

London Metropolitan University

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Basic information about the institution

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Name of institution:	London Metropolitan University
Type of institution:	University
Vice-chancellor:	Mr Brian Roper
Address of institution:	London Metropolitan University 31 Jewry Street London EC3N 2EY
Telephone number:	0207 423 0000
Fax number:	0207 320 3495
Chair of governors:	Sir John Carter
Unique reference number:	
Name of reporting inspector:	Harriet Harper HMI
Dates of inspection:	22-26 November 2004

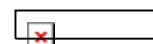
Part A: Summary

Information about the institution

London Metropolitan University was formed in 2002 following the merger of the University of North London and London Guildhall University. There are approximately 38,000 students at the university. Around 2,500 of these students are on further education (FE) courses funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). FE provision at the university is vocational and, in most cases, highly specialised. The university offers FE provision in trade union studies and in art, design and craft. In partnership with the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), the university provides training

England. The Sir John Cass department of art, media and design offers specialist FE courses in art, design, furniture making, upholstery, soft furnishing, silversmithing and jewellery. As well as those courses being inspected, the university also has small FE provision in business studies, performing arts and architecture. As one of the country's largest universities, London Metropolitan University offers over 150 undergraduate and around 100 postgraduate courses. The student population is diverse. Around a quarter of the students on FE courses, and approximately half of the higher education (HE) students, are from black or minority ethnic groups. Some of the well-established specialist craft provision attracts students from across the United Kingdom (UK) and overseas.

How effective is the institution?



Inspectors judged education and training to be satisfactory in trade union studies and in art, design and craft. They judged leadership and management of the FE provision to be unsatisfactory. The key strengths and aspects that need to be improved are listed below.

Key strengths

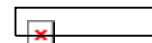
- outstanding provision in the diploma in foundation studies (art and design)
- excellent facilities and well-qualified staff in art, design and craft, that provide opportunities for students to develop high levels of specialist craft skills
- courses that successfully attract students from a wide range of social, educational and ethnic backgrounds
- productive links with partner organisations.

What should be improved

- leadership and management of the FE provision
- the effectiveness of quality assurance systems for FE
- retention and pass rates on many courses
- arrangements for registering students on to courses.

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

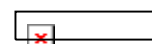
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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

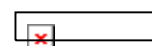
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Trade union studies	Satisfactory. Students successfully develop knowledge and skills they can use in the workplace. The quality of teaching and learning is very high. However, pass rates are very low, as most students choose not to complete the assessment tasks. Quality assurance and management of the provision are unsatisfactory.
Art, design and craft	Satisfactory. The contributory grade for foundation studies (art and design) is outstanding . There are high pass and retention rates on modern upholstery courses and high standards of students' work on most craft provision. The diploma in foundation studies (art and design) is outstanding. Achievement on jewellery, silversmithing and cabinet-making courses is poor and the national diploma in design crafts course is unsatisfactory. Management of some aspects of the curriculum is weak.

How well is the institution led and managed?



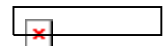
Leadership and management of the FE provision are unsatisfactory. Since the merger in 2002, senior managers have focused their attention on undergraduate and postgraduate provision, which represents the overwhelming majority of the university's work. Quality assurance systems have not been effective in improving most of the FE courses. While resources are good and one aspect of provision is outstanding, retention and pass rates on a number of courses are poor and, in some cases, they have been declining year-on-year. Curriculum management in the two areas inspected is unsatisfactory. Recent activities, including the production of a three-year development plan and the establishment of a steering group to oversee the LSC-funded provision, indicate that managers are turning their attention to FE.

To what extent is the institution educationally and socially inclusive?



