

## Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology

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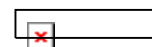
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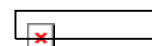
**Basic information about the college**



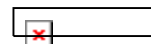
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Name of college:	Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Greg Molan
Address of college:	London Road Shrewsbury Shropshire SY2 6PR
Telephone number:	01743 342342
Fax number:	01743 342343
Chair of governors:	John Clayton
Unique reference number:	130798
Name of reporting inspector:	Annella Mochan HMI
Dates of inspection:	10-14 May 2004

**Part A: Summary**



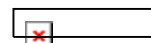
## Information about the college



Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology is the largest general further education (FE) college in Shropshire. The college has three main sites, two in Shrewsbury and one in Bridgnorth, 20 miles to the south-east. The college has four major outreach centres: two in Shrewsbury, one in Bridgnorth and a community learning centre in a secondary school in Pontesbury, a village 10 miles south-west of Shrewsbury. In addition, the college operates at about 15 community venues in association with the local sixth form college, schools and Shropshire local education authority (LEA).

The college provides education and training in all 14 of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas of learning. The college specialises in vocational courses. The largest areas of provision in terms of enrolments are in information and communication technology (ICT), health and social care and public services, business, and hospitality, leisure, sport and travel. The college also provides adult and community education, higher education (HE) and courses for an increasing number of students aged 14 to 16. In 2002/03, the college enrolled around 1,600 full-time students and 9,050 part-time students. Using the measure of full-time equivalent students, approximately 46% of students were aged 16 to 18. About 67% of students aged 16 to 18 attended full-time courses. Of the adult students, 95% were part time. Approximately, 46% of enrolments were on courses at level 1, some 31% at level 2 and 15% at level 3. At the time of the inspection, there were about 360 work-based learners. Some 87% of learners are in the construction occupational area with the remainder on engineering, accounting, hospitality and catering, and hairdressing programmes. The college's vision is 'to provide the best vocational training in Shropshire.'

## How effective is the college?



The college has made good progress in improving the quality of its provision since it was inspected by Ofsted in May 2002, when it was judged to be inadequate. In 2002, provision in five curriculum areas and in leadership and management was unsatisfactory. Provision is now good in five curriculum areas and satisfactory in three of the eight areas inspected. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college is no longer inadequate. The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

### **Key strengths**

- effective strategies to improve the quality of the provision
- effective action to improve teaching
- good personal and academic support for students
- good collaboration with schools and other colleges

- success in widening participation
- good communication across the college
- good teaching in business, visual and performing arts and media, and literacy and numeracy
- strong leadership.

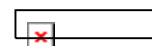
***What should be improved***

- retention rates, particularly at level 3
- pass rates in key skills
- achievement of work-based learners
- consistency of tutorials
- individual learning plans and target setting
- the use of information and learning technology (ILT) in teaching and learning
- strategic planning
- efficient use of accommodation

- the financial position.

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

### Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

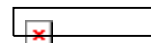


*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum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

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Construction	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning contributory grade: <b>satisfactory</b> . Students benefit from good practical teaching and the standard of their practical work is good. Support for students is effective and the progress of work-based learners is thoroughly monitored. Retention and pass rates are low on many courses. Workshop accommodation is inadequate.
Engineering	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates are high on many courses. The teaching of practical aspects is much better than the teaching of theory. Links with schools and employers are good. There is a narrow range of courses in motor vehicle.
Business	<b>Good.</b> There is much good teaching. Retention and pass rates are consistently high on many courses. Pass rates are declining on the national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 4 accounting course. The use of ILT for teaching and learning is underdeveloped.
Information and communication technology	<b>Good.</b> Teaching is good for students aged 16 to 18. Retention and pass rates are high on most courses. Links with the community and employers are good. Management of the part-time provision is poor.
Hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There is good teaching in sport. Students' practical catering skills are developed effectively. Overall, retention and pass rates are high. There is a narrow range of provision in sport and travel and some weak course planning in catering.
Health, social care and public services	<b>Good.</b> Teaching is good. Close attention is paid to the individual needs of students. Pass rates are high on most courses, but retention rates are low on provision at level 3. Progression rates to further study and employment are good.
Visual and performing arts and media	<b>Good.</b> Much of the teaching is very good. Students' practical work is of a high standard, but their written work is often poor. Pass rates are high on most courses. Some accommodation is inadequate.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Good.</b> The provision is well managed and teaching is good. Learning support for students on vocational courses is good. Adults on literacy and numeracy courses make good progress. There is a wide range of community links and partnerships. ILT in community venues is

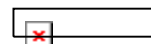
	inadequate.
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#### How well is the college led and managed?



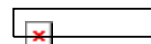
Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection in May 2002, the college has improved the quality of its provision in five of the eight areas inspected. Successful action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching. Overall, pass rates have improved. Retention rates remain low on some courses, particularly at level 3. Equality of opportunity is actively pursued. The principal and senior managers provide strong leadership in confronting the college's weaknesses. The accountability of managers is clear. Course management is more effective and the management of work-based learning has improved. Quality assurance arrangements have been strengthened and self-assessment is more robust. Governors monitor improvement plans well. Delay in producing a new strategic plan indicates a lack of clear strategic direction. Arrangements for financial management have improved. The college's financial position remains weak. The accuracy and reliability of the college's management information has improved, but the college was slow in identifying the shortfall in its recruitment target. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

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



The college's response to education and social inclusion is satisfactory. The college is an active member of many local partnerships. There is a strong commitment to provide opportunities for adults under represented in education. A wide range of courses is provided in the community, many in rural locations. Since the last inspection, provision at entry level and levels 1 and 2 has been expanded to meet the needs of school leavers better. The college's offer includes courses for pupils aged 14 to 16. There are good opportunities for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Resources and support for students with a learning difficulty and/or disability are good. All teaching rooms are accessible to people with restricted mobility. An equality and diversity committee oversees the formulation of policy and carefully monitors the implementation of action plans. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The college is in compliance with its obligations under the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. Data on the performance of different minority ethnic groups are analysed. The college has made an appropriate response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). Staff have undertaken training and procedures for eliminating discriminatory practice have been introduced.

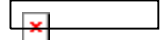
#### How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Guidance and support for students are good. Initial advice and guidance for students has improved. Induction is beneficial and helps students to settle into their studies quickly. Arrangements to identify literacy and numeracy and additional support needs of students are good. Support for students with specific needs or disabilities is good. Learning support tutors and learning mentors work effectively with teachers to provide good support for students who need it. Personal and academic support for students are good. Tutorial provision has improved. It focuses on improving attendance, retention and pass rates. There are inconsistencies in the review of students' individual learning plans. Target

support from their teachers and tutors. Students have easy access to a good range of support services including childcare, counselling and finance, and careers advice and guidance.

### **Students' views of the college**



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

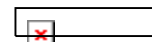
#### ***What students like about the college***

- good teaching
- study and learning support
- friendly atmosphere
- regular feedback and assessment of work
- learning centres on main sites
- approachable teachers who treat students like adults.

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

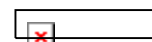
- transport to college
- variety and cost of food in the canteens
- information technology (IT) facilities at the Gateway centre.

## Other information

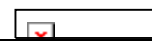


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the 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

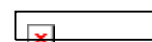


Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	62	34	4
19+ and WBL*	72	26	2
Learning 16-18	60	35	5
19+ and WBL*	72	26	2

*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. The college offers a wide range of courses that can be studied full time and part time. All 14 of the LSC areas of learning are covered, as Table 2 in Part D of the report shows. Data on students' achievements were drawn from the individualised learner records for 2000/01 and 2001/02 provided by the LSC. Data provided by the college were used for 2002/03. Inspectors also used additional data held by the college, particularly in the area of work-based learning.

2. Since the last inspection in May 2002, overall pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 and adults have improved. In 2002/03, pass rates at levels 1 to 3 for students of all ages were in line with or above the national average for general FE colleges. Between 2001/02 and 2002/03, the overall



retention rate at level 1 improved to above the national average for students aged 16 to 18 and adults. At level 2 over the same period, retention rates remained broadly in line with the national average. Between 2001/02 and 2002/03, overall retention rates at level 3 for students of all ages show no improvement and remained well below the national average for general FE colleges. College in-year retention rate data for the current academic year 2003/04 indicate an improving trend in retention rates on courses at levels 1 to 3 for students aged 16 to 18 and adults. Overall, retention and pass rates for students on short courses are above the national averages.

3. The overall attendance rate in lessons observed by inspectors was above the national average, at 82%. Attendance was high in visual and performing arts and media, and ICT at 89% and 86%, respectively. It was low in literacy and numeracy, at 73%. Overall, attendance has improved since the last inspection when it was below the national average at 76%. The average number of students in lessons was broadly in line with the national average.

