



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Godalming College

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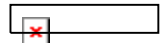
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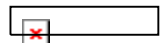
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Basic information about the college

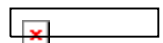


Name of college:	Godalming
Type of college:	Sixth Form College
Principal:	David Adelman
Address of college:	Tuesley Lane Godalming Surrey GU7 1RS
Telephone number:	01483 423526
Fax number:	01483 417079
Chair of governors:	Margaret Jack
Unique reference number:	130828
Name of reporting inspector:	Melanie Kavanagh HMI
Dates of inspection:	10-14 January 2005

Part A: Summary



Information about the college

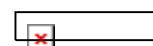


Waverley in Surrey. The borough of Waverley is a predominately rural area covering some 133 square miles and is situated in the South West corner of Surrey on the borders of Sussex and Hampshire. Waverley is an affluent area with the third lowest population density of the 11 Surrey boroughs. Unemployment in Waverley is low at 0.9% and average house prices are very high. In 2003, the pass rate in Surrey at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades A* to C for students aged 16 to 18 was 59.4%, compared with a national average of 52.9%. Surrey has one of the highest levels of staying-on rates in full-time education at age 16. Participation by young people aged 16 in structured learning is 84% and participation rates at age 17 are at the national average. In 2003, 90% of students in the college were from Surrey, 5% from West Sussex, with the remaining 5% from other local education authorities. In the same year, 95% of students identified themselves as white with 1% in each category identifying themselves as Black African; Chinese; Asian and other mixed heritage.

The college occupies a 19.7 acre single site and has 4 learning centres for adults with a professional training suite for adults at Guardian House in Godalming. Student numbers have increased since the last inspection. In October 2000, there were 1,300 students aged 16 to 18 and in October 2004 there were 1,507, an increase of approximately 16%. Adult enrolments over the same period have increased from just below 900 to 1,800.

The college offers courses in 10 of the 14 areas of learning. The highest number of enrolments for students aged 16 to 18 are in humanities; science and mathematics; visual and performing arts and business administration and management and information and communications technology (ICT). Adult enrolments are highest in health and social care, basic skills and business administration and management. In 2003, there were 1,477 students aged 16 to 18, most of whom were studying full time. Of the 813 adult students, the great majority were studying part time. In the same year, 79% of students aged 16 to 18 were studying advanced courses with 19% on intermediate programmes and 2% on foundation courses. Of the adult students, 34% were studying foundation courses, 28% were on intermediate programmes and 14% were on advanced courses. The remaining adult students were on courses without a notional level.

How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the provision to be outstanding in: science and mathematics; business administration and management; visual and performing arts and humanities. Provision in health and social care was judged to be good.

Key strengths

- high pass and retention rates

- very good teaching and learning

- excellent student achievement compared to prior achievement

- high standards of student work

- very effective monitoring of progress of students aged 16 to 18

- good and productive external collaboration and partnership activities

- outstanding support for students

- very effective quality assurance practices leading to improvements in teaching and learning and students' achievements

- outstanding leadership and management.

What should be improved

- the underdeveloped monitoring and reporting of progress of adult students on national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses

- poor retention and pass rates on additional qualifications

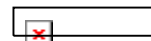
- some aspects of key skills

- a few insufficiently specific targets set in tutorials and self-assessment reports

- overcrowded and unsuitable accommodation for a minority of courses.

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

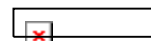
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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
Science and mathematics	Outstanding. Pass and retention rates are high, with a large proportion of students achieving high grades. Students demonstrate a high standard of written, oral and mathematical skills and produce excellent practical and investigative work. Teaching is stimulating and challenging, with particularly good use of information and learning technology (ILT) to promote learning. Students receive very good support and there is highly effective monitoring of students' progress.
Business, administration, management and professional	Outstanding. There are high retention and pass rates and students develop high standards of personal and business skills. Teaching is very good and some is outstanding. Individual students receive highly effective learning support and make excellent progress. There are extensive and productive links with employers and good curriculum management.
Health, social care and public services	Good. There are high pass rates on the Council for Awards in Childrens Care and Education (CACHE) certificate and early years courses. Students show a high standard of practical skills and there are productive partnerships to meet local needs. Teaching is good and there is effective support for learners in the workplace. Target setting for students aged 16 to 19 is insufficiently precise and there is insufficient monitoring and reporting of the progress of adult students on NVQ courses.
Visual and performing arts	Outstanding. Retention and pass rates are very high, with a large proportion of students achieving high grades. Teaching and learning are very good and some is outstanding. Students achieve an excellent standard of practical and performance work and there is very effective monitoring of students' progress. Curriculum management is outstanding.
Humanities	Outstanding. There are very high retention and pass rates and students produce a high standard of written and oral work. Teaching is stimulating and challenging and there is excellent monitoring of students' progress. Curriculum management is outstanding.

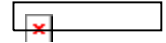
How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are outstanding. The principal and governors have set a clear and appropriate strategic direction for the college which staff fully understand and support. Staff value leadership which is motivating, open and consultative. A strong emphasis on meeting the specific needs of individual students is common to all and is a key strength of the college. The college has been successful in attracting new business. The quality of teaching and learning is significantly better than the national average and focuses effectively on the individual needs of students. Most student retention and pass rates are excellent. Students' performance in relation to their prior

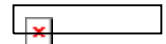
for students is outstanding. There is effective collaboration with partners. Excellent quality assurance arrangements include internal reviews which successfully integrate self-assessment, appraisal and teaching observation. Staff development is well managed and the benefits of training are quickly incorporated into work practices. There is good promotion of equal opportunities. Financial management and governance are outstanding. Pass and retention rates on additional qualifications are poor. The management of data relating to NVQs is underdeveloped.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



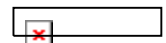
The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. A widening range of courses meets local needs effectively. Links between the college and other partners including local schools are good and targets on participation in further education (FE) are met or exceeded. Links with employers are productive and the college works well in meeting their training needs in flexible and creative ways. There are a range of essential skills courses to meet basic skills needs in the community. Support for students with literacy and numeracy needs is good. The number of students from minority ethnic groups reflects the profile of the local community. Student data is collected and analysed by gender, age, ethnicity and disability and the college has taken action to improve the achievement of underperforming groups. The college meets the requirements of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). Students with difficulties or disabilities are well supported. A good standard of specialist equipment is provided and used where necessary. Access for students with restricted mobility is good on the main campus, but the adult training centre at Guardian House is not accessible for students with restricted mobility.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Support and guidance for students are outstanding. Pre-entry guidance is comprehensive and impartial. Initial assessment is effective in identifying support needs and students receive support early in their course. Induction arrangements enable students to settle in to college quickly. Tutorials are well structured and provide very good support for students on academic and pastoral issues. Attendance and punctuality are closely and rigorously monitored. Students have access to a good range of additional support services, including learning support, financial assistance and advice on personal issues. Individual learning support is effective in improving student achievement. Teachers monitor academic progress rigorously and there is effective communication between subject teachers and personal tutors. Parents and carers receive regular reports on performance and attendance. NVQ students are well supported through workplace assessments and visits. Students receive excellent tutorial support in group and individual tutorials. Students receive comprehensive advice on careers and progression opportunities, and are very well supported in making applications for higher education (HE) and employment.