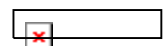
The university's response to social and educational inclusion is good. Students from a very wide range of backgrounds enrol on to specialist craft and fine art courses. Many travel considerable distances to attend the courses. Trade union courses attract many mature students who have not undertaken any formal study since leaving school. They value highly the provision that is tailored to their needs and run at local venues around the south and southeast of England. The university works effectively with partner organisations to promote and widen participation in FE and HE. Successful projects include a foundation course for people with disabilities, summer schools and a music course for disaffected young people. There is good support in art, design and craft for students with disabilities. Almost all facilities at the university's sites can be accessed easily by students with physical disabilities. There is restricted access at some of the venues used for trade union courses. Most staff have had good training on equality and diversity. The university fulfils its duties in relation to the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 (SENDA). However, the university does not monitor the impact of its race equality plan on FE students from different ethnic backgrounds.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. Students speak highly of the help they receive from teaching staff. Induction programmes are generally effective. The quality of tutorials is good for those students who access them. Arrangements for tutorial support are ad hoc and not all students benefit from regular and effective academic support. Good additional support is available for students at London campuses and there is particularly effective support for students with dyslexia. Art, design and craft students make good use of many of the university's extensive services, although they report poor service from the registry. Most trade union students study at venues outside London and have little, if any, contact with the university's central services.

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

- friendly staff

- the atmosphere

- the variety of people on courses

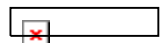
- support and guidance provided by tutors

- the opportunity to move into HE
- practical and relevant nature of the teaching
- variety of teaching styles.

What they feel could be improved

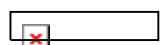
- access to studios outside course times, particularly at weekends
- inadequate storage for work and personal belongings
- the canteen
- the registry.

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 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

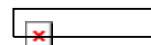
Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18 and 19+	76	16	8
Learning 16-18 and 19+	84	16	0

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).

Achievement and standards

1. The university enrolls around 2,500 students on FE courses. The majority of students are aged 19 or over.
2. Pass and retention rates on the full-time and part-time diploma in foundation studies (art and design) have been high for the last three years. The retention rates are lower for part-time students, but they complete the same course in just one year. Students on the two-year national diploma in design crafts are not as successful and pass rates fell in 2003/04 to 50%. Retention rates on this course have been poor for the last three years. While pass rates on the City and Guilds courses in soft furnishing and upholstery are good, both pass and retention rates on silversmithing, jewellery and cabinet making are low and declining.
3. Very few students gain external accreditation on the trade union courses. The majority of students do not take the qualification on offer and are not actively encouraged to do so. The students value highly the knowledge and skills they gain and the courses successfully meet the needs of the TGWU. Students gain confidence, demonstrate effective skills in negotiation and communication and are able to show how they use these newly acquired skills in the workplace. Students demonstrate a good understanding of the relevant legislation and regulations.
4. Students on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) exhibit excellent drawing and creative skills. The standard of individual craft work in City and Guilds courses is very high. In a silversmithing course, for example, a mature student was working on a large plate wine jug. The ambition, quality of design and standard of finish were extremely high. In soft furnishing, many students, who are returning to study, explore primary sources for their designs. They research the history of fabric design with enthusiasm and the completed work is personal and finished to a high standard. However, students' work on the national diploma in design craft is weak.
5. Art, design and craft students at London Metropolitan University regularly win awards and prizes in recognition of their achievements. In 2004, several students were commended by City and Guilds for silversmithing and many have received Worshipful Company of Upholders' awards and other prizes in areas such as cabinet making and restoration, upholstery and soft furnishing.
6. Progression rates from the foundation diploma (art and design) to HE are high; many students remain at the university to study at degree level or win competitive places at prestigious art schools. Some trade union students also progress on to HE.

Quality of education and training



7. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded good or better in the majority of the lessons observed, satisfactory in a minority and unsatisfactory in a small minority. While all teaching in trade union studies was very good, the quality of teaching varied in art, design and craft.

8. In the best lessons, all students make progress, enjoy learning and are clear about the purpose of activities. In trade union studies, teachers use role-play tasks very effectively to develop students' skills as negotiators. In art, design and craft, students benefit from teaching which sets a high standard of professional skill. In the less successful lessons, students are left to their own devices and are unclear as to what is expected of them.

