



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Leeds Metropolitan University

CONTENTS

[Basic information about the institution](#)

[Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the institution](#)

[How effective is the institution?](#)

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

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

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

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

[Students' views of the institution](#)

[Other information](#)

[Part B: The institution 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](#)

[Engineering, technology and manufacturing](#)

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

[Information, communications technology](#)

[Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel](#)

[Hairdressing and beauty therapy](#)

[Health and social care](#)

[Visual and performing arts and media](#)

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

[Part D: Institution data](#)

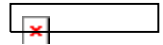
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

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

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

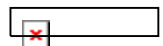
[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

Basic information about the institution

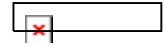


Name of institution:	Leeds Metropolitan University
Type of institution:	University
Vice chancellor	Professor Simon Lee
Principal:	John Dishman
Address of institution:	Headingley Campus Leeds LS6 3QS
Telephone number:	0113 283 3100
Fax number:	0113 283 6125
Chair of governors:	Nimble Thompson
Unique reference number:	
Name of reporting inspector:	Christine Dick HMI
Dates of inspection:	11-15 October 2004

Part A: Summary

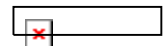


Information about the institution



Leeds Metropolitan University has a history of vocational and professional education that dates back as far as 1824. The present city campus was established, in the early 1950s, to accommodate four separate colleges which became Leeds Polytechnic, later to become the university. In 1998, in pursuing the aim to become a major provider of post-16 to post-graduate education, the university merged with Harrogate College. Most further education (FE) provision is now based at Hornbeam Park, in Harrogate, some 17 miles from the central Leeds campus. FE sits within a faculty of the university, known as the 'Yorkshire First Foundation'. Most students are drawn from in and around Harrogate; although increasing numbers of students travel from the north of Leeds. Harrogate is a relatively prosperous area. Locally, the proportion of young people who remain in education after age 16, is high. Unemployment is low. Less than 2% of the population are from minority ethnic groups. Within the vicinity, there are nine local authority and four independent schools, each with sixth forms. As a consequence, competition for students aged 16 to 18 is very strong. FE courses are available in most areas of learning. The majority of students take vocational options. In 2003/04, around 1,345 students aged 16 to 18 were enrolled on FE courses. In the same year, adult learners accounted for approximately 1,592 full-time equivalent (fte) students and more than 6,000 enrolments. Many of these are on short courses that are based in community venues. The university's mission is to be 'a pioneering, student-centred, regional university, with worldwide horizons'.

How effective is the institution?



Leadership and management are satisfactory. Of the eight curriculum areas inspected, one was judged by inspectors to be good and seven were satisfactory. Provision is good in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. It is satisfactory in engineering and in work-based learning in engineering. Satisfactory grades were also awarded in business administration; management and professional studies; information and communications technology (ICT); hairdressing and beauty therapy; health and social care and visual and performing arts and media. Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel was graded satisfactory overall, although unsatisfactory contributory grades were awarded for hospitality and catering, and for work-based learning in hospitality and catering. The proportion of lessons in which teaching is good or better is around the national average for all general FE colleges inspected in 2003/04. Guidance and support for students are good. The key strengths and areas for improvement are set out below.

Key strengths

- clear strategic direction

- effective governance, with fair representation of the FE provision

- very good local partnerships

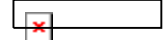
- good support for students
- good enrichment opportunities
- good student induction
- welcoming atmosphere
- effective promotion of equal opportunities.

What should be improved

- pass and retention rates, particularly at level 3
- achievement of apprenticeship frameworks
- the availability and use of reliable data on retention and pass rates
- proportion of lessons with good or better teaching and learning
- adequacy of arrangements for covering classes when staff are absent
- quality of some accommodation
- sports facilities for students on the Harrogate site.

subjects and courses in the full report.

Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

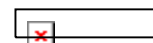


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	Satisfactory. Work-based learning contributory grade: satisfactory. There are high standards of students' practical skills and very effective support provided by technicians, but the teaching of theory classes is frequently dull. Courses offer good progression in motor vehicles but progression is poor in other aspects of engineering. Curriculum management is now good. Pass rates are low in computer-aided design and the retention rates of work-based learners are low.
Business, administration, management and professional	Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates are high on GNVQ intermediate business and on the certificate in personnel practice, but are low on level 3 vocational business programmes. There are good links between the teaching of theory and business and professional practice. Support for students is good but the checking of students' learning, in too many classes, is inadequate. There is insufficient close monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.
Information, communications technology	Satisfactory. There are high pass rates on general certificate of secondary education (GCSE), advanced subsidiary level (AS level) and general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level), and on courses for part-time students, but very poor retention rates on full-time vocational courses. Vocational students are insufficiently prepared for the world of work. Lesson cover for absent teachers is inadequate. Assessment practice and support for students have improved and are now good.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Satisfactory. Hospitality and catering contributory grade: unsatisfactory. Hospitality and catering work-based learning grade: unsatisfactory Outdoor education is very good and there is much stimulating and challenging teaching in sport. Pass and retention rates are low on advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) travel and tourism and retention rates are low on AVCE leisure and recreation. Many students develop good sports performance skills but practical sports facilities on the Harrogate site are inadequate. In hospitality and catering, poor development of food preparation skills has contributed to low pass rates in NVQs, although key skills pass rates are high.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory. There are high standards of students' practical skills and much good teaching and learning. There is good support for individual students. Weak assessment and verification practice has contributed to low pass rates in national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 2 hairdressing and NVQ level 3 beauty therapy. The achievement of apprenticeship frameworks is low.
Health and social care	Satisfactory. Pass rates are high on full-time care and early years

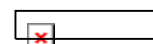
	courses but many retention rates are low at level 3. NVQ pass rates are also low at level 2. Planning to meet individual learning needs is effective and good practical equipment supports learning; although accommodation is cramped in care and early years. Internal verification outcomes are not effectively monitored and there is poor integration of key skills in theory classes.
Visual and performing arts and media	Satisfactory. Pass rates are high in foundation studies in art and design and multimedia but retention rates are low on many courses. The standard of students' work is typically high. Teaching is good in media and performing arts, and there is good support from senior learning officers. Insufficient attention is given to the development of independent learning skills and to health and safety in some workshops.
Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages	Good. Much good teaching and learning supports effective skills development. Pass and retention rates are high on externally examined literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses; although assessment practice is weak on internally accredited, discrete qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Access to learning resources, in community venues, is inadequate. Support for students, including additional learning support, is good.

How well is the institution led and managed?



Leadership and management are satisfactory. FE is embedded into corporate plans and strategy. Channels of communication and accountability are well understood. Governors and senior managers are active in monitoring quality and standards. Overall pass and retention rates are around the national average; although retention rates, on many advanced level courses are low. Too few work-based learners achieve their qualifications. Considerable difficulties, in accessing reliable data on retention and pass rates, are being addressed. Overall curriculum management is satisfactory but much practice is new. Course reviews and the self-assessment report are detailed but some key weaknesses are understated. Curriculum audits are effective in identifying unsatisfactory performance. Staff development has led to improvements in teaching and learning; although there is insufficient focus on improving performance from a satisfactory level. Findings from internal lesson observations are not routinely shared with managers and staff. The promotion of equal opportunities is good. Links with partner schools, business and community organisations are very good. The FE provision provides satisfactory value for money.

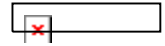
To what extent is the institution educationally and socially inclusive?



The faculty's response to educational and social inclusion is good. Initiatives to widen participation are effective. Significant numbers of adult learners study in outreach centres offering courses from entry level to higher education (HE). Pupils aged 14 to 16 attend vocational courses through collaborative arrangements with schools. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are successful on FE courses. Data on student participation and achievement, by ethnic group and gender is compiled, but the use of this data, to raise standards, is insufficiently well-developed. Policies and action plans address issues of racial discrimination and promote diversity, and equal

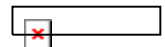
with its responsibilities under the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000; although some staff are yet to undertake relevant training. A recent access survey has assessed accommodation against the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). An implementation plan is in place to ensure that changes are made by September 2005. Most areas of the campus are accessible to students with restricted mobility, but access to some involves complicated routes.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Support for students is good. Initial advice and guidance is comprehensive. Leaflets and course details are clear and readily available. Students have good access to an extensive range of academic and personal support and they benefit from their membership of the wider university community. Induction enables students to settle into their courses quickly and individual learning support is provided promptly. Parents and students speak highly of the support received. Tutors make themselves available to help students outside timetabled classes. Attendance monitoring is effective. Tutorials are well-structured, and procedures are carefully documented. Students are set targets; although too many are insufficiently detailed and do not inform, or measure improvements. Child protection procedures are in place and relevant staff have had appropriate training. The operational management of support services is good, but there is insufficient, thorough analysis of support trends and the benefits these bring to students.

Students' views of the institution



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

What students like about the institution

- being treated like adults and with respect

- helpful learning assistants

- informative and fun induction

- wide choice of enrichment activities

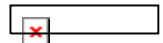
- experienced staff and good teaching

- good support and individual advice and guidance from teachers
- learning new skills and having the freedom to experiment.