Students' views of the college



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

What students like about the college

- being treated as adults
- friendly and supportive staff
- good individual help and support
- good enrichment opportunities
- availability of computers
- the professional expertise of staff
- the high expectations and standards set
- the good atmosphere in the college
- good services in the canteen.

What they feel could be improved

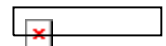
- the cramped social facilities
- the small library
- overly large class sizes

- food in the canteen

- key skills lessons

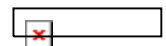
- insufficient lockers for students.

Other information

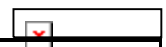


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The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

Part B: The college as a whole



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

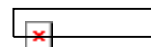


Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	84	16	0
19+ and WBL*			
Learning 16-18	83	17	0
19+ and WBL*			

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

**work-based learning*

Achievement and standards



1. The college offers 44 subjects at advanced subsidiary level (AS level) and 42 subjects at general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level). There are also advanced vocational certificates of education (AVCEs) in business; health and social care, ICT; leisure and recreation; media studies and travel and tourism. The college also offers GCSEs in nine subjects, Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) first diploma in business and other vocational courses in areas including ICT, business, childcare, and leisure and tourism. The college offers basic skills and workplace training in health and social care, and business either in the adult training suite at Guardian House or on business premises.

2. Retention and pass rates on the major qualifications offered by the college are excellent. Pass rates at GCE A level have been above national averages for the years between 2002 and 2004. College data shows that in 2004, students achieved a pass rate of 99% compared to a national average of 94%. In the same year, 56% of students achieved high grades. In 28 subjects, students achieved a pass rate of 100%. The small number of adult students studying GCE A levels in 2004 achieved a pass rate of 100% compared to a national average of 82%. Students aged 16 to 18 achieved a 99% pass rate compared to a national average of 94%. Retention rates on GCE A levels are good for both age groups, with retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 improving from 95% in 2003 to 98% in 2004. In the same years, adult retention rates improved from 87% to 100%. Pass rates at AS level have been significantly above the national averages for the past three years. In 2003, pass rates were 90% compared to a national average of 85% and college data shows that in 2004 pass rates further improved to 92%. In the same year, students achieved 100% pass rates in 10 subjects. Retention rates on AS-level courses have been above the national averages for the years between 2002 and 2004. In 2003 and 2004, it was 92% compared to the national average of 88%.

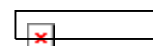
3. Students aged 16 to 18 achieve well at GCSE. College data shows that in 2002, 67% of students achieved passes at grades A* to C, rising to 75% in 2003. In 2004, 72% of students achieved pass rates at grades A* to C. In the same years, the pass rate at grades A* to G improved from 89% in 2002, to 92% in 2003 and 100% in 2004. The small number of adults studying GCSE achieve less well, with 41% achieving passes at grades A* to C in 2004. The retention rate of students aged 16 to 18 on GCSEs has fallen slightly from 92% in 2003 to 84% in 2004. However, this remains above the national average of 80%. Retention rates of adult students have been significantly above the national averages in 2003 and 2004, having improved from below the national average in 2002. In 2004, the retention rate of adult students was 81% compared to a national average of 70%. Pass rates in AVCEs are excellent. College data show that, in 2004, there was a 100% pass rate in all AVCEs which include the business double and single award, ICT, the leisure and recreation double and single award and travel and tourism. Students in both age groups achieve poorly on additional qualifications such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and Community Sport Leaders Award. This has the effect of reducing overall pass and retention rates at most levels.

4. With the exception of adult students in health and social care who are not scheduled to achieve NVQs until 2005/06, all curriculum areas inspected identified high pass rates as a significant strength. Measures of success which compare students' achievements at GCSE to their performance at AS level and GCE A level show that many students achieve better results than those predicted. In some subjects at GCE A -level, including general studies, psychology, English literature, history, geography, biology, art and design, drama and theatre, physical education, sociology, government and politics, and music technology, students achieve significantly better than predicted.

5. Students work enthusiastically and are very well motivated to succeed. They attend well and are punctual. The high standard of students' work is identified as a significant strength in all curriculum areas inspected. In science and mathematics, students demonstrate a high standard of written, oral

and numerical skills and as a result are able to present high-quality reports and to carry out complex calculations. In business, students show the ability to think critically and analyse and evaluate evidence. They are able to present and debate clearly current issues and develop very good personal and business skills such as time management and team working. Adult students in business produce good work-based evidence for their portfolios. In health and social care, students develop a high standard of practical skills and establish good links between theory and practice. In visual and performing arts, students produce excellent work and are articulate in explaining ideas and possible further developments. Humanities' students demonstrate a high standard of written and oral work. They are able to make critical and analytical judgements and use appropriate specialist vocabulary from an early stage in their courses.

Quality of education and training



6. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 69 lessons. Teaching was graded good or better in 84% of lessons, satisfactory in 16% of lessons and no lessons were graded as less than satisfactory. Learning was good or better in 83% of lessons, satisfactory in 17% of lessons and there were no lessons where learning was judged to be less than satisfactory. This teaching and learning profile is significantly better than the national averages for similar colleges. Teaching and learning are identified as significant strengths in all curriculum areas inspected. Every curriculum area achieved a teaching and learning profile higher than the national average. The best teaching and learning was observed on advanced level courses and the teaching of students aged 16 to 18 was judged to be better than that of adult students. The quality of teaching and learning is very similar whether lessons are taught by full-time or part-time staff.

7. Teaching and learning are particularly well planned with activities that extend the skills of the most able students and support the learning of less able students. Much of the teaching is stimulating and challenging and maintains students' interest through varied activities. A particular feature of the teaching is the strict timekeeping and deadlines within the lessons that challenge students to produce work within short periods of time. Teachers have high expectations of students and create a supportive atmosphere in the class that allows students to aim confidently for improved performance. Students demonstrate this confidence in their oral contributions in class discussions and their ability to make very good presentations.

8. ILT is used effectively and imaginatively to enhance learning. In many subjects, the use of ILT prevents the need for extensive note taking and allows students to concentrate on learning outcomes and the development of necessary skills and knowledge. There is effective use of teachers' commercial and vocational experience to improve learning. Teachers are skilled at making links between theoretical and practical activities. Teaching is focused on examination requirements and techniques and students show a very good understanding of what is required of them in order to achieve high grades. Learning is supported and extended through good learning materials including subject handbooks and lesson handouts. There is a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in lessons with students learning effectively from one another and evaluating sensitively the quality of each other's work. Teachers demonstrate very good subject expertise and knowledge which is highly valued by students.

