work of a very high standard. Students relate theory to practice well. In a realistic work experience class a student accurately researched permitted foods for a customer suffering from celiac's disease, using the internet. The quality of student work on all courses is of a high standard and well presented. Students are confident, achieve very good results and demonstrate excellent standards in both theory and practical lessons. Students work productively both individually and in small groups. Travel and hospitality courses provide excellent progression opportunities for students. Almost all students progress into related employment, higher education or further education courses. Students use ICT applications skilfully including word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, databases and powerpoint when preparing presentations.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hospitality, travel and tourism, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GNVQ foundation	1	No. of starts	22	15	19

leisure and tourism		% retention	77	93	89
		% pass rate	94	100	100
NVQ food preparation and cookery	1	No. of starts	12	14	18
		% retention	83	79	72
		% pass rate	70	73	85
Travel agents primary certificate	2	No. of starts	13	15	16
		% retention	100	93	94
		% pass rate	69	64	67
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	45	47	28
		% retention	89	83	93
		% pass rate	95	97	96
Resort representatives	2	No. of starts	18	32	22
		% retention	94	88	68
		% pass rate	100	100	100
AVCE travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	*	30	45
		% retention	*	97	60
		% pass rate	*	97	93

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

* indicates course not offered in that year

Quality of education and training

74. Overall teaching is very good or outstanding in both theory and practical lessons. Highly skilled teachers inspire students with their passion, expertise and enthusiasm. The creative and well-focused teaching of a range of professional competences ensures that students learn very effectively. In an adult catering evening class, students enjoyed participating in a number of exercises on preparing and handling fermented dough. The teacher enlivened the lesson by punctuating it with industrial anecdotes that were both interesting and highly relevant. Students asked probing questions, learnt effectively and critically evaluated the products they produced. Teachers have high expectations of their students and set individuals achievable but demanding targets. Lessons are well planned to meet the needs of individual students including those with identified learning difficulties. In one practical lesson the teacher ably met the needs of three distinct groups of students. Carefully designed tasks were provided to suit their range of abilities and the teacher attentively monitored progress and gave assistance as required. Teachers make good use of information about individual students that includes their prior attainment, preferred learning style and expected outcomes. Teachers use searching questions well to help students develop ideas. In the best lessons teachers use a range of exciting teaching methods to place the learning in a relevant context.

75. Resources are good for both hospitality and travel courses. Teachers make very good use of resources to develop learning. Travel and tourism students use ILT highly effectively when researching travel destinations and places of particular interest around the world. The travel shop, kitchen and public restaurant are well-equipped, busy and effective learning environments. Assignments and course notes are of good quality and help prepare students for the commercial world.

76. Students have an outstanding enrichment programme. The hospitality department has excellent links with high-profile celebrity chefs who address, and demonstrate to, students regularly. Travel

students make good use of excellent opportunities to enhance their studies. They take a wide range of additional qualifications, which improves their opportunities for employment. Students from both departments participate in national and international educational visits, which broaden their experience of industry. Students have worked internationally as a result of contacts made during these visits.

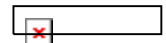
77. The assessment and verification of students' work is thorough and very effective. Feedback on students' assignments and practical tasks is clear, provided promptly and enables students to improve their performance well. Assignment feedback sheets refer to individual student target grades and subject teachers closely monitor students' progress towards meeting their targets.

78. Support for students is excellent. Induction is very thorough and helps students settle into college life quickly. All students are screened during induction for additional support needs. Pastoral support is very effective. The culture of the department is caring and supportive of students. Students with moderate learning difficulties have completed their qualifications successfully and progressed into related full-time employment. Additional learning support is readily available and effective.

Leadership and management

79. The curriculum areas are very well managed and led. Individual roles are well defined and responsibilities are clear. The self-assessment report is critical and closely reflects the findings during inspection. Staff are well motivated and have a strong sense of purpose and commitment to the well-being and development of each student. The supportive culture ensures that staff and students know they are valued. Regular meetings are a key feature of the good departmental communications. Curriculum areas pay keen attention to improving retention and pass rates and develop effective strategies to improve student recruitment. Quality assurance is very good and thorough. It includes frequent observations of teaching and the sharing of good practice among teams. Both male and female students achieve qualifications well but actions to address the imbalance in numbers of male and female students have been insufficiently effective.

Sport and leisure



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

Strengths

- high pass rates on most courses

- good, imaginative teaching which motivates students

- good facilities for practical sport and leisure

- wide range of courses

- good football education programme and progression routes.

Weaknesses

- low attainment on GCE A2 physical education and sport
- small class sizes on advanced vocational courses limit learning opportunities
- cramped accommodation for large theory classes.

Scope of provision

80. The college offers AS-level and GCE A-level courses in physical education and sport, AVCE leisure and recreation, BTEC national diplomas and certificates with a variety of topic options in sport and sports science at the main Brockenhurst site. The college also offers sports leadership awards, fitness instructor awards and a BTEC first certificate in sports science. A wide variety of part-time leisure and fitness courses are offered at community centres at Lymington, New Milton and Ringwood as well as at the main Brockenhurst site. The college offers a football education programme in partnership with Bournemouth Football Club to trainee players. There are 297 students aged 16 to 18 and 1,112 students who are aged over 19.

Achievement and standards

81. Pass rates are good or very good and above national averages on most courses. The pass rate on AVCE leisure and recreation has improved and in 2003 was 27% above the national average. The pass rate on the community sports leaders award (CSLA) is consistently above the national average and was 100% in 2003, compared with a national average of 55%.

82. Retention rates are improving, high and above national averages on most courses.

83. Most students achieve examination grades that are at least equal to or better than expected based on their GCSE scores. However the grades achieved by students on the GCE A2 physical education and sport course are below those predicted from their previous qualifications. Attainment in a minority of lessons observed was lower than expected for the time of year.