9. Specialist resources for art, design and craft students are excellent. The craft workshops, many of which have been recently refurbished, are of a very high standard. Very good specialist equipment covers a wide range of processes, including enamelling, chasing, stone setting, casting and wood milling. Computing facilities are up to date, with appropriate software. Facilities for trade union studies are good at most of the venues used.

10. Teaching staff are well qualified. Many of the staff that work on FE courses undertake applied research. Most staff in art, design and craft have good commercial, industrial or creative arts experience and many continue to work as practitioners in their specialist field. Craft teachers are highly skilled in their area of expertise. Technicians with specialist skills and experience provide good support; they manage workshops and demonstrate techniques and how to use equipment. Those teaching in trade union studies have experience of working as union activists.

11. Assessment practice varies from very good to poor. A university assessment framework produced in June 2004 is comprehensive but not widely used by staff who teach on FE courses. Students' work in soft furnishing, cabinet making, upholstery and foundation diploma (art and design) is thoroughly assessed and students' progress is well monitored. Written feedback to students on these courses is good and helps students to improve the standard of their work. Target grades set for course units are reviewed regularly. The students speak confidently about the progress they are making. Group critiques are used well and written assignments for art history are marked thoroughly with detailed and supportive comments. Assignments are set regularly and returned promptly after marking.

12. Regular, formative assessment is successful in helping students to develop and improve their skills in jewellery, silversmithing, cabinet making and allied furnishing courses. However, students on national diploma design crafts course do not receive regular feedback on progress and are not clear about assessment criteria, schedules and work deadlines.

13. On trade union courses, and on some City and Guilds craft courses, very few students complete the final assessment but are content with the level of skills they achieve. There is little formal assessment and monitoring of students' progress on trade union courses. Tutors are aware of students' progress and abilities and modify activities accordingly, but do not complete written records. Students regard the written assessments as irrelevant to their needs and are reluctant to complete them.

14. The university has productive links with employers as well as professional and trade bodies. Employers and experts involved in craft skills speak very highly of the unique provision at London Metropolitan University in terms of its high standards and the role it plays both nationally and locally in maintaining traditional crafts and in meeting skills shortages. Former students working within relevant trades, industries and professions remain supportive of the university.

15. There are good links with schools, FE colleges and community organisations. The university is responsive to requests from partners and works with them on projects to widen participation. These include: an 'access to music' programme with Community Music, a voluntary organisation, which targets hard to reach young people; and an acting access course, provided jointly with Graeae, a theatre company for those with disabilities.

16. As most of the FE students study part-time, are based at venues outside London or do not live locally, few take advantage of the university's wide range of sporting and social facilities.

17. Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. Most students are well supported on their courses. Students speak highly of the help, advice and encouragement they receive from teaching staff. Where induction programmes are offered, they are effective.

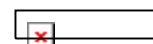
18. Art, design and craft students make good use of most of the extensive range of university services. These include health services, a learning development unit, advice on accommodation and access to learning support funds, as well as childcare provision, careers advice, counselling, and support for students with disabilities. However, students complain about disorganised enrolment procedures and inaccurate information provided by the registry.

19. Students on trade union short courses are usually recommended to undertake the courses by union officials. As their application forms do not require information about prior attainment or any specific learning needs or disabilities, there are no formal systems to arrange, in advance of the course, any additional learning or support students may need. As many courses run at venues outside London and last only a few days, it is not practical for students to attend support sessions at the university.

20. In art, design and craft, students identify their own learning or support needs or they are referred by their tutors to the university's student services. Support for students with disabilities is good. The close collaboration between the fine art teaching staff and student support services is valuable in ensuring effective help, particularly for those students with dyslexia. Good support, for example, helped one partially sighted student to successfully complete the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) and progress on to HE.

21. The quality of tutorial support for those students who receive it is good. Staff are helpful and willingly give of their time, both within and outside scheduled teaching time. As this type of support is arranged on an ad-hoc basis, not all students benefit to the same degree.

