



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



## Cleveland College of Art and Design

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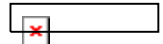
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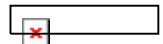
**Basic information about the college**



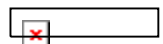
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Name of college:	Cleveland College of Art and Design
Type of college:	Specialist Art and Design
Principal:	David Willshaw
Address of college:	Green Lane Linthorpe Middlesbrough TS5 7RJ
Telephone number:	01642 288000
Fax number:	01642 288828
Chair of governors:	Councillor Bryan Hanson OBE
Unique reference number:	130571
Name of reporting inspector:	Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins
Dates of inspection:	7-11 March 2005

**Part A: Summary**



**Information about the college**



Cleveland College of Art and Design has roots which go back for more than 100 years. It is the only specialist art and design provider in the north east of England and is one of only four specialist art and design colleges within the further education (FE) sector. Courses range from level 1 to undergraduate degree. The college's full-time FE provision is delivered at two of the three main

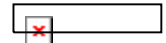
delivered on all three sites with outreach provision at the South Bank Women's Centre. Provision at the college is divided into three distinct categories; FE, higher education (HE) and continuing education. The college's continuing education courses are targeted predominantly at adult students wishing to study for progression, employment or leisure. In addition, the college runs adult numeracy and literacy courses for all full-time students. At the time of inspection, student enrolments were 1,369, an increase of some 2.3% on 2003/04.

The college is located within the Tees Valley which has a population of around 651,800. Most students are enrolled from within the Tees Valley, which consists of five local authority areas; Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Redcar and Cleveland. Approximately 42% of local education authority (LEA) wards in the Tees Valley are in the 10% most deprived in the country. Unemployment is almost double the national average of 3.1%. Out of the 50 secondary schools in the region, 34 performed below the national average for general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) attainment. Middlesbrough has the highest minority ethnic population at 4.6%, of which 3.6% are of Pakistani heritage. The highest proportion in the other four boroughs is at 1.1%. The college minority ethnic profile is representative of the local area at around 3.5%.

The college mission is:

'To provide specialist FE and HE programmes in art and design and related areas as a centre for creative excellence'.

### How effective is the college?



The inspection divided the college's FE provision into three discrete areas. All three areas were judged to be good. Most teaching and learning is good or very good. All students make good progress and are very well supported. Courses are well organised. The college's key strengths and the areas that should be improved are listed below.

#### **Key strengths**

- high pass rates
  
- high standards of students' portfolios and sketchbooks
  
- good teaching and learning
  
- good personal and academic support for full-time students
  
- friendly and welcoming environment

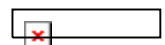
- effective strategies to meet the needs of disadvantaged areas
- good progression rates to FE and HE
- strong, well-established links with local schools
- effective development of students' confidence and verbal presentation skills.

***What should be improved***

- retention rates on some courses
- the overall monitoring and attendance of key skills
- access for students with restricted mobility
- increased sharing of good practice across courses and sites
- more systematic analysis of data to inform judgments and target setting.

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

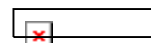
**Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas**



*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).*

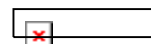
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Design communications	<b>Good.</b> The standard of students' work is good. Teaching is very good. There is very effective integration of new technologies that enhances learning. Retention rates on photography courses are low and declining.
Fine art and diagnostic studies	<b>Good.</b> Achievement on general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) foundation and intermediate courses is outstanding; however, pass and retention rates on general certificate of education advanced-level (GCE A-level) programmes at Middlesbrough are unsatisfactory. The standard of analytical and reflective sketchbook work is very high. There is much good teaching. Accommodation on some foundation diploma pathways at Hartlepool is unsatisfactory.
Three-dimensional design and fashion	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are very high on most courses, however, retention rates on level 2 courses are poor and declining. The standard of much student work is outstanding. Teaching is good and high-quality resources are used effectively to support learning.

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



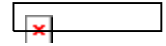
Leadership and management are good. The college effectively raises aspirations of disadvantaged people in the area by actively encouraging them to continue or return to education. Many of the issues concerning leadership and management identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Governors are now closely involved in setting the strategic direction of the college. Financial management is strong. The high quality of teaching observed at the last inspection has been sustained as student numbers have increased and the range of programmes on offer has widened. Course management is generally good. Student pass rates are high. On some courses, however, retention rates have been declining for two or three years and it is too early to judge the full impact of current strategies. There are areas of inconsistent practice across the college. The sharing of good practice to promote improvement is insufficient in some areas. The college provides good value for money.

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



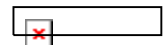
The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. The college has suitably amended its equal opportunities policy to meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. Very effective strategies are in place for widening participation. Over a third of the college's students come from areas recognised as being socially and economically deprived. All students make considerable gains in confidence and self-esteem. A good range of effective policies and procedures covering equality and diversity exist, and these are generally well monitored. Equality and diversity are well promoted throughout the curriculum. Analyses of student data to ensure that students from all ethnic and social backgrounds are making equally good progress are, however, insufficiently detailed. The college has formed productive partnerships within the community. Strong and well-established links have been forged with local schools. Despite improvements to accommodation, access for those with restricted mobility remains limited.

