



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



## Burnley College

### CONTENTS

---

#### [Basic information about the college](#)

#### [Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

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

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

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

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

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

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

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

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

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

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Construction](#)

[Engineering](#)

[Business](#)

[Information and communications technology](#)

[Sport, leisure and tourism](#)

[Health, social and childcare](#)

[Visual and performing arts and media](#)

[Humanities](#)

[Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages](#)

[Entry to employment](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2003/04](#)

[Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2003/04](#)

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

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

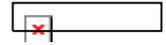
**Basic information about the college**



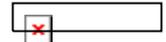
---

Name of college:	Burnley College
Type of college:	General further education/tertiary
Principal:	John Smith
Address of college:	Ormerod Road Burnley BB11 2RX
Telephone number:	01282 711200
Fax number:	01282 415063
Chair of governors:	Shelagh Derwent
Unique reference number:	130735
Name of reporting inspector:	Robin Goddard HMI
Dates of inspection:	15-19 November 2004

## Part A: Summary



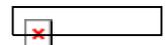
### Information about the college



Burnley, with a population of around 90,000, is located in East Lancashire. It is an area of significant social and economic deprivation. The town shares many characteristics of deprived inner city areas and receives substantial national government and European regeneration funding. A large proportion of the local population has poor literacy or numeracy. According to data from the National Office of Statistics, the unemployment claimant count percentage of the population for Burnley is around 2% compared with 3% nationally. Only around 20% of employment is in managerial and professional occupations compared with 27% nationally whilst around 28% of employees are in skilled trades or work as machine operatives compared with 20% nationally. Some 30% of all employment is in the manufacturing sector. 2001 census data show that the local population includes 5% from a Pakistani ethnic background and 2% from a Bangladeshi background.

Burnley College is a medium-sized general further education (FE) college located close to Burnley town centre. It offers a very diverse range of courses for young people and adults in 11 of the 14 areas of learning. During 2002/03, there were 8,703 students at the college, of whom 80% were aged over 19. Around 30% of the college's overall work is with full-time students aged 16 to 19. The college is the largest provider for 16 to 18 year olds in the borough. It is also the only substantial provider of full-time courses below level 3. This is particularly significant in light of the relatively small proportion locally of young people gaining five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above - around 41%. The college is the main provider of work-based learning in the area. It also offers higher education (HE) courses, and short courses to meet the needs of the local community and industry. In 2003, around 9% of students at the college were from minority ethnic groups compared with 8% in the local population. Some 55% of students were female. The college's mission is 'to assured comprehensive lifelong education and training to excellent standards'.

### How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the college to be outstanding in information and communications technology (ICT), good in eight curriculum areas and satisfactory in two. Inspectors also judged the provision in English and modern foreign languages to be satisfactory and awarded a contributory grade. Work-based learning was awarded a contributory grade of good in business and care, and satisfactory in construction. The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

#### **Key strengths**

- strong leadership of the college
  
  
- good curriculum management

- good and improving quality of teaching
- high rates of success for students
- good progression paths through the curriculum
- good monitoring of students' work and progress
- very good student support
- good partnership working with the local community
- strong focus on promoting social and educational inclusiveness
- welcoming, secure and calm learning environment.

***What should be improved***

- the quality of much accommodation
- the size of classes on some programmes
- use of learning activities to match individual needs
- internal verification of assessment
- promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum.

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

## Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are some high pass rates, but students at advanced level often do not achieve the grades which would be expected. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, but many lessons lack pace or variety. Staff qualifications and specialist facilities are good. The monitoring of students' progress and the availability of additional support are good.
Construction	<b>Good.</b> Contributory grade for work-based learning is <b>satisfactory</b> . Retention and pass rates have been consistently high on most courses. Theory teaching is good and lessons make good links with the industrial context. There is good support for college-based students and work-based learners, but on-site assessment in work-based learning is too infrequent. The plumbing and bricklaying workshops are not adequate to meet the needs of students.
Engineering	<b>Good.</b> There are high retention and pass rates. Teaching meets the individual needs of students and makes good use of teachers' industrial experience. Specialist resources and accommodation are good. However, there is a lack of practical work for full-time students either within the college or in industry.
Business	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Contributory grade for work-based learning is <b>good</b> . Pass rates are high on most courses. Teachers use a wide range of learning activities, but some students are not challenged sufficiently. Work-based learners are well matched to their job roles. Internal verification of assessment decisions is not sufficiently timely and rigorous.
Information and communications technology	<b>Outstanding.</b> A very large proportion of students complete their courses successfully and many students achieve high grades. Much very good teaching inspires students who achieve high standards. Support for students is excellent and is focused on enabling students to reach their full potential. Outstanding curriculum leadership has helped to develop very strong teamwork.
Sport, leisure and tourism	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates on most courses are very high. Most teaching is good or better, but some activities are not designed to cater for the needs or interests of all students. Some classroom accommodation is inadequate and this disrupts learning. The area is well managed and students are involved well in quality assurance arrangements.
Health, social and	<b>Good.</b> Contributory grade for work-based learning is <b>good</b> . Retention

childcare	and pass rates in care and early years are very high and they are high in work-based learning. There is much very good teaching built on a careful analysis of students' individual needs although equality and diversity is not promoted sufficiently in the curriculum. The college has recently been awarded centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) status in care. Leadership and management of the curriculum area are very good.
Visual and performing arts and media	<b>Good.</b> There are high pass rates on full-time courses. Teaching and lesson planning are good, and there is rigorous feedback and monitoring of students' work. The tutorial system is effective and student support is good. Resources and accommodation are poor and there is insufficient display and celebration of students' work throughout the college.
Humanities	<b>Good.</b> Contributory grade for English and modern foreign languages is <b>satisfactory</b> . Pass rates are high, particularly on humanities courses, but too few students complete courses at level 2. Teaching is generally good or better, but in English and modern foreign languages, some is not planned sufficiently. There is very good academic and personal support for students. Management of modern foreign language provision is unsatisfactory.
Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates are high with most learning goals being achieved. Teaching is good or better in most lessons and carefully addresses individual needs and promotes equality of opportunity. Community development initiatives have been used well to make the provision inclusive. There remains insufficient provision above entry level.
Entry to employment	<b>Good.</b> There are high rates of achievement and progression. There is effective programme management, and the provision is flexible and responsive to learners' needs. Personal support for learners is very good. Some learning activities do not meet the needs of all learners.

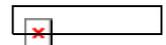
### How well is the college led and managed?

Leadership and management are good. The college has improved retention rates and maintained pass rates at a very high level. Through well-focused development activities it has reduced the amount of unsatisfactory teaching and improved teaching overall. The governors oversee effectively the strategic direction of the college and annual goals give priority to teaching and learning. They regularly monitor results and the outcome of lesson observations. Governors and managers have promoted social and educational inclusion successfully. Strong, clear leadership is provided by the principal and communication with staff is good. Curriculum management is good in many parts of the college and satisfactory elsewhere. Quality assurance is managed well and self-assessment is very accurate. Equality of opportunity has been promoted well in many areas of the curriculum. The college is in a healthy financial position and provides good value for money.

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

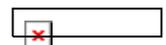
inclusiveness and equality of opportunity are central to its work. A wide range of provision is responsive to meeting community needs. The college is making a major contribution to raise the aspirations of young people and adults with low levels of educational achievement. Very good additional learning support services contribute to the success of many students. Literacy and numeracy provision is good. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups reflects the Burnley population well. The college monitors thoroughly the experiences of students of different gender and ethnic background. It has established a secure and welcoming environment where neither bullying nor harassment are tolerated. The college has responded appropriately to the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) legislation.

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



Student support and guidance are very good. Many aspects of the support provided are outstanding. The college uses a wide range of media, locations and events to promote the college well in local communities. Impartial advice and information is readily available to prospective students. Learning support is very effective in helping students succeed. Support needs are identified early and provided promptly. Support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities throughout the college is strong. Tutorials are generally good, but some are uninspiring. Students are set challenging target grades which help to improve motivation. Their progress is monitored systematically. There are effective arrangements to ensure high levels of attendance. The college provides a comprehensive range of guidance and welfare services including counselling, childcare support, and financial assistance. Careers advice and guidance are good. Security staff contribute well to a calm and secure environment.

### **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***

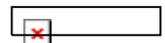
- good course and practical advice prior to and during enrolment
  
- very strong student support
  
- wide range of courses
  
- good teaching

- secure and welcoming environment
  
- being treated as an adult
  
- good canteen
  
- good careers and HE guidance.

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

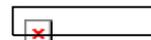
- limited parking space
  
- canteen prices too high
  
- information technology (IT) facilities in some subjects
  
- some accommodation is cramped.

**Other information**



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

**Part B: The college as a whole**



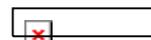
## Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	74	22	4
19+ and WBL*	64	29	7
Learning 16-18	71	23	6
19+ and WBL*	57	36	7

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. In 2003/04, around 1,360 students aged 16 to 18 and 350 adults were studying on full-time programmes. There are around 250 students aged 16 to 18 and 3,600 adults taking part-time courses at the college.

### 16 to 18 year olds

2. The combination of high pass rates with high rates of retention on most courses means that a very large proportion of students starting courses acquire the qualification they are aiming for in comparison with similar colleges. Pass rates on courses at level 1 have consistently been high and well above the national averages. Retention rates have remained at a level close to the national averages until 2004 when they rose significantly. At level 2, pass rates have also been consistently high. Retention rates have been improving steadily and are now high.

3. For advanced level courses, pass rates have consistently been in the top 10% of FE colleges. Data provided by the college suggest that, overall, students taking advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) and GCE advanced-level (A-level) subjects achieve higher grades than would be predicted by their GCSE grades. Over a three year period, those subjects which perform best in this respect include sociology, psychology and media studies. Mathematics and science subjects perform least well. Retention rates have also been high.

4. Retention and pass rates on work-based learning programmes are generally higher than national averages and, in many cases, they have showed sustained improvement since the last inspection. In health and social care, for example, retention and pass rates on apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship programmes improved in each of the three years up to 2003. In that year, the pass rate on care advanced apprenticeships was 76% compared to a national average of 30%. Apprenticeship programmes in business administration and construction have also showed sustained improvement. Since the last inspection, over 1,000 young people have been recruited on to the college's work-based learning programme. There is room for more improvement to be made.

Approximately 40% of work-based learners leave without gaining their full qualification.

### **Adult learners**

5. For adult students, there have been substantial improvements in retention rates over the last four year period. They are now well above national averages at all levels. Pass rates at level 1 are generally high, but have varied significantly in recent years; they are now around the national average. At levels 2 and 3, the pass rates have been consistently very high and remain so in 2004.