Leadership and management



22. Leadership and management of the FE provision are unsatisfactory. Since the merger of the University of North London and London Guildhall University, much progress has been made in reviewing and harmonising the regulations and curricula of the two institutions. The university recognises that its priority has been undergraduate and postgraduate provision and that there has been a lack of focus on FE.

23. FE provision is beginning to receive attention. The university is working on the production of a three-year development plan which, at the time of inspection, was in draft form and had recently been shared with governors. The university's strategic plan for 2003-2008 includes goals for the LSC-funded provision, one of which is to co-ordinate overall responsibility for FE. Progress on meeting goals in the plan is not clearly monitored. A steering group to oversee the FE provision has been set up but, at the time of inspection, had not met.

24. Provision in art, design and craft was inspected by the Further Education Funding Council

(FEFC) in 2000 at London Guildhall University. Although the inspection findings were generally good, the areas for development identified in the report have not been addressed and remain weaknesses. They are: low retention rates on some courses, some weaknesses in teaching, the quality of tutorials, the effectiveness of the review and evaluation of some courses, inadequate information on students' retention and achievements and the underdeveloped use of target setting, benchmarks and performance indicators.

25. The university has a demanding mission for widening participation and inclusion. London Metropolitan University is committed to enabling students from all backgrounds to enter FE and HE. It has been successful in recruiting students from a wide range of minority ethnic and traditionally under-represented groups. There are productive links with local schools, colleges and employers and with trades and professional associations. The university is an active member of local and regional partnerships and has a good range of successful community outreach projects.

26. Governance is satisfactory and governors attend board meetings regularly. Students' attendance is monitored and absence is questioned. Governors have an appropriate range of backgrounds, are representative of the community and include educational experience across all sectors. Staff and students are represented. Governors are kept well informed, have had training in equal opportunities and are made aware of the role of FE.

27. Appropriate communication structures are in place. A central archive of minutes of various groups and committees, as well as policies, plans and papers under development, is available to staff on the university's intranet. Reporting structures are clear within the department of art, media and design. Management responsibilities are less clear in relation to the provision of trade union courses, which are currently managed outside the university's departmental structure. The university is addressing this issue.

28. Staff at the main sites have access to good staff development. The impact of staff development is not explicitly evaluated. Few of the staff teaching on FE programmes have taken part in appraisals. The assimilation of staff following the merger and the subsequent industrial unrest have contributed to delays in fully implementing the appraisal process.

29. Data are not used effectively to analyse trends in retention and pass rates. The strategic plan sets targets against performance indicators for HE students but not for FE students. A requirement of the merger was a reduction in the number of students withdrawing from courses before they complete their qualification. Governors have seen this as a high priority and the university has a retention, progression and achievement group reporting to the academic board which in turn reports to the governors. Student withdrawal rates in the university have fallen by 10% over the past two years. While the action plan produced by the department of art, media and design identifies a number of strategies for 2003/04 to improve retention rates, it has had little impact on reducing withdrawals on FE courses. Comparison of performance against similar FE courses nationally is not widely used. Figures for retention rates and achievement are not well understood by staff. Little has been done to address the low numbers of completing students taking external qualifications. The planning office provides clear reports on recruitment figures which are circulated to managers on a weekly basis, with comparative figures for the previous years at various levels of aggregation. At course level, recruitment and withdrawal figures are available on a daily basis. Course leaders rely on their own locally held data which often differ from centrally produced data.

30. Quality assurance systems are ineffective in improving practice on FE courses. Leadership and management in each of the curriculum areas inspected are unsatisfactory. A new quality assurance handbook defines clearly the procedures for course monitoring and review. Departmental reviews are considered by the quality and standards committee of the university and an institutional action plan is presented to the academic board. However, at course level, actions identified in plans are not always addressed. Some action plans lack specific targets and clear actions. Good practice is not sufficiently shared between teachers on similar courses. Course reviews for the trade union studies for 2002/03 had not been completed at the time of inspection. The quality assurance of trade union courses lacks rigour and depends too much on informal feedback from students and tutors. The university carries out an annual survey of students' views but it is not clear how this information is used to improve provision.