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



Support for students is good. Guidance on to courses and induction to the college is effective and helps students settle quickly in to their programmes. Thorough initial assessment effectively identifies additional support needs of full-time students. Part-time students' initial assessment, however, has an over-reliance on self-referral. The diagnosis and provision of additional learning support and support for students with dyslexia is very good. Students with extra support needs are dealt with sensitively. Literacy and numeracy support are good. The college has very good counselling and welfare arrangements to support students' personal needs and issues. These services have a high profile and are well used. Students with multiple and complex difficulties have been enabled to study successfully. The tutorial system is good and effectively encourages students to self-assess their progress. Systems for monitoring part-time and full-time students' attendance are good. Effective guidance is provided on progression to employment and HE.

## 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***

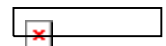
- the welcoming and friendly atmosphere
  
- good support from student services
  
- the challenging teaching
  
- being treated with respect
  
- good preparation for degree progression
  
- the input and support from specialist teachers who have worked in industry
  
- the learning resource centres

- convenience of the college shop
- interesting assignments.

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

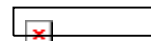
- more social spaces
- the disruption caused from people walking through classrooms
- the condition of the toilets
- car parking space
- more healthy food in the canteen
- better canteen facilities for evening lessons.

**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**



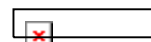
## Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

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	77	23	0
19+ and WBL*	80	20	0
Learning 16-18	79	18	3
19+ and WBL*	80	20	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).

\*work-based learning

## Achievement and standards



1. Achievement and standards are good. Most pass rates are very good, particularly for students aged 19 or over. Retention rates overall are satisfactory. There are, however, wide variations in course retention rates.

2. Attendance is satisfactory. During the period of inspection, the average attendance was 78.2%, slightly under the national average, and with less than 2% variation between the areas inspected. Attendance at timetabled key skills sessions, however, is often poor. This is being insufficiently monitored by the college.

3. Students progress well, relative to their prior attainment and potential. The college serves a significant proportion of students from disadvantaged areas who make good progress. These students gain considerable confidence and self-esteem whilst developing specialist vocational skills on a par with the whole student group.

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

4. Achievement is very good for students aged 16 to 18 at levels 1 and 2. Although there was a small decline in the pass rates of those who completed their courses in 2003/04, level 1 and 2 pass rates remain well above the national average. For example, pass rates in GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses have been at 100% for the last two years, with 53% of students achieving distinction grades. Pass rates at level 3 have improved over the last three years and are now close to, or exceeding, the high national averages. The picture is less positive in relation to some advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) and GCE A2 qualifications. Only 56% of students on AS-level fine art, and 67% of students on GCE A2 fine art, achieved their qualifications in 2003/04. Many of these qualifications are taken in addition to students' main programme of study.

5. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 studying at level 1 have been consistently declining for



the last three years, but they remain above the national average over this period. Retention rates at levels 2 and 3 have varied significantly over three years and are now close to the national average.

6. Low and declining retention rates on students' additional courses are reflected at both the Middlesbrough Green Lane campus and at Hartlepool. However, retention and pass rates are significantly poorer on both AS-level and GCE A2 fine art courses at Middlesbrough. In contrast, retention rates are significantly lower on the GNVQ foundation and intermediate at Hartlepool.

7. Many students who complete their courses gain very high grades. For example, over half the GNVQ intermediate students, a third of GNVQ foundation students and a quarter of national diploma students gained straight distinction grades in 2003/04.

8. The standards of work by students aged 16 to 18 are consistently good, and in some cases are excellent. In the three-dimensional, fashion, fine art and diagnostic studies courses, the standard of sketchbooks is particularly high. The design process is well understood and good use is made of primary source material. Students' research and development displays a considerable maturity and understanding. In design communications, students make particularly innovative use of the digital technologies available to them in conjunction with good drawing skills. The quality of drawing is also a strength in the three-dimensional and fashion area where students exhibit well-developed analytical and evaluative skills, and are able to identify form, scale, and proportion well. On fine art and diagnostic courses, students are highly motivated and are able to make informed choices about the development of ideas and the selection of media. The quality of some finished work on fine art and diagnostic courses however, often lacks the high sophistication and impact shown within the developmental stages.

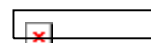
### **Adult learners**

9. Pass rates for adult students who completed their course are outstanding. They have been consistently above the very high national average for the last three years at levels 1 and 2. For example, pass rates for the part-time level 1 ceramics and stained glass courses, and the part-time level 2 jewellery and photography courses, have been 100% for the last three years. Pass rates at level 3 are also good.

10. Headline retention rates of students aged 19 or over at levels 1 are around national averages, although they have declined over the last three years. Retention rates for adults on level 2 programmes are good; however some courses have still seen a decline. For example, the retention rate on part-time jewellery at level 2 has declined from 94% to 67% over three years. The retention rate at level 3 is good, with a strong and consistent improvement over time.