84. Students are well motivated and produce work of a good standard. Students on vocational courses are making good progress in learning to use apparatus competently. BTEC first certificate students use the multi-gym and demonstrate its use to others well. Students on sports leaders and fitness instructors courses have well developed organisational skills. Advanced students effectively research information, work independently and most work productively in groups. A-level students tackle complex and detailed information. They make good progress in factual recall but struggle with some of the concepts they encounter in human physiology.

A sample of retention and pass rates in sport and leisure, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Fitness and exercise knowledge certificate	1	No. of starts	18	31	33
		% retention	94	81	89
		% pass rate	71	80	89
Fitness instructor certificate	2	No. of starts	18	16	9
		% retention	94	100	100
		% pass rate	71	88	89
Community sports leaders award	2	No. of starts	28	31	32
		% retention	75	81	81
		% pass rate	71	84	100
GCE A-level PE and sport	3	No. of starts	79	22	25
		% retention	76	100	96
		% pass rate	95	100	96
AS-level PE and sport	3	No. of starts	56	63	72
		% retention	80	83	89
		% pass rate	89	94	89
AVCE leisure and recreation	3	No. of starts	41	20	18
		% retention	85	95	56
		% pass rate	51	95	100

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

Quality of education and training

85. A high proportion of teaching is good or very good and lessons are well planned. Teachers effectively accommodate students' different learning styles during lessons and make good use of a variety of techniques including exposition, ILT, group and pair activities, practical work and research exercises to enhance students' learning. In a BTEC first certificate lesson the teacher used a mixture of short expositions and individual student work on computers, on gender differences in human physiology, to motivate students and keep them focused on their tasks. In GCE A-level PE a quiz-format IT programme is used during an introduction to factors involved in the development of elite sports performance. Teachers relate theory to practice clearly and effectively in practical lessons. Group discussions in most lessons are effective and teachers use questioning very skilfully to check students learning. Attention to health and safety issues and risk assessment is very good.

86. Sports staff are particularly well qualified with many coaching awards. Their wide-ranging expertise enhances students' learning and skill development. Facilities for practical sport are very good at the main Brockenhurst site. The fitness centre is very well equipped. A spacious sports hall caters for a range of team and individual activities. The playing fields are extensive and there is a large, serviceable, all weather playing surface. All facilities are well used by students. There are good stocks of relevant books but there are insufficient sports journals, other than those dealing with sports injury. IT facilities are good.

87. Small class sizes on advanced vocational courses limit learning opportunities for students. Just four students are on the BTEC national diploma in sport and this number is insufficient to sustain valid group work, which is an essential component of the course. Twelve students undertaking a word-shower activity on the AVCE leisure and recreation course were unable to identify sufficient ideas to sustain the activity. Insufficient numbers of students were available to properly undertake the task and explore the topic fully.

88. Classes containing 21 or more students are frequently taught in cramped accommodation. Movement around the room is severely limited and learning activities are restricted. Students are unable to effectively work in groups to fully discuss the relationship between their practical work and related theory.

89. Tutors constantly and effectively monitor student progress against target grades contained in their individual learning plans. Good support is provided to individual students who are performing below target, through lunchtime tutorials. Homework is set frequently and marked promptly. Feedback is sufficiently precise to allow students to improve their performance. Students who do not submit work on time are given advice and new, short deadlines. Students finding difficulties with practical skills are supported through after-college sessions with sports coaches.

90. The college provides a wide range of academic and vocational courses at the main site and in the community. The short and part-time courses particularly encourage adults who have been out of education for a considerable time to participate. Students are able to progress through the levels or to broaden their expertise, according to their particular interest.

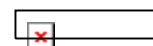
91. Students on the football education programme follow the BTEC national diploma in sport at college. The course includes a good choice of sporting options. Students have good enrichment activities and take opportunities to learn new skills. These include popular team games such as football, rugby, cricket, netball and less common individual sports including kickboxing and trampolining.

92. Students receive comprehensive advice and guidance about alternative careers including higher education courses or employment in the sports and leisure industry. However, advice on making applications to higher education is not as detailed for students aged over 19 as for those aged 16 to 18. Pastoral and learning support for students is effective.

Leadership and management

93. Leadership and management are good. There is good communication between managers, teaching and support staff. Teamwork includes the productive exchange of ideas among subject staff. The strong focus on raising students' achievement has resulted in improvements in retention and pass rates over the past three years. Course reviews are thorough and include an analysis of achievements of male and female students. The self-assessment report is critical, evaluative and realistic.

Health, social care and public services



Overall provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Strengths

- high retention and pass rates

- much good teaching and learning

- good progression to further study and related employment

- very effective assessment

- responsive provision which widens participation

- good support for students

- strong curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses in this area.

Scope of provision

94. The college offers a wide range of courses in health and social care, early years and public services from entry to level 4. Currently there are 305 students aged 16 to 18 and 13 students aged over 19 on full-time courses. There are 778 students aged over 19 and 13 students aged 16 to 18 on part-time courses. Full-time courses in health and social care include a BTEC, first and national diplomas and the AVCE in health and social care. The college offers a foundation degree in health studies. In early years, full-time courses are offered at levels 2 and 3. Public services provision includes the BTEC first and national diplomas and the higher national diploma at level 4.

95. A level 1 programme is offered for 14 to 16 year olds in their final year at school. Part-time courses include counselling at levels 1 to 3. Training is also provided in NVQs in the workplace.