9. Staff are well qualified and experienced. The very small number of non-qualified staff are working towards relevant teaching qualifications. These staff are mentored and monitored closely and effectively. Staff in adult learning have relevant and current work experience and hold appropriate assessor and verifier awards. Support and technician staff work effectively to support teaching and learning. Staff development is focused on the improvement of teaching and learning and students' achievements. Teachers have good access to training opportunities and these have led to demonstrable improvements. Specialist training has been given to staff to support students with physical disabilities, dyslexia, dyspraxia and Asperger's syndrome.

10. Teaching and learning resources used during lessons are excellent. Staff have ready access to ILT and information technology (IT) champions work alongside teachers to promote the uses of ILT. Staff in business, humanities and science and mathematics use digital projectors regularly and effectively. The music department is well resourced with computers, recording studios and professional equipment. The recently upgraded software provides excellent teaching and learning tools. The library has a good range of specialist books, periodicals, DVDs and videos.

11. There is a clear and ambitious accommodation strategy with building scheduled to begin in June 2005. However, much of the current accommodation is unsuitable and cramped. The learning resource centre is housed in a dilapidated building with poor temperature control. Small rooms are overcrowded in dance and drama, health and social care and science lessons. Overcrowding in these lessons limits teaching strategies and the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Overall, access for students with restricted mobility on the main college site is good. Whilst there is not access for students using wheelchairs in leisure and tourism, lessons are moved to accommodate their needs. In contrast, access for adult students to the adult training centre at Guardian House is poor and there are no plans to develop or move premises in the near future.

12. Assessment and monitoring of most students' progress are excellent. There is prompt and thorough initial assessment of both full-time and part-time students' learning needs. Additional support is provided quickly and effectively. The college has developed an electronic individual learning plan to record students' prior achievements, additional learning needs and preferred learning styles. This information is used extensively and effectively to plan teaching and assessment. Teachers set and mark work regularly and students receive constructive and helpful feedback in order to improve their performance. Marking is detailed and accurate and related closely to examination criteria.

13. Students have a clear understanding of their progress. Subject tutors agree challenging target minimum grades with their students and these are reviewed rigorously against actual performance. Students' progress is also monitored closely through regular tutorials. In a minority of areas, such as health and social care, the targets set for students are insufficiently clear on required actions and timescales. The college has identified this as an area for development and training has taken place to improve target setting. The assessment of students on NVQ programmes is well planned with assessors setting clear and appropriate targets for learners. Assessment practice is adapted effectively to accommodate learners with additional learning needs. However, there is insufficient use of data for managers to monitor closely the progress of these learners. The internal verification of coursework is very good for both vocational and academic courses. Internal verifiers provide useful feedback to assessors in order to improve assessment practice.

14. The college offers a wide range of subjects at advanced level and a widening range of courses at levels 1 to 3. There are good links with partner schools providing opportunities for students aged 14 to 16 to study courses including level 1 in life skills and related topics. Gifted and talented pupils are offered imaginative modules of study including particle physics, languages and art and design. The college also supports the teaching of vocational qualifications in schools through teacher exchanges and the loaning of learning resources. Outreach courses in community centres offer lessons to adults with basic skills needs. Links with businesses and employers are very good. The college provides essential workplace skills and training to meet local needs. Qualifications offered include NVQs in care and school support, ICT courses, and management and supervisory skills in the workplace. Employers are enthusiastic about the provision and value highly the skills employees gain through the training. Provision in the workplace is flexible and runs all year. The college is actively involved in workplace and employer activities and participates in a number of projects to develop sector skills.

15. Students benefit from a particularly wide range of enrichment activities in most curriculum areas. A large proportion of students participate in such activities and many participate in more than one activity. Students are offered both accredited and non-accredited qualifications including options in archaeology, political debates and meetings and religious and ethical studies. An activities week includes visits, HE workshops and science workshops. There are good progression routes for students and in 2004, 87% of students progressed from AS level to GCE A level. In the same year, 84% of students progressed to HE.

16. Teaching and assessment of key skills have been recently reorganised under a new management structure. There are now key skills co-ordinators who work alongside staff in curriculum areas. Criteria for key skills and assessment opportunities are mapped effectively across the curriculum and opportunities for key skills development are included in all lesson plans. Pass rates are good overall. For example, test pass rates for application of number have risen to 83% in 2004 and portfolio completion for the same year was 100%. However, students do not value key skills as highly as the rest of their subjects and often fail to see their relevance.

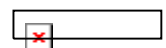
17. The college provides excellent support and guidance for students. Pre-entry guidance is comprehensive and impartial. The college has achieved the Matrix Quality Award for information and advice for adults and the Investors in Careers' Excellence Award. Professionally produced and attractive publicity materials are widely circulated and contain clear information about courses and the range of support services available. Information is accessible to students and provided in different formats on request. Induction enables students to settle quickly in to the college and their courses. The college student handbook provides comprehensive and useful information about college life. Individual course handbooks give detailed information about course content, structure and subject requirements.

18. Academic and personal support for students are excellent. The college provides a good range of support services. These include welfare, counselling and chaplaincy, finance, careers and progression and learning support. Specialist equipment and support is available for students with specific learning or physical disabilities. Professionally qualified counsellors and the student support team provide easily accessible and effective personal help for students. Currently, 140 students are supported through the educational maintenance allowance and more than 100 students received learner support funds to help with their studies. The retention rate of full-time students receiving learner support funds in 2003/04 was 97%.

19. Learning support is effective in improving the performance of students. Most students who are identified with specific learning support requirements attend one-to-one sessions. The progress of the minority of students who do not take up the offer of additional support is reviewed and monitored regularly by the learning support team. Classroom assistants provide effective support to students on level 2 courses and students aged 14 to 16. Teachers monitor academic progress rigorously and students at risk of failure are well supported through tutorials and drop-in study skills and learning support workshops. Attendance data are easily accessible through the management information system and well used by teachers, personal tutors and senior managers in monitoring students' attendance and punctuality. NVQ students are well supported through workplace assessments and visits. There is a clear disciplinary procedure for students aged 16 to 18, and close monitoring of students at different stages of this process.

20. Tutorials are well structured and effective. A core studies programme covers a wide range of topics, including study skills, citizenship, careers and progression. A comprehensive tutor guide supports personal tutors in the delivery of the programme. Students and tutors contribute to thorough reviews of the tutorial programme which has resulted in improvements. Personal tutors and the careers guidance team provide very good support to students on progression to HE and employment. Careers education is embedded in the tutorial programme, and students and tutors have excellent resources and workbooks to support this. The college has an appropriate child protection policy, and a clear guide for staff. The director of student support services has responsibility for co-ordinating actions and liaising with external agencies. A small number of staff have completed accredited training and the college has placed priority on training those staff who work with students aged 14 to 16.