11. The standard of work produced by adult students is often very good. Most attend the college on a part-time basis, and they bring with them a wide range of life experience and specialist skills which informs their learning, and is reflected in their work. The quality of assignment work is consistently high across the part-time courses, with excellent examples of idea progression and diversity. In many cases, high standards of students' technical skills are evident. Students are thoughtful and articulate in their written work.

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



12. The quality of teaching and learning across all curriculum areas is good. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 44 lessons. They judged that teaching was good or better in 77% of lessons and satisfactory in 23%. No teaching was judged unsatisfactory. The proportion of good or better lessons is 8% above the average for specialist art and design colleges inspected in

and agency teachers is consistent with that of full-time teachers. Teaching is better in lessons involving level 3 students. In level 1 and level 2 lessons, 69% of teaching was judged to be good or better; around the national average for colleges of this type.

13. The wide range of teachers' specialist expertise and current industrial knowledge significantly benefits both teaching and learning. Teachers effectively plan their lessons and clearly relate theory to practice through imaginative assignments. Information and learning technology (ILT) is very well used and integrated in full-time design communications, three-dimensional and fashion courses. Group discussions are very effective in enabling students to evaluate their own work and the work of their peers with confidence and articulation. Students demonstrate very good independent learning skills on design communication, three-dimensional and fashion courses.

14. In the most effective lessons, students respond enthusiastically and learn quickly. Teachers' use a range of activities and resources to successfully extend students' learning. The pace of lessons is lively and students of all abilities make good progress. In less effective lessons, classroom management is not always successful in engaging all students. Teaching strategies in these lessons are more limited and students are not sufficiently challenged to achieve their potential.

15. All staff are well qualified. Academic and technical staff have a good range of current industrial experience. Opportunities for training and development are good. Staff are actively encouraged to participate in a range of activities to update specialist knowledge and teaching skills. Full-time and part-time teachers employed directly by the college are encouraged to achieve teaching qualifications. They are supported by both being given time for study and a financial incentive when they achieve. Agency staff are encouraged to attend key meetings and training events. Technicians and demonstrators provide good support for students in studios, workshops and open access information technology (IT) suites.

16. The learning resources centres are well equipped and stock a very good range of specialist journals, slides and videos. Both Hartlepool and Middlesbrough learning resources centres are well used by both students and staff. Most ILT resources are good and meet industry standards. Interactive whiteboards are used particularly imaginatively within design communication courses.

17. Accommodation overall is adequate and meets the needs of most students. Since the last inspection, the college has closed down a site which housed their poorest accommodation and now operates from three sites. Easy accessibility for those with restricted mobility remains limited at two sites. However, following an accessibility audit and subsequent plan, the first phase of improvements to accommodation has been completed. The second phase, now underway, is on target to be fully SENDA compliant by September 2005. Reception areas at all three sites are welcoming and friendly. Studios within three-dimensional and fashion provide a stimulating learning environment and professional working atmosphere. In addition, there is a good use of specialist resources within fashion, three-dimensional and design communication courses to support students' learning. Accommodation on some foundation diploma pathways at Hartlepool is unsatisfactory. The positioning of some open plan studios at the Middlesbrough Green Lane campus leads to students using it as a walk-through area which can be disruptive to lessons. There is a lack of social areas for students at the main FE sites.

18. The college has clear policies and procedures for assessment that are in accordance with requirements of awarding bodies. Internal verification is well documented and rigorously applied. Course leaders design and moderate students' assignments to ensure that they are relevant and current with industry practice. Assessment of students' practical and written work is well planned and effectively carried out. Teachers provide good feedback to students on their performance and indicate areas for improvement. In some instances, however, teachers' written feedback is not sufficiently detailed to make clear to the student how performance can be improved. Opportunities for parents to discuss progress with tutors is available through a specific feedback evening held half way through the year, in addition to three further college open days.

19. There are good arrangements for the initial assessment of the learning needs of students aged 16 to 18. All FE students who have not achieved a grade C in English and mathematics are initially assessed for basic skills before starting their main programme. In most cases, the results from initial

assessment are used effectively to plan teaching. The screening of key skills, however, is insufficient and does not consistently identify students against the appropriate level of key skill programme. Initial assessment of part-time students has an over-reliance on self-referral.

20. Students' progress is monitored well by subject and personal tutors. This process is recorded on students' individual learning plans. Individual learning plans have only recently been introduced and there is variation in the quality of these between courses. In many cases, the targets are vague and do not have action points attached to them. Students' progress against key skill and basic skill achievement is absent from the majority of individual learning plans.

21. The college provides a very good range of diagnostic and specialist art and design courses from foundation level to level 3. In 2003/04, some 36% of full-time students, and 25% of part-time students, were resident in areas of recognised deprivation. There is good development of students' self-confidence. In most cases, progression is good or very good. Many level 3 students progress to HE, either at the college, or with other HE providers.