Achievement and standards

96. Retention and pass rates are high across all areas of provision. They are considerably above national averages on most courses. Retention on the recently introduced NVQ programmes is also very good and students are making good progress. The progression rate into related employment or further study was high for students in 2003, at 88%. Students' work in lessons is of a high standard. Students' enthusiastic contributions to class discussions demonstrate strong commitment to their subject and a mature understanding of ethical issues facing care and public service workers. First year national diploma in public service students showed considerable insight into the impact of attacks on the World Trade Centre and on the work and lives of the services personnel involved. In a lesson on communication skills child care students were able to apply their knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication skills very effectively to realistic and complex case studies. Discussion was both thoughtful and insightful. The students displayed work is both attractive and informative reflecting a good understanding of vocational issues and demonstrates high standards of presentational skills. During inspection attendance was 85 %.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
CACHE certificate in child care and education	2	No. of starts	17	10	13
		% retention	82	90	92
		% pass rate	93	100	92
CACHE diploma in child care and education	3	No. of starts	19	17	15
		% retention	89	88	93
		% pass rate	100	100	100
BTEC national diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	11	17	13
		% retention	18	76	85
		% pass rate	100	92	100
AVCE health and social care	3	No. of starts	24	33	13
		% retention	63	48	85
		% pass rate	87	94	82
National first diploma in public services	2	No. of starts	20	17	20
		% retention	75	76	70
		% pass rate	100	100	93
BTEC national diploma in public services	3	No. of starts	27	28	27
		% retention	56	79	79
		% pass rate	100	100	100

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

Quality of education and training

97. Most teaching and learning is good or very good. Lessons are carefully planned and well matched to the needs of individual students and course requirements. Informative summaries of students' individual learning needs are used by teachers to help lesson planning. In most lessons learning activities involve a good range of oral, written and practical activities. Teachers skilfully draw on students' placement experiences to relate theoretical issues to practice. In a level 2 child care lesson, placement activities were used to illustrate the place of play in children's development. Well-chosen resources and case studies are used to raise issues of cultural diversity. However, in a few lessons there were insufficient checks on student learning. In the best lessons good use is made of information learning technology to support learning and to develop resources for use on placements.

98. The area is well resourced. The accommodation and resources within care and early years and public services are well suited to the delivery of the curriculum for the majority of students. However, there is little planned use of all relevant and available resources for level 1 students in care. College intranet resources are used effectively by students and include schemes of work, assignment briefs and learning materials. Staff are well qualified with extensive experience in health, care and early years sectors and in the uniformed public services. Their knowledge of current policies and practice supports students to develop a clear link between theory and practice.

99. Assessment and monitoring of student progress is very good. Written feedback to students is detailed and provides clear guidance for achieving higher grades. The internal verification systems are thorough. Feedback to assessors is constructive and used to improve practice. Student progress across the provision is carefully monitored and formally discussed with students at planned reviews. NVQ portfolios are clear and very well managed. Candidates discuss their work and how evidence relates to the assessment requirements well. Reviews of progress are regular, timely and thorough.

100. Students use the internet with ease as a research tool to support the preparation of assignments. Most assignments are well presented and word processed.

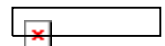
101. College provision is highly responsive to meeting students' and local needs and has effectively widened participation. There is a wide range of courses and full-time students take opportunities to extend learning and gain additional qualifications. These include first aid, food hygiene, additional GCSEs, AS-level and GCE A2 qualifications. There is an army cadet force within the college and public service students, in particular, take part in a broad spectrum of educational visits, residential activities and expeditions to support their professional development. Work placement is very well organised and carefully monitored. Very effective, professional relationships exist with employers who actively contribute to the assessment of students on work placement. Strong links with local employers, universities, the services and health, care and early years organisations benefit students learning and progression. The college works co-operatively with four early years development and childcare partnerships in Dorset, Hampshire, Poole and Bournemouth. The college has responded positively to meeting identified training needs across this wide area through the flexible delivery of NVQ training in the workplace.

102. Support for students is good. Tutorials are frequent and well structured. Students are aware of their individual learning plans and clear targets are regularly set and reviewed. The specific learning needs of full-time and part-time students are carefully identified at the beginning of their courses and appropriate support is provided. Students' work is marked conscientiously. Pastoral support is good and students speak highly of the academic and pastoral support they receive.

Leadership and management

103. Leadership and management are very good. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by staff and students. Effective formal and informal communication across the provision focuses strongly on the quality of courses for students. Quality systems are robust. Action is agreed and progress is monitored in good time. Staff are self-critical and committed to continuous improvement. The NVQ programmes are very well managed with all partners co-operating in the delivery of high quality education and training.

Visual and performing arts



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

Strengths

- very high pass rates and good grades across the whole area

- high standards of student work in art, design and music

- much good teaching in art, design and music

- very good assessment and feedback

- good enrichment for performing arts students.

Weaknesses

- low retention on AVCE art design and media courses in 2002/03
- some cramped and inadequate accommodation restricts learning.

Scope of provision

104. The college offers a comprehensive range of accredited academic and vocational, full-time and part-time courses in art, design, media and the performing arts. Courses include AS level and GCE A2, AVCE, BTEC first diploma, GNVQ intermediate and foundation, GCSE, City and Guilds and open college network (OCN). There are 778 students aged 16 to 18 and 21 students aged over 19 studying full-time. Fifty-eight students aged 16 to 18 and 2,179 students aged over 19 study on a part-time basis. Most students aged 16 to 18 are following AS-level and GCE A2 courses and specialist programmes. The majority of part-time courses are not accredited and are based in community venues.

