



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Manchester Metropolitan University

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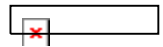
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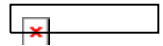
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Basic information about the institution

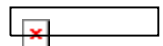


Name of institution:	Manchester Metropolitan University
Type of institution:	University
Principal:	Dame Alexandra Burslem
Address of institution:	All Saints Building Oxford Road Manchester M15 6BH
Telephone number:	0161 247 2000
Fax number:	0161 247 6390
Chair of governors:	Tom Booth CBE
Unique reference number:	133844
Name of reporting inspector:	David Lindsay
Dates of inspection:	28 February-4 March 2005

Part A: Summary



Information about the institution



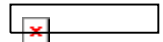
Manchester Metropolitan University is one of the largest educational establishments in the United Kingdom. It has a student population in excess of 34,000 and offers over 600 different programmes in over 70 different subject areas. Some 65% of the students enrolled in 2002/03 were on first degree programmes, 5% on sub-degree programmes and the remainder on postgraduate or professional programmes. Currently 184 students are enrolled on further education (FE) courses. Some 60% of the student population in 2002/03 was female. Nearly 65% of the students come from

Some 18% of students come from areas of traditionally low participation. The city of Manchester has two large general FE colleges, two sixth form colleges and three schools with Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded sixth forms. There is also a new academy for students aged 11 to 18.

The university was given full degree awarding status in 1992. It is situated on seven locations, five in central and south Manchester and two at Crewe and Alsager.

FE students are currently enrolled on two main courses. At the time of inspection, the art foundation course had 160 full-time students and the dental technology certificate part-time courses had 24 students. The inspection focused on the art foundation course, although a brief survey was made of the dental course to inform the key questions. No grade is attached to the dental technology provision.

How effective is the institution?



The university provides good education and training for its FE students. It has good links with external partners to widen participation. Pass rates and progression to higher education (HE) are good. All teaching is good or better. Students produce work of a high standard in art and design, in which the provision is outstanding. Guidance and support for students are very good. Leadership and management for the FE provision are good.

Key strengths

- high pass rates and progression on to HE

- good teaching and academic support

- very good specialist resources

- very good external collaboration

- comprehensive range of support services for students

- excellent contribution to widening participation

- strong strategic and developmental management inclusive of FE

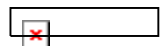
- o effective internal communication.

What should be improved

- o implementation of teaching and learning observation in art and design
- o the critical use of data at programme level in art and design
- o access for students with special needs in the art and design building
- o the use of feedback from students in art and design
- o the initial assessment system.

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

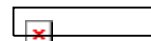
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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).

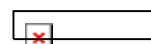
Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Foundation studies in art and design	Outstanding. Students' pass rates and rates of progression to HE are consistently high. There is a wide range of specialist resources and students produce high standards of work. The curriculum staff team is well established and effective and provides very good academic support to students.

How well is the institution led and managed for its further education students?



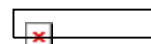
Leadership and management are good. Strategic leadership is excellent. FE provision within the university is integrated with HE structures and systems. The university has strong and committed leadership which actively promotes an agenda of widening participation and inclusivity. The strategic and three-year development plans set clear directions for the development and promotion of FE and take into account the local strategic area reviews and regional plans. Curriculum management is good. Pass rates are good and retention rates are high. Students' work is of a high standard and progression to HE is excellent. Quality systems and procedures are systematic. However, there is an underdeveloped use of data to analyse programme performance and trends on the art and design foundation course. Deans and heads of school set clear objectives and monitor progress towards objectives on a regular basis. Targets on action plans are sometimes imprecise and have no clear timescale. The supervisory overview by the university's academic standards committee and academic board is thorough and appropriate. The university has a comprehensive staff development programme which is well used by FE staff to promote and extend their professional development. There is no mandatory system of lesson observations. The promotion of equal opportunities is good. The university provides good value for money for its FE students.

To what extent is the further education provision of the institution educationally and socially inclusive?