22. There are particularly well-established and productive links with local schools. A taster design experience programme, which has brought over 1,200 school pupils into the college in the last five years, provides access to specialist college facilities and staff. An applied GCSE programme, delivered in partnership with local schools, has been successfully introduced on both main sites. There is a positive approach to social inclusion within the curriculum. Projects are used effectively to explore a range of issues. For example, in a project on the theme of boundaries, national diploma foundation students explored the issues of access, disadvantage and discrimination in an imaginative and creative way using a range of media.

23. A satisfactory range of specialist enrichment activities are available to students. Subsidised visits to London galleries and museums have been arranged in the last two years, and an appropriate range of visits to local and regional venues take place. In addition, national diploma courses are allocated funding to arrange industrial liaison through a visiting lecturer programme. Full-time students on foundation and intermediate programmes are offered part-time craft courses as enhancement to their main programme. Level 3 students are offered GCE A-level courses in addition to their primary learning goal.

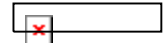
24. The development of key skills has improved significantly in recent years and pass rates are now satisfactory. The college has worked hard to integrate key skills into the vocational curriculum. Support is good from staff who are both key skills and art and design specialists. However, attendance at timetabled lessons in preparation for external key skills tests is often unsatisfactory. Key skill attendance is not always addressed effectively by vocational curriculum staff.

25. Support for students is good. Student support services are well managed. Good counselling and welfare arrangements are available to support students' personal needs and issues. The college provides appropriate pre-enrolment advice and guidance. Staff use admission interviews to effectively reinforce information on courses and college life. On-going pastoral support is provided by student support advisers. These advisors meet regularly with students to resolve any attendance or personal issues in conjunction with academic staff. Student support advisers and the counsellor spend much of their time in students' work areas and are well known by students. Careers education provides effective guidance on progression to employment, FE and HE.

26. Once diagnosed through initial assessment, high levels of support are provided for students with a broad range of additional learning support needs, including ADHD, ME and cerebral palsy. The diagnosis and provision of additional learning support and support for students with dyslexia is very good. Learner support assistants are based at both Middlesbrough and Hartlepool sites. Other students receive mentoring through Aim Higher funding which aims to stretch gifted students and support others at risk of leaving the programme early. For example, Aim Higher mentors have successfully supported students from GNVQ foundation level through to national diploma courses. Literacy and numeracy support is good. Group and individual tutorials are effective. Students prepare well for their tutorials. They self-assess their progress and the impact of their lifestyle on their college work. Analysis of data to measure the impact of learning support on student retention and pass rates is insufficient.

27. Systems for monitoring part-time and full-time students' attendance are good. Registers are monitored daily and full-time students are phoned on the first day of absence. Lateness is recorded and routinely followed-up in tutorials. A senior manager has overall responsibility for child protection and a child protection policy is in place. Designated members of staff have undertaken training to deal with child protection issues, although training has yet to be disseminated to all staff.

## Leadership and management



28. Leadership and management are good. The college makes an important contribution to the life of the local community. It both engages people in the arts and raises the aspirations of disadvantaged people in the area by actively encouraging them to continue or return to education. Many students make good progress and achieve high standards. Retention rates on some courses are low and declining.

29. The college is well governed and has an effective senior management team. Many of the issues concerning leadership and management identified at the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Governors are now much more closely involved in setting the strategic direction of the college. Their committee structure and effective mode of operation enables them to satisfactorily monitor performance and policies. Operational financial management and governance frameworks are strong. Retention strategies are in place and systems to monitor attendance and punctuality have been strengthened, although these have yet to show improvements in all areas. The college is on schedule to be fully SENDA compliant by September 2005. Accessibility for those with restricted mobility however, is still limited. The high quality of teaching and learning observed at the last inspection has been sustained while increasing student numbers and widening the range of programmes on offer.

30. Governors are clear about the college's mission and strategy. They are now closely involved in setting the direction for the college and have specific time set aside to work with managers. They are very supportive of the leadership of the principal and his senior management team. The board are well informed about the financial and academic performance of the college. They receive detailed analyses of both aspects and discuss and understand these in sufficient detail to support their decision making. The board has a clear set of appropriate performance indicators which are monitored carefully. Governors have two vacancies, however, which they have failed to fill inside their own deadline, including the appointment of a student governor.

31. Course management is good on most programmes. Course leaders are clear about their role and feel well supported by the senior team. The management and monitoring of key skills performance, however, is less effective.

32. Staff regard the principal and the senior management team as accessible and as taking a close and detailed interest in the work of teachers and their students. Communication between some course leaders and across sites is insufficient. The college is starting to spread good practice across its provision, but this work needs to be taken further. There are a few areas of inconsistent practice; for example, in effective target setting, evaluative course review and the analysis of students' achievement data.

33. Teams and managers review courses systematically throughout the year. Recruitment, attendance, retention and pass rate data, external verifiers' reports and surveys are used to inform judgements. Both student and parental views are considered carefully as part of the quality assurance process. Senior managers meet each course team to review in detail the quality of the course and set course targets. Overall, these quality assurance systems provide a detailed view of the provision, although it is not applied with equal rigour by all courses. Several course reviews are too descriptive and contain insufficient critical analysis. Some targets are too vague to be measurable. The self-assessment report accurately identified most strengths and weaknesses. In

some areas, however, it is difficult to see a clear link between the grades awarded in course reviews and those awarded in the self-assessment report.