6. The college has a robust, but sensitive approach to attendance which is described as 'zero tolerance' of unexplained absences. The attendance rate during inspection week was 81% which is above the national average for FE colleges. Attendance on the first day of the inspection was adversely affected by the proximity of Eid celebrations. Attendance was highest at over 85% in humanities and care. It was below 75% in visual and performing arts and media and entry to employment (E2E).

7. Around 9% of students come from minority ethnic groups. Analysis of college achievement data for 2003 shows that for students aged 16 to 18 from minority ethnic groups the retention rates are generally higher than for the college as a whole. Pass rates are well above those for students from these groups nationally and are broadly in line with college rates. For adult students, the retention rates are broadly similar to those for all students. Pass rates are generally higher than for students from these minority ethnic groups nationally and similar to, or above, the rates for all adult students at the college.

8. Rates of progression are high both within the college and on to HE or employment. In care, an average of 78% of students progress between level 2 and level 3, 30% of advanced apprentices go on to HE and more than 90% of cadets progress to nurse training or related courses. In business, of the 29 students who achieved the advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) double award in 2004, 24 progressed to HE. Similarly, in ICT, 76% of those completing AVCE IT were accepted into university and the other 24% went into related employment. There are high progression rates from the E2E programme. In 2004, 49% of learners who started the programme progressed to FE, training or employment. This exceeded the local LSC target significantly.

9. The standard of much students' work is high. In ICT, students have won national awards. In the 2003 FE Skills Challenge, one student won a gold award for the website challenge and, in 2004, there were silver and bronze awards in the hardware and software challenge. In visual and performing arts, level 1 students produce high-quality computer graphics and photoshop work which is above the standard expected for this level. Carpentry and joinery students develop skills to high industrial standards cutting, jointing, and boring to produce components for framed, ledged and braced doors. In engineering, first year welding students demonstrate good techniques in soldering, brazing and fusion welding of materials into complex shapes. Work-based learners in both business and care develop personal skills and confidence which permits them to take on additional responsibilities. In literacy and numeracy, many students gain in confidence and self-esteem, and their achievements are having a strong effect on their lives.

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



10. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 180 sessions. Inspectors judged that teaching was good or better in 70% of lessons, satisfactory in 25% and less than satisfactory in 5%. This is a significantly better profile of grades than the average for general FE colleges nationally. Teaching was most effective in ICT, engineering, sports, leisure and tourism, visual and performing arts, and care. It was least effective in science and mathematics and E2E.

11. Teaching is significantly better in lessons primarily involving students aged 16 to 18. Some 74% of lessons were good or better, compared with 66% for adult students. There is a higher percentage of good or better lessons for level 3 courses, at 73%, and a lower percentage for courses at level 1 at only 60%. All teaching of courses at entry level was at least satisfactory and 83% was good or better. Around 77% of teaching on AS-level and GCE A-level courses was good or better. Teaching by full-time teachers tends to be better at 77% good or better than that by part-time teachers at 52%. Nearly 10% of lessons taught by part-time teachers were unsatisfactory.

12. Most teaching is planned well. The enthusiasm and energy of many teachers generates a high level of commitment from their students. Teachers across the college have high expectations and set high standards. Most teachers have a profile of the learning needs and preferred learning styles of their students. Some make good use of these and ensure that there is a variety of learning activities. In ICT, for example, in a general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate lesson, students who were critically evaluating a website in preparation for an assessment task were constantly asked to justify their opinions; in humanities, in a law lesson about sentencing, adult students took on the role of lay magistrates and weighed conflicting evidence before determining appropriate sentences; in engineering, exercises of differing levels of difficulty are used to challenge all students. In other lessons, however, teachers rely too much on whole class teaching without taking proper account of individual needs or checking that learning has been effective.

13. The teaching of theory in vocational subjects is good. In construction, theory and practice are integrated by referring to the building legislation, British Standards and Codes of Practice. Case studies from industry are used to illustrate key points. There is much good practical teaching. In media studies, practical film projects are imaginative and students produce eye-catching magazine layouts and high-quality short films. Where class sizes are small, the range of students' experience is narrow. In performing arts, this limits performances, group work and peer evaluation. In many areas, key skills are integrated effectively into the teaching of vocational subjects and are valued by students.

14. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. They have up-to-date subject and occupational knowledge that is used effectively to promote learning. A high ratio of support staff to teaching staff is used well in the classroom. Many part-time staff are current practitioners within the industry or profession. Difficulties arising from high staff turnover have affected the quality of provision in some curriculum areas, such as in engineering and construction.

15. Staff development is wide ranging. Curriculum managers are able to draw on the development opportunities best suited to meeting the needs of their teams. Staff training is linked well to the college's strategic targets and plans.

16. Good use is made of much ageing accommodation through a detailed programme of maintenance and adjustments. The design of existing buildings in the context of increasing student numbers is causing some cramped teaching conditions and unsuitable settings for teaching. For example, there are problems in visual and performing arts, and sport, leisure and tourism with noise and poor access. Construction workshops are poor, with insufficient space to meet awarding body requirements to teach and assess in separate areas. The college is aware of these limitations and is exploring options for relocation with the local LSC. Most areas of the college have access for students with restricted mobility. Adaptations to classrooms, workplaces and workshops enable students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities to study effectively. However, wheelchair users can not use the pottery rooms.

17. There is a spacious open access learning resource centre and electronic library which is well used by students. The book stock, periodicals, CD-ROMS, videotapes and audiotapes adequately support the study of all subjects. The college is implementing its IT strategy including a virtual learning environment. There is insufficient access to personal computers in some curriculum areas. An annual health and safety audit is carried out efficiently by college technicians, teaching staff and the estates manager, creating a safe working environment.

18. The quality of assessment is very thorough on most courses. Students' work is set regularly and is used well by teachers to determine what progress students are making. The college has detailed

guidelines on providing written feedback which are implemented consistently. For example, in media studies and humanities, work is marked rigorously to encourage students to set themselves high standards. Teachers explain carefully what is needed to make improvements. In ICT, formative assessment is used extensively to consolidate learning and monitor students' progress. In literacy and numeracy, assessment is effective in setting and monitoring progress towards realistic learning targets. However, in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) this is not so well developed. In most cases, students are well informed about assessment schedules so that they can take responsibility for managing their workload.

19. In work-based learning, the arrangements for assessment in the workplace vary in suitability. In care, there are very close links between college staff and workplace supervisors and assessors to plan and carry out assessments when they are required. This works very well in practice. In construction, however, there is insufficient on-site assessment. The internal verification of assessment decisions, particularly for national vocational qualifications (NVQs) is not undertaken consistently across the college. There are shortcomings in the availability of suitably qualified assessors and verifiers, the promptness of action to verify assessment decisions, and the tracking of verification activities.

20. There is a good range of provision in most curriculum areas allowing progression from foundation to advanced level and beyond. A partnership with the University of Central Lancashire enables the college to offer HE courses including foundation degrees in a number of areas. In May 2004, Burnley College was awarded a CoVE in care skills for the community. Work-based learning accounts for 10% of the college's work and responds well to the needs of local employers. Key skills are well managed and planned across the curriculum. Key skills provision is effectively organised and co-ordinated within teaching areas by key skills specialists. Generally, key skills are integrated well within other assignments. Study programmes for full-time students offer a variety of additional qualifications, including first aid, aromatherapy, personal safety and wider key skills.

21. Equality of access to the curriculum is promoted through close working with voluntary and community organisations to provide a wide variety of steps back into learning for adults. These include asylum seekers and refugees. Around 300 14 to 16 year olds take part in vocational courses offered by the college. Many continue as full-time students at the college. Around 20 disaffected and excluded pupils also attend full time.

22. Support and guidance for students are very good. Marketing and advisory services use a broad range of media, locations and events to promote the college within the community. Community development officers and two drop-in college shops are used effectively to promote learning opportunities to non-traditional users of post-16 education. The college has achieved the matrix standard for advice and guidance through the Guidance Accreditation Board. There are good links with local secondary schools. College staff regularly attend school options and parents' evenings. There are well-attended college open days and other events for potential students. High-quality promotional literature is produced for a wide range of audiences including some in community languages. The college's profile is also raised by its work with 14 to 16 year olds.

23. The management and provision of learning support are excellent. There are thorough diagnostic assessments for literacy and numeracy for full-time students as well as many part-time adult students. Individual support needs are identified early and support is organised promptly. The college has increased the number of inclusive learning advisors to provide individual and whole class support across the curriculum. Support provided in the classroom is extremely effective. This extends the range of opportunities for many students including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students who receive additional support do better than full-time students as a whole. The retention rate for students receiving additional learning support is 90% and the pass rate is 92%. There is more limited access to support for some part-time and community-based students. Support for the development of language skills also remains underdeveloped.

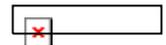
24. Tutorials on full-time courses are good. Most are planned carefully and well attended. Some, and particularly those group sessions designed to develop study skills and practices, are uninspiring. Individual tutorials to review progress are very effective. Students are set motivational target grades and performance against them is monitored systematically. There are good communications

between personal tutors and course tutors. A large proportion of students achieve a grade at, or above, their target. Parents of students aged 16 to 18 receive regular feedback through parents' evenings and individual students' reports. The college's strict attendance and punctuality standards and procedures are widely understood by staff and thoroughly applied. Security staff contribute very effectively to establishing a calm and secure environment.

25. The college provides a comprehensive range of guidance and welfare services including counselling, childcare support, financial assistance and welfare advice. They are highly effective, valued by students and address increasing needs. Around 50% of students aged 16 to 18 are in receipt of educational maintenance awards (EMAs). The awards programme is well managed and focuses successfully on improving attendance. Careers advice and guidance are good. The college careers staff work closely with Connexions personal advisers. A large proportion of students progress to other courses and increasing numbers go on to HE.

26. The college has taken steps to discharge its responsibilities on child protection. A senior member of staff has responsibility for child protection issues and liaises with the local Area Child Protection Committee. The college has established procedures for handling suspected cases of abuse of pupils or students. However, a revised child protection policy to address recent legislation has not yet been approved by the corporation nor have governors received the appropriate training.

## Leadership and management



27. Leadership and management are good. The college has addressed the issues identified in the last inspection report concerning retention and pass rates and there has been sustained improvement over the last four years. The college enables a large proportion of its students aged 16 to 18 to succeed on their courses. Retention rates for these students are now in line with national averages for similar colleges. Pass rates for those students completing the course are generally very high and many are in the top 10% of FE colleges. For adult students, both the retention and pass rates are consistently in line with, or above, those achieved in other FE colleges.