The university's response to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. Through use of detailed and extensive local and regional market intelligence, the university has developed effective strategies to widen participation. Overall, it is highly successful in ensuring that students from under-represented groups participate. Highly effective collaboration with other FE providers further promotes widening of participation. Social inclusion is promoted through strong links with community-based activities across the region and the effective use of the many university activities to engage local communities. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. FE provision in art and design and dental technology is tailored to meet the needs of students and provides clear progression routes to HE or employment. Development of basic skills is effectively embedded into teaching and learning. The university has made an appropriate response to equal opportunity and race equality legislation although a few teaching areas, for example, art and design, have poor access for students with limited mobility. Appropriate measures are in place to safeguard children who visit the university.

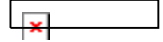
How well are further education students and trainees guided and supported?



Guidance and support for students are very good. Students on FE programmes have equal status to students studying on HE programmes. Personal tutors in the art and design faculty provide considerable advice, guidance and support for students with both academic and pastoral matters. A well-established tutorial system has a generous time allocation and students speak highly of the help they receive. Constructive feedback on coursework is detailed and helps students to improve their range of skills as well as challenging them to develop and experiment with different concepts and ideas. A few students find the work early in the first stage of the course to be very demanding and voice some concerns about the level of support offered at that early point. Initial assessment is not always timely and the effectiveness of support is not measured. Part-time students on the dental technology course receive considerable informal support and guidance. They feel little need to use the central university support services and their awareness of the services on offer is low. Whilst

reminders at a relevant later point are not consistently given.

Students' views of the institution



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

What students like about the institution

- the extensive specialist knowledge of the staff team

- opportunities for direct progression to Manchester Metropolitan University and Salford University degree courses

- the access to the range of good resources

- the rich, creative environment of the university, including library and gallery

- the open studio atmosphere with staff and students from all areas willing to share work and ideas.

What they feel could be improved

- the opening hours of the shop and better access to the materials and equipment store

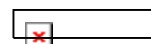
- the clarity of the contextual studies project

- information on the use of the materials fee

- the number and poor quality of the toilets for female students in the Grosvenor building

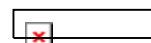
- the amount of minor equipment in dental technology.

Other information



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

Part B: The institution as a whole



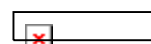
Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors



Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching	100	0	0
Learning	100	0	0

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

Achievement and standards



1. Recruitment on to the FE courses has remained stable for the past three years. However, this year the number of students aged 16 to 18 has decreased while that of students aged 19 or over has increased. This followed a steady decline in the number of students aged 19 or over which is now back to its previous level. Students aged 19 or over represent 24% of the FE student population. In both art and design and dental technology, the number of students aged 16 to 18 fell this year while that of students aged 19 or over increased. All dental technology students are employed and

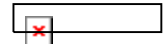
recruiting students have recently been circulated.

2. The overall FE provision has consistently high pass rates for students of all ages. Pass rates in art and design are high, as are the rates for merits and distinctions. All are above the national averages for general FE colleges. In dental technology, the pass rates for students completing the course are consistently high. In both art and design and dental technology, the progression to HE is high, with many students wishing to progress with their studies at Manchester Metropolitan University.

3. Retention rates overall are high, but for students aged 19 or over the rate in 2003/04 was 76%, and significantly below the rate of 92% for students aged 16 to 18. Rates in art and design have remained consistently high. In dental technology, retention rates vary considerably and in some years are low. Last year, all 4 students aged 19 or over withdrew. Dental technology staff have investigated thoroughly the reasons behind this and concluded that they are dependant on employers and students' personal circumstances. Currently, in art and design, 21 students from the 181 enrolled have withdrawn. Insufficient analysis has been done as to the reasons for this.

4. Students in art and design produce a high standard of work and display a richness of ideas and a wide range of techniques and use of materials. Students show a good awareness of contemporary issues in art and design. They are highly involved on a personal level with their work, although for some weaker students this involvement is overemphasised. In dental technology, coursework is generally good as is the work that students carry out in the workplace which is assessed by employers. In the laboratories, students display confidence in their practical skills.

Quality of education and training



5. Overall teaching is very good. Of the 12 lessons observed in art and design and dental technology all were good or better. One lesson was outstanding. The majority of lessons were very good. The lessons observed in art and design were predominantly for students aged 18 whereas those in dental technology involved students aged 19 or over.