34. Quality assurance systems clearly focus on standards of teaching and learning and students' progress and attainment. The system for observing lessons is well established. Teaching and learning are assessed annually using an external consultant. In addition to providing valuable feedback to individual teachers, it also produces a detailed and useful report. The standard of teaching and learning observed by the consultant generally matches the profile observed by inspectors.

35. The management information system is largely accurate. The college has recently introduced new software which is providing greater clarity in the analysis of retention and pass rate data. It is used effectively to inform corporate and curriculum decision making. These data are used in most course reviews areas to provide analysis and inform actions for improvement. Aspects of data analysis are underdeveloped. For example, the college collects student retention and pass rate data by gender and age, but does not routinely analyse it in sufficient detail within all course reviews and the self-assessment. During the period of the inspection, the college had some difficulty in providing timely analysis of retention and pass rate data.

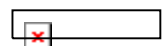
36. Promotion of equality of opportunities is good. The college has responded appropriately to changes in legislation on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and SENDA. Clear policies and systems for monitoring are in place. Most governors and staff have received training and are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity are central to the college's work. However, there is not a systematic approach to monitoring the progress of students from different ethnic backgrounds to ensure that all ethnic groups represented at the college are making good progress. Actions to widen participation are good. Learning mentors and Aim Higher mentors have received training in stretching the gifted and talented and these pupils achieve well. Equality and diversity are well promoted through teaching and assignments.

37. The college has strong links with schools, community groups and employers. One initiative with local employers has established a code of practice with regard to employing part-time students. Employers agree to recognise the academic concerns of the students and liaise with them and the college to make appropriate allowances at times when they have a heavy workload. The college actively monitors local and regional needs through its membership of local and regional partnerships.

38. Staff participate in a good range of internal and external development activities to update their specialist skills and knowledge. Full-time and fractional staff employed directly by the college are encouraged to achieve teaching qualifications. Training and development plans are discussed regularly between staff and their line managers at review and development.

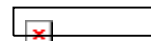
39. Financial management is good. The college has been designated as having Pathfinder status by the LSC and holds financial category A status. The financial position is monitored closely by managers and governors. Most course recruitment targets have been met consistently each year. In-year retention rates have improved. Inspectors judged that the college provides good value for money.

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



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## **Design communications**



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

### **Strengths**

- good standard of students' work
  
- very good teaching
  
- very effective integration of new technologies that enhances learning.

### **Weaknesses**

- low and declining retention rate on photography courses.

### **Scope of provision**

40. The college offer a range of courses. At the time of inspection, a total of 291 students were enrolled on to courses in this area. Approximately 77% were full-time students aged 16 to 18. There are three full-time national diploma courses in graphics, multimedia and media (moving image). AS-level and GCE A2 qualifications in photography and graphics are offered as part of the national diploma courses. At level 1 and level 2, the college provides part-time courses in photography and digital imagery. Photography is also offered part time at level 3. All full-time and most of the part-time provision is based at the Middlesbrough Green Lane campus.

### **Achievement and standards**

41. Pass rates for national diploma multimedia and national diploma graphic design are good. On part-time courses, pass rates are also high on digital imagery, photography and graphics. Retention rates on the national diploma in graphic design and the national diploma in multimedia remain around the national average. The national diploma in media has improved consistently over three years to just above the national average. However, retention rates are declining on some part-time photography courses and on AS-level and GCE A2 photography courses. In AS-level photography, just under a third of students failed to complete their qualification.

42. Standards of students' work are high. Students' work on national diploma courses demonstrates a very good use of new technology, integrated with a good standard of conceptual and visualisation skills. Much drawing and illustration work is professionally presented and explores colour, shape and form in a confident and experimental manner. Student work reflects good cultural and social understanding. Most courses integrate equal opportunities within assignment work, for example, a lesson from the national diploma in media (moving image) course used stereotypes cleverly to explore students' opinions.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
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NCFE photography	2	No. of starts	13	7	15
		% retention	92	86	27
		% pass rate	100	100	100
National diploma in graphic design	3	No. of starts	20	28	31
		% retention	75	89	71
		% pass rate	93	92	95
National diploma in media production	3	No. of starts	20	17	12*
		% retention	55	65	75
		% pass rate	82	82	89
National diploma in multimedia	3	No. of starts	**	10	18
		% retention	**	70	72
		% pass rate	**	88	92
AS-level photography	3	No. of starts	90	112	92
		% retention	78	75	68
		% pass rate	77	61	94

\* course changed to national diploma in media (moving image) in 2003

\*\* course was not available

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

43. Teaching and learning are very good. Assignment briefs are clear and show students what skills they are learning. Lessons are well planned. There is very good integration of new technologies in teaching and learning by staff and students. Students' use of interactive whiteboard, digital cameras and computer software is combined with good design development and drawing skills in their work. Staff use digital presentations as teaching aids to inspire their students. For example, in a multimedia lesson, students designed and produced digital portfolios to either show employers or for entry to university. They used the interactive technology well to present their portfolio design for critical evaluation from their peers. In another very effective lesson, students used computers and mixed a range of specialist software packages to explore the function of typeface creating an image based on the alphabet. The tutor effectively used an interactive whiteboard to present questions about poster design, which kept all students actively engaged. In a minority of lessons, teaching strategies do not ask students enough questions to ensure they have sufficient understanding.