28. The principal provides strong leadership to staff and students in his commitment to an inclusive and equitable college and in focusing on the importance of raising students' achievements. He is well supported by a senior management team with responsibilities for curriculum, client services, corporate services, and finance. The deputy principal oversees an academic structure based on divisional heads supported by curriculum managers. In response to the developing educational agenda, a senior manager now leads 14 to 19 education. Curriculum management is effective. It is good in around half the curriculum areas inspected and outstanding in ICT. Managers have been supported well by a training programme, Managing Excellence, which has been instrumental in fostering a good team ethos and in producing a management charter to guide good management practice. Management information has improved significantly since the last inspection. As a result of extensive consultation, agreement was reached on a range of standard reports to support both managers and lecturers. These are now available online and have proved to be an effective aid in improving attendance and other areas of performance. A weekly meeting of a users' group ensures constant development and improvement.

29. The governors work closely with senior managers in setting the strategic direction of the college. They hold two special meetings a year to consider in-depth strategic and annual goals. These goals are specific and measurable, and focus primarily on elements of teaching and learning and success rates. This has resulted, for example, in their decision to initiate a major accommodation review to take account of growing student numbers and changing learning needs. Progress in implementing plans is monitored at every meeting. Governors have a good understanding of college standards and academic performance. A curriculum and standards committee receives detailed reports from managers on results and other issues concerned with teaching and learning such as the results of classroom observations. Two governors participate regularly in academic board discussions.

30. Communication with staff is good. In addition to a regular newsletter, the principal briefs staff three times a year on progress on college goals and regularly attends divisional meetings. There is a strong culture of consultation exemplified by academic board meetings that are structured to allow in-depth discussions. A college charter, launched in January 2004, identifies key values for both academic and support staff, and is being implemented through action plans agreed at team meetings.

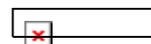
31. Staff development is based on needs identified through self-assessment, appraisal, and the strategic plan. It has been central in assisting the college to make progress towards its strategic objectives. A key element in the programme is 'Skills for Excellence' through which teachers identify priority topics, such as classroom management, and supportive training is organised. Staff attending these sessions are required to brief their colleagues on key points relevant to their curriculum area. Additional training is offered to enable staff to obtain relevant qualifications. Part-time staff are given the opportunity to participate in these arrangements. The need for a flexible programme to take account of their special needs is now being addressed. Support for part-time staff in curriculum areas is not consistent across the college. An enhanced programme of training for support staff, 'Support for Excellence', has been initiated this year.

32. Quality assurance has played a key role in enabling the college to maintain and raise standards. Quality policies are reviewed systematically and course teams have to demonstrate their adherence to these in their quality file. There is clear guidance on the self-assessment process, which requires teams to respond to the key questions in the inspection framework. Some parts of the self-assessment report contain judgements which are not sufficiently evaluative of performance. Targets are well understood and used to inform judgements on progress. The classroom observation scheme to support improvements in learning has been strengthened in the last two years by the involvement of external advisers. Lesson observations and subsequent responses have been helpful in reducing significantly the percentage of unsatisfactory teaching. In several curriculum areas, there are unsatisfactory arrangements for the internal verification of assessment decision, particularly for NVQ qualifications.

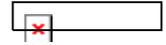
33. The college has given high priority to promoting equal opportunities. A key strategic objective concerned with extending the college's contribution to social inclusion has been pursued vigorously. Priorities have included an extensive 14 to 16 programme with local schools and the extension of community-based education, training and advice. In an area where the local population includes a significant minority ethnic population of around 8%, the college recruited 9% of minority ethnic students in 2003/04. The equal opportunities policy has been revised to take account of the requirements of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and SENDA legislation. Progress has been reviewed annually resulting, for example, in an increase in the retention rates of Bangladeshi students from 60% in 2000/01 to 85% in 2002/03. There is close contact with local organisations and the college has organised for several years Islamic awareness events supported by local community leaders and attended by school pupils. Inspectors found limited examples of curriculum materials designed to promote equal opportunities. Some progress has been made in improving access for those who have physical disabilities, but wheelchair users are unable to use the pottery workshops. The college is aware of the need to recruit more staff from minority ethnic groups.

34. Financial management of the college is good. The college has maintained a strong financial position and is using its reserves to improve the learning environment. The deployment of resources is efficient. Costs are kept continually under review particularly through the use of benchmarking data. In light of the high quality of teaching and high rates of success for students, the college provides good value for money.

## **Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas**



## Science and mathematics



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

### **Strengths**

- high pass rates on many courses
- specialist staff in all subject areas
- good support and monitoring of students' progress.

### **Weaknesses**

- low numbers completing GCE A levels in science and mathematics
- poor progress made by students on level 3 science and mathematics courses
- low-quality learning materials in some lessons.

### **Scope of provision**

35. Most provision is at levels 2 and 3. Some 152 level 2 students, the majority aged 16 to 18, are enrolled on GCSE mathematics courses with 19 taking GCSE human physiology and health or GCSE science. An Open College Network (OCN) introduction to human physiology course is taken by 11 adults. At level 3, there are 86 students taking AS-level mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics and environmental science. Some 28 adult students are taking level 3 OCN courses in human physiology and mathematics. Some 30 students are enrolled on GCE A2 science and mathematics courses. An applied science GCSE course is taught in a local school by college staff.

### **Achievement and standards**

36. Pass rates are high on some courses. In GCSE mathematics, the percentage of students achieving grades A\* to C has consistently been higher than the national average. On science and mathematics GCE A-level and AS-level courses, students have made poor progress. Where students pass, they frequently attain lower grades than those predicted from their entry qualifications. Strategies to address this have begun to have a positive impact. For example, in 2003, the AS-level mathematics results were, on average, almost two grades lower for each student than those predicted. However, in 2004, the results were, on average, nearly one grade higher than

predicted. There have been similar, but more modest improvements in AS-level biology and chemistry. Pass rates in GCSE mathematics have been high, although retention rates on this course have declined to below national averages. In GCSE human physiology and health, retention and pass rates have declined and are now low. There have been declining enrolments in GCE A-level subjects with small classes in most subjects. The college has taken steps to address this.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2002 to 2004***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
GCSE human physiology and health	2	No. of starts	17	21	24
		% retention	71	86	54
		% pass rate	67	39	31
OCN human physiology	2	No. of starts	15	30	18
		% retention	80	70	83
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	161	136	129
		% retention	68	65	64
		% pass rate	68	53	70
AS-level science subjects	3	No. of starts	64	37	37
		% retention	95	73	81
		% pass rate	82	56	70
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	48	29	23
		% retention	81	86	74
		% pass rate	59	44	88
GCE A2 science subjects	3	No. of starts	31	34	*
		% retention	85	85	*
		% pass rate	100	93	*

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

37. Most teaching is satisfactory or good. The best lessons are well planned and delivered with great enthusiasm. Students are thoroughly engrossed. For example, in a lesson on energy efficiency in agricultural systems, good use was made of a video clip on pig farming to promote debate about scientific and ethical issues. However, too many lessons lack pace or a variety of learning activities. Many lessons are almost exclusively teacher centred, often moving through the material without checking properly on whether learning has been effective. Teachers have profiles of each student's achievement and preferred learning style. Some make good use of them in planning lessons, but others do not. For level 3 courses, each teacher keeps records of target grades for each student. Some use this information well as part of the assessment process. There is inconsistency in the quality of learning materials. No clear standards are set by managers. Some low-quality hand written materials are used. Whilst some good use is made of information and learning technology (ILT), this is not yet part of common practice.

38. The laboratories and mathematics classrooms are well designed and well equipped. Laboratories are used for both theory and practical sessions. Mathematics is taught frequently in a specialist base room. There is a dedicated computer suite of networked personal computers for

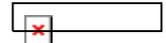
science and mathematics students. Good technician support is provided. Textbooks are generally provided for all full-time students and there is a wide range of suitable texts in the library.

39. Coursework and assignments are set and marked in line with college procedures. Students appreciate the prompt return of marked work and the usefulness of the comments made on how they can improve. Students at risk of underperforming are identified by subject teachers and this information is relayed to personal tutors. The personal tutors then provide continuing support. Personal tutors also receive weekly attendance reports from the register system. The attendance record of each full-time student aged 16 to 18 is sent to their parents as part of their progress report, which also contains target grades, a record of progress to date and a clear student action plan. There is early diagnosis of individual additional support needs and the support is provided in a timely way.

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

40. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Mathematics and science are part of the overall division of sciences and humanities. All full-time staff are involved in the self-assessment process, and use performance indicators and value added data when evaluating the performance of their courses. There are good opportunities for staff development and a well-established appraisal system. Course team meetings address a range of relevant issues. A concerted initiative to improve the quality of teaching and learning is having a positive effect. There are few examples of equality and diversity issues being incorporated within the curriculum.

### **Construction**



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

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

#### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
  
- good teaching in theory lessons
  
- very good support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor workshop facilities in plumbing and bricklaying
  
- too few assessors and verifiers in some areas

- o insufficient on site assessment in work-based learning.

### **Scope of provision**

41. The college offers a good range of full-time and part-time construction craft courses at entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. These include bricklaying, carpentry and joinery, painting and decorating, plumbing and electrical installation. There is specialist provision in plastering, cabinet making, antique restoration and upholstery. Technician and professional courses include the GNVQ at foundation level in construction and the built environment, and the chartered institute of building certificate level 3 in site supervisory studies. The college also offers higher national certificate and diploma courses in furniture manufacture and upholstery. There are 219 full-time students, of whom 55% are aged 16 to 18. Approximately 59% of the 643 part-time students are adults. There are also 189 apprentices and advanced apprentices on work-based learning programmes. Nearly 5% of students are of minority ethnic origin.

### **Achievement and standards**

42. Retention and pass rates on most construction courses are high and have been consistently above the national averages for the last three years. On the City and Guilds electrical installation course, for example, pass rates in 2002/03 and 2003/04 were 100% and 81% respectively as compared to a national average of 60%. On the NVQ craft courses, retention rates have been above 90% for the last two years. On the certificate in plumbing course, there has been a delay in obtaining qualifications in 2004 due to problems with assessment and internal verification. Retention and pass rates on work-based learning are above the national averages in many cases. On the apprenticeship programme, for example, retention and pass rates rose significantly from 2000/01 to 2002/03 and were at least 30 percentage points above the national averages.