Leadership and management



strategic direction for the college which staff fully understand and support. Issues raised at the last inspection have been resolved. Staff value highly leadership that is motivating, open and consultative. The college has been successful in attracting new business. The quality of teaching and learning is significantly better than the national average. Most student retention and pass rates are excellent. Students' performance in relation to their prior achievement is outstanding on many courses. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They give freely of their time and provide very good support to students. The strong emphasis that is placed on meeting individual students' needs is a key strength. There is effective collaboration with partners. Quality assurance is excellent. There is good promotion of equal opportunities. Financial management and governance are outstanding. The management of data relating to NVQs is underdeveloped. Pass and retention rates on many additional qualifications are poor.

22. The college has been successful in attracting new students. Between 2003 and 2004 recruitment of students aged 16 to 18 increased by over 6% and adult enrolments doubled. There are over 100 students aged 14 to 16 attending the college on a day-release basis or enrichment courses. Recruitment targets have been achieved for the last three years.

23. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Some 84% of teaching seen by inspectors was judged to be good or better. Pass and retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses are excellent. They have exceeded national averages for the last three years and in 2004 the GCE A-level pass rate was 99%, with 56% of students achieving high grades. In 2004, 84% of students progressed to HE. Retention and pass rates for adults on a majority of short courses have been above national averages for the years between 2002 and 2004. Pass and retention rates for additional qualifications are poor which has the effect of reducing overall pass rates at most levels. The management of data for NVQ provision is underdeveloped and this presents difficulties to managers in monitoring student performance and progressing quality assurance activity appropriately.

24. Management of the college is excellent. In all curriculum areas inspected, the management of the curriculum is good and in two areas it is outstanding. The senior management team work corporately in a spirit of openness and collaboration. An inclusive approach is adopted that clearly focuses on meeting the specific needs of individual students. Staff at all levels contribute to the development of the curriculum and identify with the drive for excellence. Morale is exceptionally high. Managers and staff succeed in providing exciting learning opportunities for students. Management systems are sound and nearly all work effectively. Communication is varied in style and method and is well used. In particular, easily accessible interactive management information systems are used effectively by staff to carry out day-to-day business.

25. Strategic planning is thorough and provides clear direction. It is informed by a detailed market analysis and is successful in incorporating local needs and government priorities. Stakeholders contribute to the planning process enthusiastically. High-quality teaching and learning is central to the plan. Development priorities are clear. Progress is monitored regularly to ensure that plans are completed successfully and improvements implemented. Data are used well to inform planning and includes staffing and resource implications.

26. Community links are productive. Partnerships have been influential in attracting new business. The principal has been central to their establishment. In particular, the Waverley Federation provides a forum for the development of a shared 14-to-19 programme. The Surrey Sixth Form Colleges' Consortium and the West Surrey Essential Skills Confederation are enabling colleges to promote their curriculum and good practice across the community. Good practice is being shared well and curriculum collaboration is growing. Courses for the business community are made available on a flexible basis both at the adult training centre and on employers' own premises. The college is advanced in its application for Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for social care and the training of classroom assistants. Parents and carers are welcomed in the college. They are kept well informed about student progress by a comprehensive and informative reporting process.

27. Quality assurance is excellent. Curriculum quality is maintained well through systematic, cyclical processes of self-assessment, appraisal and teaching observation. Governors and staff undertake self-evaluation within a structured framework and progress development plans which succeed in

addressing most weaknesses. Self-assessment reports are validated formally by a review panel that includes senior managers, governors and visiting moderators. Grades and future targets are agreed and validated prior to presentation to the full Board. A recently introduced internal review process enables self-assessment to be fully integrated with the college's well-established appraisal and teaching observation practices. College staff value the composite process as an excellent way to evaluate their own performance and share good practice. Students' views are sought formally in frequent surveys and employers' views are gained during regular face-to-face meetings.

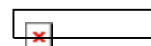
28. Staff development is well managed. Training reflects both the needs that emerge from quality assurance and the development priorities of the college. All staff who attend training evaluate the experience and prepare and complete action plans which ensure that the benefits of training are quickly realised.

29. There is good promotion of equal opportunities. Expectations are embodied in a formal policy which properly incorporates the expectations of the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. A co-ordinator working through a formal committee oversees and monitors implementation. Selection, recruitment and the overall composition of the student and the staff population is analysed by ethnicity, disability and gender. Students' performance is also analysed by group and actions have been implemented to address any underperforming groups. There is a nominated member of the Board to monitor disability awareness.

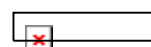
30. Governance of the college is outstanding. Members are enthusiastic, skilled, experienced and well informed. They understand the work of the college and fulfil their statutory duties effectively through a number of appropriate sub-committees. The monitoring of all performance is robust. Student performance targets are discussed and finalised, the college's self-assessment report is considered fully prior to adoption and college finances are dealt with in detail. The Board assesses its own performance thoroughly each year and members attend a range of appropriate training programmes. The clerk is an independent appointment and duties are fulfilled very well.

31. Financial management is outstanding. The principal manages the college finances at a strategic level. The finance director and his team manage day-to-day operations. Capital and revenue budgets are allocated to budget centres on a formula basis. Orders are managed centrally. Monthly statements are issued. The learning and other resources of the college are good, although there is some poor accommodation. The college has maintained category A status for financial management since incorporation. All recruitment targets have been consistently met. The college has had a major building programme approved which will address its accommodation issues and realistic financial plans are in place to fund the project. The college continues to generate annual surpluses. Within the scope of the LSC review, the college's financial management is strong. On the basis of good growth, very good and improving student retention and pass rates and excellent teaching and learning, the college offers good value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Science and mathematics



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

Strengths

- high retention and pass rates
- excellent student progress
- stimulating and challenging teaching
- excellent practical and investigative work by students
- high standard of written, oral and mathematical skills shown by students
- excellent monitoring of student progress
- very effective support for student learning.

Weaknesses

- a minority of overcrowded and unsuitable laboratories.

Scope of provision

32. The college offers a wide range of subjects at advanced level in science and mathematics. The courses offered include GCE A-level and AS-level biology, chemistry, environmental science, human biology and physics. Mathematics at GCE A level and AS level can be taken with either mechanics or statistics. The number of students on many of these courses is large, for example, 112 students are studying AS-level biology. There is also the option to study further mathematics at advanced level. At intermediate level, GCSE mathematics, statistics, double and single award science are offered. At the time of the inspection, there were a total of 1,290 enrolments in the science and mathematics area.

Achievement and standards

33. Pass rates on all advanced level courses and most intermediate courses are high. Pass rates for GCE A-level mathematics, biology, chemistry, AS-level mathematics, environmental science, physics and GCSE double science and statistics are significantly above the national average. Pass rates for GCSE mathematics, GCE A-level physics and AS-level chemistry are at the national averages. Retention rates are either at or above the national averages on most courses. The number of students achieving high-grade pass rates is significantly above the national averages on AS-level mathematics, chemistry and environmental science courses and in GCE A-level

mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics. In GCE A-level chemistry in 2004, 67% of students achieved high grades compared to the national average of 49%. Students on AS-level further mathematics and GCE A-level human biology, biology, environmental science and further mathematics courses achieve results significantly better than predicted from their prior attainment at GCSE.