4. Students are well prepared for progression to employment and the next stage of their learning. Most students enjoy their studies and work enthusiastically. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively. On sport and public services courses, students work particularly well in teams during competitive sporting events. Overall, the standard of students' work is at least satisfactory and much of it is good. In many curriculum areas, students' key skills of communication and IT are successfully developed. Students on NVQ courses often use digital cameras effectively to produce evidence to include in their portfolios. In application of number, most students become sufficiently competent to cope with the demands of their course. Students develop their occupational skills and knowledge effectively and their practical skills are good. In construction and engineering, students' skills match the standards required by industry. Catering students plan and organise their work well and are able to cope with the time pressures that they will encounter in industry. Art and design, and performing arts students are often original, experimental and creative in their work. In business, students have good analytical and evaluative skills. Their debating skills are good and they are able to participate effectively in well-thought out discussions. In health and social care, students have a well-developed understanding of equal opportunities and are sensitive to the issues.

5. All full-time and work-based learning students have an entitlement to improve their key skills in communication, IT and application of number to meet their individual needs. Between 2000/01 and 2001/02, the pass rates at levels 1, 2 and 3 on the three main key skills were very low. In 2002/03, the pass rates improved significantly bringing them more in line with the national averages. Between 2001/02 and 2002/03, the pass rate on level 1 communication rose from 11% to 50%. Over the same period, the overall retention rates on key skills at levels 1 to 3 fell to below the national averages. College data for the current academic year show that retention rates on key skills have improved and are now good.

6. Students on work-based learning programmes develop effectively the skills they need for employment. The majority of learners are on foundation or advanced apprenticeships. Overall, students are slow to achieve the full apprenticeship framework. Many apprentices fail to achieve the key skills element. In construction, between 2000 and 2003, only about 8% of foundation apprentices achieved the full framework within the planned duration. Since the last inspection in 2002, significant changes have been made to the management of work-based learning. The progress of learners is thoroughly monitored and they are assessed more often. For learners currently in training, their records indicate that they are on target and are making steady progress towards their learning goals.

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

7. In 2002/03, some 75% of full-time students were aged 16 to 18. Nearly 7% of students in this age range were on part-time courses. Approximately 30% of qualifications taken by these students were at level 1, 48% at level 2 and 20% at level 3. Over the period 2000/01 to 2001/02, the percentage of students aged 16 to 18 completing their courses fell. In 2001/02, the retention rate on level 1 and level 2 courses was 74% and 72%, respectively, which is in line with the national averages. The retention rate on level 3 courses was at the national average in 2000/01, but in 2001/02 it was well below at 66%. Data for 2002/03 show that the college has been successful in improving the overall retention rates on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3. The level 1 retention rate rose by 8% to 82% which is

above the national average. The improvement on level 2 and level 3 courses was more modest. Over the period 2001/02 to 2002/03, the overall retention rate at level 3 rose slightly, but it remained well below the national average. In 2000/01 and 2001/02, the overall pass rates on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 were near to or above the national averages. The pass rate on courses at level 1 in 2001/02 was well above the national average at 87%, but in 2002/03 it fell by 11%. In 2002/03, the overall pass rates at level 2 and level 3 rose slightly to 73% and 83%, respectively, bringing them broadly in line with national averages.

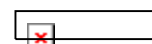
### **Adult learners**

8. Of the 10,673 students who enrolled in 2002/03, some 83% were aged 19 or over. In 2002/03, approximately 55% of all qualifications taken by adults were at level 1. Retention rates for adults on long courses are mixed. In 2001/02 and 2002/03, the overall retention rate on level 1 qualifications was slightly above the national average. Over the same period, the retention rates on courses at level 2 and level 3 show a declining trend. At level 3, retention rates are unsatisfactory and in 2002/03, at 56%, were significantly below the national average.

9. Over the three-year period from 2000/01 to 2002/03, the overall pass rates for adults on long courses at levels 1 to 3 show an improving trend. In 2002/03, the pass rate on level 1 courses was well above the national average, at 86%. Overall pass rates on courses at levels 2 and 3 are generally around the national averages.

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

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



11. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 159 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 65% of these, satisfactory in 32% and less than satisfactory in 3%. This profile is slightly better than the average for general FE colleges inspected in 2002/03. The standard of teaching has improved since the last inspection, when 10% of lessons were unsatisfactory. The grades awarded for learning were similar to those for teaching. Teaching is most effective in visual and performing arts and media, business, and literacy and numeracy. Teaching is least effective in construction and engineering.

12. Teaching is significantly better in lessons primarily for adults. Some 72% of these lessons were good or better, compared with 62% of lessons for students aged 16 to 18. Attainment during lessons is also significantly better for adults than for younger students. All teaching for work-based learners is satisfactory or better. The best teaching is at level 1, with 77% of lessons graded good or better. In contrast, teaching at level 2 and level 3 was less successful with 59% and 65%, respectively, of lessons graded good or better. In most curriculum areas, teaching in practical lessons and in lessons where there is a mix of theory and practical activities is better than in theory lessons. Lessons taught by full-time teachers are better than those taught by part-time teachers.

13. The most effective lessons are well planned and have clear learning objectives. They include an appropriate variety of activities to stimulate and motivate students. These lessons are lively and productive and students help each other with their learning. Group work and discussion, case studies, role plays and presentations are used by many teachers to enliven lessons. The best lessons effectively integrate theoretical and practical topics and make reference to realistic, practical examples. Some teachers are beginning to make effective use of ILT to help students to learn. The work experience of adult students is often used effectively to help them apply their knowledge better. Many younger students have work placements and visits to industry which enhance their college studies.

14. The less effective lessons do not take sufficient account of the needs of individual students. In some lessons, teachers talk too much and students are not productively engaged in learning. Other lessons are dull and unimaginative and students lose interest. More able students do not always have the opportunity to progress at a faster rate and become bored. Other teaching weaknesses include, unclear explanations, poor use of questioning techniques to confirm students' understanding, and too few checks on students' learning.

15. The management of key skills has improved since the last inspection. The college's policy and delivery strategy for key skills have been revised and are now clear. Management responsibilities are well understood and co-ordination of key skills across the college is good. Most teachers have undertaken staff development to improve their understanding of key skills. Specialist key skills teachers work effectively with subject teachers. In work-based learning, training co-ordinators deliver and support students with their key skills. In most curriculum areas, there is good integration of key skills in vocational assignments. Students are well prepared for external tests. Average attendance at key skills lessons is high, at 86%.

16. There are clear policies and procedures for assessment and monitoring of students' progress. On most courses, assessment is well planned, regular and fair. Most course teams check and verify assignments before they are issued to students. At the start of their course, students are given an assessment schedule to help them plan their workload. Most assignments are interesting, vocationally relevant and include opportunities for the assessment of key skills. Most teachers mark students' work carefully and return it promptly with helpful and constructive comments. However, spelling and grammar is not always corrected. Since the last inspection, the procedures to monitor the progress of work-based learners have been improved and they are now generally good. However, a small minority of learners have not been assessed frequently enough. Employers are kept well informed of the performance and attendance of work-based learners. Parents of younger students are invited to regular parents' evenings. Internal verification procedures are mostly sound and meet the requirements of the awarding bodies. There are appropriate arrangements for sampling the work of assessors and their candidates.

17. Most full-time teachers have appropriate qualifications and experience. Around 80% have a recognized teaching qualification and another 9% are working towards one. In contrast, only about half of the part-time and fractional teachers have a teaching qualification. With the exception of construction, there are sufficient staff with assessor and verifier qualifications. Since the last inspection, there has been extensive staff development which has focused on teaching and learning. The outcomes from lesson observations are used effectively to improve teaching. Teachers new to the college and established teachers are well supported by teacher mentors.

18. The college has improved its accommodation and specialist facilities since the last inspection. At London Road and Radbrook, reception areas and students' services have been relocated and now provide a more welcoming environment for students. Hairdressing and beauty salons, the training restaurant and the art school have been refurbished. Additional and more up-to-date specialist equipment has been acquired for catering and engineering. Students and staff have access to a quiet room for contemplation and prayer. There is a 28-place nursery at Radbrook for students with children. At London Road, sports facilities are extensive, but much of these are of poor quality. At other sites, students have access to sports playing fields. Refectory facilities are adequate, but become congested at peak times.