43. Students work well in lessons. They develop skills to industrial standards. For example, in one lesson, carpentry and joinery students acquired skills in cutting, jointing, boring and planning to produce components for framed, ledged and braced doors. Overall, students' written work is satisfactory, but it is particularly good in furniture courses. In these courses, reports are word processed, well written and often include suitable bibliography. Students' portfolios of evidence are generally good. They contain a range of diverse evidence such as assessor observations and narrative describing photographic evidence of the projects.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
City and Guilds 2360-06 electrical installation part 1 theory and practice	1	No. of starts	*	26	29
		% retention	*	73	72
		% pass rate	*	100	81
Certificate in plumbing	1	No. of starts	*	30	25
		% retention	*	90	96
		% pass rate	*	89	0
Construction occupations foundation certificate	1	No. of starts	41	40	39
		% retention	88	70	77
		% pass rate	92	100	93
Intermediate	1	No. of starts	*	20	49

construction award		% retention	*	65	98
		% pass rate	*	85	98
NVQ construction craft	2	No. of starts	50	36	53
		% retention	84	94	100
		% pass rate	93	94	98
NVQ construction craft	3	No. of starts	30	**	40
		% retention	97	**	90
		% pass rate	93	**	81

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\* course not running

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

44. Teaching in theory lessons is good. In these lessons, teachers share the learning outcomes with students. They use a good range of teaching and learning styles. Teachers integrate theory and practice by referring to the building legislation, British Standards and Codes of Practice. Examples and case studies from industry are used to illustrate key points. In one theory lesson, on the installation of sanitary appliances, plumbing students discussed and analysed the causes of trap seal loss prior to undertaking the installation work. Teachers regularly check on students' progress and understanding. However, very little use is made of the Internet and specialist computer software. Training in plastering lacks realism. Plastering flat walls that have no sockets, switches or fireplaces does not adequately prepare students for real jobs. The teaching of key skills is integrated with the curriculum and delivered in a vocational context. College-based students enjoy these lessons and appreciate the value and relevance of key skills. Work-based learners are involved in a wide range of activities and training. They are given appropriate support, but encouraged to work independently and are given increasingly challenging tasks to complete.

45. All teachers have relevant vocational qualifications and industrial experience. However, there are insufficient assessors and internal verifiers in some areas, particularly in plumbing. Classrooms are spacious, well maintained and equipped with good teaching aids. In contrast, workshop resources are poor. The bricklaying workshop is cramped and there is insufficient space for bricklaying students' projects. The plumbing workshop is dirty and its few training bays are used as storage spaces.

46. Assessment arrangements for college-based students are satisfactory. For practical tasks in the workshops, students have good handbooks and task sheets. Industry standards are specified in the task sheets, but some students do not understand fully how their work is assessed. There are good tracking sheets showing each student's position in relation to the requirements of assignments and tasks. The quality of assessors' written feedback is inconsistent across courses. Some feedback, particularly in furniture courses, is detailed and helps students to improve their work. There is insufficient on-site assessment for work-based learners. Opportunities for assessment by direct observation in the workplace have been missed. The majority of assessment is carried out in the college workshops.

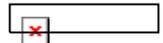
47. Support for students is very good. All full-time students have effective initial diagnostic assessment in communication and application of number to identify the additional support needed. Induction programmes incorporate health and safety issues. Full-time and substantive part-time courses have one-to-one and group tutorials. Students feel that the time in these tutorials is well spent. Work-based learners' progress reviews take place on a regular basis. Employers' representatives are fully involved and receive a copy of the review document, as do the learners. However, progress reviews completed on-site are often in an unsuitable environment with others

working in close proximity.

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

48. Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. Teams meet regularly and communication is improving. Self-assessment draws on the findings from the internal teaching observations and course level evaluations. Some aspects lack rigor. The development plan is not sufficiently well focused on actions which will bring about improvement. For a number of action points, responsibilities for monitoring progress are not allocated appropriately. Internal verification procedure is inconsistent across all areas of the provision. In some areas, internal verification is good. There are effective sampling plans, internal verification checklists and internal verification programme records. This is not the case in other areas. In plumbing IV, the course has been adversely affected by staff on long-term sick leave and newly appointed teachers without assessor and verifier awards. This has resulted in the awarding body suspending centre approval and delaying the awarding of certificates for the 2003/04 students.

### **Engineering**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates
  
- good teaching which meets the needs of individual students
  
- good specialist resources and accommodation
  
- high progression rates on technician courses
  
- very effective support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- lack of practical work for full-time students
  
- slow progress at implementing development plan.

### **Scope of provision**

49. The college provides a wide range of technician engineering courses from levels 2 to 4, and welding craft courses from levels 1 to 3. There is close liaison with local schools, employers and the local university. Vocational GCSE, first diploma and welding taster courses are run for the 14 to 16 year old school pupils, and a foundation degree is run in conjunction with the University of Central Lancashire. There are 194 engineering students equally split between students aged 16 to 18 and adults. There are 54 full-time students, of whom 38 are aged 16 to 18. Of 81 part-time day-release students, 61 are aged 16 to 18, and there are 59 part-time evening students, all of whom are adults.

### **Achievement and standards**

50. Pass rates on most courses are high and consistently above national averages. In GNVQ intermediate and fabrication and welding levels 1 and 2 courses, both pass and retention rates are very high. Whilst retention rates on all courses remain at, or above, national averages some have declined as enrolments expand. The standard of students' practical work is high. In practical sessions, students show good occupational skills and undertake complex tasks with confidence. For example, first year welding students demonstrated good techniques to carry out soldering, brazing and fusion welding of materials into complex shapes and, in computer-aided design (CAD), students demonstrated the ability to translate three-dimensional drawing to two dimensional with sectioned views and dimensional details early in their course. The standard of students' key skills is high and most produce written work of a satisfactory or better standard. Students' attendance and punctuality are also good.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Awarding Body Consortium (ABC) fabrication and welding and welding practice	1	No. of starts	23	32	35
		% retention	96	75	91
		% pass rate	82	100	63
First diploma in electrical and manufacturing engineering	2	No. of starts	*	39	27
		% retention	*	90	74
		% pass rate	*	88	100
GNVQ intermediate engineering	2	No. of starts	33	27	16
		% retention	91	85	100
		% pass rate	73	78	88
City and Guilds 4351 07 CAD two-dimensional CAD	2	No. of starts	15	18	62
		% retention	100	89	82
		% pass rate	60	100	74
City and Guilds 2290 certificate in welding and fabrication	2	No. of starts	15	26	41
		% retention	80	77	66
		% pass rate	100	95	60
National certificates in engineering and mechanical engineering	3	No. of starts	33	45	20
		% retention	64	38	80
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)  
\*course not running

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

51. There is good teaching which meets the needs of individual students. Lessons are well planned using a variety of teaching techniques including use of visual aids, small group work and gapped handouts. Practical demonstrations keep students interested and involved. Teachers make good use of their own industrial experience and lessons are well paced. They regularly check that learning is taking place. In practical lessons, exercises of differing levels of difficulty are used to challenge all students. Students ask questions with confidence and actively contribute to discussions. There is good assessment and monitoring of students' progress. Written feedback and the marking of students' work are thorough. Students are well aware of the progress they are making. There is a lack of practical work for full-time technician students. There are few industrial visits, no industrial work experience and no regular practical workshop training in college workshops. These students are unable to relate their coursework to current industrial practice.

52. Specialist resources and accommodation for engineering are good. A purpose designed learning resource centre provides good facilities for CAD, materials testing, electrical and electronic laboratory work and metrology. Classrooms are well equipped, many with digital projector facilities. The opening of a new technology centre is planned for February 2005. Two of the eight full-time engineering teachers are female and present good role models to school leavers coming to the college. There is good assessment and monitoring of progress to support achievement of individual learning plans. Written feedback and the marking of students' work are good. Students are clearly aware of the progress they are making and how they can improve.

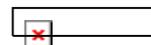
53. The range of courses meets the needs of students and employers well. There are high progression rates on technician courses with over 85% of first diploma students progressing to national certificate or diploma courses. A high percentage of these students progress to HE. There is also good progression between levels 1 and 3 of welding courses. There is close liaison with local schools for which the college runs a vocational GCSE, a first diploma and welding taster courses.

54. Support for students is highly effective. Full-time and part-time students, including some who attend evening lessons, receive regular tutorials and action planning sessions. Where students fall behind with their studies, these sessions provide useful additional help to improve their progress. There is good additional learning support. For example, a student with dyslexia has been given a laptop computer with specialist software to simplify report writing and teachers have increased the font size of their learning materials. A student with a visual impairment has been helped to undertake computer-aided engineering lessons using special projection facilities and software. For students with numeracy and literacy problems, one-to-one assistance is available in the vocational lesson from a learning support worker. The college has a zero tolerance approach to lateness and absence, and punctuality and attendance are good.

### **Leadership and management**

55. Management of the curriculum area is satisfactory. There are eight members of full-time staff in the curriculum team. Three of these have suffered long-term illness, including the curriculum manager. A temporary acting curriculum manager has been in post for the last 12 months and a senior manager with engineering curriculum experience has acted as mentor. There are regular course team and division meetings during which attention is paid to retention and pass rates issues. Communications are effective and teachers are well informed. An exercise to raise the standard of teaching and learning has been undertaken, and support given to those with satisfactory or less than satisfactory lesson observations. There is limited progress in implementing the self-assessment report development plan and several key targets have been missed. The engineering industrial advisory committee did not meet during the 2003/04 session although this was reintroduced in September 2004.

## Business



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

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

### **Strengths**

- high retention and pass rates
  
- wide range of effective learning activities in lessons and workplaces
  
- high levels of support for learning
  
- wide range of courses.

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient challenge for more able students
  
- ineffective measures to improve the quality of teaching
  
- lack of rigor in internal verification.

### **Scope of provision**

56. There are around 121 full-time students, most of whom are aged 16 to 18, and around 690 part-time students, the majority of whom are adults. Some 53 work-based learners follow apprenticeships in administration. Full-time courses in business studies are a pre-foundation course, foundation and intermediate GNVQ in business, AVCE, AS-level accounting and AS-level and GCE A-level business. Full-time courses in administration comprise NVQ level 1 and certificates in administration at levels 2 and 3. Part-time courses include certificates in bookkeeping and accounting at levels 1, 2 and 3, introductory and long management courses, courses for trade union representatives, diplomas in secretarial administration or medical reception and office skills subjects. School pupils can study applied GCSEs.