31. The university fulfils the requirements of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2001. A clear and comprehensive race equality policy has been produced. Most staff have had training in diversity and equality, and co-ordinators have been appointed in departments. A diversity and equality group meets to review progress. However, the university does not monitor the impact of its race equality policy on FE students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The department of art, media and design has an action plan for diversity and inclusion, with few target dates for action in the near future. The university is fulfilling its duties with regard to SENDA and departments have considered the implications for their curriculum areas. The intention is to produce a university action plan by January 2005, based on departmental statements.

32. The university carries out responsible financial management. The audit from the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) indicates that financial management is satisfactory. Departments submit their yearly budget requirements which are then discussed and agreed by the university's executive group. No distinction is made between FE and HE courses. Budget management is devolved to departments who receive detailed monthly reports. Support is available from the finance department if necessary. Subject leaders have delegated budgets for part-time teaching and manage within their allocations. Based on the average course size, students' achievements, standards of work and access to the university's resources, the university offers satisfactory value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas

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Trade union studies

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

Strengths

- successful development by students of relevant skills for the workplace
- very good teaching and learning
- flexible range of provision tailored to the needs of the students and the union.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates and too little encouragement for students to obtain externally recognised qualifications

- inadequate arrangements for the assessment and monitoring of students' progress
- unsatisfactory curriculum management and quality assurance.

Scope of provision

33. In partnership with the TGWU, the university offers a range of part-time courses in trade union studies throughout the south and south-east of England. At the time of inspection, there were around 1,000 part-time students enrolled on a range of different courses. The majority are aged 19 or over. The main courses, which are funded by the LSC, are for shop stewards and health and safety representatives. These courses are divided into three parts and each part runs over a period of four days. Other courses offered include those for learning representatives and branch secretaries, as well as courses on specific topics such as the environment, politics, pensions and the economy. Weekend courses are offered on black and minority ethnic issues and also women's issues. Short computer skills courses are held throughout the year at the Woodberry centre in London.

Achievement and standards

34. Retention rates are very high and have been so for the last three years. Many of the students on these courses have not undertaken any other formal study since leaving school. Students enjoy lessons. They learn to apply relevant laws and regulations effectively in the workplace and to distinguish between aggressive and assertive behaviour. They develop useful skills to support their role as shop stewards or health and safety representatives. They arrive at the next part with evidence of how they have put into practice what they have learnt. Students and the tutors use this as a measure of the effectiveness of the courses.

35. Pass rates are very low, as few students opt to complete the assessment tasks. In the last three years, the pass rate has been between 0% and 11%. There has been insufficient encouragement by tutors and TGWU officials for students to undertake the 500-word written assessment on completion of each four-day course.

A sample of retention and pass rates in trade union studies, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
Trade union studies	2	No. of starts	389	109	577
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	0	0	0
Health and safety representatives	2	No. of starts	112	100	228
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	5	11	3
Industrial relations	2	No. of starts	153	709	362
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	3	1	1

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

Quality of education and training

36. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Skilful use is made of role play to enable students to acquire knowledge and understanding of industrial relations. In role-playing sessions, the students gain confidence as their effectiveness as negotiators improves. They develop better listening skills to enable them to react and adjust arguments to meet the needs of the people they represent. In one session, students were given a dismissal scenario. Those students acting for the union side used their knowledge of the law effectively to secure a good settlement for the employee. In analysing the role play, students demonstrated good skills of evaluation and reflection. In another session, students examined several case studies and applied the regulations for reporting injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences in the workplace in a mock health and safety committee meeting. The scenarios provided opportunities for students to relate their own experience to the regulations. The tutors regularly use the background and work experience of the students effectively to provide relevant examples.