What they feel could be improved

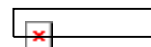
- the cost of food in vending machines, and in the 'Loft Café'
- access to drinking water
- overcrowding in the student common room
- frequent changes to course timetables
- some accommodation that is drab in B and C blocks
- some key skills sessions
- female toilet facilities.

Other information



The institution inspection report will normally be published 12-working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the institution. Once published, the institution has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The institution's action plan must show what action the institution 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 institutions 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 institution as a whole



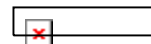
Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	62	27	11
19+ and WBL*	70	24	6
Learning 16-18	57	33	10
19+ and WBL*	70	26	4

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

*work-based learning

Achievement and standards



1. Summary data indicate that pass and retention rates for all students are around the national average for general FE colleges, with some improvements in the number of students who achieved their qualifications over the three years to 2003. Adult learners typically out-perform students aged 16 to 18 at all levels. At the time of inspection, achievement data for 2003/04 were incomplete; although there are indications that retention rates, on many courses, have improved. Overall attendance in the lessons observed, at around 81%, was above the national average for colleges of a similar type. At 89%, attendance was highest in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. By comparison, the lowest figure, of 76%, was recorded in both visual and performing arts and media, and in hairdressing and beauty therapy.

16 to 18 year olds

2. At the time of inspection, around one-third of students that were enrolled on FE courses were aged 16 to 18. Most of these students are on programmes at levels 2 and 3. At level 2, pass and retention rates have improved and are now similar to the national average for general FE colleges. At level 3, pass rates have improved to around the national average but retention rates are low. For example, in 2003, overall retention rates on level 3 courses were more than 10% below the national figure. By contrast, for the smaller number of students on level 1 courses, retention and pass rates are good. In 2002/03, at 88%, pass rates at level 1 were more than 15% above the national average.

3. Retention rates are significantly below the national average in a number of advanced level vocational programmes. For example, on AVCE business, retention rates were more than 15 percentage points below the national average in 2002/03. In the same year, the national diploma in

computer studies retained just 8% of students and, with the exception of the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) diploma in childcare and education, retention rates on level 3 courses in health and social care were very low. The majority of students who complete their course at this level are usually successful, although in AVCE travel and tourism, pass rates were almost 30% below the national average for general FE colleges.

4. In several curriculum areas, there are high pass and retention rates on individual courses. For example, in 2002/03 some 90% of general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate business students, and 83% of GNVQ intermediate health and social care students were retained, all of whom successfully completed their qualification. In the same year, in visual and performing arts and media, 100% of multimedia design students were retained and, at 93%, pass rates were very high. In the diploma in foundation studies art and design, some 88% of students were retained and the pass rate was around 6% higher than the national average for general FE colleges. At 92%, and 100% respectively, pass rates on AS-level ICT and the diploma in reflexology were very high.

5. Work-based trainees take courses in motor vehicles, hairdressing and business administration. Most trainees are on motor vehicles programmes. Until very recently, work-based learners have made slow progress in completing their apprenticeship frameworks and retention rates are low.

6. Provision for the development and accreditation of students' key skills has improved. In 2003/04, college data indicate a 30% improvement in key skills units achieved. Across all curriculum areas, male students outperform female students in key skills portfolio completion. Key skills pass rates are particularly good in electrical installation, NVQ motor vehicles and in hospitality and catering courses. Trainees on apprenticeship schemes are now achieving key skills qualifications much earlier in their programmes than students in previous years.

7. The standard of students' work in lessons is generally satisfactory. However, the proportion of lessons in which advanced level students aged 16 to 18 were judged to have made good progress, when compared with that which might be expected at that point in their course, at 50%, was low. In engineering, ICT and hairdressing and beauty therapy, learners develop good practical skills. Much students' work is of a high standard in visual and performing arts and media, although some students are overly dependant on their teachers. In literacy, numeracy and ESOL, students demonstrate good personal and learning skills, which improve their self-esteem and confidence. In health and social care, students make thoughtful contributions to classroom discussions. In sports, students demonstrate good performance skills and in business classes, students are confident and articulate. Young people aged 14 to 16 develop good vocational skills on courses in hairdressing, engineering and in health and social care. Approximately half of those learners who are eligible progress to HE.

8. The faculty is developing a system which calculates how well students are achieving in their courses when compared to their previous GCSE results. At the time of inspection, the new model was not yet in place, largely due to the lack of timely, detailed data on students' achievements.

Adult learners

9. Some two-thirds of the learners enrolled on FE courses are adults. Most of these are on courses at level 1. Overall pass and retention rates are significantly higher for adult learners than for students aged 16 to 18. At level 1, retention rates are around 8% higher than the national average for general FE colleges, and pass rates are very high. For example, in 2002/03, some 93% of adult learners achieved their level 1 qualifications. In the same year, at level 2, retention rates were very high and pass rates were slightly above average. At level 3, retention and pass rates, at 76% and 81%, were significantly above the national average. In some 80% of observed lessons at level 2, and 79% at level 3, adult learners were judged to have made good progress.

Quality of education and training



10. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 120 lessons. The proportion of good or better teaching was a little above the national average for general FE colleges inspected in the previous year, although there was slightly more unsatisfactory teaching. Inspectors judged that teaching was good or better in 65% of lessons, satisfactory in 26%, and less than satisfactory in around 9%. Teaching was best in hairdressing and beauty therapy, where 75% of teaching was judged to be good or better. The most unsatisfactory teaching, at around 11%, was observed in visual and performing arts and media. There is some variation in the quality of teaching associated with the level of courses, and age of learners. For example, at level 3, almost 79% of classes for adult learners were judged to be good or better, compared with 58% of classes at this level for students aged 16 to 18. Overall, just under 64% of level 3 classes were judged to be good or better, compared with 68% of classes at level 2. The proportion of good or better grades awarded were highest in lessons taught by full-time teachers. Some 71% of these classes were judged to be good or better, compared with 54% of those taught by part-time staff.

11. In the most effective lessons, teachers make the best use of their specialist knowledge to engage, challenge and motivate students. Sessions are carefully planned; learning materials are used creatively and are of a high standard. In business and sports, teachers link theory to students' practical experience. In health and social care, planning takes account of individual learning needs. Weaker lessons are characterised by dull teaching of theory. Other features include lack of pace and insufficient checking on learning. In too many of these classes, learners are not effectively engaged in their studies and do not make the progress expected of them. In hairdressing, health and social care, and literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes, insufficient use is made of information learning technology (ILT).

12. Learning is generally satisfactory or better. In almost 63% of observed classes, inspectors judged learning to be good. Learning is better in lessons involving adults. In almost 70% of adult classes, learning was good or better, compared with 57% of classes for students aged 16 to 18. In visual and performing arts and media, insufficient attention is given to the development of students' independent learning skills.

13. The faculty's key skills policy sets out students' entitlement. All full-time students have their key skills levels assessed at the start of their course. Key skills specialists work closely with vocational curriculum teams to support key skills development, although key skills are yet to be integrated effectively across all curriculum areas. Students in hospitality and catering and engineering develop good key skills. Key skills are not well integrated in vocational classes in hairdressing and beauty therapy or in health and social care. Attendance at key skills sessions is poor in visual and performing arts and media.

14. Most FE courses are offered in adequate accommodation, in three buildings close to Harrogate. A few classrooms and working areas are cramped and dated. On-site facilities for sports courses are poor. Most areas are accessible to wheelchair users but students with restricted mobility have to follow complicated routes to move around the building. A detailed access survey has led to a planned programme to meet SENDA requirements. The estates team deal promptly with requests from staff for adjustments to accommodation and equipment, to meet individual learner needs.

15. The refectory is bright and welcoming. An adjacent student-recreational area is small and often overcrowded at peak times. Studios in art and design are well equipped, but insufficient attention is paid to health and safety in some workshops. Learning resources in health and social care are particularly good. By contrast, there are insufficient learning materials to support the curriculum in literacy, numeracy and ESOL in community venues.

16. Technicians provide good support in art and design and engineering. Information technology (IT) resources are good in the learning resource centre. Additional computers are available for independent study. A very well-equipped room is set aside for use by students who require assistive technology; such as large keyboards for the visually impaired and specialist software. Laptops are available for loan to students studying literacy and numeracy.

17. Most teachers have relevant vocational and professional qualifications. Good use is made of external speakers. Arrangements to cover staff absences in IT are ineffective. Staff shortages have impacted on the capacity of the team to undertake work-based assessment in hairdressing. Staff development opportunities are managed well, with clear links to strategic objectives. Training to improve the quality of teaching and learning has been a priority. Vocational teachers take advantage of the good opportunities for industrial updating.

18. Personal tutors offer regular feedback, including views gathered from subject tutors. Written feedback on marked work is particularly detailed and constructive in business and ICT, although feedback on marked work is of variable quality in health and social care. Assessor teams meet regularly to share good practice. Monitoring of most work-based learning has improved. Opportunities for assessment on some NVQs have increased. Detailed assessment and verification guidance is provided for staff. Assessment practice is good in art and design, ICT, and work-based engineering. In hairdressing, internal verification is not planned well and assessment opportunities for work-based learners are insufficient. There is a lack of rigour in internal verification practices in health and social care and college-certificated literacy and numeracy courses.