34. Students demonstrate very high standards in written, oral, numerical and experimental skills and are able to present high-quality practical reports and to carry out complex calculations.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	87	55	96
		% retention	86	84	90
		% pass rate	47	43	45
AS-level environmental science	3	No. of starts	44	35	32
		% retention	86	91	100
		% pass rate	89	94	84
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	155	182	154
		% retention	90	87	94
		% pass rate	60	72	80
AS-level physics	3	No. of starts	56	84	65
		% retention	96	92	98
		% pass rate	81	87	86
AS-level biology	3	No. of starts	109	99	112
		% retention	96	98	94
		% pass rate	95	97	90
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts			
		% retention			
		% pass rate			
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	55	36	43
		% retention	98	100	98
		% pass rate	94	97	100

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

Quality of education and training

35. Teaching in science and mathematics is stimulating and challenging. Students' interest is maintained by using a range of interesting and varied activities. For example, in one GCE A-level environmental science practical lesson, students used a variety of instruments and chemical testing methods to determine pollution levels in different waters. Students demonstrated high levels of manipulative and practical skills and made informed and critical use of the results. In a GCE A-level physics lesson on waves, students' understanding of polarisation was broadened by the teacher using a wide range of practical examples of electromagnetic waves including light polarising glasses, television aerials, radar and satellite communications. In most lessons, the needs of all students are met effectively with material that is differentiated well. In all lessons, there is excellent co-operation

between students and teachers leading to a pleasant atmosphere that encourages learning. Teachers provide excellent learning support to individual students in lessons. Resources are used well and schemes of work and lesson plans are detailed and closely monitored. Information technology is used effectively to promote learning. For example, in a GCSE mathematics lesson, students learned about the mathematics of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes using computer software that adjusted to the different abilities of the students. Students have a high level of interest and motivation and are willing to learn from, and support each other, in lessons.

36. Teachers are well qualified in their subjects and have appropriate teaching qualifications. Laboratory accommodation is sufficient for the number of courses, but the size and design of some laboratories is not suitable for practical work with the large numbers of students in some lessons. Technician support is good in all science subjects. Initial assessment is used effectively to place students on appropriate courses. Students' work is marked well with strict deadlines for the return of the work and students receive helpful written and oral feedback. Regular tests are set and marked and students are well informed about their progress and what they must do to improve their performance. The recently established electronic individual learning plans are widely used and provide excellent support to students.

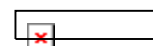
37. GCE A-level courses provide good progression routes to a wide variety of HE courses. The progression rate to HE is high with over 80% of students in science and mathematics progressing to HE in 2004. There is a wide enrichment programme in the science and mathematics area with workshop sessions available in all subjects involving students effectively in a variety of extra scientific activities. For example, a number of students take part in competitive science projects including the 'Mouchel Bridge Project' where they design and build bridges.

38. There is a comprehensive and effective tutorial system. There is excellent monitoring of students' progress and teachers offer good support both in and out of the classroom. Attendance is rigorously checked and absence is followed up promptly. Students receive effective guidance on progression to HE from tutors and the careers service.

Leadership and management

39. Leadership and management are good. Careful analysis of performance is used to secure improvements. Most of the department's targets are realistic, but challenging. However, some targets, such as for attendance, have been less challenging and easily met. The management structure of the department is clearly defined, well understood and valued highly by staff. Course reviews and informal meetings focus on teaching and learning. All teachers are observed and appraised and there is a strong and successful focus on improving teaching and learning and students' achievements. Teachers have clear roles and responsibilities and internal communications are good. There is successful sharing of good practice which has had a major impact on improving teachers' performance and students' achievements. Staff development is focused effectively on improvements to teaching and learning.

Business, administration, management and professional



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

Strengths

- very high retention and pass rates

- very good and some outstanding teaching

- high standard of personal and business skills shown by students

- excellent support for students

- extensive and productive links with employers

- good curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses.

Scope of provision

40. The college offers a wide range of business, administration and management courses including intermediate general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) in travel and tourism, AVCE awards in business, leisure and tourism, GCE A levels and AS level in business and economics and GCSE in business. Part-time programmes include NVQs in administration, management, assessor awards and teaching support. Some 39 students aged 14 to 16 attend the college on a day-release course. There are 738 full-time and 150 part-time students following programmes in business, leisure, tourism, economics, administration, management and professional studies. The majority of full-time students are aged 16 to 18, whilst all part-time students are adults.

Achievement and standards

41. Pass rates are particularly high for AVCE awards in leisure, tourism and business, and in GCE A level and AS level in business and economics. The number of students achieving high grades in these subjects is also higher than the national averages. A significant number of students aged 16 to 18 achieve better grades at GCE A level than predicted from their previous attainment at GCSE. Retention rates are also consistently high. Students produce an excellent standard of coursework and demonstrate very good personal and business skills. Students studying for AVCE awards and GCE A level in business and economics produce very good work showing evidence of critical thinking, analysis and evaluation. They are able to present and debate lucidly such issues as the effects of government policies and legislation on business. Students demonstrate a high standard of skills in areas including time management, team working and making presentations. Adults produce very good work-based evidence for their portfolios and use initiative within the workplace to implement new ideas. Progress to HE and employment is particularly good for full-time students. Over 80% of AVCE business students progressed to HE in 2004.

A sample of retention and pass rates in business, administration, management and

professional, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	14	32	13
		% retention	93	81	85
		% pass rate	92	85	91
GCSE business and communication	2	No. of starts	*	18	25
		% retention	*	94	88
		% pass rate	*	82	91
AVCE single award in business	3	No. of starts	28	90	29
		% retention	79	82	97
		% pass rate	88	99	93
AVCE single award in travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	12	20	15
		% retention	100	70	80
		% pass rate	83	93	100
AVCE double award in business	3	No. of starts	40	38	76
		% retention	83	76	99
		% pass rate	52	100	97
AVCE double award in leisure and recreation	3	No. of starts	16	21	40
		% retention	100	95	95
		% pass rate	100	85	100
AS-level economics	3	No. of starts	58	58	85
		% retention	91	97	93
		% pass rate	92	86	99
AS-level business studies	3	No. of starts	142	127	116
		% retention	94	94	96
		% pass rate	98	93	91
GCE A-level business studies	3	No. of starts	66	96	88
		% retention	97	98	100
		% pass rate	62	94	99

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

42. Teaching is very good and some is outstanding. Lessons are imaginatively planned, and are clearly focused on the needs of individual students. Activities are challenging and stimulating, and make best use of the teacher's and students' commercial experience. In an economics lesson, the students were carefully guided, with the use of a mind map, to compare and contrast economic policies. This stimulated an animated and well-informed discussion on politics. Students develop a high standard of skills. Strict deadlines are established and worked towards successfully. Teachers prepare graduated activities which cater effectively for the needs of students of differing abilities.