Achievement and standards

105. There are high pass rates on all full-time courses. Between 2001 and 2003 the pass rate on AVCE art and design was 100%. All the students studying AVCE media, GCE A2 music and GCE A2 performance passed in 2002/03. There is a similar high level of pass rates at AS level in performance studies, media and film. These pass rates are consistently high and close to 100%. Retention rates are good. GCE A2 music retained all students and they all passed in 2002/03. There are high levels of retention in GCE A2 drama, media and art. In 2003 retention rates on AVCE art and design and media courses are low. The retention rate in art and design was 43% and in media 52%. There is satisfactory progression to higher education and employment. Progression from AS level to GCE A2 and similar level vocational programmes is satisfactory.

106. Students in art and design and music produce high standards of work. In art and design the primary research in sketchbooks and workbooks is of exceptional quality. In portfolios of work, students demonstrate knowledge and skills in a range of techniques and provide good evidence of exploratory work, research and design. Students studying textiles consistently produce exciting experimental work. Part-time students studying City and Guilds photography qualifications produce prints of a professional standard. In one class, students on an AS-level programme had been given a new assignment concerning natural forms. This required a different visual language from their previous work, which had used conventional media. The students produced their drawings with chalk tied to the end of a stick. The need to work with different arm movements and to control the drawing from a distance, produced results that were refreshing and bold.

107. Music students produce very good compositional work. In one lesson an ensemble produced particularly good sound and harmony from challenging music. However, drama students do not demonstrate good understanding of the links between practice and theory. They lack sufficient confidence and technical expertise in aspects of practical acting skills. Students have a good range of skills in photography, media, dance, music, textiles and ceramics. Students are secure in discussing their work and developing their own ideas. Media and film students display maturity in discussing challenging material and making judgements. High levels of self-assured debate were

observed in a discussion about the relationship of morals and ethics to film making. During inspection the average attendance was good at 86%.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	14	17	16
		% retention	93	59	94
		% pass rate	54	90	47
AVCE*** art and design	3	No. of starts	21	27	35
		% retention	71	78	43
		% pass rate	100	100	100
AVCE media**	3	No. of starts	19	29	21
		% retention	68	72	52
		% pass rate	85	100	100
GCE A2 art and design	3	No. of starts	*	94	107
		% retention	*	94	95
		% pass rate	*	98	93
AS-level art	3	No. of starts	194	258	313
		% retention	88	82	87
		% pass rate	92	92	94
AS-level drama	3	No. of starts	50	70	55
		% retention	80	89	85
		% pass rate	88	74	91

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

* indicates course not offered in that year

** 2000/01 GNVQ media

*** 2000/01 GNVQ art & design

Quality of education and training

108. There is much good teaching in art design, media and music. Lesson planning is thorough and supported by comprehensive schemes of work. In the most effective lessons teachers ensure students' understanding and skills development and then give students freedom in the interpretation of ideas. They encourage students to explore and experiment. Theory is effectively related to practise. In the best classes teachers have high expectations and demonstrate high-level expertise to motivate students.

109. In weaker lessons, aims and objectives are unclear, lessons lack structure and teachers fail to sufficiently develop students' knowledge and skills. Poor practice included note taking whilst students sat on the floor, hand-outs containing spelling mistakes and grammatical errors, use of incorrect terminology by teachers and insufficient opportunity for students to contribute to discussions.

110. Some facilities are cramped and inadequate. A performance room is too small for the size of some groups of students and the type of practical work undertaken. It has poor acoustics and an unsatisfactory decorative condition. Acoustics in the adjoining music practise room are unsatisfactory. The main music classroom is too small for the number of students using it. The ceramics studio is cramped for the numbers of students and the amount of work produced. The three-dimensional studio is too small for large-scale artefact construction. This studio also lacks the equipment necessary for three-dimensional activities. The current availability of editing facilities is insufficient to meet student demand. Other resources are generally satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced.

111. Assessment is very good and progress is carefully monitored. Assignments are designed to ensure students have appropriate opportunities to meet the assessment criteria and to cover course requirements. Students are clear about the standard of work necessary to succeed. Feedback promotes the successful achievement of students. Verbal feedback is immediate and frequent. Written feedback is thorough, honest and constructive. Students are involved and knowledgeable about the assessment criteria and requirements. They are open to criticism and willing partners in the range of strategies provided to improve their achievement.

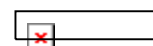
112. There is good enrichment for performing arts students. Students take a variety of additional awards including London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) acting grades, Associated Board music examinations and language of dance qualifications. These qualifications enhance students' learning in a variety of disciplines. The awards are recognised by industry and improve students' employability and progression to further study. The range of college provision is extensive across the disciplines and levels of courses. It includes a valuable non-accredited programme for part-time adult students.

113. Students are well supported. On-course support is effectively provided by personal tutors. Information is communicated between tutors through an electronic tracking system that includes individual learning plans. Additional learning support and pastoral support is effectively provided for students.

Leadership and management

114. Leadership and management are good and resources are efficiently and effectively used. Management information is used in decision-making and to help identify the improvements needed. There is a self-critical culture that values continuous improvement and takes pride in student achievement. Quality assurance is rigorous in most areas but self-assessment did not identify weaknesses found during inspection. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted in the curriculum. In ceramics and textile assignments on ethnic studies and "the vessel ceremony and ritual", students study different cultures and societies. A member of staff has attended a professional development day entitled "boys who sew".

Humanities



Overall provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Strengths

- very good pass rates

- good high grade attainment in most subjects

- much outstanding teaching and learning
- good use of paper-based and ILT resources to stimulate investigative skills
- wide range of provision
- comprehensive and effective curriculum support for students
- strong leadership and management improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory punctuality by a minority of students.