19. The faculty provides a good range of FE in a highly competitive environment. It has taken steps to revise its curriculum, in response to changing demand. Enrichment opportunities enable full-time first-year students to gain access to recreational activities and additional qualifications. Outreach centres in community venues and local schools offer courses to many students who would otherwise be unable to participate in learning. Specialist provision, for small-sized and medium-sized enterprises in the food manufacturing industry, is offered in a rural setting. In lifelong learning centres at Ripon and Melmerby, courses available include literacy, numeracy, languages and IT.

20. Adults returning to study follow courses that lead to a range of full-time and part-time access to HE provision. A number of initiatives are aimed at increasing the participation of women in refuge, voluntary carers, and young people who are in danger of exclusion from education. Links with local schools, at Key Stage 4, are strong. Some 400 pupils aged 14 to 16 attend faculty courses in vocational subjects at foundation level. These include increased flexibility (IF) programme courses and provision that is aimed at re-engaging young people in learning. New courses have been developed in motor vehicle and hairdressing in response to increasing demand from pupils aged 14 to 16 who wish to continue their studies after age 16. The faculty's FE provision is responsive to the needs of local employers. The marketing team successfully promotes a range of courses to industry.

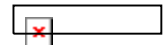
21. Support for students is good. Pre-entry advice and guidance is accurate and clear. Leaflets are readily available, and contain concise information on courses and the range of support available. The advice centre, known as the help zone, is welcoming and accessible, although it is too small to cope adequately with demand. Detailed advice is available on a range of issues including financial support, benefits, transport, and students' rights and responsibilities. Faculty staff take part in school information events and host well-attended open days. Procedures on bullying and harassment are clear and promoted well.

22. Comprehensive student services include specialist support, for example, support for students with dyslexia and sensory impairment. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL support is readily available. Students benefit from their wider membership of the university. They have access to student union advice and a range of learning and recreational facilities. The faculty employs a full-time counsellor. Students at outreach centres are able to access support on the main campus or in the centres. A faculty nursery offers 20 places for children aged 2 to 5.

23. Induction to FE courses is thorough and greatly appreciated by students. All full-time students complete an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and specialist support needs. In 2003/04, the faculty provided additional learning support to over 500 students. Most literacy and numeracy support is delivered by specialist staff in mainstream classes. Teaching staff have received training to help them to recognise indicators of individual support needs. Operational management of support services is good, although there is insufficient analysis of trends and changes in support needs or the impact of support on students. Communication with parents and carers is regular and detailed. Students have access to a comprehensive careers library and specialist careers software. A Connexions adviser is based within the faculty and works closely with guidance and teaching staff.

24. All students have a personal tutor and an entitlement to tutorials. Tutors have received appropriate training. Guidance for tutors is extensive, with exemplar material for both individual and group tutorials. The faculty has recently appointed a specialist advanced practitioner for tutorials. A forum exists in which tutors from different curriculum areas are able to meet and share good practice. Tutors set targets for improvement with students, although these are not routinely well done. In the best examples, targets are measurable with clear indicators of how students can improve. Monitoring of attendance is good. Child protection procedures are in place and designated staff have received appropriate training. Links with social services and other agencies are good.

Leadership and management



25. Leadership and management are satisfactory. In February 2004, under the direction of the recently appointed vice chancellor of the university, FE provision was centralised in a new faculty: Yorkshire First Foundation. FE is one of several initiatives that is focused on widening participation and promoting lifelong and work-based learning. The 2004-08 corporate development plan makes substantial reference to FE, which is effectively embedded into the strategic vision of the institution as a whole. Planning processes are thorough. Development plans are measured against faculty and institutional targets. Monitoring occurs through fortnightly management team meetings.

26. The principal of Harrogate College is dean to the Yorkshire First Foundation. He has acted as principal since 1999 and dean since February 2004. As such, he is a member of the senior executive team of the university. Many functions, such as finance and estates management, are now located in the central university business services. Centralisation and harmonisation of approaches is a key objective of the recent re-organisation. Governance of FE provision is good. Governors are well informed about FE issues and have good working relationships with senior managers. Channels of communication and accountability are well understood. Key policies and minutes of meetings are readily available through the university intranet.

27. Curriculum management is overseen by two heads of school, each with two assistants, who take responsibility for resources and quality. The head of curriculum, quality and standards has overall responsibility for staff development, tutorials, key skills, enrichment activities and the growing 14 to 16 provision. Heads of school manage devolved budgets for their areas. Some 13 curriculum managers take responsibility for operational matters. At the time of inspection, in one school, no senior staff were in place, due to retirement or sickness. Line management responsibilities had been taken up by the deputy principal. Curriculum managers have had to take on new responsibilities, in some cases at short notice and with limited training. Staffing shortages have affected seven curriculum areas out of the eight inspected, leading to some difficulties in covering absence, and the deployment of inexperienced temporary staff.

28. Most new full-time teachers have access to a mentor but support for part-time teachers is more variable. Overall, management is satisfactory in seven curriculum areas and good in one. Features of effective curriculum management include good teamwork and sharing of good practice. Quality assurance at course level is satisfactory, but internal verification in care and early years and in hairdressing and beauty therapy is weak. Work-based learning is available in engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, hospitality and catering, and business. Weak planning of assessment on work-based programmes and staffing issues in hairdressing have contributed to low achievement of apprenticeships, although recent improvements are having some impact on framework completions.

29. Course teams have a good understanding of the curriculum and of the community they serve. A comprehensive quality cycle has a standard agenda that focuses on performance and reviewing progress against targets. Self-assessment is generally thorough; although some key weaknesses are understated. Support areas self-assess using the same model as curriculum teams. Issues are addressed through a detailed action plan; although, at course team level, overall analysis of data on

retention and pass rates lacks rigour and too many targets are based on insufficiently secure management information.

30. Curriculum audits are undertaken on a two-year cycle. Teams review teaching and learning through internal lesson observations, analysis of student satisfaction, arrangements for tutorial provision, additional learning support, key skills, and through analysis of data on retention and pass rates and attendance. Audits have successfully identified underperforming areas. Quality improvement plans have been drawn up, but these plans do not set clear targets or identify measurable outcomes. Significant improvements have been made in teaching and learning in sport and leisure, ICT, engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy. A recovery plan for technology is well thought out, making good use of advice from external consultants and decisive management action. Curriculum audits are less successful in driving up standards in areas where the judgement is satisfactory or better.

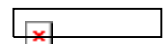
31. Lesson observation takes place, as part of the internal audit, although observation grades have been overgenerous. Findings are not effectively communicated to managers or staff, and do not form part of the appraisal process. A comprehensive staff development programme is in place across the university. A special project in hospitality and catering has improved the use of ILT on NVQ courses. Good opportunities for vocational updating are used well by teachers.

32. Promotion of equal opportunities within the faculty is good, although data have not been available to support a full analysis of trends relating to ethnicity and gender. A diversity committee monitors the implementation of the race equality policy and action plan. The faculty complies with the requirements of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. Steps are taken to overcome gender stereotyping, particularly in vocational subjects. For example, the use of male hairdressers and female engineers to promote courses at open events. Training events to raise staff awareness of current legislation are held, although a number of staff have yet to attend.

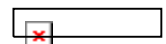
33. A comprehensive estates strategy is addressing accessibility issues. The faculty works very well with a wide range of partners in the community. The dean has chaired the local area learning partnership, and the faculty has taken a leading role in many good examples of collaboration, including those with schools involved in the extensive 14 to 16 programme, and the digital forum of local businesses, promoting the use of IT. A food manufacturing start-up unit in Ripon is particularly highly regarded. A strong widening participation agenda is embodied in the operating statement of the Yorkshire First Foundation.

34. The quality of management information has been poor in the two years to 2004. External consultants are currently engaged in reviewing information systems and procedures. Data collection and interpretation has been weak. Insufficient access to accurate data has hindered detailed planning at course level, and contributed to a failure to meet financial targets in 2002/03. The cost-effectiveness of FE provision is not systematically monitored by course teams. Direct oversight of financial matters by the university registry is now in place, and close scrutiny is maintained. Best-value principles are being introduced. FE provision benefits from the university's position as a substantial purchaser. Overall, value for money is satisfactory, although recent financial history has undermined this.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Engineering, technology and manufacturing



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

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

Strengths

- high standards of students' practical skills

- effective technician support for staff and students

- rigorous assessment in work-based learning

- good curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates in computer-aided design and in GCSE engineering

- low retention rates in work-based learning

- dull theory teaching

- poor progression pathways in manufacturing and general engineering.

Scope of provision

35. At the time of inspection, the curriculum area was undergoing a period of growth and redevelopment, in the wake of declining numbers in previous years. There are 70 apprentices in motor vehicle repair and maintenance and 11 trainees are on apprenticeships in fabrication and welding. All off-the-job training takes place in the faculty. There are 15 students on a level 1 course in motor vehicle studies and a further 13 students aged 16 to 18 are studying full time at level 2. A growing 14 to 16 provision, offered in partnership with local schools, includes 23 students taking GCSE engineering, and 25 working towards NVQ units in engineering at level 1. There are 25 students studying level 2 and 3 computer-aided design courses as evening classes. Some 40 adult learners attend part-time level 1 classes in welding.