They make good use of searching and targeted questions to check and reinforce learning. For example, skilful teaching and questioning motivated young people aged 14 to 16 on day-release to understand and use breakeven analysis very quickly. Most teachers make effective use of ILT in teaching and learning. There is insufficient reference to the key skills that are being developed in a minority of lessons.

43. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. The blend of experienced, well-qualified staff and staff that are new to teaching provides a rich source of ideas and approaches which enhance learning. Students benefit from the current commercial experience of part-time staff. Full-time staff update their occupational experience regularly, using work placements to generate teaching material. There is good access to ICT in business classrooms, although some classrooms are overcrowded. Access for students with restricted mobility to the adult training centre at Guardian House is poor.

44. The monitoring of students' progress is very effective. Work is regularly set and marked, with constructive feedback to students on how to improve their performance. Students' progress is carefully recorded and tracked. Coursework is meticulously standardised and meets the demands of the awarding bodies. Internal verification practices for NVQs are good. Verifiers and moderators provide detailed and constructive feedback to staff. Assessment planning is good for NVQ students, with specific and appropriate targets being set by assessors. Full-time students meet academic staff regularly to discuss progress. They know how they are progressing and how to improve their grades.

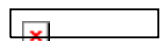
45. The college is very responsive to the needs of the local community. Links with local employers and education providers are particularly good and productive in widening participation. The number of adults enrolled on business-related NVQ programmes has doubled to 150 in the last year. The college is currently working with local partners towards establishing a CoVE for training school support staff.

46. Pastoral and academic support are very effective. Good initial information and guidance results in students being on appropriate programmes. Induction helps students to settle quickly. All students are screened sensitively for additional learning needs. Learning support is flexible and includes one-to-one and group sessions, and in-class support for language, literacy and numeracy. Students with dyslexia receive effective support including laptops on which to type all their work. The support that these students achieve has resulted in their achieving higher grades than those predicted from their previous attainment. Students value the friendly, approachable staff who help them readily or refer them to the wide range of student support services. Close monitoring and support has further improved retention rates. Adults on NVQ programmes are well supported by assessors with regular visits to their workplace.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are good. Course teams manage their programmes effectively. There are clear lines of responsibility and staff work well in teams. Part-time staff are integrated well. Teachers meet regularly to plan programme delivery and prepare learning resources. They check on students' progress and actions are well focused on improving students' achievements. There is good communication with other departments and effective sharing of resources and good practice. Course files and documentation are well maintained and minutes of meetings show clear action points. New staff are well supported through shadowing, observation, mentoring and training. Staff appraisal and staff development are effective and improve teaching. There is a culture of continuous improvement and the course review process is well integrated with an accurate and self-critical self-assessment report. However, data are not used effectively on adult NVQ programmes to monitor progress and inform management decisions.

Health, social care and public services



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

Strengths

- high standard of practical skills by students

- good teaching and learning

- productive partnership working to meet local needs

- good progression by students on early years courses

- effective support for students in the workplace.

Weaknesses

- poor target setting in tutorials for students aged 16 to 19

- insufficient monitoring and reporting of progress of adult students on NVQ courses.

Scope of provision

48. The college offers courses including the CACHE certificate and diploma in early years care and education and the AVCE in health and social care. Many of the students studying the certificate and diploma also undertake NVQ in early years childcare and education as a dual award. There are currently 55 students aged 16 to 18 studying these courses. The 337 adult students are working towards NVQ qualifications in care and early years at levels 1, 2 and 3. This includes the registered managers' award for care and play-work qualifications. The college has a well-developed plan for a CoVE in social care. There are a small number of students aged 14 to 16 studying health and social care on a day-release basis.

Achievement and standards

49. There are high pass rates on the CACHE certificate and diploma in early years care and education. The great majority of adult students studying on NVQ programmes are not scheduled to achieve the full award before 2005/06. The progress of these students is good or satisfactory, with appropriate unit achievement. Students develop a high standard of practical skills and establish good links between theory and practice. Students and learners also develop very good caring skills such as improved communications and effective risk assessment. Adults learning about attachment

theories in an NVQ workshop were quick to grasp the concept and identify how it could be used in planning strategies for working with children and where it could be referenced within the NVQ.

A sample of retention and pass rates in health, social care and public services, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
Basic health and safety certificate (short course)	1	No. of starts	31	13	32
		% retention	100	38	100
		% pass rate	74	80	97
Certificate in child care and education	2	No. of starts	13	20	*
		% retention	92	80	*
		% pass rate	92	100	*
NVQ early years care and education (16 to 19)	2	No. of starts	*	15	*
		% retention	*	100	*
		% pass rate	*	100	*
Diploma in child care and education	3	No. of starts	13	*	13
		% retention	92	*	100
		% pass rate	75	*	92
NVQ early years care and education (16 to 19)	3	No. of starts	*	*	11
		% retention	*	*	64
		% pass rate	*	*	64

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

*low numbers of students enrolled

Quality of education and training

50. Teaching in the area is good. Teachers challenge and encourage students to develop links between practical and theoretical work. Full-time students demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Teaching meets individual students' needs through differentiated activities. Students benefit from creative classroom activities which encourage active student participation effectively. In a lesson on equality of opportunity, students examined examples of direct and indirect discrimination and followed up the initial discussion through paired work using case studies. Students were challenged and interested in the exercise. They demonstrated good progress in their understanding of equal opportunities issues and how they applied in practical situations.

51. Resources are satisfactory, with suitably qualified staff with relevant vocational backgrounds. Students have good access to IT and there is up-to-date book stock in the library. However, accommodation is cramped for larger groups on both the main college site and the adult training centre at Guardian House. All students undertake initial assessment to identify learning needs and additional support staff provide effective support to students in the classroom. NVQ assessors have adapted assessment practices successfully to accommodate students' additional learning needs. Learners benefit from well-planned NVQ assessments with clear guidance and produce good quality evidence. Full-time students receive clear assignment briefs and show a good understanding of grading criteria and what they must do to achieve the highest grades.

52. There is productive partnership and collaboration with employers to meet local needs. A significant number of employers work with the Adult Business Education Unit supporting local workforce development. NVQ programmes are tailored to employers' needs and are customised for the needs of individual students. Good links with employers have led to supportive and appropriate

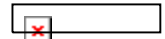
work placements for students. There is extensive and well-used feedback from employers through regular employer forum meetings. There is good progression to employment by students on early years courses.

53. Teachers and tutors provide effective support for students in the workplace. Students develop good personal skills through effective teacher and assessor visits to work placements. Many of the adult students in this area are returning to study and there is comprehensive and accessible support for these learners. Induction arrangements introduce students and learners to their programmes effectively. There are clear and useful pre-course interviews to identify the level and type of award appropriate for students' abilities. Students aged 16 to 19 receive useful tutorials and confidently seek help and support. However, targets set in tutorials for students aged 16 to 19 are insufficiently precise to promote students' progress effectively. Students' progress in literacy and numeracy is not systematically discussed or included in these targets.