19. The overall standard of accommodation is mixed. Buildings are clean and generally well maintained. However, due to budget constraints, only essential maintenance is carried out. Most classrooms are adequately furnished. Audio-visual aids are readily available. Temporary classrooms at Radbrook have inadequate heating and ventilation. The dance studio does not have a sprung floor and some construction workshops are cramped for the number of students using them. The college has too much accommodation for the number of students enrolled and room utilisation is low at all three sites, particularly at Bridgnorth. An access audit has been carried out to ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act. Improvements are ongoing to comply with legislative requirements. Some accommodation on each site is inaccessible to wheelchair users. However, all specialist teaching rooms are accessible. There is good support for students with a learning difficulty and/or disability and specialist equipment is provided to meet individual needs. The

college has good links with a local disability resource centre.

20. The college has made significant investment in ICT. All students have access to the Internet and to the college's intranet. There are sufficient up-to-date computers for students to use. Some classrooms have interactive whiteboards, but not all teachers are confident about the use of new technologies. The college is developing a virtual learning environment, 'virtual campus', and its use is increasing steadily. Learning resource centres on each site have sufficient space for individual and group work and quiet study. The range of book stock, journals and periodicals is adequate.

21. The college offers a wide range of mainly vocational courses for school leavers and adults. The college collaborates with the local sixth form college to minimise duplication of provision. Since the last inspection, the curriculum offer has changed and improved. Several of the less successful courses have been discontinued. New courses at entry, foundation and intermediate level have been introduced to meet the needs of students better and provide clear progression routes. However, there is no provision at entry level or level 1 in sport and travel. In most curriculum areas, there are opportunities for students to progress from foundation to advanced level courses. Insufficient use is made of market research and local labour market information to inform curriculum planning and development. A broad range of HE courses is offered in partnership with the Staffordshire Regional Federation, the University of Wolverhampton and the North East Wales Institute.

22. There are good opportunities for students to gain qualifications in addition to their main course of study. These improve students' opportunities for progression to employment or further study. Students participate in a good range of enrichment activities related to their area of study. These include voluntary work with local primary schools, visits to galleries and exhibitions, and entering skills competitions. However, there are few opportunities for students to take part in enrichment activities which involve students from curriculum areas across the college.

23. The college has good links with schools. A broad range of 'taster sessions' is run for prospective students. Vocational courses for pupils aged 14 to 16 are offered in partnership with about a dozen schools through the Increased Flexibility (IF) programme. Collaborative working with local partnerships is helping to widen participation in education and training. The college's involvement in a range of projects is helping to improve the skills base of the local workforce. Links with employers are good. The provision of courses on employers' premises is a growth area. In some curriculum areas, students benefit from work experience with employers and donations of specialist equipment to the college.

24. Initial advice and guidance for prospective students have improved since the last inspection. Applications are dealt with efficiently through central admissions. Interviews are carried out by subject teachers who are assisted by student services staff to ensure impartial advice on the options available. All full-time and substantial part-time students undertake an initial assessment to identify their literacy and numeracy support needs. In some curriculum areas, students preferred learning styles are identified, but teachers do not always use this information well when planning lessons. Learning support tutors work effectively with vocational teachers to provide in-class support to students who need it. In addition, learning mentors are allocated to all level 1 courses and to level 2 and level 3 courses where retention and pass rates are poor. Learning mentors also rigorously follow-up absences. There is good support for students with a learning difficulty and/or disability from a well managed team of learning support assistants. Appropriate arrangements are in place to provide specialist support to students with dyslexia and to those with hearing or visual impairment or mental health problems. There are good procedures to identify and support other students who are causing concern or are at risk of leaving their course early. In addition, Connexions personal advisors provide a specific service for students identified as being at risk.

25. Induction is generally well planned with a good range of interesting activities to help students settle quickly into their studies and college life. The arrangements for students who join their course late are well managed. These students are monitored carefully to ensure that they are retained on their course. All students are issued with a handbook which has useful information about the college and the services available to students.

26. Support and guidance for students have improved. A good range of support and welfare services

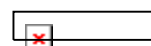
including counselling and financial advice and help with literacy and numeracy are easily accessible to all students. Communication between staff providing the different services is effective. Staff roles and responsibilities are clear. Support services are now more responsive to the needs of individuals. The quality of the services provided is regularly evaluated. The impact of support on student performance is measured and reported regularly to the academic management team.

27. Personal and academic support for students are good. All students on a course of more than six hours have a named personal tutor. Those on shorter courses generally receive the help they need from their subject tutor. Students speak highly about the individual support they receive. The recently revised tutorial programme focuses on improving attendance, retention and pass rates through regular progress review using individual learning plans. The quality of tutorials varies widely, but overall they are satisfactory. Students' meet with their tutor every six weeks to review progress against their individual learning plan. However, the outcomes of these meetings are not always recorded well. Learning plans often lack short-term goals for students to work towards and targets set are often imprecise. The tutorial handbook does not provide tutors with sufficient guidance or supporting materials to help them deliver a programme to develop students' personal and social skills. Support and guidance for work-based learners has improved with the appointment of tutor assessors in all occupational areas.

28. Learning centres have a good stock of careers and HE literature and computer-based information. There is good support for students applying to HE. For students progressing to employment, careers advice is good as is the information they receive on local employment prospects. Students are complimentary about the careers advice they receive from their vocational teachers. The college has links with the Connexions service for careers and guidance interviews.

29. A senior member of staff has responsibility for child protection issues and a child protection group is being established. The college's child protection procedures and guidelines for dealing with abuse to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults are clear. There is an appropriate training programme for key staff.

## Leadership and management



30. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection in 2002, the college has made good progress in addressing its weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved and the monitoring of performance is more rigorous. Attendance rates have risen. Overall, pass rates have improved and are at or above the national average for general FE colleges. Retention rates are more mixed and on some courses are well below the national average.

31. The principal and senior managers provide strong leadership. Since the principal took up post in March 2003, new senior managers and faculty directors have been appointed and the college has been restructured. Roles and responsibilities have been clarified and are well understood. The principal and senior managers are open and consultative in managing the many changes taking place. Communication is good. Overall, staff morale is high. Managers work well together and are committed to raising standards across the college. Appropriate emphasis is placed on improving the quality of teaching and learning and services for students. At the time of the inspection, the college was in the process of reviewing its mission and developing a new strategic plan. Delay in completing this has resulted in a lack of clarity in the college's long-term aims and mission. Market research is not used sufficiently to inform planning.

32. Governors have played a major role in the preparation of action plans to improve the leadership and management of the college and the quality of its provision. They systematically monitor actions taken and the progress made. They are well informed and realistic about the many challenges facing the college. Governors worked effectively with the senior management team to review and update the college's recovery plan. The governors' quality and standards committee routinely monitors

students' pass and retention rates, and attendance. It also reviews targets and monitors teaching improvement schemes, taking a particular interest in the lesson observation programme.

33. Five faculty directors are responsible directly to the principal for the management of the curriculum. The principal's direct intervention has resulted in the raising of standards being given a central position in all the college does. Course management is at least satisfactory and in some curriculum areas it is good. The management of work-based learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. Well-targeted staff development has improved teaching and assessment strategies and the support of students in the work place. The recently introduced system for managing literacy and numeracy support across the college is good. The management of part-time ICT courses for adults is less successful. Full-time ICT courses for students aged 16 to 18 are well managed. In visual and performing arts, and business, leadership is particularly good. Across the college, staff are beginning to share good practice and many are developing a culture which strives towards continuous improvement.

34. Quality assurance arrangements have been reviewed and strengthened since the last inspection. An extensive lesson observation programme has been undertaken in the college. This has improved teaching. Outcomes from lesson observations are used effectively to inform staff development. However, in curriculum self-assessments, insufficient attention is given to this information to inform judgements on teaching and learning. Course reviews are generally detailed, and targets are set and monitored for attendance, retention and pass rates. Self-assessment is now more rigorous and involves all staff. The accuracy and availability of retention and pass rate data has improved. Managers are developing greater confidence in the data and are using it more to inform their planning. Stringent and sustained strategies to improve retention rates are beginning to show a positive impact. Managers at all levels monitor in detail patterns of attendance at course, class and individual student level. Students' views about the quality of the provision are canvassed and appropriate action is taken.

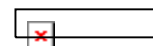
35. Since the last inspection, staff development has focused on improving teaching and learning and curriculum management. This strategy has been successful. The recently reviewed appraisal scheme is now closely linked with teaching observation and increasingly professional development has focused on individual teacher's classroom practice. Teacher mentors support teachers effectively in confronting identified professional weaknesses and developing their teaching skills. The team of mentors are developing into a forum for the sharing of good practice. Budgets for staff development have been devolved to curriculum managers in order to concentrate training on identified course needs.