Achievement and standards

36. Progression to further study or to related employment is high. In motor vehicles, around 75% of level 1 students completed the course successfully. Most of these have subsequently either enrolled on the level 2 award or joined the foundation apprenticeship programme in 2004/05. Pass rates on level 2 computer-aided design courses are improving, but remained well below the national average in 2003/04. Too many apprentices leave their training programmes early. Course records, for current apprenticeship schemes, indicate that retention and successful completion rates are improving. Almost all foundation motor vehicle apprentices progress onto the advanced programme and the majority continue to careers in the industry. Pass rates were low on GCSE engineering in 2003/04.

37. Students develop an impressive level of practical competence and confidence, and have good interpersonal skills. In practical classes, and in the workplace, they are confident in handling tools and equipment, and in approaching new tasks. They work effectively as individuals and with colleagues and supervisors. Adult apprentices speak confidently with their employers and are trusted to liaise with customers. Pass rates for key skills have improved significantly in the three years to 2004.

Quality of education and training

38. Most teaching is at least satisfactory. Students work efficiently in workshops and develop good practical skills. Practical classes are well planned and executed. Students respond appropriately to their teachers' high expectations. They are attentive, settle quickly to their tasks and enjoy their work. One group of full-time level 2 motor vehicle students were completing complex repair and maintenance tasks on different vehicles. The students recalled earlier instruction and approached each task with confidence, working co-operatively in pairs. In contrast, too much dull theory teaching allows students to be passive observers for too long to hold their attention. For example, in one class, learners were required to observe a demonstration. The teacher did not encourage interaction or check learners' understanding. As a consequence, they quickly lost interest and experienced significant difficulties in completing follow-up exercises. In work-based learning, employers speak positively of the value of the off-the-job training provided.

39. Motor vehicle workshops are fit for purpose, although shabby when compared with the high standards experienced by many trainees in the workplace. Classroom areas in the workshops provide appropriate space for short periods of instruction but are unsuited to longer theory sessions. Engineering accommodation is adequate for the programmes currently operated. The quality and quantity of tools and equipment are satisfactory. Teachers, training co-ordinators, assessors and technicians have relevant industrial experience and are appropriately qualified. Some new appointments have come directly from industry. This has enhanced students' learning experiences and is welcomed by employers.

40. Trainees' progress is carefully monitored and recorded. Clear documentation, covering NVQ competencies, enables apprentices and employers to understand what has been achieved to date and what still needs to be done. Information is used effectively during progress reviews to set targets that need to be completed before the next review. The assessment of work-based learning is now well managed and rigorous. Practical assessments include searching questioning of the apprentice's theoretical knowledge. Activities are terminated if the apprentice shows a lack of confidence or is deemed to be too slow in the task. Assessors make good use of workplace visits to gather all relevant evidence. During one work-based assessment, the apprentice had to interrupt his task to answer a customer telephone call. This was handled politely and efficiently and recorded as evidence towards competence in customer service. The small businesses that employ many of the apprentices are sometimes not able to provide the range of training and assessment experiences to satisfy NVQ requirements. In such cases, provision is made for training and simulated assessment in the workshop, or with other employers. Internal verification is managed well.

41. Increasing numbers of pupils aged 14 to 16 from local schools study motor vehicle courses at levels 1 and 2. Learners aged over 16 who aspire to a career in the auto-repair industry are well served by courses that offer progression routes and different modes of attendance. Those who are looking to work in manufacturing or general engineering have far fewer opportunities. Motor vehicle courses are offered for full-time students at levels 1 and 2, and in work-based learning programmes at foundation and advanced level. A part-time level 4 management course is available to adult

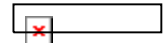
learners from the motor industry. By contrast, after the GCSE and level 1 programmes, offered in conjunction with schools, the only route to continuing in engineering is to take up a foundation modern apprenticeship in welding.

42. Well-planned induction enables students and trainees to settle into their courses. Initial assessment identifies individual support needs. Additional support is also provided if a need is detected later in the student's programme. Good technician support is readily available and is used very effectively to support students' learning. In practical motor vehicle sessions, technicians work particularly closely with teachers. They use their considerable specialist expertise to guide students when difficulties arise.

Leadership and management

43. Leadership and management of the curriculum area have improved and are now good. Decisive actions have been taken to develop the provision. From a previously unsatisfactory outcome of internal curriculum audit, a clear recovery plan has been implemented. New staff appointments have been made. Internal monitoring processes are well documented and effective. Internal verification and self-assessment are thorough. Indicators of improving outcomes are evident on most courses. Curriculum teams meet regularly; business is appropriately recorded with clear action points. Problems remain with reconciling centrally held achievement data on work-based learning with local course records.

Business, administration, management and professional



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

Strengths

- high retention and pass rates on GNVQ intermediate business and high pass rates on the certificate in personnel practice

- well-developed links between theory and practice

- good support for students.

Weaknesses

- low retention and pass rates on level 3 vocational courses

- inadequate checking of learning in too many lessons

- o insufficient close monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

Scope of provision

44. Recently introduced first and national diplomas are offered to full-time business students. Courses in business administration, book-keeping, accounting and finance, marketing, human resources and general management training are available for part-time, mainly adult, students. Accounting and finance can be studied either during the day or in the evening. Book-keeping, accounting and finance are provided at levels 1 to 5, and many students progress through the different stages. At the time of inspection, some 34 full-time and 248 part-time students were enrolled on business administration, management and professional courses. Five apprentices were following training programmes in business administration.

Achievement and standards

45. Retention rates on the GNVQ intermediate business course have remained high and in 2003/04, pass rates improved to 100%. Pass rates have been consistently high on the part-time certificate in personnel practice and the central assessment examinations for NVQ accounting; although successful completion of the full NVQ level 3 accounting has been low for the past three years. Low retention rates and fluctuating pass rates are a feature of advanced level vocational business education in recent years. A revised curriculum offer is in place for 2004/05 to better reflect the needs of these students.

46. The standard of students' written work is good. Portfolios are well organised. Many students develop good analytical and critical skills. They are confident and articulate, and are able to express themselves clearly. They use references to current business and professional practice to support their points of view. Students develop their skills in college, and apply this to their workplace or personal lives. For example, an NVQ accounting student has used her new skills to improve book-keeping arrangements for her parish clerking work. A supervisory management student has been able to introduce improved time management skills for his work team, while full-time students, working on an 'effective retailing' unit, now appreciate the need for improved facilities for the disabled in different local shopping outlets.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	*	15	10
		% retention	*	87	90
		% pass rate	*	69	100
GCSE accounting	2	No. of starts	18	23	*
		% retention	61	70	*
		% pass rate	64	100	*
NVQ accounting intermediate stage	3	No. of starts	48	60	34
		% retention	85	82	88
		% pass rate	43	31	50
Certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	19	30	22
		% retention	95	93	86
		% pass rate	83	93	100

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

* fewer than 15 starts

Quality of education and training

47. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. In good lessons, teachers plan their work carefully; lesson plans and schemes of work are detailed. Planning takes into account students' preferred learning styles and teachers frequently introduce a range of activities to suit the different learning needs of their students. Theory work is well matched to commercial practice. Teachers use their own vocational backgrounds to enhance learning and they encourage students to relate topics to their personal experiences as consumers or employees. Business studies students, for example, reported on potential hazards and dangers in local catering establishments as part of their health and safety module. Professional studies students identified proposals for new personnel initiatives in their own workplaces. In too many lessons, teachers fail to check learning effectively. Activities are insufficiently varied and students quickly lose interest.

48. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory. Teachers are well qualified with relevant vocational and teaching experience. Access to staff development opportunities is good. Regular vocational updating is seen as a priority for personal development. Recent links with a regional business enterprise organisation have helped teachers to secure short placements and gain useful new experiences in local industry. The introduction of a virtual learning environment has significantly increased the scope for learning activities. The library is a good learning resource centre and teachers and students make good use of online and other learning facilities.

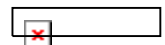
49. Assessment practice is satisfactory and meets the requirements of awarding bodies. Some previous issues, such as inconsistent application of internal verification procedures, have now been addressed. Students are made aware of the assessment requirements of their programmes at induction. They know how to appeal assessment decisions if necessary. Full-time students have individual action plans which are regularly monitored and reviewed. Many part-time professional students are required to consider their progress as part of their continuous professional development modules. Teachers provide detailed and useful written comments on students' work.

50. Support for students is good. They value the ready access to a wide range of academic and personal support. They receive clear initial advice and guidance from staff. Additional support needs are identified through initial assessment at induction. Learning support assistants work effectively with teachers. Both full-time and part-time students have personal tutors. Tutorial support is offered on a group and individual basis. Many part-time students use email and telephone contact and peer email networks to support them outside of the formal tutorial system. Local employers act as mentors for management students.

Leadership and management

51. Leadership and management of the area are satisfactory. Curriculum managers lead with a consultative and supportive approach. A commitment to improving the experience of all students is strong. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively. Quality assurance is monitored through scheduled team meetings and college-wide curriculum audits. However, formal arrangements to review the quality of teaching and learning are insufficiently thorough or frequent. Aspects of good practice and areas of concern are not routinely identified.

Information, communications technology



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

Strengths

- high pass rates on GCSE, AS level and many part-time courses

- good assessment that leads to improved standards

- good support for students.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on level 3 vocational courses

- vocational students insufficiently prepared for the world of work

- inadequate cover for absent teachers.