37. Staff are suitably qualified. Each member of the small team has a union background, having progressed through trade union education to degree-level qualifications. The materials used to support the sessions are written in a clear and helpful manner. Appropriate wall displays in classrooms are used to reinforce learning. Tutors make good use of whiteboards, flip charts and overhead projectors. Some of the venues currently used are not accessible for wheelchair users and this is being addressed by the TGWU.

38. Tutors are aware of individual students' progress and they adjust learning activities to take account of the range of abilities in a group. Students regard external accreditation as irrelevant and are reluctant to take the written tasks. There is little formal monitoring of individuals' progress on these short courses.

39. The LSC-funded provision encourages people into study who might not otherwise consider FE or HE. Students value the fact that the courses are held in convenient locations throughout the south and south-east of England. After completing the courses, many have moved to more senior positions within the union, gained promotion or continued with further study at the university. In 2003, 22 students progressed on to HE courses in trade union studies at the university.

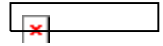
40. Self-financing courses in diversity and respect on employers' premises have been successful. An airline, for example, reports the positive impact the course has had on the attitudes and behaviour of their baggage handlers.

41. Tutors have little background knowledge of students' abilities or additional needs, as the course application form does not require this information and there are no diagnostic assessments. Once on a course, identification of any additional learning needs and access to that support depends on the knowledge and skill of the tutor. In practice, very few access the university's student support services in London.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Quality assurance procedures are weak. A partnership steering group meets infrequently, partly to monitor the programme, but has had little impact on students' achievements. Course evaluation forms have recently been introduced but they are insufficiently detailed to allow students to make responses that might be used to improve provision. As this provision is delivered off site through partnership arrangements, the university's standard course-related quality assurance procedures necessarily have to be modified to encompass the activity. However, there are no course reviews and no self-assessment report for the curriculum area. Formal team meetings are held irregularly and no minutes are recorded. While tutors keep up to date through material provided by the union, there is little emphasis on improving the quality of the programme and addressing the issues around assessment. Action has been taken to put the provision on to a more secure financial base this year. There are plans to move the provision into one of the university's departments.

Art, design and craft



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

Contributory grade for the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) is **outstanding (grade 1)**

Strengths

- high pass and retention rates on diploma in foundation studies (art and design) and upholstery courses
- high standards of students' design craft work
- much good teaching
- outstanding provision in diploma in foundation studies (art and design)
- excellent specialist resources.

Weaknesses

- poor and declining pass and retention rates on jewellery, silversmithing, and cabinet-making courses
- unsatisfactory provision on national diploma in design crafts
- some poor teaching on silversmithing, jewellery and design crafts
- poor management of some aspects of the curriculum.

Scope of provision

43. Within the department of art, media and design, there are 848 students studying art, design and craft. Of these, 225 students are full-time and 623 are part-time. Around 80% of the students are aged 19 or over. The university offers a highly specialised range of City and Guilds craft courses. These include jewellery with stone setting and gemmology, silversmithing, including chasing and casting, enamelling, wood machining and hand crafted cabinet making, finishing, soft furnishing and upholstery. Students can study on a full-time, part-time, day or evening basis and can progress from level 2 to level 3. In addition to the two-year full-time national diploma in design crafts and a full-time or part-time pre-degree diploma in foundation studies (art and design), the university also offers an extensive range of HE courses in art, design and craft subjects.

Achievement and standards

44. There have been consistently high pass and retention rates on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) and on the City and Guilds modern upholstery courses. In 2004, of the 96 students who began the full-time diploma in foundation studies course, 87 were successful. In 2004, all students who completed the City and Guilds certificate in design and craft soft furnishing course at level 3 gained the qualification. There are very low pass rates and declining retention rates on City and Guilds level 2 jewellery craft and advanced silverware courses. The retention rate on the City and Guilds hand-crafted cabinet making two-year part-time course, at 39% in 2004, is very low. The national diploma design crafts has seen a sharp decline in enrolment and in pass rates. In 2004, only 4 from the 14 who began the course were awarded the diploma.