### **Achievement and standards**

57. Pass rates are high on most courses. Pass rates on the AVCE single and conversion to double awards, GNVQ foundation, level 1 NVQ in administration, level 1 bookkeeping, certificate in first line management and AS-level and GCE A-level business have been consistently higher than national averages in each of the last three years. Pass rates on GNVQ intermediate exceeded national averages in 2002 and 2003, but fell to well below average in 2004. Retention rates match or exceed national levels on almost all courses. Pass and retention rates on the apprenticeship programme are high.

58. Most students make good progress and demonstrate a strong commitment to their studies. Employment law students identify the ways European Union directives, such as that on working time, impact on their workplaces. Management students use problems from their work as the starting point for developing problem solving techniques. Administration students bring relevant examples from their work experience to relate theory to practice. Work-based learners' personal skills develop well; many take on additional responsibilities and gain promotion. Of the 29 students who achieved AVCE double award in 2004, 24 progressed to HE. Attendance during the inspection was 82%.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in business, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Certificate in bookkeeping 1 year	1	No. of starts	33	22	20
		% retention	82	77	90
		% pass rate	78	53	83
GNVQ business	2	No. of starts	**	29	18
		% retention	**	72	78
		% pass rate	**	86	43
Trade union representatives (short)	2	No. of starts	32	31	46
		% retention	94	100	98
		% pass rate	97	87	98
AVCE business single award	3	No. of starts	34	58	29
		% retention	79	79	90
		% pass rate	89	85	81
AS-level business studies	3	No. of starts	38	28	21
		% retention	84	86	90
		% pass rate	94	83	89
Certificate in first line management	3	No. of starts	25	19	*
		% retention	60	63	*
		% pass rate	100	92	*

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\* data not available

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

59. Most lessons are satisfactory or good. Teachers use a wide range of learning activities

effectively to maintain students' interest and develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. In a lesson on human resources, the teacher used a powerpoint quiz to check students' recall of previous learning and reinforce definitions of key terms. In an administration lesson, students in small groups prepared arguments for or against smoking, eating and drinking in the workplace and then attempted to convince the class of the merits of their case. The teacher reinforced the standards expected by employers. In another lesson on the internal organisation of businesses, students' learning was checked thoroughly in a rapid round of department-function dominoes. Full-time students have weekly private study lessons, supervised by a member of the course team, to make progress on outstanding work. Teachers are readily available to help students outside of lessons. Students' feedback on the effectiveness of the learning strategies used in their lessons is welcomed. Work-based learners thoroughly develop skills for the workplace.

60. There are insufficient challenges for more able students in teaching and training programmes. In several lessons, the whole class is taught together, regardless of the range of students' abilities and their relevant work experience. In a finance lesson, the only extra expected of the more able students was helping other students to follow the explanations given. Teaching and learning on the apprenticeship programme do not challenge some work-based learners, as their previous achievements are not taken fully into account.

61. Teachers are qualified appropriately, but few have recent relevant commercial experience. Workplace supervisors have significant experience of managing apprentices. Classrooms are maintained well and have good displays of learning materials. Teachers have occasional difficulty in accessing computer rooms to use for lessons. Students have easy access to computers for working outside of lessons. There is good provision for silent and group private study.

62. Teachers check students' progress on their course at regular intervals, compare it with their previous achievement and negotiate targets to improve performance. The progress of students following individual programmes in office skills is monitored carefully. Feedback on written work is good. Work-based learners are matched carefully to job roles through initial assessment. This takes account of learners' preferences for location and type of environment as well as the outcomes of personality and ability tests. Workplace supervisors are not involved sufficiently in assessment.

63. The wide range of business and administration courses, from pre-foundation to degree level, provides good opportunities for progression. There are specialist courses in accounting, office skills, management and trades union studies. Full-time administration students undertake work experience that extends their understanding of the workplace and provides for assessment at work. Many students enjoy the college's enrichment programme. Some undertake additional qualifications to ease progression to HE. Employers actively support and encourage work-based learners to gain additional qualifications.

64. Students' needs for additional support are diagnosed and suitable support is arranged. Some lessons have two teachers. In others, inclusive learning officers negotiate with teachers how best to support students. Course leaders track and follow-up students' lateness and absence. Students have good support for progression to employment or HE. Regular guidance is given to work-based learners applying for jobs, particularly in encouraging less confident learners to seek more challenging roles.

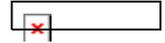
### ***Leadership and management***

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Self-assessment identifies most weaknesses, but progress to address some critical issues is slow. In several instances, managers have not identified unsatisfactory teaching early enough to minimise the impact on students. Strategies to improve standards of teaching and learning have included coaching and mentoring. These have assisted in helping teachers to use more varied teaching strategies, however, they are not yet addressing the issue of providing sufficient challenge for more able students.

66. Managers recognise some limitations of procedures and have instituted a programme of observing teachers who are newly appointed or in new roles. Course teams develop schemes of

work and learning materials together. Internal verification is insufficiently rigorous. The appropriateness of new assessors' decisions is not checked carefully enough. There are delays between completed units of NVQ being assessed and standards being verified. Invalid evidence and lenient standards have been noted by awarding bodies.

## Information and communications technology



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

### **Strengths**

- very high retention and pass rates
- many students achieving high grades on GNVQ and AVCE programmes
- outstanding leadership and management
- excellent teamwork
- much outstanding and very good teaching
- excellent support for students
- close monitoring of progress with prompt action to address issues.

### **Weaknesses**

- there are no significant weaknesses.

### **Scope of provision**

67. Full-time courses are offered at all levels from entry level to level 3. There are 14 students on Edexcel Start IT, 49 students on GNVQ foundation and intermediate, 31 students on AVCE single

award and 28 completing AVCE double award. There are also 36 students on the City and Guilds IT practitioner programmes at levels 2 and 3, and 16 on AS-level and GCE A-level programmes. There are 515 students on part-time programmes delivered both in college and in the community, and ranging from entry level to the European computer driving licence (ECDL) to a networking programme.

### **Achievement and standards**

68. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 on long programmes are outstanding and have remained well above national averages for the last three years. Many students achieve high grades. For example, 64% of students completing the AVCE double award obtained high grades compared with a national average of 44%. Retention rates are also very high on most programmes. This is only around national averages for the AS-level course and there is limited progression from AS level to GCE A level. Students have been successful in winning national awards. In the 2003 FE skills challenge, one student won a gold award for the website challenge and, in 2004, there were silver and bronze awards in the hardware and software challenge. There is excellent progression to higher level courses and employment. In 2003/04, 76% of those completing AVCE IT were accepted into university and the other 24% went into related employment.

69. The quality of students' work is consistently very good and well presented. Many students show a depth of understanding well above that which might be expected at that stage in their course. For example, GNVQ intermediate students evaluating the effectiveness of a website were able to demonstrate a clear insight into what might be expected of a professionally designed site.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
GNVQ foundation IT	1	No. of starts	26	20	20
		% retention	92	75	90
		% pass rate	100	100	94
Certificate for IT users - computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT)	1	No. of starts	515	373	281
		% retention	67	84	89
		% pass rate	96	78	70
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	27	35	27
		% retention	96	94	96
		% pass rate	100	100	100
AVCE ICT (single award)	3	No. of starts	51	47	47
		% retention	92	89	91
		% pass rate	91	93	95
AVCE ICT (double award)	3	No. of starts	43	41	33
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	98	100	100
AS-level IT and information	3	No. of starts	29	24	*
		% retention	76	67	*
		% pass rate	68	75	*

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled*

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

70. The quality of teaching and learning across the area is very high. Almost all lessons were judged to be at least good and a large proportion were very good or excellent. Teachers are enthusiasts for their subject and show tremendous energy in their teaching. They have high expectations of all students and students respond to this. They are frequently challenged and questioned to check their understanding. For example, in an outstanding GNVQ intermediate lesson, students who were critically evaluating a website in preparation for an assessment task were constantly asked to justify their opinions.

71. Students enjoy their lessons and are as enthusiastic as their teachers. They work hard and are engaged fully in the activities. Lessons are varied and demand professional standards of students. There is good use of innovative activities to enhance learning and maintain students' interest. For example, an ECDL lesson began with a team game to recap on learning from the previous lesson, an animated video was used in an AVCE lesson to illustrate protocols, and there was good use of projected photographs in a practical session on making network cables.

72. All full-time and most part-time staff have appropriate teaching qualifications. Staff based in the IT department have a good range of vocational qualifications and experience. A number of staff are involved in national programmes for sharing good practice and producing materials for the Standards Unit and National Learning Network. A wide range of staff development focuses on improving teaching and learning. Two members of staff are completing higher degrees. These include modules on e-learning which supports the departmental work on integration of the virtual learning environment.

73. Classrooms are well equipped and generally spacious. They are well laid out to facilitate group work and theory sessions alongside good access to computers. There is an appropriate range of software and hardware. Teaching is supported by well-prepared learning materials which are shared by staff across the whole provision.

74. Student assessment is used extensively to consolidate learning and support monitoring of students' progress. Marking is thorough and the quality of written feedback is good. Full-time students have short recap tests at the beginning of most sessions, results are recorded and used to inform regular progress reviews. More comprehensive tests are also carried out once each term. Parental involvement is extensive and parents' evenings are well attended. Parents receive regular progress reports and they are alerted as soon as any concerns arise. There is an effective system of internal verification of assessment decisions.

75. There is a good range of full-time and part-time provision with progression routes from entry level to foundation degree within the college. In addition, there are a growing number of outreach programmes in the community and on employers' premises. Timetables are designed to meet the needs of students and, for part-time students, there are flexible attendance options. Full-time programmes are delivered over three days with mandatory attendance at a workshop on a fourth day for those students falling behind. Links with industry are good and developing further. Extensive market research has resulted in additional programmes being developed. For example, an evening networking training programme has been introduced.

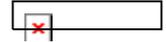
76. There is very effective support for students on both full-time and part-time programmes. Initial assessment identifies effectively the additional support needs of students and identified needs are met promptly. Support systems for full-time students aged 16 to 18 are focused on ensuring that they achieve their maximum potential and prompt action is taken immediately where there is cause for concern.

### **Leadership and management**

77. Leadership and management are outstanding. There is strong and energetic curriculum

leadership, and a team ethos based on mutual support. All staff are focused on improving teaching and students' achievements. There is strong forward planning and efficient timetabling. Very effective communications ensure that all staff are involved in, and benefit from, team meetings. Strategies are in place to ensure that part-time staff are also fully involved. Quality assurance processes for college-based and outreach provision are strong. Sharing of resources ensures that staff time in developing these is kept to a minimum. Self-assessment is thorough and rigorous, and has resulted in identifiable improvements over time.