Scope of provision

52. A range of computing and IT courses is offered to full-time and part-time students. Full-time provision includes first and national diplomas for IT practitioners, GCSE in ICT, and GCE A level in ICT. Part-time students can choose from a wide variety of courses that range from entry level to level 3. These include computing for beginners, a basic computing certificate for IT users at levels 1 and 2, desk-top publishing, web wise, the European computer driving licence (ECDL) and a certificate programme in ICT for teachers. At the time of the inspection, 73 students were enrolled on full-time courses and 609 learners, who were mainly adults, were studying in part-time classes.

Achievement and standards

53. Pass rates are high on the GCSE ICT and AS-level ICT courses and on many part-time courses. Most retention rates are satisfactory or better; although in 2002/03, retention rates on computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) short courses were around 14% below the figure for colleges of a similar type. In the same year, pass and retention rates were high on the GNVQ intermediate ICT courses. Level 3 courses, for full-time students, have had very poor results. The retention rate for the AVCE in ICT in 2002 was 13% and the national diploma in computer studies retained just 8% of students in 2003. Both of these courses have now been replaced by the British Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma for IT practitioners.

54. Attendance and punctuality are monitored rigorously and absences are quickly followed up.

55. Students' coursework is well structured and presented. Practical skills are well developed. In one lesson, students stripped down and rebuilt desktop computers very quickly and competently. Full-time and part-time students develop the skills to work independently and apply themselves conscientiously to set tasks. Advanced level students are confident in forming judgements and gathering evidence to support their views.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Open College of the North West (OCNW) FAST foundation certificate in computers	X	No. of starts	45	32	30
		% retention	100	94	90
		% pass rate	100	100	100
CLAIT (short) Replaced in 02/03 by certificate for IT users (New CLAIT)	1	No. of starts	1,041	524	137
		% retention	95	95	70
		% pass rate	82	76	89
GCSE IT	2	No. of starts	*	16	*
		% retention	*	75	*
		% pass rate	*	92	*
ECDL (short)	2	No. of starts	276	285	24
		% retention	99	98	75
		% pass rate	70	74	89
AS-level IT	3	No. of starts	*	*	17
		% retention	*	*	76
		% pass rate	*	*	92
GNVQ advanced IT (00/01) AVCE in ICT (01/02) national diploma computer studies (02/03)	3	No. of starts	49	31	*
		% retention	55	13	*
		% pass rate	56	100	*

Source: college data provided in autumn 2004

* fewer than 15 starts

Quality of education and training

56. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Lesson plans often include practical and effective strategies to support students of different abilities. In the best lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching techniques to maintain the interest of their students. They set demanding tasks for their learners and display sound vocational knowledge. In a minority of lessons, students' interest is not maintained and explanations of techniques and concepts are unclear. As a consequence, students are less well motivated and demonstrate poorer attainment.

57. Increasing use is being made of the college intranet to share teaching materials and to store hand-outs and assignments for students.

58. Computing resources for full-time students are good. Computer rooms are well equipped. The network is stable and students can easily gain access to computers outside of lesson time. The computer rooms are in good decorative order and contain interesting and useful displays. Resources for staff are poor. Too few teachers have sole access to a computer to develop their teaching materials or to mark students' work. Data projectors, to support teaching and learning, are not readily available in classrooms. Staff praise the quality of technical support, although the delay between reporting faults and having them remedied is too long. The library has a good stock of relevant books on computing but there are insufficient practical computing magazines. Part-time students, both on the Harrogate site, and in the outreach centres, benefit from well-equipped computer rooms, many furnished with data projectors.

59. Assessment practices are good. Students' work is marked quickly and returned with constructive, formative comments. External verifier reports confirm that assessment practices meet all the awarding body requirements. Assignment hand-in dates are carefully spaced to avoid bunching. Many assignments are broken into stages to help students to plan their workload and keep up to date. A selection of coursework is cross-marked for accuracy and assignment briefs are checked for suitability. Students' progress is recorded on spreadsheets, which are held on the shared drive, and the students are made aware of their progress during tutorials.

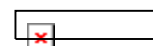
60. The range of provision meets the needs of the local community. Part-time students regularly progress to higher level courses. Additional courses are offered to full-time students; although these learners do not have routine access to relevant work experience. As a consequence, they are insufficiently well prepared for transition to the world of work.

61. Support for students is good. Regular tutorials are held. In these, students develop wider key skills and discuss their progress with their tutor. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with effective learning support. More general support is offered to all learners in first diploma classes. Specially configured and equipped machines have been installed in the learning resource centre for use by students with sight impairments or dexterity difficulties. The initial advice and guidance students receive is usually effective in directing them to the most appropriate course.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management of part-time courses and the GCSE and GCE A-level courses is good. Communications within the teaching team are effective. Meetings are frequent and well documented. Staff development is readily available and good practice is shared. The curriculum strategy for full-time courses has been less well managed. Frequent changes have been made to level 3 provision. Replacement teachers, with insufficient subject expertise, have been used to cover long staff absence, to the detriment of students' progress. The self-assessment report lacks rigour and some significant strengths and weaknesses are understated.

Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel



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

Contributory grade for hospitality and catering is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

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

Strengths

- very good outdoor education
- much stimulating and challenging teaching in sport
- good performance skills in sports
- high pass rates in hospitality and catering key skills.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates on NVQs in hospitality and catering
- poor development of food preparation skills at NVQ level 2
- low pass and retention rates on AVCE travel and tourism and low retention rates in AVCE leisure and recreation
- inadequate practical sports facilities on the Harrogate site.

Scope of provision

63. A range of full-time provision in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, are offered from levels 1 to 3. Courses lead to national certificates and diplomas in sport, travel and tourism. A first diploma in sport is also available. A broad range of short sports coaching courses including first aid and national pool lifeguard are also offered. Some 150 full-time students study sport, leisure and travel. Around 107 students are on courses in hospitality and catering. Full-time catering students take NVQs in food preparation and cooking at levels 1 and 2. These students also study additional qualifications in key skills and food hygiene. Part-time NVQs are offered in food preparation and cooking at levels 2 and 3. Other part-time and short courses include the Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET) intermediate certificate and food hygiene at foundation and intermediate level.

Achievement and standards

64. Pass and retention rates are low in AVCE travel and tourism and retention rates are low in AVCE leisure and recreation. In 2001/02 and 2002/03, these were significantly below national averages. By contrast, in 2003/04, pass rates on the national diploma in outdoor education, at 100%, were very good.

65. Most students produce satisfactory or better written work. Assignments and portfolios are well presented with good use of ICT. Students on sports courses understand the link between theory and practice; they are confident and well motivated. Many reach high standards of sporting performance, particularly in rugby and football. In classes, students demonstrate good skills in research, presentation and collaborative group work.

66. Hospitality and catering students perform well in key skills and they are encouraged to progress to higher levels. Between 2002 and 2004, some 70% of these students achieved three key skills qualifications. Pass rates are low on NVQ hospitality and catering courses and work-based learners have made slow progress towards completing their apprenticeship frameworks. Students' food preparation skills at NVQ level 2 are poorly developed. Work areas are often untidy and techniques in preparing and cooking food are unsatisfactory. For example, in a food preparation class, learners who failed to weigh ingredients were not checked, which resulted in incorrect ratios and poor outcomes. In another lesson, a whisk was used to mash potatoes.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
WSET certificate in wines and spirits	2	No. of starts	*	**	**
		% retention	*	**	**
		% pass rate	*	**	**
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	38	**	*
		% retention	76	**	*
		% pass rate	62	**	*
AVCE leisure and recreation	3	No. of starts	23***	23	33
		% retention	61	83	39
		% pass rate	71	58	85
AVCE travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	23***	19	16
		% retention	61	58	56
		% pass rate	71	85	44

Source: college data autumn 2004

*Course not running

** fewer than 15 starts

***AVCE leisure and tourism

Quality of education and training

67. Much teaching in sports is good. In the most effective lessons, clear objectives are set and teachers use a variety of teaching methods. These classes are stimulating, challenging and often good fun. In a national diploma sport psychology lesson, the teacher used personality trait tests, transforming dry theory into fun practice and effective learning. Sports teachers are enthusiastic with a lively teaching style. They encourage students to highlight examples from their own placement or work experience and emphasise current industry practice. A particular strength is the quality of provision in outdoor education which makes excellent use of local and national natural resources. In the least satisfactory lessons, the teaching lacks pace and fails to stimulate students. In these lessons, learners quickly lose interest and learning is inhibited.

68. In hospitality and catering, there is good teaching of key skills. Key skills staff and vocational staff work together to set key skills in context. Good use is made of ILT and in some areas this is particularly effective. For example, part-time students studying for the WSET wine and spirits qualification are able to access all course materials through the college's virtual learning environment. School pupils who attend a link programme are well supported in researching recipes on the Internet. However, NVQ level 2 food preparation classes are not sufficiently well planned or supervised. Demonstrations do not prepare students adequately for their tasks. Too frequently, students' poor practice and techniques are not corrected. One teacher set a bad example of poor hygiene practice by washing his hands in a pan sink and using his apron to dry them. Most lesson plans contain a minimum of information. Insufficient consideration is given to selecting teaching and learning strategies to engage learners and to meet individual learning needs.