Leadership and management

54. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Procedures for quality assurance, lesson observation, staff appraisal and self-assessment are effective in bringing about improvements to teaching and learning and students' achievements. Staff development is successful in maintaining good vocational skills and developing teaching and training skills. Communication within the area is good and staff are well informed and actively involved with quality assurance. The Adult Business Education Unit has a clear strategic focus and works effectively with partners including the local council and the National Health Service (NHS) Surrey and Sussex Workforce Development Board. However, there is insufficient monitoring and reporting of the progress of adult students. Management reporting is under developed and reports do not usefully inform management meetings. The college has recognised this issue and there are well-developed plans to improve the reporting procedures.

Visual and performing arts



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

Strengths

- very high retention and pass rates

- large proportion of students achieving high grades in visual and performing arts

- excellent standard of practical and performance work

- very good and some outstanding teaching

- very effective monitoring of student progress

- excellent student progress compared to prior attainment

- very good support for students

- outstanding curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- inadequate accommodation for dance and drama.

Scope of provision

55. The college offers courses in GCE A-level and AS-level art and design, textiles, dance, drama, film studies, media, music, music technology and photography and AVCE in media. GCSEs are offered in media and photography. There are 864 full-time students aged 16 to 19 enrolled on visual and performing arts courses. The majority of students are studying art and design, and media and film studies, with smaller numbers in music, film studies and photography.

Achievement and standards

56. Retention and pass rates are outstanding. In 2004, retention and pass rates were above the national averages in 14 of the 15 courses offered. In 2004, students achieved pass rates of 100% in GCE A-level textiles, dance, drama and theatre studies, film studies, music, music technology, AS-level drama, music and GCSE photography and media studies. Many students achieve high grades. The proportion of students achieving high grades in 2004 was above the national average in all but two courses. All students studying textiles achieved the highest grades possible in 2004. Data which compare students' actual grades with their GCSE results show that in most courses their performance was significantly better than that which was predicted.

57. The standard of students' work is excellent. Lively integration of different art forms results in challenging and innovative public productions which are open to all college students. Imaginative and experimental work in art and textiles is particularly well displayed throughout the college.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
GCSE media studies	2	No. of starts	17	16	17
		% retention	94	81	65
		% pass rate	88	92	100
AS-level music	3	No. of starts	15	14	11
		% retention	100	86	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100

AS-level film studies	3	No. of starts	42	44	69
		% retention	93	89	81
		% pass rate	87	92	91
AS-level dance	3	No. of starts	16	11	13
		% retention	94	91	85
		% pass rate	93	80	91
GCE A-level music technology	3	No. of starts	21	17	17
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	81	100	100
GCE A-level drama and theatre studies	3	No. of starts	49	55	56
		% retention	96	100	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GCE A-level art and design	3	No. of starts	75	91	107
		% retention	100	100	87
		% pass rate	100	100	96
GCE A-level music technology	3	No. of starts	21	17	17
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	81	100	100

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

Quality of education and training

58. Teaching is very good and some is outstanding. Teaching is stimulating and challenging and underpinned by clear learning aims. Teachers have high expectations of all students. Lessons are well planned with differentiated activities that allow the most able students to achieve at the highest standard and support the less able students to achieve well. Teaching strategies are varied and include much small group work in media and drama courses. Art and design students work individually and have effective daily feed back from tutors. Learning is supported by good handouts and lesson outlines are available on the intranet for students who have been unable to attend classes. The intranet is well used for research, useful articles and a forum for debate. There are good working relationships between students and staff and a pleasant and positive atmosphere in lessons.

59. Work in art and textiles is of an exceptionally high standard. Students produce visually exciting sketchbook work using a wide diversity of approaches, media and techniques. Students are articulate about their work, explaining ideas, influences and processes and possibilities for further development. They are encouraged effectively to develop a strongly individual response to themes and assignment topics. For example, drama students working on the text of *Mother Courage* explored advanced drama concepts, performing extracts which showed skilled acting techniques based on a clear understanding of the play. The class finished with a lively and well-informed discussion on the purpose of theatre.

60. Staff are well qualified and many are practitioners in their own right. Technicians provide good practical support to students and teachers. Art and design studios are spacious with very good displays of student work. Music technology accommodation has recently been upgraded and now has good teaching and recording studios. Media and music departments are very well resourced with ILT, which is used well in teaching and learning. The rooms used by drama and dance are too small for large groups of students. Lighting and sound equipment is outdated and storage is limited for stage properties, costumes and larger percussion instruments. The college library is well

resourced with sufficient periodicals, books, DVDs and videos, and specialist resources are available in classrooms and studios.

61. The assessment of practical and theory work is rigorous and challenges the students. Results are closely monitored against predicted grades, based on prior attainment and performance. Students are able to assess their own work accurately and identify areas for improvement. Teachers encourage a culture of high expectations and agree challenging target grades with students. Performance against targets is reviewed regularly by subject and personal tutors. Feedback on written work is very detailed and gives helpful guidance for future work. Teachers carry out a detailed evaluation of the success of each project to plan and modify subsequent assignments.

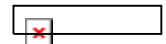
62. Students participate in a wide range of visits to theatres, galleries, film and music festivals and regular trips abroad. Staff and students benefit from guest speakers from the creative industries, including former students. There are frequent public performances and concerts. These concerts are a regular feature of college life with material ranging from string quartets and choirs to a full orchestra. In a promenade performance of an original interpretation of *Romeo and Juliet*, music technology students wrote and performed music, art students designed the set and media students projected the action on to six screens surrounding the acting area. The department has been particularly successful in involving students from other curriculum areas to join in performances and take part in arts activities.

63. Academic and pastoral support are excellent. Support needs are identified promptly and a high percentage of students taking up this support achieve higher than predicted grades. In addition to regular group tutorials, students have individual tutorials twice each term in which their progress is monitored and targets reviewed. There are clear and successful strategies to support students who are not achieving their potential grade or attendance targets.

Leadership and management

64. Leadership and management are outstanding. Effective quality systems are in place which have led to improvements in teaching and learning and students' achievements. Management information is used well to identify patterns of student success and set challenging targets for recruitment and retention and pass rates. Communication is good and part-time staff are well supported. There are regular, purposeful staff meetings which all academic and support staff attend. Lesson observations are detailed and accurate and appraisals are linked effectively to staff development. The department's plans reflect accurately the changing local conditions and the needs of students.

Humanities



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

Strengths

- very high pass and retention rates

- significant proportion of students achieving high grades.

- stimulating, challenging and effective teaching

- o high standards of students' written and oral work
- o excellent monitoring of students' progress
- o outstanding curriculum management.

Weaknesses

- o there are no significant weaknesses.