36. The college actively pursues equality of opportunity for staff and students. An equality and diversity committee oversees the formulation of policy and monitors its impact. It has recently reviewed the full range of equality and diversity policies and integrated them into a single over-arching policy with a well-thought-out action plan. Good practice in equal opportunities in the classroom was identified in care, visual and performing arts and sport. The college is careful to ensure that it is in compliance with its duties under the Race Relations (amendment) Act. The majority of staff have been trained in the implications of the Act. The progress of the small number of students from ethnic minorities is monitored centrally and the results appropriately analysed. Good progress has been made in the implementation of the requirements of the SENDA. Staff have been trained and procedures for eliminating discriminatory practice in admissions and teaching have been introduced. Appropriate procedures to anticipate the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are in place.

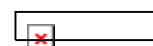
37. The arrangements for financial management and control have improved with the appointment of a new finance director. A clear picture of the college's weak financial position has emerged. Accurate management information has enabled senior managers and governors to focus on plans for financial recovery. However, difficulties with a new system resulted in the college being slow to appreciate the level of shortfalls in recruitment. Governors and senior managers are aware of the grave implications of this situation and changes are being made to the college's recovery plan. Inefficiencies in the deployment of staff are being addressed, teachers' workloads are being carefully monitored, and a course costing system is being developed. Budget holders receive regular and accurate reports on income and expenditure. Since the last inspection, the college has successfully improved the quality

of its provision. Teaching and learning have improved and the proportion of lessons judged to be less than satisfactory has been reduced significantly. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Construction



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

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

#### **Strengths**

- good standard of practical work
- good practical teaching
- thorough monitoring of work-based learners' progress
- wide range of provision
- effective support for students.

#### **Weaknesses**

- low retention and pass rates on many courses
- poor completion of apprenticeships
- inadequate workshop accommodation.

### **Scope of provision**

38. The college offers a wide range of provision in construction at foundation, intermediate and advanced level. Full-time and part-time courses are offered in brickwork, wood occupations, plumbing, painting and decorating and technician areas. Short courses are available in electrical installation and gas safety. Some 470 students are enrolled on construction courses of whom about 190 are foundation apprentices and 108 advanced apprentices. Nearly 40% of students are aged 16 to 18. In addition, 60 pupils aged 14 to 16 are studying construction at the college one day a week.

### **Achievement and standards**

39. The standard of students' practical work in college workshops and in the workplace is good. Students are able to perform practical tasks confidently and use hand and power tools competently. Practical work such as plumbing installations, wiring domestic lighting and power circuits, painting walls and hanging wallpaper, and building solid and cavity walls is completed in a professional and timely manner to the appropriate industry standards. The standard of students' written work is mostly satisfactory. Overall, the development of students' key skills is good and key skills pass rates are steadily improving. During the inspection, the average attendance at lessons observed was above the national average at 80%.

40. Retention and pass rates are low on many courses. Achievement of the full apprenticeship framework is poor. Since 2000/01, of the 128 trainees who enrolled on a foundation apprenticeship, only 10 have completed the full framework. However, some 40% of these trainees have successfully completed their NVQ and of the balance many are still in learning. The management of work-based learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. Learners' progress is now rigorously monitored and retention rates have risen. Nearly 90% of trainees who started their apprenticeship during 2003 attend college regularly. These students are making satisfactory progress towards the achievement of their learning goal.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Electrical installation part 1	1	No. of starts	15	39	39
		% retention	60	0	92
		% pass rate	89	0	47
NVQ painting and decorating	2	No. of starts	23	*	15
		% retention	4	*	33
		% pass rate	0	*	0
NVQ carpentry and joinery	2	No. of starts	85	68	63
		% retention	0	21	40
		% pass rate	0	93	40
NVQ bricklaying	2	No. of starts	*	31	35
		% retention	*	3	3
		% pass rate	*	0	100

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

\*fewer than 15 students enrolled

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



41. Most teaching is good or better. Teaching in practical lessons is the most effective. These lessons are well planned with a range of activities to meet the needs of students with different abilities. The more able students are able to progress at a faster rate, while less able students are given the extra help that they need. Some teaching of theory is less successful. It is often unimaginative and fails to motivate and engage students in learning. In the better theory lessons, teaching is delivered in an industrial context and references are made to realistic practical examples. In some lessons, effective use is made of ILT to enhance students' learning. The teaching of key skills has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Safety and safe working practices are promoted well across the curriculum.

42. Staff are well qualified and experienced occupationally, but many do not have appropriate teaching or assessor qualifications. Workshop accommodation is inadequate. Some workshops are cramped for the number of students using them and some are in need of refurbishment. Some classrooms have interactive whiteboards which, in the better lessons, are used effectively by teachers. The learning resource centre has a wide range of learning material and these are well used by students and staff. The range and quality of specialist equipment in workshops is adequate and satisfactory stocks of materials and tools are maintained.

43. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Assessment is well planned and is conducted fairly and at regular intervals. Students have individual learning plans and these are carefully monitored. Assignments are based mainly on underpinning knowledge activity packs. The quality of assessor feedback on assignments varies widely. Some work is marked with helpful and constructive comments and others only with ticks. In portfolios, insufficient use is made of evidence which students could gather from their workplace. Work-based learners are visited regularly and their progress is thoroughly monitored and carefully recorded. Employers are kept well informed of learners' progress.

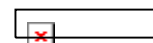
44. There is a wide range of provision which meets the needs of employers and the local community. Links with schools and employers are good. The college works closely with the Federation of Master Builders and has a representative on the Shropshire construction training group.

45. Pastoral, academic and key skills support for students are good. In lessons, students who require help with their literacy and numeracy receive a good level of support. Learning mentors assist students who have been identified as being at risk. Work-based learners are well supported by training co-ordinators and workplace assessors. Apprentices benefit from good employers who support their learning programme well.

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

46. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the management and leadership of the construction provision has improved significantly. New managers and staff have been appointed. The management structure is clear and communication is good. Appropriate strategies have been implemented to improve retention and pass rates. Targets have been set for recruitment, retention and pass rates and these are routinely monitored. Lesson observations are helping to improve the student experience. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Self-assessment lacks rigour and is not sufficiently self-critical. Staff and students have a reasonable understanding of equal opportunity issues, but equality and diversity are not promoted well. There are no strategies in place to widen participation in construction by under-represented groups.

## **Engineering**



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

**Strengths**

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
- good practical teaching
- effective support for learning
- good partnerships with schools and employers.

**Weaknesses**

- low retention rates on a minority of courses
- uninspiring teaching in most theory lessons
- insufficient use of ILT in theory lessons
- narrow range of courses in motor vehicle.

**Scope of provision**

47. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in manufacturing, mechanical and electronics engineering from level 2 to higher national certificate (HNC). Full-time courses at level 1 and level 2 are offered in motor vehicle maintenance and service replacement.

48. There are 79 students on full-time engineering courses and 95 part-time students. Of these students, 69% are aged 16 to 18. As part of the IF programme, there are 95 pupils aged 14 to 16 working towards an NVQ level 1 in performing engineering operations.

**Achievement and standards**

49. Pass and retention rates are high on most courses and many are above the national average. In 2001/02 and 2002/03, the pass rate on City and Guilds motor vehicle repair and maintenance skills was 100%. Over the same period, the retention rate rose from 61% to 85%. All students enrolled on the City & Guilds progression award for motor vehicle servicing and repair at levels 1 and 2 in 2002/03 successfully achieved the qualification. In 2002/03, pass rates were high on the national certificate and national diploma in engineering at 86% and 90%, respectively. Retention rates fell in

2002/03 to well below the national average on the basic training of technicians in engineering certificate and the first diploma in engineering.

50. The standard of students' practical skills and technical knowledge is satisfactory. Students at all levels are able to carry out practical tasks without constant supervision, work safely and use the appropriate tools competently. Students on advanced level courses have mastered complex practical skills and have a good understanding of theory principles. Students' written work is generally well presented and of a good standard. Many students have developed good research and evaluative skills. Attendance at lessons is in line with the national average.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
City and Guilds motor vehicle repair and maintenance skills	1	No. of starts	17	18	27
		% retention	53	61	85
		% pass rate	78	100	100
City and Guilds progression award for motor vehicle servicing and repair	1	No. of starts	25	40	26
		% retention	16	73	100
		% pass rate	50	86	100
City and Guilds computer aided draughting and dimensional design	2	No. of starts	47	47	49
		% retention	87	91	88
		% pass rate	96	98	95
City and Guilds progression award for motor vehicle servicing and repair	2	No. of starts	*	28	26
		% retention	*	79	100
		% pass rate	*	82	100
National certificate engineering	3	No. of starts	32	42	**
		% retention	72	55	**
		% pass rate	91	65	**
National diploma engineering	3	No. of starts	15	**	37
		% retention	47	**	54
		% pass rate	71	**	90
NVQ aircraft engineering maintenance	3	No. of starts	24	40	21
		% retention	8	40	52
		% pass rate	100	88	82

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

\* course not running

\*\* less than 15 students were enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

51. Teaching is mostly good. The best teaching is in practical lessons. The more successful lessons are well planned with interesting activities to involve students of differing abilities. Students are well motivated and enthusiastic and ask relevant and searching questions. In an electronics lesson on customer service requirements, students discussed and developed a good understanding of the importance of customer satisfaction. Their vocational knowledge was strengthened as they considered the importance of suppliers. The teaching in most theory lessons is dull and uninspiring.