69. Practical sports facilities on the Harrogate site are poor; there is no indoor gym, and equipment in the fitness room is outdated. More comprehensive sports facilities, at the university's Carnegie centre, are available but due to the distance of these facilities from the main campus, it is not easy or convenient for students to gain access to them. In hospitality and catering, practical facilities are good. Specialist accommodation includes two training kitchens and a production kitchen. These are well equipped with commercial-standard equipment. A training restaurant can be set up to mirror different styles of service. The college café is also used to train students. Students have good access to IT facilities, including computers in practical areas, which provide them with access to learning and assessment materials.

70. The majority of sports staff have teaching qualifications and are involved in national and local sports initiatives. Some travel and tourism staff have recent and relevant vocational experience, that enriches the students' experience. Teachers make good use of professional development opportunities and some are involved as external exam board moderators. In hospitality and catering, most staff have appropriate industrial experience but some do not hold qualifications at the most appropriate level.

71. Assessment in sport is satisfactory. It is accurate, fair and carried out regularly. Assessments are well designed. Students' progress is monitored. Assignments are carefully marked and returned with constructive feedback that enables students to improve. Internal verification meets awarding body requirements. In hospitality and catering, assessment and internal verification procedures have improved. NVQ portfolios are well organised. Students have recently started to use digital images to evidence the standards they have achieved.

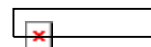
72. Opportunities for students to take additional sports qualifications and participate in other activities are good. These include access to the sports academy, trips and Carnegie sports awards, but take up is low. There are few opportunities for tourism students to take additional qualifications.

73. Pastoral and academic support for students is good. Diagnosis and provision for specialist learning needs are mostly effective. A well-organised system supports students who have been identified as a cause for concern. Course inductions are well planned and prepare students for the start of their programmes. Teachers are accessible and their support is highly valued by students. Insufficient attention is given to students' individual learning needs in hospitality and catering. The progress of college students and work-based trainees is closely monitored through regular tutorials and reviews. Communication with employers is good.

Leadership and management

74. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff and course team meetings are regular and focus on curriculum issues and the raising of standards. In hospitality and catering, effective self-assessment and action planning is in place. In work-based learning, this is beginning to have a positive impact on the achievement of trainees; for example, through the recent introduction of modularised key skills, increased work-based assessment and access to online assessment materials. However, internal lesson observations have failed to identify weaknesses in food preparation. Data on retention and pass rates are inaccurate and this has restricted the overall progress of planning for improvement.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy



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

Strengths

- high standards of students' practical skills
- much good teaching and learning
- good support for individual students.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates in NVQ level 2 hairdressing and NVQ level 3 beauty therapy courses
- weak assessment and verification practice
- poor achievement of apprenticeship frameworks.

Scope of provision

75. The faculty offers courses in hairdressing and beauty therapy full-time and part-time, including men's hairdressing, aromatherapy, reflexology, body massage, Indian head massage, advanced nail techniques and anatomy and physiology. At the time of inspection, some 341 learners were studying beauty therapy programmes. A further 87 students and 13 work-based trainees were studying hairdressing. Around 59% of full-time students were aged 16 to 18 and 98% of part-time students were adults. Introductory programmes have been developed in hairdressing for pupils aged 14 to 16 from schools. The faculty has recently introduced an NVQ level 1 full-time course in beauty therapy.

Achievement and standards

76. Pass rates on part-time reflexology and body massage courses are good. Pass rates have been consistently above national averages for reflexology and body massage in the three years to 2003. Pass rates are low in NVQ level 2 hairdressing and NVQ level 3 beauty therapy. Pass rates over the period 2000 to 2003 have remained well below national averages for the one-year NVQ level 2 in hairdressing in all but one year. Pass and retention rates on NVQ level 2 beauty therapy improved from well below the national average in 2000 to slightly above in 2003. Pass rates on the level 3

course for beauty specialists improved dramatically in 2003 to 93%, from a very low baseline the previous year. Overall achievement of apprenticeship frameworks is low.

77. Students typically maintain a professional approach in commercial salons. They develop good practical skills. First-year students were already competent at an early stage in the academic year in blow-drying and massage techniques. For example, in an Indian head massage lesson, all students had mastered the correct routine and worked confidently without intervention from their teacher. In an NVQ level 1 lesson, the students responded well to questions from the teacher, and displayed a sound grasp of theoretical knowledge.

78. Good health and safety practices are promoted in practical lessons. All students are mindful of personal hygiene and dress codes, sterilisers are widely used and spills are promptly cleaned away.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ in hairdressing (two-year programme)	2	No. of starts	23	*	*
		% retention	70	*	*
		% pass rate	56	*	*
NVQ in beauty therapy (one-year programme)	2	No. of starts	33	24	22
		% retention	82	75	95
		% pass rate	70	94	81
Indian head massage (short)	2	No. of starts	43	29	20
		% retention	93	97	75
		% pass rate	63	96	93
Reflexology diploma (one-year programme)	3	No. of starts	16	16	*
		% retention	100	69	*
		% pass rate	100	100	*
NVQ in beauty therapy (one-year programme)	3	No. of starts	21	22	19
		% retention	81	95	89
		% pass rate	76	71	65
Beauty specialist diploma	3	No. of starts	16	*	16
		% retention	100	*	88
		% pass rate	69	*	93

Source: College data autumn 2004

* fewer than 15 starts

Quality of education and training

79. There is much good teaching and learning. Teachers use strategies that take account of individual students' learning needs and styles, including question-and-answer sessions, discussions, demonstrations, small group work and individual instruction. In a theory lesson for apprentices, the teacher thoughtfully prepared a lesson on pre-treatment tests and set up an experiment that used metallic-based colour and hydrogen peroxide. This resulted in an intentional, extreme reaction. The steam and heat generated was a strong reminder to students of the dangers associated with incorrect mixing of products. In another lesson, NVQ level 2 beauty therapy students, who had

researched diseases and disorders for homework, were confident in discussing their findings in small groups, and reported back to the rest of the class. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of good technical skills. Health and safety, client care, and working to commercial timings are routinely covered in practical lessons.

80. Teachers use their commercial experience well, and give examples to illustrate key points and to set theory in context. In the weaker classes, individual students' understanding is not sufficiently checked with direct open questions. Key skills are not well integrated into vocational classes.

81. Accommodation and specialist equipment are mostly satisfactory. Standards of decor and maintenance are good. Hairdressing and beauty therapy have dedicated base rooms. Teachers produce well-prepared learning resources to help students extend their knowledge, although learning resources for key skills are poor and are insufficiently related to hairdressing or beauty therapy. Computers are not used well in the curriculum area and there is no access to the Internet on the computers available in classrooms. Salons are cramped when large groups are dealing with clients. Increasing student numbers have put a strain on access to small equipment and consumables. Teachers are appropriately qualified, and keep up to date with professional developments. Most have recent commercial work experience.

82. Assessment and verification practices are weak. Initial assessment has not consistently ensured that learners are placed on courses at the most appropriate level. Internal verification has not highlighted students' slow progress or the lack of assessments in portfolios. Staff shortages and increased student numbers have restricted access to assessment for too many learners.

83. Weak assessment practice has contributed to the low achievement of apprenticeship frameworks. Contact with salons takes place through review sessions with trainees, although no workplace assessments have taken place over the last year. Employers are not informed of the schemes of work followed by their trainees at college. Consequently, they are unable to plan salon training to support them.

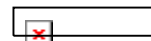
84. A wide range of courses, with varied modes of attendance, are offered from level 1 to 3. Progression opportunities are good. The IF programme at NVQ level 1 in hairdressing for pupils aged 14 to 16, from local schools, and a full-time course at NVQ level 1 in beauty therapy are attracting increasing numbers of learners. Many students continue their studies to the next level or take additional subjects. Several short courses in beauty have been developed for part-time learners. Good enrichment opportunities include visits to shows and exhibitions, and entry to regional and national competitions.

85. Support for students is good. Teachers work closely with support staff in planning for learning. Students have ready access to in-class learning support. Tutorials are regular and effective. Advice and guidance are mostly satisfactory, although a few learners were recruited to beauty therapy at an inappropriate level and have since transferred to lower-level programmes.

Leadership and management

86. Leadership and management are satisfactory but have lacked coherence, with a number of temporary post-holders in place over the last eighteen months. Increased workloads have reduced the time teachers have to undertake assessments. Under the new curriculum management arrangements, teaching has improved. Appropriate changes have been made to systems, procedures and record-keeping. Stricter progress targets are set for students and more rigorous internal verification procedures have been implemented. A well-resourced curriculum improvement plan is addressing identified weaknesses. Teachers now feel more involved and part of a team.

Health and social care



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

Strengths

- high pass rates on full-time care and early years courses

- effective planning to meet individual students' learning needs

- good support for students

- good practical equipment and resources that support learning.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on most level 3 courses and low pass rates on NVQ level 2 in care

- poor monitoring of internal verification outcomes

- cramped accommodation in care and early years

- poor integration of key skills in theory classes.