## **Sport, leisure and tourism**



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

### ***Strengths***

- very high pass rates
  
- good variety of learning activities
  
- high rate of student progression
  
- good curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- inadequate classroom accommodation
  
- insufficient account of individual learning needs in teaching.

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

78. The college provides a range of courses in sport, leisure and tourism from foundation to advanced and higher levels. There are full-time courses in travel and tourism and sport and exercise science. Specialist part-time courses include treatment of sports injury courses and community sports leaders awards are provided as additional qualifications for full-time students. There are 181 students, almost all of whom are full time.

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

79. Pass rates on most courses are very high. At level 2, pass rates on the NVQ in sport have remained well above national averages. Pass rates on the first diploma in applied science (sport and exercise science) have remained at 100% for the last three years. The GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism course has also performed very well. At level 3, pass rates on the AVCE in travel and tourism are very good and remain high. The national diploma in science became the national diploma in sport and exercise science in 2002/03 and has maintained the excellent pass rates seen on the national diploma sport programmes.

80. Retention rates on most programmes are satisfactory and remain close to the national averages. The standard of students' work is good, with most students working at, or above, the levels expected for the level and stage of their programme. Students' punctuality is satisfactory, but attendance during the inspection was low at 77%. There is good student progression in sport and travel. In 2003/04, 77% of students on sport and travel programmes progressed within the college. Some 81% of the level 1 students in sport progressed to level 2 and 58% of the foundation award students in leisure and tourism went into employment.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in sport, leisure and tourism, 2002 to 2004***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
NVQ sport recreation and allied occupations	2	No. of starts	**	15	15
		% retention	**	80	80
		% pass rate	**	75	80
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	15	**	19
		% retention	87	**	63
		% pass rate	100	**	92
National diploma in applied science sport	3	No. of starts	20	*	16
		% retention	65	*	94
		% pass rate	100	*	100
AVCE in travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	17	20	27
		% retention	76	65	93
		% pass rate	92	92	96

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\* course did not run

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

81. Most college teaching is good or very good. Students' interest is maintained by using a range of appropriate, imaginative and varied activities. These include the use of ICT, poster work, games and role play. Students are encouraged to take on new challenges and to learn new skills. In the most effective lessons, learning resources are used well and there are good schemes of work and lesson plans. Most lessons have clear aims that are explained fully to the students at the start of each lesson and learning is reviewed at the end of lessons. Supporting handouts and visual aids are informative and clear. In a number of sport and travel lessons, teachers draw upon their occupational knowledge and experience and those of the students to help develop their understanding. Teachers provide good personal support in lessons. In some lessons, the activities are not designed to match the needs and interests of individual students. There is no requirement in some tasks for the demonstration of the skills of analysis and critical review. Complex tasks are not broken down sufficiently for the less able students in some groups.

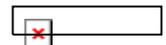
82. Staff qualifications are satisfactory and some staff have relevant industrial and commercial experience. All staff are either teacher qualified or working towards a teaching qualification. Some classroom accommodation is inadequate. Noise levels are excessive in these rooms and it is difficult for students to take part in group work. Teachers set and mark work regularly. Marking is thorough and it is easy for students to see how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. Internal verification is satisfactory.

83. Students receive a good induction programme which includes assessment that identifies needs for support in key skills and additional learning needs. The results of initial assessment are used to inform the students' group profiles and tutors and students agree targets at their first tutorial. Progress is monitored regularly throughout the year. The tutorial system includes procedures for monitoring attendance, punctuality and poor performance. Where problems are identified appropriate action is taken. Students who are at risk of failing are given extra support.

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

84. The provision is managed well. There are curriculum managers for both travel and sport who manage each curriculum area. Managers are enthusiastic and work closely with teachers, who have clear roles and responsibilities. Internal communications are good and there are regular team meetings to discuss students' progress and monitor performance. Staff development opportunities are good. There are good strategies to improve retention rates that include changes to entry requirements, a 'buddy' system for new students and the provision of dedicated course base rooms. Quality assurance is good. Students' views are gathered routinely through questionnaires and student representative contributions to team meetings. As a result of student representations, curriculum timetables have been adjusted to accommodate the need for students to travel when their lessons are off site.

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



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- very high retention and pass rates on most courses
  
- much very good teaching
  
- good range of courses which meets the needs of the community
  
- very good curriculum management.

### **Weaknesses**

- poor key skill achievement by level 3 full-time students
- poor recording of internal verification decisions in work-based learning
- insufficient promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum.

### **Scope of provision**

85. The college offers full-time provision from entry level to advanced levels in health and social care and levels 2 and 3 in early years education. There are 205 students studying full time, of whom 59 are on apprenticeships provided in conjunction with local National Health Service (NHS) trusts and other care providers. Part-time provision includes first aid, counselling, certificate in community mental health, teaching assistants courses and a range of complementary therapies. OCN levels 2 and 3 units are studied part time or as part of full-time adult HE access courses preparing for nursing, midwifery and social work. There is NVQ provision at levels 2, 3 and 4 in care and at levels 2 and 3 in early years. Further short courses include dementia care, moving and handling, and food hygiene. Of the 334 students attending college on a part-time basis, 198 are on NVQ programmes. Courses are also provided for 14 to 16 year old pupils attending three schools. In April 2004, the care division was given CoVE status and is developing courses to meet the local community's need for qualified care workers.

### **Achievement and standards**

86. There are very high pass rates on full-time and part-time courses in care and early years which are consistently well above national averages. In 2003/04, many courses had 100% pass rates. Retention rates have also been high. There are high rates of framework achievement in work-based learning. From 2000/01 to 2002/03, for both apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships, retention and completion rates have improved consistently and are significantly above the national averages. College data relating to students' targets show a strong achievement pattern at level 3 in both care at 60% above target and early years at 74% above target. There are low levels of achievement of key skills qualifications on national diploma courses, particularly in communication. Progression rates are high. An average of 78% of students progress between level 2 and level 3, 30% of advanced apprentices progress to HE and more than 90% of cadets progress to nurse training or related courses. Standards of work in lessons are high. Displays in childcare show good practical skills. Work-based learners acquire both skills and confidence, becoming valued as employees and gaining posts of responsibility. Attendance, at 88% during inspection week, is above the national average for colleges of this type.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in health, social and childcare, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
NVQ care	2	No. of starts	31	34	37
		% retention	100	85	95
		% pass rate	97	100	100
Certificate in	2	No. of starts	24	*	60

counselling		% retention	92	*	97
		% pass rate	100	*	90
Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) certificate	2	No. of starts	22	17	19
		% retention	77	76	89
		% pass rate	100	100	100
Progression nurse training and health studies	2	No. of starts	112	90	64
		% retention	76	76	61
		% pass rate	86	100	100
NVQ early years	3	No. of starts	23	47	24
		% retention	87	77	88
		% pass rate	75	94	90
Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	21	20	25
		% retention	67	100	92
		% pass rate	93	95	100

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

87. There is much very good teaching, which is well planned and based on careful analysis of students' needs. Some particularly enthusiastic and charismatic teaching engaged students stimulating debate on complex subjects such as the link between Darwinism, Freud and counselling theory. The sharing of experience between students enhances learning and there are good links between theory and practice. Apprentices are given good training opportunities by employers who understand the requirements of the awards. There is insufficient promotion of equality and diversity through the curriculum. For example, major life events are taught without reference to different cultures. Displays do not reflect diversity sufficiently and a display about nursery menus made no reference to cultural influences on diet.

88. Resources to support learning are satisfactory. Staff are qualified appropriately with vocational experience in nursing and early years education as well as teaching and academic qualifications. A significant number of new staff have brought with them up-to-date expertise. A college programme of staff development is valued by the staff. The majority of rooms in the college are satisfactory and some have been improved under the CoVE funding. However, several are drab and a significant minority are cramped and hot. Students have access to personal computers and the Internet in the learning resource centre, but these facilities are not available in classrooms.

89. Initial assessment and admissions processes ensure that students are appropriately placed on courses. Assignments are internally verified prior to use. Feedback to students is timely although some work demonstrates limited and unstructured comments, but new standard feedback forms have been developed to ensure consistency. All workplace assessment takes place on site ensuring both realistic experience and the involvement of workplace assessors. During term time, college assessors visit learners on a regular four weekly schedule, but during college vacations there are some delays. The internal verification process is inadequate for work-based learning as it is not systematically tracked or recorded.

90. There is a very good range of courses. A range of enrichment activities includes visits to HE, a complementary therapies programme for health studies students, residential visits and a visit to a multi-faith centre. There are very productive partnerships with a range of external bodies and employers. Short courses have been in response to employers' needs, such as in management of

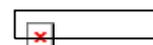
dementia, as well as changes to NVQ delivery. The college has a strong commitment to care training in the local community. Within a very successful partnership with the NHS in east Lancashire the division provides all of the underpinning knowledge for NVQs and the technical certificates and key skills training for hospital cadets. The college has CoVE status in care and is successfully offering a wide ranging training programme to 'up-skill' current care workers and to attract non-traditional students and school leavers into the caring professions.

91. Tutorial support for college and work-based learners is good. Students find tutors and employers readily accessible and supportive. A planned scheme of work for tutorials encompasses study skills such as essay writing. Good careers advice and opportunities to access career information are available with visits to HE institutions and help with application forms and interview skills. Workshops are available for additional support in assignment writing and portfolio building, and additional learning support is provided as needed.

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

92. Leadership and management are very good. The division shares a clear vision and strategies are well communicated. Stability has been maintained during significant staff changes. Co-ordination of off-the-job and on-the-job training is good. Self-assessment is very thorough with clear development plans. Students feel confident in an inclusive college environment. Too little emphasis has been given to develop in students a greater understanding of equality and diversity issues.

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



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on full-time courses
- good teaching and lesson planning
- thorough feedback and monitoring of students' work
- effective tutorial system with good student support.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low and declining enrolment on full-time courses

- o insufficient display and celebration of students' work throughout the college
  
- o poor resources and accommodation.

**Scope of provision**

93. In visual and performing arts, media and music there are 172 full-time students aged 16 to 18 and 38 full-time students aged 19 and over. There are 26 part-time students aged 16 to 18 and 124 students aged 19 and over. At level 1, there are part-time courses in basic craft skills, creative studies, performing skills, and multi-media design, and a full-time BTEC introductory certificate in art, design and media. At level 2, there are courses in GCSE art studies and GNVQ intermediate art and design. BTEC certificate courses are available in video production, music technology, intermediate media design, and design and craft, and BTEC first diploma in performing arts. At level 3, AS levels are available in art studies, film/video production, and media studies. GCE A-level courses are offered in art and design, film, and media studies. An AVCE is available in art and design, and there are BTEC national diploma courses in media, performing arts, music practice, music technology, fashion and three-dimensional design.