44. Most staff are well qualified, and many have very good industrial experience. Resources are good with industrial-standard equipment in graphics, media and multimedia. There is an excellent specialist life-drawing studio and a radio station organised and run by students. The college has good library facilities, with an excellent slide library and range of specialist magazines. There is good open access to ILT facilities. The open-plan studios and editing suite are used by students as a short cut to other studios while formal teaching is taking place. This practice is often distracting to students within these formal lessons.

45. Assessment is fair and thorough. National diploma graphics, media, multimedia and AS-level photography in particular, are assessed thoroughly and rigorously. Written feedback to students is detailed and constructive for students to improve their work. There are good opportunities for students to critically self-assess their work in lessons and at assessment. Peer assessment is a strong component of most courses. In a very creative graphics lesson, students working in small groups evaluated their ideas for a final major project based on the 'branding' of products. Students were asked discuss their ideas for advertisement campaigns while others evaluated their ideas to include all sections of society. This effectively enabled students to consider aspects of inclusion

within design. Internal verification is consistent across all courses.

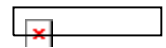
46. There is a good range of full-time courses and a developing part-time provision. Plans are now in place to offer a fuller range of part-time design communications courses such as animation and digital media. An industrial panel contributes to courses and a good range of projects and assignments are generated from these links with industry. There are funds for national diploma courses to invite speakers from industry into lessons. Enrichment activities are adequate, but are mostly related to students' main programme such as gallery visits and visiting lecturers. Many students go on to further study in HE.

47. Support for students is good. Initial guidance on to courses is comprehensive, with course leaders giving specialist advice. All students take a diagnostic assessment for literacy and numeracy to identify additional needs. There are five students in national diploma graphics and five students on the national diploma in multimedia who are receiving support from the Aim Higher system for gifted and talented students.

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

48. Courses are well managed. There is enthusiastic and particularly strong leadership on the national diploma in graphics course. On all full-time courses, there is good communication between staff and shared good practice. Quality assurance systems such as course reviews and assessment boards identify issues and develop strategies for improvement. Staff have good access to staff development for both specialist courses linked to design communications and also curriculum development. Course organisation is effective and the development of industrial panels for all full-time courses promotes good vocational practice. There is good integration of equal opportunities into the curriculum.

### **Fine art and diagnostic studies**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- outstanding achievement on GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses
  
- very good analytical and reflective sketchbook work
  
- much good teaching
  
- very good support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***



- o unsatisfactory pass and retention rates on GCE A-level courses at Middlesbrough
- o unsatisfactory accommodation on some foundation pathways at Hartlepool.

### **Scope of provision**

49. There are 360 full-time students aged 16 to 18 within the diagnostic and fine arts curriculum area and 184 students aged 19 or over. Approximately 60% of the provision is based in Middlesbrough and 40% in Hartlepool. The college offers a range of full-time courses including GNVQ foundation and intermediate, national diplomas and diplomas in foundation art and design. Full-time courses cater for around 80% of the students, most of whom are studying at level 3. A cohort of level 1 and level 2 students accounts for 27% of total enrolments. Level 3 courses are complemented by AS-level courses in fine art, textiles, graphics and photography. For full-time level 1 and 2 courses, a range of part-time NCFE programmes are available.

### **Achievement and standards**

50. There are excellent pass rates on all GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses, on both of which all students passed in the last two years. Over half of the students on these courses achieved distinction grades. Pass and retention rates for the diploma in foundation art and design at both Middlesbrough Green Lane and Hartlepool have remained consistently around the high national average. The retention rate on the GNVQ foundation course, despite declining slightly over three years, is high and remains significantly above national average. The retention rate overall on the GNVQ intermediate courses is just over national average. Pass and retention rates on the AS-level and GCE A2 fine art at Hartlepool are very good. However, pass and retention rates on these courses at Middlesbrough are unsatisfactory, falling significantly below national averages in 2003/04.

51. The standard of students' practical work is good. There is very good analytical and reflective work in sketchbooks, where the design processes are well understood and good use is made of primary source material. Students' research and development displays a considerable maturity and understanding. In a GNVQ intermediate lesson, students produced a set of collages of industrial decay in Middlesbrough. The work displayed a flair for surface texture and a sensitivity to colour that is extraordinary in students at this level. Students are articulate and talk confidently about their work and constantly relate their own work to a range of artists and art movements. Key skills are well integrated into vocational courses and are used in the context of the students' own work.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in fine art and diagnostic studies, 2002 to 2004**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
GNVQ foundation art and design	1	No. of starts	12	27	24
		% retention	100	96	92
		% pass rate	92	100	100
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	42	47	58
		% retention	74	96	83
		% pass rate	97	100	100
AS-level fine art	3	No. of starts	213	101	39
		% retention	64	84	72
		% pass rate	50	68	56