Scope of provision

87. The college offers a range of full-time and part-time courses from level 1 to level 4. At the time of inspection, 108 students were on full-time courses; 90% of these were aged 16 to 18. Around 376 learners study part time. Almost 74% of these are adults. Short courses are available in, for example, health and safety and first aid. Early years provision includes the CACHE certificate of childcare and education, the diploma in childcare and education at level 3 and the national diploma in early years. Care and public service courses include the AVCE health and social care, the national diploma in care and GNVQ intermediate in health and social care, GNVQ foundation in health and social care, and the first diploma in public services. Part-time provision includes counselling at levels 2 and 3, NVQ level 2 care, British sign language, certificate in youth work for adult students and GCSE health and social care for pupils aged 14 to 16 from local schools. The early years offer includes the CACHE certificate and diploma in pre-school practice, introduction to

childminding and Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) teaching assistant at level 2.

Achievement and standards

88. Pass rates are high on the GNVQ foundation health and social care, CACHE certificate, and the recently introduced diploma in child care and education. In GNVQ intermediate health and social care, pass rates improved significantly in 2002/03 to 100% from just 36% in the previous year. Pass rates are low on the first diploma in public service. Too few learners achieve their NVQ level 2 qualifications in care and the numbers of students have declined significantly in recent years. Retention rates have now improved on most courses; although they remain poor on AVCE health and social care and on the national diploma in early years. For example, in 2002/03, at 33%, the retention rate on the AVCE course was significantly below the national average for colleges of a similar type.

89. Many students make good progress, moving on to further study or employment. For example, one foundation student successfully progressed to the CACHE certificate in child care and education, then to advanced certificate of vocational education. Another student was awarded the St Michaels Hospice Cup for outstanding achievement. A former refugee with English as a second language progressed from level 2 in care through level 3 and on to nurse training.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
First aid at work	1	No. of starts	111	78	44
		% retention	94	88	100
		% pass rate	59	62	100
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	36	*	*
		% retention	94	*	*
		% pass rate	68	*	*
GNVQ intermediate in health and social care	2	No. of starts	**	15	*
		% retention	**	73	*
		% pass rate	**	36	*
NVQ care	2	No. of starts	30	*	*
		% retention	77	*	*
		% pass rate	0	*	*
AVCE health and social care	3	No. of starts	16	18	*
		% retention	50	61	*
		% pass rate	50	45	*
National diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	**	*	16
		% retention	**	*	50
		% pass rate	**	*	100

Source: college data autumn 2004

* fewer than 15 starts

** course not running

Quality of education and training

90. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Teachers link theory to practice, using appropriate case studies and students' own experience. For example, in a lesson on child development, adult learners worked effectively in small groups to evaluate play activities, drawing on their experience of caring for children. Detailed lesson planning takes account of individual and group needs and preferred learning styles. Regular review of lessons is particularly effective in informing future practice.

91. Students' files are well organised. Notes are clear, easy to follow and accurate. Note taking by foundation and first diploma students regularly includes pattern and colour to highlight key points. Learners make thoughtful contributions to discussions. Classroom displays are of a high standard. Students take pride in their work and demonstrate appropriate awareness of cultural diversity. One group explored the introduction of anti-discriminatory practice through the use of child-centred equipment, food and clothing. All students explained the effectiveness of their choice with clarity and enthusiasm. In the weaker classes, teachers dominate the session. Some students remain passive, others become bored. Teachers' poor use of questioning fails to reinforce, or confirm, learning. Insufficient variation of activity leads to students' poor concentration and restricted learning. Key skills are not routinely integrated into vocational classes.

92. Resources to support learning are good. Teachers have appropriate vocational qualifications and keep up to date with current practice. All have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification or appropriate assessor awards. The college has a wide range of good equipment to support practical work in early years. However, some practical activity in care and early years is restricted by cramped classrooms. Students benefit from having access to wider university resources. Tutors work closely with the learning resource centre to ensure the adequacy of book stock, although some texts are dated. There are very few general classrooms with access to computers. Too little use was made of ICT in lessons observed during the inspection. Students in vocational placements are well supported by visits from the course tutors, which leads to good liaison with placement providers. Links with schools are good and pupils aged 14 to 16 attend lessons in health and social care.

93. Assignments are appropriately structured and relevant to the vocational area. The quality of written comments on assessed work is more variable. Some feedback is detailed and clearly indicates where improvements can be made; although too much feedback is descriptive and lacking in guidance to help learners to progress. Internal verification is systematic but action points to improve assessor practice are not routinely tracked through to completion.

94. First-year students benefit from a full programme of enrichment activities. Expeditions and visits are used to support vocational learning. Recent visits include a trip to the interfaith centre in Leeds.

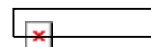
95. Initial guidance for students is good and involves the whole course team. All early years applicants are invited to an open day in the summer. Initial assessment is carried out during induction and improvement targets are set. These are followed up in tutorials and reviewed regularly. Good practice in target setting is evident in early years but, overall, too many targets are vague and, as a consequence, improvements are difficult to measure.

96. Students and trainees receive good pastoral and specialist support. Specific learning needs are identified at the start of their course. Learning support is effective and used to empower students. Placement supervisors speak highly of the good support learners receive in the workplace.

Leadership and management

97. Management of the curriculum area is satisfactory. The teaching team is well established but, at the time of inspection, no senior curriculum managers were in place. Course teams work well together to operate the day-to-day management of the curriculum. There is a strong commitment to equal opportunities in teaching and pastoral care. The outcomes of regular course team meetings feed into the self-assessment report. Most areas of weakness are being addressed, although internal verification has not been managed well. The monitoring and support of staff who are new to the curriculum area are insufficiently thorough.

Visual and performing arts and media



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

Strengths

- high standard of students' work on many courses
- high pass rates on the diploma in foundation studies and multimedia courses
- good teaching in media and performing arts
- good support from senior learning officers.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on many courses
- insufficient attention paid to the development of independent learning skills
- insufficient attention to health and safety procedures in some workshops.

Scope of provision

98. At the time of inspection, 106 students aged 16 to 18, and 120 adult learners were on full-time courses. Some 162 students aged 16 to 18 and 1,155 adults study part time. Courses are offered in GNVQ intermediate art and design, GCSE art, and AS-level and GCE A-level art and photography. In addition, national diplomas are available in fine art, three-dimensional design crafts, textiles/fashion, performing arts, graphics and multimedia. Other courses include foundation diploma in art and design and City and Guilds courses in jewellery-making and embroidery. A wide range of part-time Open College Network (OCN) courses in creative arts account for the high proportion of adult enrolments; for example, in ceramics, jewellery, upholstery, painting and printmaking. These are complemented by summer schools in raku and salt-glaze firings. Full-time students are able to choose a range of courses to enrich their main study. Links made with schools include classes in fine art and photography and other Saturday clubs for pupils aged 14 to 16 and students aged 16 to 18. Student numbers on full-time courses have declined significantly in recent years.

Achievement and standards

99. Pass rates are particularly high in multimedia design and in the diploma in foundation studies art and design. Retention rates are low on many courses. For example, in 2002/03, for the national diploma courses in design and in drama, 41% of students left before the end of their programme. In the same year, at 70%, the retention rate on the GNVQ intermediate art and design course was 8% below the national average for colleges of a similar type.

100. Standards of work are high in foundation studies art and design, multimedia webpage design and graphics digital imaging and in City and Guilds embroidery classes. In one lesson, graphic design students worked in groups to photograph a series of props for promotional purposes. They were successful in integrating traditional drawing skills with digital imaging. Work is creative and students show a willingness to experiment. Attendance at key skills lessons is poor.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
City and Guilds creative skills: ceramics	2	No. of starts	16	14	12
		% retention	100	93	92
		% pass rate	38	0	82
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	19	22	20
		% retention	74	68	70
		% pass rate	64	93	86
NCFE multimedia design	3	No. of starts	41	34	15
		% retention	100	53	100
		% pass rate	90	94	93
Edexcel diploma in foundation studies art and design	3	No. of starts	56	56	64
		% retention	95	88	88
		% pass rate	91	96	95
BTEC national diploma in design	3	No. of starts	48	40	64
		% retention	60	55	59
		% pass rate	86	64	92
BTEC national diploma in performing arts	3	No. of starts	*	11	22
		% retention	*	82	59
		% pass rate	*	100	92
AVCE double award in art and design	3	No. of starts	**	33	16
		% retention	**	48	55
		% pass rate	**	88	100

Source: college data autumn 2004

*Course not running

** fewer than 15 starts

Quality of education and training

101. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, although the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching is higher than the national average for visual and performing arts and media in similar colleges inspected in the previous year. In media and performing arts, teaching is often good. Schemes of work and lesson plans are prepared to a common format, and show clear and achievable outcomes. Individual students' needs are identified and teachers reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

102. In the most successful lessons, students' interest is engaged from the outset and activities are structured in a way that allows them to develop skills incrementally. In a performing arts physical theatre lesson, students rehearsed a previously learnt and complex sequence of movements. They were then asked to communicate an emotion and adapt the sequence using a selected piece of music. Considerable development of practical and creative skills occurred during the course of the lesson. In a media class, ambitious outcomes, together with excellent demonstrations of complex software programmes, enabled students to produce work that, in one case, approached a commercial standard.