In these lessons, question and answer techniques are overused. Students are too often inattentive and wait for the teacher to provide the answer. In lessons, insufficient use is made of ILT. Many opportunities are missed to present information quickly and to use software packages to present graphical and mathematical information to help students learn. In one lesson, the teacher wrote notes and formulae on the white board for students to copy and attempted to draw and extrapolate graphs which resulted in students being confused about the outcomes of the exercise.

52. Teachers are well qualified and most have or are working towards teaching qualifications. Satisfactory resources are available in all areas of engineering. Since the last inspection, motor vehicle stocks and welding equipment have improved. Links with employers are good and some have donated equipment to the college. There are well-equipped facilities for computer-aided design which include industry-standard software. The layout of the fabrication and welding area is poor and the rooms are too small. Access to the motor vehicle workshops is poor.

53. Overall, assessment procedures are sound. Students receive copies of assessment plans during induction. Assessment is fair and marking is accurate. Feedback on written and practical work is constructive. Course tutors and learning mentors carefully monitor students' progress. On workshop walls, students' progress is recorded on prominently displayed charts. Students are well informed about their progress and what they need to do to improve. There are regular reports to employers and to parents of younger students.

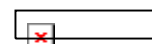
54. Links with schools and employers are good. In collaboration with around 11 schools, 95 pupils aged 14 to 16 are enrolled on engineering courses. These students make good progress in developing vocational skills. Full-time students have a planned programme of work experience which complements their college studies. There is a broad range of courses for mechanical engineering and electronics from level 1 to level 4. In motor vehicle, there are no opportunities for students to progress beyond level 2.

55. Support for students is good. Students receive good impartial advice and guidance to help them make an informed choice of which course to study. Induction is well planned and includes team building activities. Weekly tutorials are generally used well to discuss personal issues and review individual learning plans. Poor punctuality and attendance are routinely followed-up. Students value the additional support they receive to help them with their literacy and numeracy and key skills.

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

56. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Course teams meet regularly to review the provision and it has improved since the last inspection. Successful strategies have been implemented to improve rates. Staff development has appropriately concentrated on improving teaching and learning and classroom practice. Procedures for the costing of courses have been introduced. Internal verification covers all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, but some issues identified by national standards sampling are still to be resolved.

## **Business**



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

### ***Strengths***

- consistently high retention and pass rates on many courses

- much lively teaching and learning
- wide range of provision with good progression routes
- well-managed provision.

### ***Weaknesses***

- declining pass rates on NVQ level 4 accounting
- underdeveloped use of ILT for teaching and learning
- inconsistent target setting with students.

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

57. The college offers a wide range of business-related courses at the London Road and Radbrook site. Full-time and part-time courses are available in business studies, administration, law, and finance and accounting. Part-time provision includes management education and trade union studies. Students can study most subjects during the day or in the evening. Courses are offered at level 1 through to level 4 in some subjects. Apprenticeships are offered in accounting. At the time of the inspection, there were 314 full-time and 704 part-time students enrolled on business courses. The majority of students are adults.

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

58. Retention and pass rates are consistently high on many courses. Between 2001 and 2003, the retention and pass rates in text processing at level 2 were significantly above the national average. Over the same period, all students who completed the certificate in personnel practice achieved the qualification. Retention rates have improved on the national diploma business and finance from 40% in 2001 to well above the national average in 2002 and 2003. Pass rates on NVQ accounting level 4 declined significantly between 2001 and 2003.

59. The standard of students' work is good. Written work is of a high standard. Students' portfolios in accounting and business administration are well organised and presented, with appropriate vocational evidence. Many students develop good critical and analytical skills. Most students develop good occupational skills and grow in confidence. They present their points of view well and make relevant references to business and professional practice to support their arguments.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	69	48	54
		% retention	70	75	76
		% pass rate	92	89	82
Text processing stage 2	2	No. of starts	66	48	56
		% retention	97	85	93
		% pass rate	77	90	88
National diploma in business and finance	3	No. of starts	25	22	21
		% retention	40	73	82
		% pass rate	100	88	91
Insitute of legal executives	3	No. of starts	25	20	27
		% retention	86	89	80
		% pass rate	63	50	75
Certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	25	28	29
		% retention	92	100	90
		% pass rate	100	100	100
NVQ accounting	4	No. of starts	49	51	52
		% retention	86	86	93
		% pass rate	88	64	53

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

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

60. Most teaching is good or better. Schemes of work are detailed and lessons are well planned. Most teachers take into account the individual needs of students. They use a variety of appropriate activities to stimulate and maintain students' interest. Lessons are often lively, with a busy and productive atmosphere. In lessons, teachers encourage students to participate and to support each other in their learning. In a management lesson, students presented each other with different definitions of quality as consumers, producers and managers, and collectively agreed a definition which was compared with academic definitions. In another lesson, part-time legal diploma students tested each others' knowledge of will and succession. They each asked a question of another group member, with prizes for the best answers. This activity encouraged the more reticent students to participate. Full-time business studies students are helped to develop their key skills in application of number by tracking their own preferred sector company shares tables and interpreting this information mathematically. Teachers effectively relate theory to current business and professional practice. In a trade union education lesson, students discussed the best forms of communication used in their workplace. In a law lesson, students simulated an industrial tribunal by preparing claim and counterclaim to a charge of unfair dismissal. In the less successful lessons, teachers fail to check students' learning frequently enough and there is poor use of questions to check understanding. In a few instances, teachers did not use basic teaching aids and resources effectively. In lessons, there is insufficient use of IT.

61. Teachers are well qualified with appropriate business and commercial experience. Part-time teachers bring additional, current expertise to the curriculum area. Most teachers have teaching qualifications and staff new to teaching are encouraged to work towards a recognised teaching qualification. Staff development opportunities are good and many teachers take advantage of them. Accommodation is satisfactory. Most rooms are clean and bright, but many lack subject identity. Temporary accommodation at Radbrook is poor. Students have good access to a wide range of

learning and library resources at both sites in Shrewsbury.

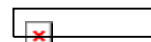
62. Arrangements for assessment are generally satisfactory. Students are well informed of the assessment requirements of their subjects at the start of their course. Written work is returned promptly with detailed and constructive comments. Internal verification procedures are sound.

63. Students receive good information, advice and guidance to ensure that they choose the most appropriate course to meet their needs. Additional support needs are identified through initial assessment. Nearly all students take advantage of the support that is offered. Academic and personal support for students are good. In lessons, learning support tutors work effectively with students to develop their skills and help them with their coursework. Students have individual learning plans which they have negotiated with their tutor. However, target setting in these plans is weak.

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

64. Management of the curriculum area is good. There is strong leadership which is clearly focused on improving the quality of the provision. Managers analyse student achievement data carefully to set targets for improvement. Outcomes from lesson observations and students' views are used to improve teaching and learning. Communication across the area is good. Teaching teams meet frequently to monitor their work. Self-assessment is evaluative and self-critical. Equal opportunities are actively promoted.

### **Information and communication technology**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
- much good teaching for students aged 16 to 18
- good support for learning
- good community and employer links.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on European computer driving licence (ECDL) courses

- poor management of part-time provision.

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

65. The college offers a broad range of provision in ICT and computing. Courses are offered at the college's three main sites, in community venues and on employers' premises. Since the last inspection, a level 3 certificate in e-business and a full-time foundation level programme have been introduced. At the time of the inspection, approximately 1,500 students were enrolled. The vast majority of students in the curriculum area are adults on part-time courses. About 9% of students are aged 16 to 18 following full-time courses.

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

66. Retention and pass rates on most courses are high. Between 2001 and 2003, the pass rate on the national diploma in computer studies has been consistently high and well above the national average. On many courses, retention and pass rates show a rising trend. Overall, retention and pass rates are high on part-time courses. In 2003, the pass rate on the ECDL course was unsatisfactory. Retention rates have declined on the first diploma IT and in 2003 they were below the national average.