GCE A2 fine art	3	No. of starts	38	5	16
		% retention	80	87	81
		% pass rate	66	84	67
National diploma in foundation art and design (full time)	3	No. of starts	112	142	139
		% retention	89	94	88
		% pass rate	100	93	92

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

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

52. There is much good teaching. Students make good progress in most lessons. The best teaching exhibits a range of methods to engage the students and presents a progression of achievable targets within the session. A strong emphasis on group work in many lessons enables students to learn effectively from their peers. For example, in an effective visual communications lesson, a national diploma foundation art and design student used a provocative powerpoint presentation to promote discussion amongst other students. The presentation used a variety of media sources to explore the use of shock value in advertising. Where teaching is less effective, lessons do not address students' varying learning abilities clearly enough. More fully realised projects are apparent at Middlesbrough than at Hartlepool. In some projects, the final resolution of ideas lacks the creative energy observed in the developmental work.

53. Teachers are well qualified to teach their subjects and have relevant vocational experience. Resources at the Middlesbrough Green Lane Campus are good with well-appointed workshops and good studio space. Displays of work on the Middlesbrough Green Lane campus are good and provide the students with exemplar materials and opportunities to display their own work. In contrast, specialist accommodation on some foundation pathways at Hartlepool is unsatisfactory. The lack of distinct wet and dry areas within the graphics pathways at Hartlepool limits students' experience of working within a professional environment. In addition, poor displays, for example, in the foundation graphics and photography areas do little to inform students' presentation skills. Technician support is good across all courses and on both sites. Library resources are very good at both sites and are well used by students.

54. The area has clear and comprehensive policies for assessment that are implemented effectively. Each course has clear plans and procedures for assessment that are shared with students at the start of the course. Students appreciate the thorough oral feedback on their work, which is regularly given to them by teachers. Written feedback is comprehensive. There are good arrangements for action planning and monitoring students' progress.

55. A good range of enrichment activities broaden the students' experience. Students on the GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses have an annual trip to London that is fully subsidised through the colleges Aim Higher initiative. All courses have regular trips to regional centres, including Durham and Newcastle. Students on the foundation diploma have recently travelled to London and Paris. The impact of these trips is clearly evident throughout students' work.

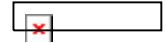
56. Support for disadvantaged students and for those with learning difficulties is very good. Support staff are well known to students who speak highly of both the study and personal support that they receive. The college has a culture of support and openness that is reflected by the students in their dealings with each other as well as staff and visitors to the college.

### **Leadership and management**

57. Leadership and management are good. There are good systems in place to record student progress and staff use the information effectively to inform planning. Staff feel well supported and appraisal is effectively used to inform staff development. Team meetings are regular, although in

many cases there is too much reliance on the informal discussion of issues. Course reviews are generally well written. Each course operates independently however, and there are missed opportunities for students and staff to collaborate and share good practice across courses and between sites. Quality assurance is good, although the link between grades awarded for course reviews and the college self-assessment of the area is unclear. Equality of opportunity is good and effectively promoted in all areas.

### **Three-dimensional design and fashion**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- very high pass rates on most courses
  
- much outstanding student work
  
- good teaching on many courses
  
- high-quality resources that support learning.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor and declining retention rate on part-time level 2 courses.

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

58. The area offers a range of courses, which allow students to progress from level 1 to level 3. Full-time courses include national diplomas in three-dimensional design, fashion, and design crafts. AS-level three-dimensional design and AS-level textiles are also available as additional subjects. A wide range of NCFE part-time courses in ceramics, jewellery and stained glass are delivered flexibly during the day and evening. At the time of inspection, approximately 534 students were studying on courses within this curriculum area. Of these, 270 were aged 16 to 18 and 264 were adults. Most of the provision is delivered at the Middlesbrough Green Lane campus.

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

59. Pass rates on most courses are very high. Pass rates on the national diploma in fashion and clothing and NCFE craft courses are excellent. Pass rates are good on the national diploma in three-dimensional design despite a 14% fall in 2003/04. Pass rates on both the AS-level and GCE A2

textiles have been consistently high at the Hartlepool site. Pass rates on the same qualifications have improved over three years at Middlesbrough Green Lane campus and were also very good in 2003/04.

60. The retention rate on the national diploma in three-dimensional design is good and increased to significantly above national average in 2003/04. The retention rate on the national diploma in fashion and clothing, although improved in 2003/04 remains at around the national average. The retention rate overall on AS-level textiles has improved and is just at national average. The retention rate on the AS-level textiles course at Hartlepool was high at 93% in 2003/04 despite falling significantly to below national average in 2002/03. The retention rate at Middlesbrough Green Lane campus, however, has been consistently low and declined to below national average in 2003/04. The retention rate on NCFE ceramics level 1 courses is good. However, there are poor and declining retention rates on part-time level 2 programmes. The retention rate on level 2 stained glass has fallen from 90% in 2001/02 to 44% in 2003/04. Similarly, on NCFE level 2 jewellery and on level 2 ceramics, the retention rate has fallen over three years to considerably below national averages. Attendance in the area during inspection was just under national average at 77%. Attendance at key skills classes is unsatisfactory. Very few students on the national diploma design crafts course at Middlesbrough completed their key skills tests.