Scope of provision

115. There is a wide range of provision in humanities and there has been significant growth over the past three years. Humanities has 948 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 47 full-time students aged over 19. There are 13 part-time students aged 16 to 18 and 207 part-time students aged over 19. The college offers AS level in 12 subjects and GCE A level in 10 subjects such as archaeology, classical civilisation geography and psychology. There are 137 students currently studying GCE A-level psychology, and 223 studying AS-level psychology. There are 362 students currently enrolled on AS-level geography, history, law and sociology. AS-level and GCE A-level government and politics is one of the smallest subjects with 25 students. Sociology is available as the only level 2 subject. The college offers the international baccalaureate. Sixty students follow the well-established full-time and part-time access to higher education programme.

Achievement and standards

116. Pass rates have been above the national average for the last three years. The proportion of high grades (A and B) has been consistently above the national average for the past three years. In 2003 pass rates were 100% in GCE A-level geography, general studies, history and philosophy. Students studying AS-level psychology achieved a pass rate of 95% in 2003 and 57% of the students obtained high grades. In 2003 pass rates for GCE A-level psychology and sociology were 99% and 96%. The pass rate for the International Baccalaureate has been 100% for the past two years. In AS-level and GCE A-level geography and AS-level psychology, most students have consistently obtained higher grades than predicted by their previous qualifications. In history, law and religious studies some students have achieved lower grades than those expected. Retention rates for AS level and GCE A level are at the national average and have generally improved over the past three-years.

117. Attendance at lessons observed during inspection was 79.46%. The punctuality of a minority of students was unsatisfactory in a significant number of lessons and lateness was not always challenged.

118. Students produce written work of a high standard. They have very well developed skills of analysis and evaluation and are able to make well thought out arguments to support their judgements. Students work confidently and productively both in groups and when working independently. They respond positively to complex topics and are able to answer difficult questions without prompting. In a psychology lesson students completed a computer-based exercise that was marked on-line, giving them immediate feedback on their work and enabling them to complete high-standard extension exercises.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
AS-level geography	3	No. of starts	87	86	110
		% retention	83	86	83
		% pass rate	96	95	91
GCE A2 geography	3	No. of starts	81	56	61
		% retention	78	98	98
		% pass rate	95	100	100
GCE A2 history	3	No. of starts	91	34	56
		% retention	85	97	98
		% pass rate	100	97	100
AS-level law	3	No. of starts	87	90	124
		% retention	83	89	82
		% pass rate	75	83	81
AS-level psychology	3	No. of starts	166	191	238
		% retention	84	90	91
		% pass rate	95	96	95
GCE A2 psychology	3	No. of starts	88	105	108
		% retention	70	97	94
		% pass rate	100	98	99

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

Quality of education and training

119. Much of the teaching is very good or outstanding. Students are strongly motivated and teachers' expectations of them are high. The presentation of topics in lessons is very thorough and at the appropriate standard for students. They gain regular practice in applying their knowledge and developing a range of research skills. In the best lessons teachers move effectively from one topic to the next to maximise learning, asking directed questions of students to check understanding. Teachers' use well prepared research materials to ensure students develop investigative skills. In a philosophy lesson students worked on original text in order to complete a critique of Sartre. The teacher then skilfully drew out key philosophical issues that developed understanding and extended learning. Teachers' are aware of the individual learning needs of students. In a psychology lesson students completed a detailed investigation on the limitations of intelligence tests, with the choice of five different learning styles to suit their learning. In a minority of lessons students receive too much

information from the teacher and the needs of the most able students are not met. In psychology, effective use is made of ILT in order to develop students' research skills.

120. Staff are appropriately qualified and take good advantage of the opportunities for staff development. There is an effective mentoring scheme to support teachers and improve the quality of learning. Most of the teaching accommodation is well equipped but some classrooms are too small for the size of the group and this hinders learning. ILT is used effectively and resources are available to students on the college intranet to extend learning. The library is well stocked with textbooks and journals. Appropriate displays of learning materials and posters create a stimulating environment in classrooms and corridors.

121. Teachers mark work thoroughly and students are aware of the criteria by which their work will be assessed. Students receive helpful feedback on written work, which gives guidance on how to improve performance. Student views are sought and lead to improvements in the organisation of courses. Teachers attend awarding body standardisation meetings to ensure that their teaching meets the requirements of the specifications and to standardise marking. Schemes of work show different approaches to the integration of key skills into AS-level and GCE A-level subjects. Little evidence of the integration of key skills into lessons was observed.

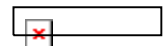
122. The college offers a wide range of AS-level and GCE A2 subjects, access to higher education courses and the International Baccalaureate programme. There is an extensive programme of popular enrichment activities, which broaden students' experience. Students participate in a good range of national and international educational visits to such places as Russia, Paris and the law courts.

123. Students receive effective guidance and support. Additional subject workshops are timetabled to improve the standard of students' work. Tutors review and monitor student progress against targets and celebrate student success. There is an effective support programme for exceptionally able students, including those making Oxbridge applications. Teachers are committed to their students and give support on an informal basis. Full-time students receive an effective initial assessment of any learning needs or difficulties.

Leadership and management

124. There is very effective leadership and management in humanities, which promotes a culture of continuous improvement. Teachers carry out extensive reviews and evaluation of the effectiveness of provision in order to maintain and improve standards. Realistic action plans are devised, which set demanding targets for improvement. Progress against the plans is regularly monitored. There is good communication and staff teams share good practice. Extensive staff development has taken place in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

English and modern foreign languages



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

Strengths

- very good pass rates and retention rates in all English and most modern foreign language (MFL) AS-level and GCE A2 subjects

students' prior attainment at GCSE

- very high and improving levels of high grade passes in GCE A-level English subjects
- much good teaching
- good curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- lower grades than predicted for students on AS-level and GCE A2 English literature, AS-level Spanish and AS-level German
- inappropriate provision to meet student needs for level 2 English.