Scope of provision

65. The college offers courses in GCE A level and AS level in archaeology, psychology, philosophy, sociology, geography, history, law, religious studies and politics. The college also offers GCSE sociology. Enrolments on advanced level courses have increased significantly over the last three years and in 2004 there were 1,400 enrolments in this area. Most students are full time and aged 16 to 18. A small number of students aged 14 to 16 also study in the area through a day-release programme.

Achievement and standards

66. Pass and retention rates are excellent. In the years between 2002 and 2004, of the 58 courses in humanities only 3 courses have not exceeded national averages for retention rates and only 7 courses have not exceeded the national average pass rates. In the same period, most courses have exceeded the national averages for students achieving high grades. Measures of GCE A-level achievement which compare students' predicted grades with their GCSE performance show that, in 15 of the 18 courses, students achieve significantly better grades than those which were predicted. Courses including GCSE sociology, AS-level archaeology, politics and law which have been identified by the college as underperforming have improved their retention and pass rates significantly in 2004.

67. Students are well motivated and responsive. Their written and oral work is of a high standard. Students' essays frequently indicate their ability to make fine analytical and critical discriminations. Their oral work is confident and well expressed and students quickly learn to employ the technical terms of their subjects.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
GCSE sociology	2	No. of starts	19	13	29
		% retention	79	85	79
		% pass rate	47	82	70
AS-level philosophy	3	No. of starts	22	43	62

		% retention	91	91	87
		% pass rate	95	95	94
AS-level history	3	No. of starts	88	92	91
		% retention	95	96	96
		% pass rate	93	96	95
AS-level geography	3	No. of starts	112	109	100
		% retention	89	99	97
		% pass rate	95	96	92
AS-level religious studies	3	No. of starts	12	14	24
		% retention	100	79	88
		% pass rate	92	100	95
AS-level law	3	No. of starts	44	68	83
		% retention	91	90	98
		% pass rate	80	93	94
GCE A-level geography	3	No. of starts	55	67	86
		% retention	100	99	99
		% pass rate	100	100	99
GCE A-level government and politics	3	No. of starts	10	22	29
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	81	102	140
		% retention	99	98	99
		% pass rate	100	99	99
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	33	60	53
		% retention	100	97	100
		% pass rates	97	100	100
GCE A-level history	3	No. of starts	95	90	93
		% retention	100	96	97
		% pass rate	98	100	100

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

Quality of education and training

68. Teaching in the humanities area is excellent. Very good lesson plans are embedded in comprehensive schemes of work. Teachers employ an excellent variety of activities to enhance learning and stimulate student interest. Feedback from group work is particularly well managed to ensure that the collective findings of the groups are clearly collated and shared by all students. Excellent use is made of ILT and e-learning in many lessons and minimises the need for extensive note taking. For example, in a psychology lesson, students were given theoretical information regarding short-term memory and were then involved in testing the theory. Interactive technology was used to project each of 20 words briefly on to the screen. The collective results of the students' visual recall were then collated on the classroom computers in graph form by pairs of students and analysed prior to feedback.

69. Detailed and helpful study guides for students are available in all subjects. Handouts and teaching aids used in the classroom are relevant and engage students' interest. Learning activities and syllabus options are often selected for their topicality and interest to the students. In philosophy, for example, the making of moral judgements was considered in the contexts of euthanasia, animal rights and abortion. In a religious studies lesson, a powerpoint presentation on the biblical standing of women was set against the lyrics of a current pop song.

70. Teaching and learning time is used to maximum effect. There is a brisk pace in most lessons and little time is wasted. Effective use is made of the time after AS-level examination for introductory GCE A-level work, and enrichment activities. There is a very strong emphasis on sound preparation for examinations. Students are keenly appreciative of the extra support they receive in preparation for the examinations and their coursework commitments. A stimulating and well-attended enrichment programme enhances students' interest in their subjects. Homework is set regularly and marked conscientiously to schemes designed by each of the subject departments. Overall, marking is clear and helpful, but a small minority of marked essays do not make sufficiently clear to the student how their work could be improved.

71. The resources in the department are good. Many rooms are well equipped with fixed projectors, personal computers and interactive technology. Teachers are well qualified and demonstrate an expert knowledge of their subjects. Staff training and development is extensive and relevant, particularly in the use of ILT in teaching and learning. Teachers new to the profession are mentored and monitored closely. Textual and video resources within the faculty and library are good.

72. There is excellent subject support and guidance. Good pre-course information plus the involvement of subject specialists in the initial programming of students ensures that students are on appropriate courses. Students receive prompt initial assessment to identify additional learning needs and are supported and monitored effectively.

Leadership and management

73. Leadership and management are outstanding. Self-assessment is accurate and self-critical. There are detailed action plans which have resulted in improvements to teaching and learning and students' achievements. Management information system data are reliable and efficiently employed to inform and monitor performance. Attendance and retention rates are interrogated each month and students perceived to be at risk of underachieving are monitored and supported closely.

74. Improvements to teaching and learning have been secured through regular classroom observation which includes the examination of students' written work and course files. The department has been successful in allowing course teams autonomy in their subjects whilst ensuring that there is a strong degree of commonality through agreed policies and procedures.

Part D: College data

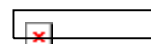
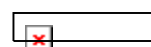


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2003/04

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	2	34
2	19	28



3	79	14
4/5	0	3
Other	0	21
Total	100	100

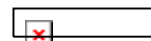
Source: provided by the college in spring 2004

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2000/01

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)
Science and mathematics	1,025	20	14
Land-based provision	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0
Engineering, technology and manufacture	103	2	1
Business administration, management and professional	582	103	9
Information and communication technology	685	208	11
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	2	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	598	101	9
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	0	0	0
Health, social care and public services	63	126	2
Visual and performing arts and media	681	9	9
Humanities	1,969	3	26
English, languages and communication	727	91	10
Foundation programmes	18	426	6
Unknown AOL	6	255	3
Total	6,457	1,346	100

Source: provided by the college in 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	643	170	43	76
Retention rate %	92		89	79	82	92	88
National average %	81		75	83	71	72	73
Pass rate %	70		81	79	44	82	35
National average %	67		75	72	68	73	75
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,325	1,421	1,158	94	128	183
	Retention rate %	86	85	91	84	64	54
	National average %	80	81	81	71	70	69
	Pass rate %	89	72	87	47	55	39
	National average %	84	84	86	69	70	74
3	Starters excluding transfers	4,728	4,591	4,855	125	146	103
	Retention rate %	85	89	91	55	60	73
	National average %	80	89	90	65	71	73
	Pass rate %	90	91	92	64	77	75
	National average %	85	87	88	67	73	77

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

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 2001 to 2003: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2003.

2. College rates for 2000 to 2002: College ISR.

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
	Level 3 (advanced)	85	15	

Level 2 (intermediate)	78	22	0	9
Level 1 (foundation)	100	0	0	1
Other sessions	0	0	0	0
Totals	84	16	0	69

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