45. Students' work on the diploma in foundation studies is outstanding. The quality of drawing is excellent; students produce measured perspective and expressive drawings. During the initial stage of the course, students explore processes of idea and image development and produce an exciting range of work. In 2004, 25 students were awarded distinctions and their portfolios show work that is extremely mature and thorough in pursuing ideas to their full potential and individual in style and content. One student who went on to study architecture had produced an exciting and impressive range of flexible wood structures. These were ambitious in scale and very ingenious in their design, which was based on skeleton structures. Progression on to HE by students on the diploma in foundation studies is high. Students on the City and Guilds courses in upholstery, soft furnishing, cabinet making, jewellery and silversmithing achieve very high standards of craft work. Students' work on the national diploma in design craft is weak. The quality of drawing is poor and designs are not thoroughly researched from primary sources, or with reference to contemporary design.

A sample of retention and pass rates in arts, design and craft, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
City and Guilds 6955-04 modern upholstery	2	No. of starts	13	13	12
		% retention	100	92	92
		% pass rate	85	83	91
City and Guilds 7660-09 silverware advanced craft	2	No. of starts	28	20	25
		% retention	57	50	44
		% pass rate	44	40	18
City and Guilds 7670-08 jewellery craft	2	No. of starts	93	93	100
		% retention	40	44	35
		% pass rate	5	7	6
City and Guilds 6955-16 machine wood working	2	No. of starts	16	12	32
		% retention	88	100	90
		% pass rate	79	67	86
City and Guilds 6955-	2	No. of starts	21	17	17

08 hand craft cabinet making		% retention	58	73	31
		% pass rate	27	73	60
British Technology and Education Council (BTEC) diploma foundation studies (art and design), full time	3	No. of starts	104	11	96
		% retention	89	90	93
		% pass rate	98	99	97
BTEC diploma foundation studies (art and design), part time	3	No. of starts	33	30	38
		% retention	88	73	82
		% pass rate	84	100	97
BTEC national diploma in design*	3	No. of starts	22	17	14
		% retention	50	35	57
		% pass rate	82	67	50
City and Guilds 7922 certificate in design and craft	3	No. of starts	13	14	15
		% retention	77	64	73
		% pass rate	60	78	100

* previously national diploma in silversmith jewellery and allied craft

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

Quality of education and training

46. The quality of teaching is varied. The best teaching is disciplined, sets a high standard and is based on realistic assignments. On the diploma in foundation studies, teaching is highly structured, lively and stimulating and taught by staff who demonstrate a strong team ethos. Schemes of work show a methodical approach to analytical drawing. The initial exploratory stage is very well planned to develop students' thinking and understanding of processes of change and transformation. Students understand basic design elements such as perspective. An exhibition of recently completed work showed clearly how students' technical skills in printmaking, monochrome drawing and colour theory had been nurtured to enable them to express their ideas effectively.

47. The weaker and unsatisfactory teaching lacks clear aims and allows students to work without focus. In such sessions, there is no evidence of learning outcomes or assessment criteria and students are unclear about the requirements or timing of the assignments. The weaker teaching is in jewellery courses, particularly the national diploma design crafts where individual students' needs are not recognised or catered for. In some specialist craft lessons, students on different levels of the same course are taught together. In a busy chasing lesson, the tutor gave good individual support to all students and the mixed workshop stimulated skills development for the less experienced students who learned from their more advanced colleagues. In other jewellery lessons, students were left to their own devices and needed to seek out the tutor for assistance. Many of these learners were unsure about what was expected of them even though the tutors were highly skilled in their individual craft.

48. Specialist resources available for the majority of courses are excellent. The accommodation and workshops in craft areas are of a high standard, particularly in silversmithing, jewellery, enamelling, cabinet making, wood finishing and upholstery. The quality of equipment is high and is used by both FE and HE students. The specialist computer facilities, many with high specifications and relevant software, meet students' needs. There is adequate access for students outside scheduled lessons times. Tutors are well qualified with good current industrial experience. Workshops are well managed by technicians who work closely with teaching staff by demonstrating techniques and equipment. There is some cramped accommodation and the base room for the national diploma

design crafts course and some cabinet workshops are small. Some studios are drab and lack displays to celebrate students' work.