Scope of provision

125. English and MFL has 852 students aged 16 to 18 and 22 students aged over 19 studying full time. Of the 907 part-time students, 22 are aged 16 to 18. AS-level and GCE A2 courses are offered in English literature, English language and literature, English language, communication studies, French, Spanish and German. GCSE English and Spanish are offered at level 2. There is a range of OCN accredited courses from levels 1 to 3 in French, German, Spanish and Italian. English constitutes about two thirds of the whole provision and also includes an advanced extension award.

Achievement and standards

126. Pass and retention rates are generally high at AS level and GCE A2, with the percentage of high-level grades above the national average in most English subjects. In 2003, AS-level English language and literature students performed much better than their GCSE results would have predicted. Over a three-year period, students' final grades in AS-level and GCE A2 English literature, and for the small number of students on AS-level Spanish and AS-level German, have been lower than their target grades. In modern languages, most adult learners achieve their personal learning goals.

127. The standard of students' work in the best lessons is high. For example in an advanced English language and literature lesson, a group of students were asked to create a version of Grimm's Hansel and Gretel for very young children using a translation of the original as source material. They did so with a high level of sophistication in the use of language and awareness of the needs of their target audience.

128. There is good progression from AS-level to GCE A2 courses in English and many students go on to higher education. For example, in 2003 some 30% of GCE A-level French students progressed

to take a language related degree course.

129. Student attendance across the area in the week of the inspection, at 81%, was slightly above the national average.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCSE English language	2	No. of starts	119	122	202
		% retention	78	75	77
		% pass rate	51	46	47
GCSE Spanish language	2	No. of starts	26	40	55
		% retention	81	65	60
		% pass rate	62	65	72
AS-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	110	123	114
		% retention	80	90	87
		% pass rate	77	97	95
AS-level English literature	3	No. of starts	78	112	103
		% retention	91	91	81
		% pass rate	89	100	90
GCE A2 level French	3	No. of starts	*	27	28
		% retention	*	100	100
		% pass rate	*	100	100
GCE A2 English language and literature	3	No. of starts	*	53	78
		% retention	*	96	100
		% pass rate	*	98	100

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

* indicates course not offered in that year

Quality of education and training

130. Much teaching is good across the area: most lessons are thoroughly prepared, well structured and planned within the framework of detailed schemes of work. Teachers are enthusiastic and committed. They establish rapport with their students and, in good lessons, make effective use of humour, anecdotes and a wide range of activities to stimulate learning. In one foreign language evening class, adult students enjoyed building up vocabulary on body parts and movement by playing the role of photographers setting up formal photographs.

131. Learners are attentive and collaborate well in pair and group activities, supporting each other's learning. In some adult foreign language lessons, insufficient attention is given to improving pronunciation and accuracy, which slows down communication. English lessons lack the momentum and pace required sufficiently to extend all the students.

132. Individual support for students in lessons from teachers and learning assistants is good and there is further learning support available for students through workshops. An effective range of enrichment opportunities supports the development of foreign language students' skills, including

educational visits and work experience abroad, and revision courses.

133. Staff across the area are appropriately experienced and qualified. Language teachers have native or near-native fluency and together with language assistants, use the taught language well to develop students' oral skills. Accommodation is pleasant and specialist resources are good, allowing some staff to make effective use of ILT. For example, in one advanced foreign language lesson, students were able to develop oral, comprehension, writing and research skills by investigating and summarising current news stories on the internet in the foreign language.

134. English lessons are regularly timetabled in the well-equipped language laboratory, which has encouraged greater variety of activity in English lessons. Staff and students have access to a growing bank of useful learning resources being developed on-line. However, in some English lessons teachers miss opportunities for effective use of ILT.

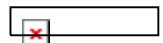
135. Teachers make good use of information about students' learning styles and other needs in planning and delivering lessons. Individual learning plans are completed and monitored for all learners, ensuring students are assessed and monitored against individual target grades, although those for adult students on foreign language courses do not clearly record achievement of personal learning objectives. Students' work is accurately and thoroughly marked, with helpful feedback given, so that students know how well they have done. Progress reviews help students to improve, though in some cases planned actions are insufficiently specific. In adult foreign language provision, the progress of adult learners is not systematically tracked and monitored and, as a result, staff are not always able to use this information to plan lessons and courses.

136. The range of English courses at advanced level is good. The college has developed strategies to cater for the needs of the most able students: teachers include this group in their planning to meet individual student needs in lessons, and the advanced extension award in English is offered. In addition, currently about 30 students studying English and MFL take part, by invitation, in a programme for those identified as exceptionally able. However, the needs of many level 2 students, a significant number of whom are inappropriately placed on the resit GCSE English course, are not being adequately met.

Leadership and management

137. Curriculum managers provide a clear sense of direction for the area, focussing strongly on improving teaching and learning. Curriculum teams work well together and teachers meet regularly to coordinate, evaluate, and plan. There is good induction and support for new teachers. Comprehensive course reviews, including student feedback and action planning, form an integral part of departmental self-assessment reports at course level. The implementation of departmental policy by staff, is monitored informally rather than systematically. There is regular lesson observation by managers and peers: this leads to effective sharing of good practice. Data available for the analysis and monitoring of OCN language courses for the past three years is not sufficiently accurate.

Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities



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

Strengths

- very good progression for students aged 16 to 18

- good teaching to meet individual learning needs

- highly responsive provision meets wide range of community needs

- good support to develop students' independence by learning support assistants

- good management to continuously improve provision.

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of individual learning plans in the sixth form college

- inappropriate use of independent living accommodation.