103. Weaker lessons lack structure and purpose. Teachers do not question students effectively to confirm understanding. In several lessons, a minority of students made no contribution to discussions. There is insufficient attention paid to the development of independent learning skills in some second-year classes. These students are too dependant on their teachers. They are not confident to discuss work in progress and have underdeveloped analytical skills.

104. Students have ready access to computers outside the classroom. Art and design students are making increasing use of digital imagery. One student on the diploma in foundation studies in art and design was creating a model village from playing cards. His next step was to film this on set and produce a short animation. A number of students use image manipulation techniques in project work. In contrast, in a performing arts business lesson, students were not encouraged to use ILT to present their research on professional roles within the theatre, even though the brief for this assignment was one of few to link tasks with key skills attainment.

105. Resources for art and design and media are good. Studios are spacious with attractive wall displays. There has been recent, significant investment in the media area, with the addition of a suite of 20 G5 Mac computers and colour printers. Ceramic and textile workshops and the printmaking studio are fully equipped. Performing arts is sited in a separate building. The library contains a satisfactory range of books and journals but these are not used well. Teachers are appropriately qualified and many are practitioners or have their own business. Senior learning officers support teaching staff particularly well in ceramics, photography and foundation art and design.

106. Assessment is thorough. Feedback is supportive and informs students how they can improve. In art and design, informal progress reviews are regular and are much valued by students. In performing arts, the use of video diaries as supporting evidence for the final major project is both innovative and effective. Internal verification procedures are now well established to meet the requirements of awarding bodies.

107. There is an appropriate range of full-time courses, although there is no full-time provision at levels 1 and 2 in media and performing arts. In art and design, in an attempt to address declining recruitment to art and design national diplomas, specialist pathways are being developed in the national diploma in design. In performance and media, recruitment has fallen this academic year by an average of 29% across the three full-time courses.

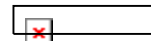
108. Additional support needs are diagnosed on entry to FE courses. Group tutorials are held weekly. For second-year art and design students, these are structured around an OCN progression unit. Individual tutorials are scheduled regularly, and are also available on demand. Progression to HE has improved and is now very good

Leadership and management

109. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The self assessment report is largely accurate

but some retention issues are understated. Targets for retention and pass rates are set and agreed with course teams. These are monitored at quarterly intervals. Strategies for improvement include the requirement for a full audition for all performing arts students. Lesson plans and schemes of work are monitored to ensure that they comply with college quality systems.

Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages



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

Strengths

- good pass rates on foundation certificate (literacy) and good pass and retention rates on Pitmans ESOL qualifications

- much good teaching

- high standard of students' skills

- good support for students.

Weaknesses

- weak assessment practice in discrete literacy, numeracy and ESOL internally accredited courses

- inadequate access to learning resources in community venues.

Scope of provision

110. The provision includes literacy, numeracy, ESOL, additional learning support and key skills up to level 2. At the time of inspection, 243 students were enrolled on discrete literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes on the main Harrogate site, or in one of the 12 community venues. A small number of learners attend classes in the workplace. Many learners are adults attending classes for between two and nine hours a week. Literacy and numeracy classes are offered from entry level to level 2. ESOL is offered at four levels. Discrete literacy and numeracy classes are offered for learners on GNVQ foundation programmes in health and social care and leisure and tourism. Some 31 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have literacy and numeracy integrated into their courses. Around 82 full-time students are receiving specialist literacy, numeracy and ESOL support.

Achievement and standards

111. Pass rates are good. In 2002/03, pass rates for the 53 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who took the FAME foundation certificate were 100% successful; around 36% higher than the national figure. Pass and retention rates for ESOL students in Pitmans ESOL examinations are good. In 2002/03, 49 students took either the basic or elementary examination. The retention rate was 100% for both courses and was significantly higher than the national average. Pass rates in Pitmans basic examinations were 28% higher than national figures. On elementary courses, 96% of students were successful compared with the national figure of 55%.

112. Key skills pass rates at levels 1 and 2 have improved significantly in the three years to 2004. In 2002/03, 91% of students in receipt of learning support were retained on their courses.

113. Students develop good personal and learning skills, which help to prepare them effectively for working life. Entry level 3 students on a full-time programme take part in a weekly placement at a local church lunch club. Students show exceptional development in the practical applications of literacy and numeracy as they operate as a small business, giving profits back to the church. They develop good self-esteem and confidence.

114. Students attend college regularly and are on time. During inspection, attendance in this area was very good, at 89%.

Quality of education and training

115. There is much good teaching and learning. Schemes of work and lesson plans are carefully detailed, which lead to the effective development of skills in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Most teachers are thorough in the checking of learning. In many lessons, teachers are enthusiastic in their approaches to learning. As a consequence, students' motivation and interest is maintained. In a numeracy class for full-time foundation students, the teacher used number games to set up a very effective group activity on fractions. The students took part in a lively discussion and were naturally using the language of mathematics. In the majority of classes, learning is well managed. In an entry level ESOL class, activities included the four language skills in the context of asking for directions at a coach station. Students practised simulated dialogues, within a supportive learning environment, which gave them confidence to use the language outside the classroom. In a level 2 key skills communication class, business students were efficiently set to task in collaborative groups, researching health and safety regulations, then sharing information in preparation for an assignment. In a minority of lessons, insufficient focus is placed on the use of activities to extend the learning of the more able students. In a few literacy classes, insufficient account is taken of the need to set activities in a vocational context.

116. Well-qualified teachers and learning support staff give good support to individual students. Students speak highly of the support provided by the well-established team of learning support assistants, which comprises around 40 assistants. Around half of these staff hold specialist qualifications in learning support. Many are also teacher trained. The new 'skills for life' materials are well incorporated into lessons. The 'skills for life' team have a bank of 21 laptops that can be booked. ILT is used to enrich learning in some lessons, but overall, its use is underdeveloped. Access to on-site learning resources in community venues is inadequate. In an evening class held at a school, activities were restricted due to a lack of practical learning aids. Teachers can borrow resources from the main site but time and travel constraints make this impractical for part-time staff.

117. Initial assessment is effective. Outcomes are used as the basis for individual schemes of work. However, assessment practice on internally certified courses in discrete literacy, numeracy and ESOL is weak. Achievement is measured against individual learning plans, but too many plans have poorly developed targets. Consequently, achievement is not matched against consistent standards. Internal verification procedures on this accreditation route are insufficiently rigorous.

118. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL at the main site and in community venues are held at times at times to complement students' work and other commitments. A women-only ESOL class is held for

students who are unable to attend mixed classes. A partnership with a community group provides extensive learning opportunities for students who would otherwise be excluded from learning.

119. Support for students is good. Additional learning support needs are identified through enrolment and induction enrolment. Support is usually in place for the start of their course. There is particularly good support for dyslexic students. Coloured overlays, tinted glasses and adapted paper-based materials are standard features. A dyslexia support group meets weekly. Induction procedures are comprehensive for part-time and full-time students.

Leadership and management

120. Leadership and management are satisfactory. In the absence of a senior manager, the deputy principal has recently taken over direct strategic responsibility for the development of this area. An effective 'skills for life' strategy is now in place, with greater clarity of roles and responsibilities. A newly appointed advanced practitioner co-ordinates the development of learning support assistants. Course teams meet regularly and communication is good. Equality and diversity are promoted well. Insufficient advance planning is undertaken to ensure that all staff have access to relevant, external training.

Part D: Institution data

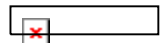
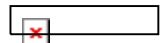


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

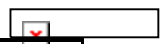
Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	33	36
2	33	26
3	20	20
4/5	0	1
Other	14	17
Total	100	100



Source: provided by the college in autumn 2004

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	349	528	9
Land-based provision	5	70	1



Construction	23	44	1
Engineering, technology and manufacture	82	326	4
Business administration, management and professional	38	523	6
Information and communication technology	424	585	11
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	36	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	265	634	10
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	81	281	4
Health, social care and public services	138	247	4
Visual and performing arts and media	278	1,188	15
Humanities	331	778	12
English, languages and communication	368	1,120	16
Foundation programmes	361	289	7
Total	2,743	6,649	100

Source: provided by the institution 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
1	Starters excluding transfers	410	341	314	1,003	794	1,257
	Retention rate %	84	82	78	85	80	80
	National average %	76	76	76	71	71	71
	Pass rate %	79	62	88	81	81	93
	National average %	71	71	71	72	72	72
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,273	959	600	1,226	1,745	1,331
	Retention rate %	78	73	77	86	81	85
	National average %	72	72	72	68	68	68
	Pass rate %	63	66	72	64	74	78
	National average %	72	72	72	73	73	73

3	Starters excluding transfers	815	700	683	1,002	1,341	1,154
	Retention rate %	67	67	64	78	69	76
	National average %	77	77	77	70	70	70
	Pass rate %	63	69	80	65	70	81
	National average %	78	78	78	74	74	74
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	95	152	184
	Retention rate %	*	*	*	76	57	53
	National average %	n/a	n/a	n/a	68	68	68
	Pass rate %	*	*	*	47	52	77
	National average %	n/a	n/a	n/a	57	57	57

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

Sources of information:

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

2. Institution rates for 2000 to 2003: *Institution ISR.*

* Numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	64	25	11	52
Level 2 (intermediate)	68	21	11	37
Level 1 (foundation)	58	42	0	12
Other sessions	69	26	5	19
Totals	65	26	9	120