67. Most full-time students' work is of a high standard. Overall, the work of part-time students is satisfactory. First diploma students are proficient in HTML programming and national diploma students use industry-standard software confidently to produce banner advertisements for the Internet. Adult students grow in confidence and are enthusiastic about learning. Many develop skills in word processing, databases and spreadsheets which improves their employment prospects. Most students use the Internet competently for research.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
Computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT)	1	No. of starts	495	376	140
		% retention	80	76	89
		% pass rate	72	77	81
First diploma in IT	2	No. of starts	52	53	47
		% retention	85	91	74
		% pass rate	80	60	86
ECDL	2	No. of starts	46	135	152
		% retention	67	58	82
		% pass rate	58	86	51
Integrated business technology stage 2	2	No. of starts	163	149	42
		% retention	80	77	88
		% pass rate	74	67	78
Integrated business technology stage 3	3	No. of starts	46	53	29
		% retention	72	68	83
		% pass rate	42	42	83



National diploma in computer studies	3	No. of starts	72	71	56
		% retention	78	65	80
		% pass rate	100	93	100

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

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

68. There is much good teaching on full-time courses for students aged 16 to 18. Lesson planning is thorough and classroom management is good. Many teachers plan and deliver lessons to meet the individual learning needs of students. Literacy and numeracy support are good for students who need it. Teachers make effective use of ILT in teaching through online demonstrations of applications software and the regular use of powerpoint when delivering theory. Teachers are beginning to make good use of new virtual learning environment software. Students on full-time courses experience a wide range of software applications packages and are confident in their use. In one lesson, the teacher used powerpoint and online demonstrations to compare and contrast the effectiveness of different Internet websites. Students then used industry-standard software to create their own websites, and produce interesting and imaginative solutions.

69. Much of the part-time provision is delivered in community locations. Students have individual learning programmes which they negotiate with their tutor. ICT workshops cater for students studying different qualifications at various levels. In some centres, teachers use high-quality learning materials and students make good progress with their learning and attainment is good. Teachers in these centres provide effective one-to-one support. Students receive regular and comprehensive feedback on their work and good guidance on what they need to do to improve. However, this good practice is not shared sufficiently across all the part-time courses.

70. Since the last inspection, there has been substantial investment in ICT and resources are good. Students and staff have ample access to computing resources and a wide range of software applications. However, students do not have sufficient space on the network to store their work. Most learning materials are well designed. Staff are appropriately qualified and many full-time teachers have recent and relevant industrial experience.

71. Assessment practice is satisfactory. At the start of their course full-time students are issued with an assignment schedule and assessment criteria is clear. The progress of students aged 16 to 18 is thoroughly monitored and recorded. Absences are routinely and promptly followed-up. Average attendance at lesson observed was high, at 90%. Procedures to monitor the progress of part-time students are less robust and are not always fully effective.

72. There are good partnerships with the community and employers. The college has maintained a good range of part-time courses in the community and has successfully sought various sources of funding to continue to support them. Full-time students benefit from many interesting trips and visits which are vocationally relevant and from presentations from guest speakers.

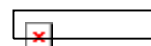
73. Support for students is good. There is a high level of support for students who need it. Learning support tutors have good subject knowledge and are able to contribute effectively to the development of students' personal and learning skills. Students on full-time and substantial part-time courses have well-organised, weekly tutorials in computer rooms. Tutors have reviews with individual students while the other students are productively engaged in practical exercises or assignments. However, the content of the tutorial provision for full-time students varies.

### **Leadership and management**

74. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Effective initiatives have been put in place to improve teaching and learning. Teaching teams for full-team courses meet regularly to monitor students' progress and discuss actions to improve teaching and learning. Quality assurance

procedures are good. The self-assessment report broadly reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. The curriculum area is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity and recognises the need to improve the gender balance and recruit more young female students. At the last inspection, weaknesses in the management of part-time provision were identified and these have not been resolved. Management roles and responsibilities for part-time provision are unclear.

### **Hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
- much good teaching and learning in sport
- good development of students' practical catering skills
- effective personal and learning support.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on a minority of courses
- weak assessment practice on part-time catering courses
- some poor course planning in catering
- narrow range of provision in sport and travel.

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

75. The college offers advanced vocational certificates of education (AVCE) in hospitality and

catering, and travel and tourism, national diploma in sport (sports development and fitness), first diploma in sport, and general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate in leisure and tourism. NVQs are available in food preparation and cooking and food and drink service at levels 1 to 3 for full-time and part-time students. Part-time provision includes food hygiene and health and safety certificates. A catering 'startup' programme enables students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to gain experience of the hospitality industry. Programmes for pupils aged 14 to 16 are well established and provide clear transition routes from school to college. About 250 students aged 16 to 18 and 840 adults are enrolled in the curriculum area. This includes seven work-based trainees who attend college one day a week.

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

76. Retention and pass rates are high on most courses. In 2002 and 2003, the retention and pass rates on AVCE hospitality and catering were well above the national average. Retention and pass rates on sport-related courses are also high. Students on AVCE travel and tourism and GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism are less successful and in 2003 the pass rates were significantly below the national averages. Between 2001 and 2003, the overall retention and pass rate on NVQ levels 1 to 3 food preparation and cooking and NVQ level 2 serving food and drink were consistently above the national averages. Attendance at lessons is good and lateness by students is dealt with effectively. Most students gain related employment and a good number progress to HE.

77. Catering students demonstrate high standards of practical skills in kitchens and the restaurant. They pay particular attention to detail in the presentation of food. In practical lessons, students work well together in teams and demonstrate good social skills when dealing with customers in the restaurant. Some students have achieved success in local and national cooking competitions. On sport courses, both male and female football teams have been successful in regional and national competitions. A number of students have had trials with professional and semi-professional football clubs. One student is currently with the Yorkshire Cricket Academy and another is a top junior international mountain biker.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
NVQ food preparation and cooking	1	No. of starts	34	26	36
		% retention	74	73	78
		% pass rate	92	95	93
NVQ serving food and drink	1	No. of starts	35	25	36
		% retention	71	64	78
		% pass rate	88	88	46
NVQ food preparation and cooking	2	No. of starts	75	68	52
		% retention	72	70	79
		% pass rate	78	81	78
NVQ serving food and drink	2	No. of starts	29	30	30
		% retention	90	87	90
		% pass rate	96	88	88
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	26	17	20
		% retention	73	76	100
		% pass rate	68	69	55
First diploma science (sport)	2	No. of starts	32	22	16
		% retention	78	68	75

		% pass rate	88	87	92
National diploma applied science (sport)	3	No. of starts	59	65	42
		% retention	69	74	69
		% pass rate	90	81	93
AVCE hospitality and catering	3	No. of starts	19	17	16
		% retention	79	88	81
		% pass rate	68	88	100

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

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

78. Most teaching is good or better. Teaching is well planned with a variety of activities to engage students and promote learning. Teachers use their vocational experience well to help students understand industrial practices. The teaching of theory is effectively linked to students' practical work. In an NVQ level 1 cooking lesson, students organised themselves well and worked productively to produce a range of choux pastry items. The quality of finished products and the attainment of these students was high. In sport, many students develop good practical skills and demonstrate high levels of performance in their chosen sport. In a sport lesson, students carried out a range of fitness tests and successfully gathered and analysed the data to compare results. In the less successful lessons, learning objectives are not identified clearly and important topics are not explained sufficiently to help students learn. In kitchens, teachers do not always correct poor working practices. For example, students grease tins with half cut packets of margarine, peel onions with their hands, and use the wrong colour coded boards for preparing meat, fish and vegetables.

79. Teachers are appropriately qualified for the courses that they teach. However, some catering teachers do not have recent experience of the industry. Accommodation and equipment for catering is mostly satisfactory. There has been significant investment since the last inspection. The restaurant has been refurbished and an industry-standard electronic booking system purchased. However, one of the kitchens is cramped, resulting in students preparing food on the side of sinks and making it difficult for them to work in a methodical and professional manner. Catering classrooms are dull and uninspiring with little use of displays to celebrate students' work and stimulate interest in the occupational area. The college has extensive facilities for sports, but the gym, floodlit outdoor area and athletics track are of a poor standard. Students have good access to computers for research and to word process their work. NVQ catering students are able to check their underpinning knowledge with interactive software. Students use digital cameras effectively to provide portfolio evidence of their practical work.

80. For full-time students, initial assessment is used well to plan their learning. Students have individual learning plans and these are updated regularly. However, on sport courses, monitoring and recording of students' progress are poor. Most assignment briefs are interesting, vocationally relevant and have clear assessment criteria. Most students' work is marked and returned promptly with constructive comments. Teachers do not always correct spelling and grammar. Assessment practice for part-time catering students is poor. Students are inappropriately assessed in a training kitchen preparing small amounts of food. Apprentices have not been assessed in their workplace for nearly nine months. There are good links with industry and employers. Catering students benefit from well-planned industrial experience which is assessed as part of their learning programme.