Scope of provision

138. The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses at the college's main campus at Brockenhurst and at centres at Lymington, Ringwood and New Milton. It also provides classes in over 40 locations including village halls and community centres, residential and nursing homes and centres owned by partnership organisations such as Leonard Cheshire, Mencap and social services. There are 28 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 33 full-time and 1,492 part-time adult students. Provision includes part-time courses for students with learning difficulties, mental health problems and physical/sensory impairment. There is full-time provision for adults and students aged 16 to 18 on the main site.

Achievement and standards

139. Achievement and retention rates on all courses are high. In 2002/03 retention rates averaged 89% for all students including older adult students and those with mental health difficulties. In 2002/03, all students aged 16 to 18 gained qualifications through City and Guilds diploma of vocational education and literacy and numeracy qualifications. Pass rates for students over 19 years of age on a range of qualifications was between 90% and 100% in 2002/03. Adult students successfully take literacy, numeracy and OCN qualifications. Students with physical and sensory impairments achieve challenging and detailed personal goals exceptionally well. Students make good progress on all programmes. Progression for students aged 16 to 18 is excellent. A high proportion of students progress onto level 1 and 2 courses in the college and some move on to work. Two students have been employed at the college and others have gained work locally. Progression routes for adults are less well developed. During the inspection the average attendance was 88%.

Quality of education and training

140. Teaching and learning are good or very good. Schemes of work are well structured. Lesson

plans are detailed and link effectively to the core curriculum, where appropriate. Teaching meets individual learner's needs. In a highly skilful lesson for visually impaired older learners, students demonstrated professional textile techniques despite significant loss of sight. In another very successful lesson, older students, many with severe arthritic conditions, were able to perform physical exercises very well. Adult students with severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviours were very effectively taught how to follow a personal fitness programme in the college's well-resourced leisure suite. Students demonstrated significant levels of independence. In a well organised manufacturing lesson in the engineering workshop, students with learning and behavioural difficulties carefully made picture frames demonstrating high levels of safe, independent learning, using an electric sander and mitre saw. However, in a minority of lessons not all students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate their achievement in social, communication and behavioural skills and achievement against target is insufficiently detailed.

141. Learning on the main site takes place in high standard, well-equipped vocational areas of the college. In a few lessons, the lack of appropriate vocational equipment limits learning and attainment. The independent living accommodation on the main site is in need of decoration and refurbishment. It is not a cheerful and engaging environment for the development of skills for independence. Literacy classes are held in a bedroom but there is no computer or overhead projector, the walls contain uninteresting and badly displayed work, the kitchen is very small and the accommodation is not used most effectively to develop independent living. The living room has a worktable at one end where the dining room table should be placed and is used for cookery, art and other sessions. Much learning is paper-based and students do not always demonstrate what they can do. The bedroom is not used to teach bed-making or cleaning; it is used only if someone feels unwell. Most staff, including learning support assistants are suitably qualified and experienced.

142. Initial assessment is well developed and includes the use of diagnostic information. However, targets are not always set effectively at lesson level on individual learning plans at the sixth form college. Targets are insufficiently detailed and there is insufficient recording of the small progress steps students achieve. In many lessons overall assessment of learning is good and teachers use a range of imaginative and active methods to assess learning. In a very effective literacy lesson for adults with learning difficulties, the students enjoyed demonstrating their understanding of positioning words, such as 'opposite', by playing a movement game.

143. The highly responsive provision meets a wide range of community needs. The provision is extensive and effectively supports the needs of a very wide range of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities for all ages, including much older learners. There has been significant growth (30%) in the work of the department in the last year in response to local demand. There are excellent links with a wide range of external agencies. The college has good relationships with local supported employment schemes and some students engage in part-time work. These students have insufficient opportunities at present for studying vocational courses to support skills development. However, a wider range of courses will be available from September.

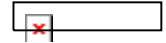
144. Students have very good support. It is provided through a culture that values the dignity of individuals. There is a high ratio of teachers and learning support assistants and good care is taken to match learning support assistants' skills and life experience to individual students and groups. Learning support assistants are very effective and work hard to develop students' independence. Support for students embraces a culture that values the dignity and status of students and is tailored to meet a wide range of needs.

Leadership and management

145. Leadership and management are good and there is a clear focus on continuously improving provision. Recent improvements include the development of more detailed lesson and individual planning for part-time adult students and work is underway to more closely integrate practice for full-time and part-time students. Effective communication across the area includes regular team meetings that focus on teaching and learning, curriculum planning and student progress. Staff appraisal is regular, identified training needs are met and the whole team have undergone core curriculum training. Learning support assistants receive on-going training in response to student needs and have recently undertaken training in Makaton signing and behaviour management.

Quality assurance is mostly effective and internal verification is thorough. All staff are very committed and well motivated to secure improvements and share a vision to further develop high quality provision for all students.

Literacy and numeracy



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

Strengths

- very good teaching

- effective individual support

- high retention rates on all courses

- high achievement on adult literacy and numeracy courses

- comprehensive initial assessment

- strong partnerships meet local community needs.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates on level 2 key skills

- some insufficiently detailed individual learning plans on sixth-form essential skills programme.

Scope of provision

146. The adult essential skills programme offers courses in community centres located mainly in Lymington, New Milton and Ringwood. Courses include family learning programmes, work with

tenants associations, health centres and other organisations including essential skill development in the workplace. There are 315 students on these courses. In the sixth-form college, essential skills are developed within a range of vocational programmes and include key skills in application of number and communication. Literacy and numeracy support is integrated into, for example, GNVQ leisure and tourism and NVQ business and catering. Level 1 numeracy and literacy are core components of the continuing education course for students with learning difficulties. There are 189 full-time learners following these programmes.