**Achievement and standards**

94. This area has high pass rates on most courses, many around 100%. These include GNVQ intermediate art and design, BTEC first diploma in performing arts and GCE A-level media. The retention rates on most courses are also consistently above national averages. There are, however, low pass rates on some part-time courses. There are low and declining enrolment patterns in the area. For example, enrolment on GNVQ intermediate art halved over three years as has that on the intermediate certificate in multi-media design within two years. Students numbers in GCE A-level media are also declining.

95. The standard of students' work in performing arts and media is high. Performing arts students make good progress on both national and first diploma courses, acquiring confidence as well as developing strong physical and voice skills. In art and design, there are high standards of construction skills in BTEC national diploma in fashion. There is well-structured three-dimensional work by GNVQ intermediate students and some high-quality computer graphics by level 1 students where photoshop work is above the standard expected for this level. However, practical skills in some level 3 art and design provision are not always of the required standard. In a few art lessons, student self-evaluation is underdeveloped. Progression rates are high, both within the college from level 2 to level 3 and from level 3 to HE.

**A sample of retention and pass rates in visual and performing arts and media, 2002 to 2004**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
BTEC first diploma in performing arts	2	No. of starts	16	28	22
		% retention	90	78	88
		% pass rate	100	93	100
Intermediate certificate in multimedia design	2	No. of starts	*	37	14
		% retention	*	78	79
		% pass rate	*	83	100
GCE A-level media	3	No. of starts	22	17	15

studies		% retention	91	100	100
		% pass rate	95	100	100
AS-level art studies/fine art	3	No. of starts	**	50	25
		% retention	**	88	92
		% pass rate	**	68	88

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

\*course did not run

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

96. Much of the teaching is good and lesson planning is effective. In media studies, teaching and learning are very good, and practical film projects are imaginative. Students learn advanced computer skills on the BTEC national diploma media course, producing eye-catching magazine layouts and high-quality short films. On the BTEC national diploma in fashion, students gain a strong awareness of standards of industrial competence. Teaching and learning on the level 1 introductory diploma in art are very good. However, students on the BTEC national diploma in three-dimensional studies course have produced insufficient work in three-dimensions for a specialist course in this subject. Limited use is made of ICT in visual arts lessons. Teaching groups on many programmes are very small giving a limited range of experience to students. The low numbers limit performances, group work and peer evaluation. Opportunities are missed to display artwork to a wider audience. There is insufficient display and celebration of students' work throughout the college.

97. Assessment and monitoring of students' work are rigorous. Students' work is marked rigorously in media and performing arts, encouraging students to set high standards. Students receive detailed feedback telling them how to improve. However, students do not always complete the self-evaluation section on assessment sheets, and in a small number of art lessons, students do not reflect sufficiently on their performance.

98. Resources and accommodation are generally poor. Art rooms are ageing, and sometimes dirty, with inadequate storage facilities. The art staff room is inappropriately sited causing disruption to lessons and there is insufficient access to computers for art students. There are restrictions on access to the theatre and insufficient rehearsal space for performing arts students. The music centre is cramped and students have a lack of recording equipment and software. There is limited access to art rooms and particularly the pottery room for students with mobility problems. Good use is made of IT facilities in multimedia lessons, some of which are taught in the IT department, and three-dimensional students have access to a specialist furniture construction workshop. Staff are well qualified and many have good industrial experience. However, there is insufficient technician support in music and performing arts.

99. There is a good range of level 2 and level 3 provision and part-time courses. Some lessons are located in outreach centres to increase participation from under-represented groups. A sewing skills lesson has enabled students to design and make patterns for their own Kameez (dress) and Shalwar (trousers). The college also participates in creative and cultural events at the local Burnley festival. The availability of enrichment opportunities varies between courses. There are fewer organised trips and educational visits for music students than for other courses.

100. Guidance and support for students are very good. The tutorial system provides effective advice on applying to HE and enables students to review their goals regularly. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well. For example, several students with additional learning needs on BTEC first diploma in performing arts receive additional support from their lecturers and from a learning support assistant as necessary.

## ***Leadership and management***

101. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The curriculum manager has been in post for less than a year and is starting to strengthen good practice and make further improvements to the curriculum. Staff have all been observed teaching in the last 12 months by external observers. They benefit from the college's staff development programme, but there is little sharing of good practice as a result of the lesson observation process. The college management information system is well used by staff. There is no clear strategy to address declining recruitment.

## **Humanities**



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

Contributory grade for English and modern foreign languages is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
  
- good progress made by advanced level social science students
  
- high levels of students' application in lessons
  
- very good academic and personal support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory retention rates on some level 2 courses
  
- narrow range of teaching methods and learning activities
  
- insufficient specialist leadership of language provision.

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

102. Most courses are at AS level and GCE A level for full-time students aged 16 to 18. There are approximately 260 enrolments in humanities subjects and a further 60 in English. AS-level and GCE A2 French are offered to a small number of students through a consortium arrangement with a local school. The college also offers GCSE courses in English, Spanish, psychology, law and sociology. Almost 70% of GCSE enrolments are in English. The college offers Spanish and French to 135 adult students through its entry level programmes. Adult students account for approximately 30% of the provision in humanities. In this area, there are short courses at levels 2 and 3 with good progression opportunities to degree level study in the social sciences.

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

103. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are outstanding at GCE A level and generally high at AS level. Retention rates for these courses are at least satisfactory. The percentage of students achieving high grades at AS level and GCE A level has declined. However, college data show that a large proportion of students aged 16 to 18 achieve or exceed their expected AS-level or GCE A-level grades based on their achievements at GCSE. A very large proportion of students who start law courses succeed in passing them. In sociology, high pass rates are combined with high grades and students on average achieve at least one grade higher than predicted. Some retention rates have been declining. In 2004, only 58% of students completed the GCSE English course. Attendance during the inspection was good at around 85%.

104. Standards of work in relation to exam requirements are high. Students demonstrate high levels of concentration in lessons. They work hard to complete set tasks thoroughly. In many subjects, students are able to use specialist terminology with precision and apply it in appropriate contexts. Sociology students display a confident understanding of sociological theory methods and a critical ability to evaluate their effectiveness.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 2002 to 2004***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Certificate in practical languages	1	No. of starts	105	132	102
		% retention	73	89	78
		% pass rate	84	70	69
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	137	174	104
		% retention	69	68	58
		% pass rate	63	48	77
Certificate in psychology (OCN) (short)	2	No. of starts	45	39	40
		% retention	89	82	68
		% pass rate	73	75	96
AS-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	33	38	48
		% retention	85	74	77
		% pass rate	96	100	89
AS-level psychology	3	No. of starts	56	64	76
		% retention	95	91	87
		% pass rate	96	100	83
GCE A2 law	3	No. of starts	25	35	22
		% retention	88	94	100
		% pass rate	91	100	100
GCE A2 psychology	3	No. of starts	24	42	45

		% retention	79	86	91
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Source: ISR (2002 and 2003), college (2004)

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

105. Teaching is generally good or better. Students maintain high levels of concentration in lessons and work hard to complete the tasks set. In the better lessons, students are encouraged to develop ideas through effective group work. Teachers use questions to probe, challenge and extend students' thinking. Students show keen interest in well-planned activities which are designed to develop analytical skills. For example, in a law lesson about sentencing, adult students taking the role of lay magistrates weighed conflicting evidence before determining appropriate sentences. Some teachers, however, rely too much on whole-class teaching which fails to meet the different needs and abilities of students. In some lessons where a limited range of learning resources is used, the handouts are unimaginative. Some teachers make good use of references to websites and bibliographies in their lessons. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in English and modern foreign languages below level 3. Here, as a result of some poor lesson planning and learning materials, the learning of students is limited. Languages are largely taught through the medium of English, and materials are predominantly geared to the needs and interests of younger students.

106. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. Many are examiners for awarding bodies and bring considerable external experience to their role. Accommodation is generally satisfactory although sometimes classroom layout prevents students from interacting easily.

107. Student assessment is regular and well planned. Students are clear about when and how they will be assessed and what they need to do to achieve. Formal feedback sheets are widely used for written work, but on many, staff simply define problems rather than suggest solutions. Target minimum grades are shared with students early in the programme and each significant piece of work is assessed against them. They help in motivating students. In discussion with their teachers, students identify realistic short-term targets which help to raise their standards. There is regular monitoring of students' progress during staff team meetings. In psychology, teachers regularly check students' files. This enables students to organise work effectively. In modern foreign languages, there is an in-house initial assessment, but despite this some students are on courses at the wrong level for their needs.

108. The range of humanities and English 16 to 18 provision is satisfactory at level 3. For adult students, the humanities provision is wide-ranging and flexibly organised to allow good opportunities for progression. Language provision for adult students is currently limited to French and Spanish through the ABC language programme and GCSE Spanish. Key skills are integrated well into AS-level and GCE A-level courses, and around 70% of students achieve a key skills qualification in communication.

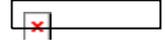
109. There is very good academic and personal support for students. College-wide strategies for identifying and meeting students' support needs work well. Students receive timely and good advice and guidance on careers and HE. There is good personal support for adult students. This meets a wide range of individual needs and includes financial support. Attendance is monitored carefully, and if problems are identified, information is shared across subject areas.

### **Leadership and management**

110. Leadership and management are good overall. Communication is good and teamwork is effective in supporting all staff to share the college vision of raising aspirations. There is good analysis and monitoring of most programmes and students' performance. Students' views are incorporated in course reviews and self-assessment. Modern foreign language provision lacks management by a specialist linguist. Programmes are well co-ordinated to meet exam criteria. However, there is no clear strategy to determine the suitability of the provision and its future

direction. All language staff are part time. Teaching is not monitored adequately to determine its quality.

## Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages



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

### **Strengths**

- much good teaching and learning
  
- high retention and pass rates for students entered for external qualifications
  
- effective community partnership initiatives to widen participation
  
- good range of activities and resources to promote equality of opportunity in lessons
  
- effective assessment practice in literacy and numeracy.

### **Weaknesses**

- narrow range of Skills for Life provision
  
- insufficient setting of targets and recording of students' progress in ESOL
  
- unsatisfactory internal verification procedures.

### **Scope of provision**

111. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision includes discrete courses for adult students at the college and in the local community. A number of innovative projects incorporating this curriculum area are used to widen participation which includes provision in the workplace and in the local community. Essential skills and key skills are integrated into vocational programmes for students

aged 16 to 18. There are 146 students on discrete courses in literacy and numeracy and 121 on ESOL courses. The majority of students are at entry level. The college offers a range of literacy and numeracy support. All full-time students are assessed for literacy and numeracy and there are currently 300 students receiving support.