81. The college offers a wide range of courses in catering, travel and tourism, and sport. However, there are some gaps in the provision in sport and travel. There are no entry level or level 1 courses, vocational routes, part-time or evening classes. The college has successfully established male and female football academies.

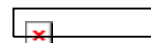
82. Students receive good personal and learning support. Teachers have high expectations of their students. In practical and theory lessons, learning support tutors provide a high level of literacy and

numeracy support to students who need it. They also help students interpret terminology related to their vocational area. Effective arrangements are in place to identify and support students at risk of not completing their course.

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

83. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear focus in subject and departmental team meetings on improvement targets for attendance, retention and pass rates. Course teams meet regularly. The self-assessment process is honest, but descriptive and lacking in analysis. Poor planning on craft catering courses hinders the more able students from completing their qualification before the target date and progressing to the next level of study. There is no clear strategy to increase participation from under-represented groups.

### **Health, social care and public services**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
- much good teaching
- good progression rates to further study and employment
- good personal and academic support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention rates on level 3 courses
- poorly managed group work.

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

84. The college offers a broad range of full-time health, childcare and public services courses. These include GNVQ foundation and intermediate in health and social care, national diplomas in early years and health studies, and first and national diploma in public services. Council for Awards in

Children's Care and Education (CACHE) childcare and education programmes are offered at foundation, certificate and diploma levels. Most of the 419 full-time students are aged 16 to 18. There are nearly 1,000 adults enrolled on part-time courses in childminding, counselling, first aid, dental nursing, and health and safety. An NVQ level 3 in early years care and education is offered to those in employment. Health and social care courses are offered in Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth.

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

85. Pass rates are high on most courses. Overall, pass rates show an improving trend and in 2003 many were above the national averages. Between 2001 and 2003, the pass rate on the first aid at work course rose significantly and in 2003 some 96% of those enrolled achieved the qualification. The retention rate on level 3 courses is unsatisfactory. Over the three years from 2001, it has been persistently below the national average. The average attendance at lessons observed is good at 85%.

86. The standard of students' work is mostly good. Childcare and health and social care students link theory to workplace practices effectively. In a childcare and education lesson on behaviour management, students used examples from their workplace to identify good and poor practice. Progression to further study or employment is good. Annually, about 75% of students who achieve the national diploma in health studies progress to HE. About the same proportion of students on the CACHE certificate progress to the diploma course. Public services students develop good team working skills.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
First aid at work short course	1	No. of starts	83	494	446
		% retention	95	100	100
		% pass rate	57	91	96
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	**	15	16
		% retention	**	87	75
		% pass rate	**	85	92
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	24	24	**
		% retention	83	75	**
		% pass rate	90	67	**
NVQ care	2	No. of starts	35	32	17
		% retention	60	59	59
		% pass rate	62	100	80
NVQ early years care and education	3	No. of starts	**	28	24
		% retention	**	14	29
		% pass rate	**	75	57
National diploma in public services	3	No. of starts	*	19	21
		% retention	*	53	52
		% pass rate	*	80	73
CACHE diploma in childcare and education and precursor	3	No. of starts	35	**	39
		% retention	69	**	41
		% pass rate	82	**	94

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

\* course not running

\*\*fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

87. There is much good teaching. Lessons are well planned and purposeful with clear aims and objectives which are shared with students. Teachers successfully use case studies, role plays, visits and visiting speakers to motivate students. In the better lessons, teachers identify students' preferred learning styles and adapt their teaching methods appropriately. Teachers involve students in relevant activities which develop their practical skills as well as their knowledge of theory. In an early years lesson, students enjoyed writing a short poem to improve their skills to enable them to help children understand rhyme and sound. In a public services lesson on human rights, a topical news item on alleged prisoner abuse was effectively linked to human rights legislation. In lessons, group work is not always managed effectively and the development of students' skills of communication and collaborative working are hindered. Students' experiences from work or work placement are shared effectively. In a health and social care lesson, intermediate students fully explored the influence of care values on codes of practice from their workplace. Adult students share their personal and professional experiences to develop their understanding and enrich the learning experience.

88. Teachers are well qualified vocationally and all have or are working towards a teaching qualification. Some have recent and relevant industrial experience and use good examples from this to enliven students' learning. Accommodation is good. Specialist practical rooms for care, childcare and counselling are well equipped. There is an adequate supply of consumables for practical work and high-quality learning materials. The library is well stocked with an appropriate range of books, journals and other resource material. Students have good access to computers outside of lessons.

89. Assessment is fair and regular. Students' work is marked and annotated with helpful comments to help students to improve. However, spelling, punctuation and grammar are not always corrected on written work or on wall displays. This is important as students work with children. In lessons, teachers use question and answer techniques effectively to check students' understanding.

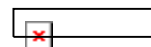
90. Links with employers and other partners are good. The curriculum area has well-established links with the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and a range of schools, crèches, and playgroups. Productive links have been established with local hospitals and Partners in Care which co-ordinates NVQs in Shropshire. New courses have been introduced which respond to local needs.

91. Guidance and support for students are good. The induction programme enables students to settle into their course quickly. There are effective arrangements to support work-based learners. Initial assessment quickly identifies students requiring additional support. Results are discussed with students and learning mentors are used effectively to assist with study skills. Students' personal and academic targets are set and carefully monitored in one-to-one sessions with tutors. Students' progress is carefully monitored. Absences are promptly followed-up. There are regular parents' evenings which keep them well informed of students' progress. Careers advice is good and includes contributions from employers and local universities.

### **Leadership and management**

92. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication across the curriculum area is good. Continuing professional development is encouraged. There are strategies in place to improve retention and pass rates. Quality assurance focuses on raising standards of teaching and learning. All course teams contribute to the self-assessment report and it is broadly accurate. Actions to bring about improvement are identified and progress reviewed at regular intervals. Equality of opportunity is an integral part of the ethos of the care and childcare sector and is well promoted in lessons and on wall displays.

## Visual and performing arts and media



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

### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
- good standard of practical work
- much well-planned and stimulating teaching
- effective curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- declining retention and pass rates on foundation art and design
- poor standard of some written work
- some inadequate accommodation for art and design and dance.

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

93. The college offers a broad range of full-time and part-time courses in visual and performing arts and media. Full-time courses include introductory diplomas in art and media and performing arts and first diplomas in design, media and performing arts. National diplomas are available in fine art, multimedia and performing arts (acting and dance). The college has a well-established, pre-degree diploma in foundation studies in art and design. Part-time courses are available in photography, creative studies and art and crafts both in the college and in the community. At the time of the inspection, there were 288 students on full-time courses and approximately 723 adults studying part time.

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



94. Pass rates are high on most courses. In 2002 and 2003, pass rates on the first diploma performing arts and the national diplomas in dance and design were well above the national averages. Between 2002 and 2003, the pass rate on City and Guilds photography rose significantly to well above the national average. Retention rates are low on the national diploma dance. Over the three years from 2001, the retention and pass rate on the pre-degree diploma in foundation studies show a declining trend. Average attendance at lessons observed is high at 86%.

95. Much practical work in art and design is of a high standard. Students have good technical skills and can express themselves using a wide range of media. This enables them to develop individual ideas and to discover their individual strengths. Sketchbooks are highly creative and experimental, often containing perceptive self-critical comment. Performing arts practical work is also good. Students are enthusiastic and talented, many showing flair and originality in their performances. Students frequently exchange creative ideas and engage each other in critical debate. Overall, much of the written work of students is no more than satisfactory. It often lacks structure and contains significant grammatical and spelling errors. In one multimedia web design project, the design work was interesting, but the written evaluation was poor and lacked clarity and understanding. There was little appreciation of the importance of, or the relationship between, written and visual communication.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
First diploma performing arts	2	No. of starts	27	20	17
		% retention	70	90	88
		% pass rate	84	94	87
City and Guilds photography	2	No. of starts	41	89	39
		% retention	68	64	74
		% pass rate	89	40	90
National diploma dance	3	No. of starts	72	50	22
		% retention	64	56	59
		% pass rate	80	93	100
National diploma design	3	No. of starts	17	37	21
		% retention	82	62	67
		% pass rate	100	100	93
National diploma drama	3	No. of starts	72	37	43
		% retention	64	49	70
		% pass rate	80	89	77
Foundation diploma art and design	3	No. of starts	53	54	56
		% retention	87	91	82
		% pass rate	96	94	87

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

***Quality of education and training***

96. Much of the teaching is good or very good. In the best lessons, teachers use a variety of techniques to challenge and inspire students to develop ideas and to encourage them to think for themselves. Lessons are well planned and students enjoy them. Most lessons include a good variety of activities to stretch the more able students and encourage those who need more help with their

work. In one dance lesson, students worked on their own and in small groups to support each other in developing movement and dance techniques. The teacher was sensitive to individual needs and the less able students made good progress as their confidence grew. In a fine art lesson, a student explored the idea of self-identity through textiles. The resulting work was thought provoking, exquisitely crafted and demonstrated high professional standards. In a national diploma acting lesson, students created and produced a series of performances which successfully addressed technical issues of voice production. In a minority of lessons, teachers talk for too long and students' learning is not monitored or checked.