147. Individual support is provided for students with literacy and numeracy needs when needed.

Achievement and standards

148. Retention rates are high on all courses. There are high levels of achievement on adult literacy and numeracy courses and the pass rate for national tests in 2002/03 was 93%. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 and adults on entry level certificates in 2002 to 2003 were high, at 94%. Pass rates for level 1 key skills in application of number and communication were very good at 76% and 60% respectively. They were 47% and 23% above national averages in 2003 at level 1 but they were low at level 2. The pass rate for the 44 students taking communication level 2, at 38%, was 8% above the national average but was still low and had fallen by 51% on the previous year. The pass rate for 23 students taking application of number level 2, at 16% was very low and 5% below the national average.

149. Students on adult programmes have detailed individual learning plans and make good progress in achieving their learning goals, which are carefully moderated. Students aged 16 to 18 demonstrate a good standard of work and have well presented portfolios. Progression for adult essential skills students is good, in 2003, 85% progressed onto further courses, employment or access to higher-education courses.

150. Attendance is low on some mathematics courses for students who do not want to re-take GCSE. Average attendance of students in literacy and numeracy classes during inspection was satisfactory at 74%.

Quality of education and training

151. Teaching is good or very good. Lessons are well planned to meet individual needs. In a maths class for adult students a group were working on a housing and budgeting theme. A wide range of methods, to meet individual student needs, was used very effectively. In a hospitality class for students aged 16 to 18 key skills were extremely well integrated. Students costed menus that would be used in the kitchen the next day, using spreadsheets on computers and effectively developing both numeracy and IT skills. In both cases individual needs were effectively addressed in a relevant context. Much teaching is interesting and imaginative.

152. Individual learning plans and target setting for sixth form college students are not always used most effectively to plan learning and monitor progress. Planning is not always sufficiently detailed and related well to initial assessment. In a small number of lessons teaching did not make most productive use of time and resources.

153. Tutors, including some vocational teachers, are well qualified and have completed appropriate Skills for Life training. Resources for literacy and numeracy are very good and the latest up-to-date learning materials are available. Computers are usually used well, and there are useful materials available on the internet, but they are not always available to support learning.

154. There is a well-developed and comprehensive system of initial assessment for all students. It provides effective information about students' basic literacy and numeracy skills, learning styles, learning difficulties and additional support requirements. Adult students also complete a diagnostic assessment. All students complete an assessment that identifies dyslexic tendencies.

155. The college provides a wide variety of courses in many centres to meet the needs of students

and employers. The college has very strong partnerships with a wide variety of organisations, agencies and schools. These effectively meet community needs, widen participation and successfully encourage students who experience significant barriers to learning to join courses. Work with local employers, including a ferry service and local hotels, is enabling adults to develop literacy and numeracy skills relevant to their working lives. Essential Skills provision for students aged 16 to 18 on main college courses is very good and particularly well integrated on hospitality courses.

156. Individual support is very good for both students aged 16 to 18 and adult students in the community. Students value highly the academic and pastoral support offered by staff. The skills development unit offers particularly effective support for both students and staff. There is a very good programme of individual support provided promptly for students with additional needs based on comprehensive initial assessment. These lessons are well attended and students are highly motivated and progress well.

Leadership and management

157. Leadership and management are good. Teachers are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Essential Skills staff are highly valued and well supported. Morale and commitment to students and colleagues within the team are high. Skills development staff provide valuable advice and training for staff across the college. Learning support assistants are involved in the planning of individual learning and work effectively alongside teachers in the classroom.

158. Staff have been fully involved in self-assessment and setting priorities for development. Communication with teachers working in community venues is good and they attend regular meetings, training events and receive emails to ensure that they are well informed and up-to-date. The essential skills team is very aware of equal opportunities. They are very knowledgeable about the needs of students with a wide range of disabilities and those whose first language is not English.

Part D: College data

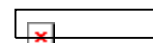
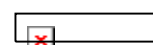


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	5	29
2	15	8
3	72	5
4/5	0	0
Other	8	58
Total	100	100



Source: provided by the college in

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	1,187	1,788	2,975
Land-based provision	1	55	56
Construction	0	0	0
Engineering, technology and manufacture	187	147	334
Business administration, management and professional	756	2,396	3,152
Information and communication technology	597	2,898	3,495
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	26	26
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	598	1,122	1,720
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	31	0	31
Health, social care and public services	245	613	858
Visual and performing arts and media	1,333	4,061	5,394
Humanities	3,946	1,567	5,513
English, languages and communication	1,536	267	1,803
Foundation programmes	206	1,502	1,708
Other/Unknown	51	6	57
Total	10,674	16,448	27,122

Source: provided by the college in

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
1	Starters excluding transfers	689	341	334	496	772	898
	Retention rate %	84	77	87	77	57	68
	National average %	76	75	76	73	69	70
	Pass rate %	66	92	87	73	77	80

	National average %	65	69	71	66	68	71
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,607	1,253	1,155	474	481	655
	Retention rate %	78	76	80	68	69	63
	National average %	72	70	72	70	68	68
	Pass rate %	67	76	82	73	72	76
	National average %	67	69	71	64	68	72
3	Starters excluding transfers	3,201	5,843	6,534	435	362	511
	Retention rate %	82	80	88	76	68	74
	National average %	67	71	77	69	68	70
	Pass rate %	69	82	85	66	72	69
	National average %	75	77	79	66	69	72
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Retention rate %	0	0	0	0	0	0
	National average %	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Pass rate %	0	0	0	0	0	0
	National average %	0	0	0	0	0	0

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/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).

Sources of information:

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

2. College rates for 1999/2000 to 2001/02: College ISR.

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)	79	18	3	112
Level 2 (intermediate)	85	13	2	45
Level 1 (foundation)	82	18	0	22
Other sessions	79	14	7	28

Totals	81	16	3	207
---------------	-----------	-----------	----------	------------

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2004. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Office for
Standards
in Education