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

112. Retention and pass rates are high. There has been an improving trend in retention rates for adult students in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. A large proportion of students now complete the course. Increasing numbers are entering for external examinations. In 2003/04, 38% of all ESOL students took external qualifications and 44% of adult students in literacy and numeracy. Pass rates for these qualifications are also high. Retention and pass rates on college programmes with targeted support for literacy show an improving trend.

113. There is a high standard of work in most lessons and the achievements are having a positive effect on the lives of these students. In the majority of lessons, students develop their skills in both written and spoken form. Many adult students speak freely about the pride they have in their achievements. Students enjoy working together and are able to reach high standards in relation to their goals and the qualifications. Many also gain in confidence and self-esteem. For example, a student at entry level was nominated as student representative and as a result was able to support fellow students in lessons. In ESOL, the standard of students' spoken English is high. They participate well in lessons, building their confidence. The majority of students who are at entry level also develop personal and learning skills.

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

114. Teaching is good or better in the majority of lessons. In the best sessions for adult students, the learning activities are linked closely to the students' own experiences and interests. For example, in a literacy session, the tutor used current soap operas to introduce new spellings to the group. Teaching strategies include successful paired work, spontaneous question and answer elements with the whole group and general topic discussion. Student participation is actively encouraged in order to enhance learning. Many of the lessons are very well planned to take account of individual learning needs. Learning materials are of a high standard. Teachers use materials that reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the local population well. In a successful ESOL lesson at entry level, students learnt to describe their neighbourhood through a range of activities including digital photography and the selection of vocabulary specific to each of their circumstances. There is, however, too little use of ILT in literacy and numeracy. In a minority of ESOL lessons, there is insufficient focus on meeting the needs of all students which results in a lack of demanding work for more able students and insufficient focus on improvement of literacy skills. Literacy and numeracy support is being embedded successfully into vocational programmes. Staff development for tutors working on these programmes is having a positive impact on the teaching and learning taking place. Team teaching involving vocational and support tutors is part of this strategy. There is insufficient sharing of good practice across divisions.

115. Staff are qualified appropriately and there are good opportunities for staff training. The need has been recognised to raise the level of specialist qualifications for staff. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory in both the college and community venues. There are examples of displays that celebrate achievement and ESOL students have good classroom accommodation, IT equipment and teaching and learning resources. However, in literacy and numeracy, the IT resources are limited.

116. Assessment practice in literacy and numeracy is good. Initial assessment is thorough and measurable targets are set and recorded to match the needs of students. These targets are used at regular review interviews to plan the next stage of the students' programme effectively. Staff encourage students to monitor their own progress and take an active part in the recording process. In ESOL, there is insufficient setting of targets or recording of progress. Even though initial and diagnostic assessment is carried out, the information gathered is not used effectively with individuals. Students are not given feedback on a regular basis about the progress they are making and staff rarely record outcomes from set tasks and homework. This weakness has been recognised

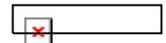
by the college.

117. There is a narrow range of discrete provision above entry level in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. This limits the progression opportunities for many students. Support to develop language skills for ESOL students on main college programmes is also limited. There is a broad and effective range of support for full-time students in literacy and numeracy. There are effective community partnership initiatives to widen participation. The college has good links with bodies including the local authority, trade unions, Primary Care Trusts, probation service and employers.

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

118. Leadership and management are good. A Skills for Life working group is providing a whole-college strategic approach to this provision. There are regular team meetings. Self-assessment reports are thorough and rigorous. However, the sharing of good practice in relation to assessment and monitoring of students' progress across all aspects of this provision is not well developed. Procedures for internal verification of college certificates lack rigour. This is recognised by the college which has drawn up plans to make improvements.

### **Entry to employment**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high rates of achievement and progression
  
- very good personal support for learners
  
- effective curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- learning activities that do not meet the needs of all learners
  
- fluctuating attendance rates.

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

119. The E2E programme is managed within Burnley College Training, the work-based learning division of the college. There are 50 learners on the programme. The E2E programme began in the

college in August 2003, and during 2003/04, 157 learners started the programme. The programme is designed to enable disengaged and underachieving young people to progress to employment or FE. It consists of three strands: vocational learning, basic and key skills, and personal and social skills. All three strands of the programme are delivered on site at the college. The learners have access to a wide range of vocational options that include joinery and painting, food preparation, distribution operations and business administration. In 2003/04, 31% of learners were female and 15% were from minority ethnic groups. Almost all learners were aged 16 to 18.

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

120. There are high progression rates from the programme. In 2003/04, 49% of learners who started the programme progressed to FE, training or employment. This significantly exceeded the local LSC target. Learners' achievement of vocational qualifications is good. In 2003/04, learners achieved 84 NVQ qualifications at level 1 in 4 vocational subjects. In addition, five learners achieved adult literacy and/or numeracy level 1 certificates. In all, 44% of the learners achieved a level 1 qualification. A total of 55% of learners completed their individual learning plans. Attendance in the sessions inspected was low at 60%. Registers indicate that the overall weekly attendance on the programme between August and November 2004 was in a range from 52% to 85%.

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

121. Tutors prepare thoroughly for sessions. They have very productive working relationships with learners that enhance learning. The more effective sessions have a good variety of approaches to promoting learning and clear learning objectives that are achieved. In these sessions, there is effective one-to-one teaching and support, and tutors create a purposeful atmosphere. They plan good opportunities for assessment that are used well. In one session, effective team teaching and small group work focused on musical and pictorial quizzes. This developed team building skills which were assessed. The development of practical skills and social skills is more effective than learners' progress in other elements of the programme.

122. Some learning activities in theory sessions do not meet the needs of all students. Almost all lessons have students with a wide range of ability from entry level 1 to level 1, yet they are generally set the same tasks within the same timescales. There is also some ineffective teaching in theory sessions of literacy, numeracy and IT by tutors who are not qualified specialists in these subjects. Some learning activities do not have a relevant context. Some tutors place insufficient emphasis on the accuracy and correctness of written and oral responses by students.

123. Students have access to a good range of vocational options. These include joinery, painting, distribution operations, business administration and food preparation. There are 19 students on placements and these range from one day to four days each week. Placements are well matched to the interests of students. Progress within the placements is assessed carefully, although this is not linked to a vocational qualification. Internal verification and vocational skills assessments are satisfactory overall.

124. The E2E programme is located within the main college, and all classrooms and workshops are along one corridor. Some classrooms are small, have no natural light and poor ventilation. Teaching equipment is inadequate in some rooms, with low-quality overhead projectors, screens and whiteboards. There is also some low-quality computer equipment with small monitor screens, limited printing facilities and a lack of scanners. Other workshop and practical areas are satisfactory.

125. The arrangements for initial and diagnostic assessment are thorough. This information is used effectively in planning and managing the overall programme. Learners of differing ability have different course options. The E2E passport is used effectively and staff also use additional monitoring and assessment records. The mentoring system is effective and is valued by students. Mentoring sessions are carried out off site at the nearby Skate Park. This weekly half-day session is attended by all of the staff. Learners have a choice of supervised recreational activities. In a separate area, tutors have mentoring meetings with learners during which they review learning and progress, and consider any personal issues that are raised by learners. This arrangement is very

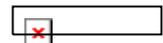
effective in providing a setting that encourages the development of confidence, personal skills and trust on the part of the learners. They respond very positively to this experience.

126. The entry arrangements to the programme are good. Learners are recruited by tutors working closely with the Connexions adviser who is attached to the college specifically for the E2E programme. Learners receive suitable careers advice during the programme. Personal support for learners is very good. Learners find tutors accessible, friendly and helpful. Tutors provide a breakfast club every day before courses start and this is welcomed by learners. It provides an informal situation for useful discussions with students, and it encourages trust between learners and tutors.

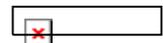
**Leadership and management**

127. Curriculum and programme management are good. The programme manager, 10 tutors, 2 training development officers and the Connexions adviser share the same workroom and this encourages an effective team approach. The three strands of the programme are integrated effectively into a coherent framework for the learners. The programme is flexible and responsive to learners' needs and benefits from a clear direction. LSC targets are met and exceeded. Monitoring of performance is good. The provision is socially and educationally inclusive and engages young people who are disaffected and/or disadvantaged in a number of ways. Tutors have benefited from relevant training, but there is not yet a plan for sufficient tutors to gain specialist teaching qualifications.

**Part D: College data**



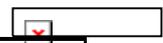
**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2003/04**



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	29	27
2	28	25
3	37	12
4/5	0	0
Other	6	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: provided by the college in autumn 2004*

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2003/04**



Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)

Science and mathematics	158	243	4
Land-based provision	0	6	0
Construction	278	533	9
Engineering, technology and manufacture	191	556	8
Business administration, management and professional	251	809	11
Information and communication technology	263	1,769	22
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	0	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	270	148	4
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	9	140	2
Health, social care and public services	364	686	11
Visual and performing arts and media	277	225	5
Humanities	340	335	7
English, languages and communication	163	333	5
Foundation programmes	116	468	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,730</b>	<b>6,617</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in autumn 2004

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2001	2002	2003	2001	2002	2003
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	572	857	518	1,397	1,297	1,396
	Retention rate %	70	75	75	64	62	79
	National average %	75	76	76	70	71	71
	Pass rate %	84	86	77	74	85	72
	National average %	67	69	73	68	70	77
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	723	814	663	1,678	1,681	1,621
	Retention rate %	70	75	78	69	65	64
	National average %	70	71	71	68	68	67

	Pass rate %	90	85	83	80	83	77
	National average %	68	70	73	67	71	73
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1,376	1,214	1,328	1,162	983	894
	Retention rate %	76	81	72	67	68	66
	National average %	70	77	77	68	70	69
	Pass rate %	93	91	88	80	86	79
	National average %	75	77	80	68	71	74
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	44	38	104
	Retention rate %	*	*	*	98	68	77
	National average %	**	**	**	67	68	69
	Pass rate %	*	*	*	95	88	84
	National average %	**	**	**	54	54	58

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 2002 to 2003: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2004.

2. College rates for 2001 to 2003: College ISR

\* numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

\*\* data not available

**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)	73	23	4	74
Level 2 (intermediate)	68	25	7	57
Level 1 (foundation)	59	34	6	32
Other sessions	82	18	0	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>180</b>

© Crown copyright 2005. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced verbatim without adaptation, and the source and date of publication are stated.  
Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