49. Assessment practice is varied. Many assignments are well written. In cabinet making, upholstery and soft furnishing, there are good regular assessments of students' work, thorough records and regular feedback on students' progress. Individual tutorials are recorded. On the diploma in foundation studies (art and design), assessment is good and students receiving regular verbal feedback and their work is discussed in group critiques. Written feedback on art history essays is detailed and supportive. The portfolios are reviewed by groups of staff at three key assessment points, and the feedback is supportive with clear advice on how to improve and extend work. Students on the national diploma in design crafts course do not receive regular written feedback on their progress. The brief feedback given does not indicate ways of improving work. On City and Guilds silversmithing and jewellery courses, staff use a self-assessment system twice a year. Teachers sign these but their written comments are too brief to be of value to students.

50. The City and Guilds courses meet the unique needs of students intending to work in specialist industrial sectors both in London and nationally. Many current learners are professionals such as bankers, financiers and information technology (IT) managers who intend to change careers and are learning high-level skills which will prepare them well for this.

51. Most students are well supported on their courses. All students have a personal tutor and can ask for a tutorial. The frequency of tutorials varies between subjects. The induction process is successful in introducing students to student services and the library. However, some part-time students on City and Guilds courses do not receive induction to these central services. The admissions procedures operated through the central registry are not wholly effective. Many students make repeated attempts to enrol on courses and are not always successful.

Leadership and management

52. There is poor management in some aspects of the curriculum. The integration of the previous two departments of fine art and design and technology has still not fully impacted on systems and practice. There is a clear difference in the recording systems used. A number of individual courses, such as the City and Guilds soft furnishing and diploma in foundation studies (art and design), are well managed. In these courses, staff work well as a team, assessment and records are thorough and course reviews are effective in maintaining the standard of provision. However, there is no sharing of this good practice across the department. A number of courses are not well managed. Quality assurance is poor. There are no clear action plans or targets to improve failing courses or poor retention rates. Some course evaluations are detailed but they vary in style and quality and many lack rigour in the analyses of trends in retention or pass rates. Staff promote an inclusive environment and work effectively with a diverse range of students.

Part D: Institution data

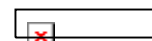
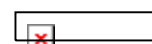


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	0	5
2	39	73



3	59	18
4/5	0	0
Other	2	4
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the institution in autumn 2004

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	0	31	1
Land-based provision	0	0	0
Construction	0	43	2
Engineering, technology and manufacture	24	346	15
Business administration, management and professional	4	1,279	52
Information and communication technology	0	0	0
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	0	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	0	0	0
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	0	0	0
Health, social care and public services	0	0	0
Visual and performing arts and media	93	649	30
Humanities	0	0	0
English, languages and communication	0	0	0
Foundation programmes	0	11	0
Total	121	2,359	100

Source: provided by the institution in autumn 2004

Table 3: Retention and achievement

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Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
2	Starters excluding transfers	23	33	34	382	340	349
	Retention rate %	70	70	74	49	51	49
	National average %	73	72	*	69	68	*
	Pass rate %	38	48	40	44	54	60
	National average %	73	76	*	70	73	*
3	Starters excluding transfers	68	79	68	243	276	340
	Retention rate %	87	90	88	79	69	71
	National average %	83	83	*	70	69	*
	Pass rate %	86	99	92	70	56	45
	National average %	83	84	*	71	74	*
Short courses	Starters excluding transfers	1	3	4	662	889	1,156
	Retention rate %	100	100	100	100	100	100
	National average %	91	90	*	92	92	*
	Pass rate %	100	0	100	3	2	100
	National average %	77	79	*	82	86	*

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..

** Unavailable*

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)	71	22	7	14

Level 2 (intermediate)	90	0	10	10
Level 1 (foundation)	0	100	0	1
Totals	76	16	8	25

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