61. Students' work in all areas is of an exceptionally high standard. Projects are ambitious and professional. For example, in a stained glass lesson students worked on elaborate panels featuring twisting Macintosh roses and full size French windows with art deco jewelled glass. There is a professional approach to the presentation of work and very competent drawing underpins all subjects. Students use a wide range of media confidently. Work on display in studios and across the college is fresh and lively. Sketchbooks are vibrant and energetic. Students analyse complex concepts, deal with abstract ideas and express their own ideas clearly and fluently. A minority of finished ceramic work is underdeveloped and lacks the high-quality outcomes of other craft work.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in three-dimensional design and fashion, 2002 to 2004***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
NCFE creative crafts (ceramics)	2	No. of starts	16	12	22
		% retention	100	92	50
		% pass rate	100	100	100
NCFE creative crafts (jewellery)	2	No. of starts	18	11	18
		% retention	94	82	67
		% pass rate	100	100	100
AS-level textiles	3	No. of starts	90	97	115
		% retention	72	74	79
		% pass rate	88	78	93
National diploma in three-dimensional design	3	No. of starts	20	29	37
		% retention	80	66	78
		% pass rate	100	100	86
National diploma in fashion and clothing	3	No. of starts	27	28	33
		% retention	63	61	67
		% pass rate	94	100	100

***Quality of education and training***

62. Teaching is good and students' learning is very good. Lessons are well planned and structured.

Teaching methods are varied to stimulate and maintain students' interest. Teachers reinforce points well and question and answer techniques are used skilfully to check students' understanding. Good use is made of ILT to enhance teaching. Peer teaching is also used extensively, particularly in group critiques and helps to develop students' communication skills. In one highly effective and well-structured three-dimensional lesson, students prepared mood boards and models for their final major projects. Teachers used excellent visual aids to inspire and motivate students. Students confidently demonstrated the extent of their knowledge and skills in individual presentations at the end of the lesson. Each student displayed their model and spoke with self-assurance and composure.

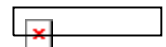
63. Teachers are highly experienced. As practising furniture designers, stylists, puppeteers, hat makers, jewellers, stained glass designers and children's book authors, they add a professional dimension to the courses. There is a very good use of specialist resources to support learning. The appearance of many studios is welcoming and there is strong curriculum identity. Students have flexible access to a wide range of learning resources and facilities. Well-equipped workshops include three-dimensional, ceramics, fashion and textiles, and computing. Students also have access to colour printing for assignment work. Teaching handouts are well designed and conducive to students' learning.

64. Assessment on courses is good. Feedback on most assignments is detailed and thorough and serves to motivate students to achieve higher grades. A wide range of enhancement activities and live projects enthuse and inspire students. For example, visiting speakers have included the puppeteer and Turner prize nominee Yuka Shonibare. Students also take part with a considerable degree of success in external competitions. Recent success stories have included first prize for three-dimensional design students for a communication device for individuals with speech problems. Specialist support for students is good. Tutorials are well organised and delivered.

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

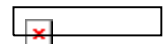
65. Course leadership and management are good. Lines of communication are effective. Meetings are well documented and information is disseminated effectively across teams. All staff are fully involved in writing course reviews. All course reviews, however, do not accurately reflect the quality of provision, with many being too self-critical. Staff appraisal is well established and leads to relevant staff development. There is also an effective mentoring programme, which is highly valued by staff. Promotion of equality and diversity within the curriculum is good.

#### **Part D: College data**



**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2004/05**

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	5	33
2	15	32
3	80	35
Other	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>



Source: provided by the college in spring 2005

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2004/05**

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments (%)
Fine art and diagnostic studies	360	184	40
Design communications	223	68	21
Three-dimensional design and fashion	270	264	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in spring 2005

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2002	2003	2004*	2002	2003	2004*
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	12	207	238	56	79	239
	Retention rate %	100	80	82	82	76	72
	National average %	84	81	**	80	70	**
	Pass rate %	92	72	82	100	95	98
	National average %	69	76	**	66	77	**
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	104	83	519	217	60	193
	Retention rate %	69	95	83	62	78	90
	National average %	77	77	**	71	71	**
	Pass rate %	99	100	87	99	98	94
	National average %	73	76	**	69	74	**
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	900	683	636	110	72	131
	Retention rate %	77	84	81	60	74	83
	National average %	71	75	**	69	74	**
	Pass rate %	87	84	87	83	79	83

	National average %	80	82	**	67	68	**
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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 specialist 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 2002.

2. College rates for 2001 to 2003: College ISR

3. Rates for 2003/04 provided by college MIS, spring 2005.

\*data provided by the college (not validated)

\*\*data 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)	80	19	0	31
Level 1 and 2 (foundation and intermediate)	69	30	0	13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>44</b>

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