97. Improvements have been made to specialist facilities since the last inspection. In visual arts, there are well-lit studios and good darkroom facilities. Students on the national diploma in fine art have their own base room which enables them to be creative and experimental in producing work of varying size and scale. Some of the drawing areas are too small. In one life drawing lesson, students did not have enough space for their easels and they were unable to see the model properly. The resulting drawings lacked technical accuracy. The textiles room is also cramped. The IT suite contains a good range of industry-standard specialist software. In performing arts, the dance floor is not sprung and this hampers the development of students' skills. In one lesson, the teacher had to avoid using techniques including leaps and jumps because of health and safety concerns. Studios are light and airy, but there is no sound proofing or lighting system.

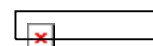
98. Assessment of practical work is good. Students are given clear guidance on what they need to do to achieve high grades. Most practical work is accurately marked and students receive detailed and constructive comments to help them improve. However, some of the marking of students' written work is ineffective and gives insufficient guidance to students.

99. Overall, support for students is good. There are good arrangements for students who need help with their literacy and numeracy. Tutorial support is generally effective. Students value the support they receive. Careers guidance is good. In lessons, effective use is made of learning mentors to support students. For example, in an introductory diploma performing arts lesson, students with specific learning difficulties made considerable progress in learning how to use Internet search engines and research careers. There is good support for visually impaired students and those with other disabilities.

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

100. Leadership and management are good. There is a strong commitment to improve the quality of the provision. Retention and pass rate data are carefully analysed and realistic targets are set for improvement. Communication across the curriculum area is strong. Teaching teams meet regularly and take prompt action to address any issues. Self-assessment is sound and is realistic in the assessment of the quality of the provision. Action plans are closely monitored. There is good support for new staff. Equal opportunities are actively promoted.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good achievement of adults on literacy and numeracy courses
- much good teaching

- effective use of volunteer tutors
- effective cross college literacy and numeracy support
- wide range of community links and partnerships
- well-managed provision.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention and pass rates on general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) mathematics
- inconsistent use of individual learning plans
- inadequate ILT in community venues.

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

101. The college offers a wide range of part-time literacy and numeracy courses for adults under the title 'Second Chance'. There is extensive provision at community venues and a smaller number of courses provided on main college sites. Links with the community and organizations such as the probation service are effective. Courses are offered in libraries, residential homes for the elderly and for adults with mental illness, a drug rehabilitation centre, and a hospital. The college works in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau and provides courses such as 'Money Matters'. There are nearly 400 students on part-time courses and about the same number of students receiving literacy, numeracy or dyslexia support within their main programme of study. About 1,000 students are working towards key skills in application of number and communication. Some 19 students are enrolled on GCSE mathematics and 39 on GCSE English.

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

102. The achievement of most students is good. Adults on part-time literacy and numeracy courses make good progress and most achieve their individual learning goals. In 2003, the pass rates on level 1 and level 2 communication and application of number key skill courses were in line with or above the national averages. Retention rates on most courses are satisfactory. However, the retention rate is poor in GCSE mathematics and in 2002/03 it was well below the national average. The national qualifications in literacy and numeracy are used effectively and increasing numbers of

students are entering for the examinations at entry level, and levels 1 and 2. Attendance is slightly below the national average at 73%. Progression routes for students on literacy and numeracy courses are not well planned.

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

103. There is much good teaching and learning. Some teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons and GCSE English is very good. Most lessons are effectively planned to meet individual student needs. In the best lessons, teachers use stimulating learning materials, engage students' interest and develop their skills. Many of the lessons for adults are workshops where students work individually with volunteer tutors on well-planned activities. In one lesson, students were fully engaged in a variety of relevant tasks such as reading out loud, working on spelling exercises on a computer and revising for numeracy tests. In a GCSE English lesson, students developed their ability to recognise and use persuasive language by analysing sophisticated examples of advertisements. They then viewed Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech on video and finally analysed the text of a speech by President Bush following the events of 11 September 2001. In a literacy and numeracy lesson for students with learning difficulties, the teacher used a digital camera effectively to record the progress of non-verbal students.

104. Teachers and learning support tutors are appropriately qualified. Volunteer tutors have undertaken relevant training. The accommodation and resources for the curriculum area are poor. Too many classrooms are cramped for the number of students using them and this limits the range of teaching and learning activities that can be used. In classrooms, ILT facilities are inadequate and there is no Internet access in most rooms used by adults.

105. The initial assessment and diagnosis of students' skills is good. Students on literacy and numeracy courses are encouraged to take the national qualifications. All students have individual learning plans and in many lessons these are used well. However, there is a lack of consistency in the use of these plans by tutors. In some plans, the targets set for students are too general and are insufficiently broken down into short-term goals for students to work towards. Plans often relate to activities rather than the development of skills.

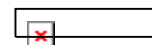
106. The range of literacy and numeracy courses is good. Students are able to study literacy and numeracy from entry level to level 2. Provision is offered at the college and at a large number of community venues, often in rural locations. Literacy and numeracy courses are provided at two employers' premises and this area of the college's work is expanding. Careful consideration is given to ensure that courses are offered at a time and place which meets the needs of individuals in the local community.

107. Overall, support for students is good. Students speak highly about the support they receive from their tutors. The college has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the last inspection in May 2002. Learning support tutors, based in each department, work closely with vocational teachers to provide students with the help that they need. Support in literacy and numeracy is provided in the classroom, to small groups or individually to students. Much of the learning support material is well designed and vocationally related to enable students to develop and practice their skills. The progress of students receiving literacy, numeracy and dyslexia support is carefully monitored. Pass rate data is analysed to measure the effectiveness of the support that students receive.

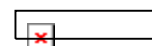
### ***Leadership and management***

108. Leadership and management are good. The quality of the provision has improved since the last inspection. Self-assessment is self-critical and evaluative. The outcomes from lesson observations are thoroughly analysed and help inform improvements to classroom practice. Appropriate strategies have been put in place to improve the low pass rates in key skills. There is careful attention to equality of opportunity and there is good support for students with a learning difficulty and/or disability. Whilst operational management of the area is strong, strategic planning for the future development of literacy and numeracy provision in the college is weak.

## Part D: College data



**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2002/03**



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	30	55
2	48	23
3	20	13
4/5	0	2
Other	2	7
Total	100	100

*Source: provided by the college in summer 2004*

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2002/03**



Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	611	450	6
Land-based provision	5	56	0
Construction	269	229	3
Engineering, technology and manufacture	235	361	3
Business administration, management and professional	471	1,199	9
Information and communication technology	660	2,056	14
Retailing, customer service and transportation	115	1,270	7
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	550	1,184	9
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	347	550	5
Health, social care and public services	546	1,750	12
Visual and performing arts and media	384	720	6

Humanities	31	374	2
English, languages and communication	624	656	7
Foundation programmes	910	453	7
Unknown area of learning	523	1,538	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,281</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in summer 2004

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	2,095	760	588	1,701	1,853	1,719
	Retention rate %	85	80	74	80	66	75
	National average %	76	75	76	73	69	70
	Pass rate %	70	71	87	70	75	81
	National average %	65	69	71	66	68	71
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1,420	1,459	1,166	1,616	1,686	1,739
	Retention rate %	74	69	72	72	70	67
	National average %	72	70	72	70	68	68
	Pass rate %	67	74	70	71	70	73
	National average %	67	69	71	64	68	72
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	777	850	855	1,563	1,419	1,595
	Retention rate %	68	71	66	68	62	60
	National average %	67	71	77	69	68	70
	Pass rate %	81	75	79	60	69	72
	National average %	75	77	79	66	69	72
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	18	*	*	383	266	271
	Retention rate %	56	*	*	53	76	74
	National average %	66	73	71	67	67	67
	Pass rate %	40	*	*	59	61	58
	National average %	65	54	53	58	55	56

*Note: summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared 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.*

*\*fewer than 15 students enrolled*

**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)	65	31	4	66
Level 2 (intermediate)	59	39	2	46
Level 1 (foundation)	77	23	0	30
Other sessions	65	29	6	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>159</b>