6. In art and design, teaching is structured around a range of tutorials which are used to support individual students. Students are well informed about their progress and are stretched to realise their full potential. Schemes of work are designed to develop students' skills of working independently and increase their ability to create, research and develop ideas. Projects encourage students to develop individually and provide stimulation for the better students and support for the weaker ones. Demonstrations effectively introduce skills and techniques. The teaching is very structured in the first term to help develop skills and a critical approach. Students make very good progress and become more independent learners as the year progresses. Teachers use a range of activities supplemented by visiting speakers and visits to museums and art galleries.

7. In dental technology, lessons are well organised and structured, although lesson plans do not record learning outcomes or methods of checking on learning, nor do they show how the needs of all students will be met. Handouts from teachers are helpful to students and appropriate examples are given to link their learning to dentistry. Students demonstrate good recall of previous work and are enthusiastic and involved. However, a few students do not take a full part in discussions. They do not respond to questions and ask few questions themselves. Demonstrations of laboratory techniques are clear and staff show good technical knowledge. Overhead transparencies are used effectively, but are not always copied for students. Some students do not make sufficient notes in lessons. Students display a good knowledge of practices in the workplace.

8. The university has a mixture of buildings of different ages on its All Saints Campus. The buildings are clean and well maintained and much has been done to improve their attractiveness. Art and design has a wide range of specialist resources, studios and exhibition spaces. New timetabling procedures have improved access. Some space in art and design does not have easy access for

wheelchair use and is difficult for people with visually impairments to navigate. Some toilets for female students are unsatisfactory. Storage space for some students' is inadequate. An excellent dental technology centre is planned to open shortly. This development has been well managed with full involvement of staff. Students currently housed in temporary accommodation have not, however, been disadvantaged.

9. Staff are well qualified and experienced. In art and design, they are current practitioners. They take advantage of developmental opportunities to maintain their knowledge and skills. Dental technology staff are leaders in their profession and have extensive contacts. The management of technical staff in art and design is well organised and structured. Very careful attention is given to health and safety in both curriculum areas. Students can only use specific equipment in art and design if they have the appropriate induction. Students are able to borrow equipment for use outside lessons. In dental technology lessons, students are carefully briefed on health and safety.

10. Central library resources for both dental technology and art and design are excellent and close liaison takes place between specialist library staff and the course teams. Inductions take place at the start of each year and are adapted to meet curriculum needs. A wide range of cafeterias and refectories is available and the university is close to the city centre with extensive alternative facilities. The university currently provides residential accommodation for 23 art and design students who have a choice of accommodation. Students have access to the computer network from home including the library resources and specific faculty websites. The website in dental technology is well developed to support students' learning. Students have access to computer-based learning and past examination papers. Work has yet to commence in art and design.

11. The art and design foundation programme has been developing its unitised curriculum and accompanying assessment strategy. The work of art and design students who wish to enter the foundation course is assessed carefully. Students' individual progress is carefully monitored through the comprehensive and effective personal development and assessment tutorial system, although the targets set in some students' action plans are unclear. Students are well informed about the assessment process and assessment criteria in both art and design and dental technology. Assessment strategies are well established, thorough and well planned. In art and design, a team approach ensures consistency of grading. Teachers benefit from taking part in the team moderation, although no analysis is carried out to show how assessment practices might be improved. Regular reviews of students' projects with peers and with teachers take place. Feedback to students on their projects is good. Individual attendance and punctuality are closely monitored and tutors are rigorous in raising concerns with students. However, no overall analysis of attendance is made. On the dental technology course, employers are kept well informed through formal reports and informal contact. Assignments and tests are accurately marked, but feedback to students is insufficiently detailed, as are the termly reports. External examiners' reports are too brief and do not focus sufficiently on individual courses. Tests distinguish well between student' differing abilities. Training logs provide a good method for assessing workplace experience.

12. In art and design, a broad based level 3 foundation course with specialist pathways provides an effective preparation for HE programmes. Retention rates are high and almost all students consistently progress to degree programmes matching their aspirations and potential. A direct internal progression route is used increasingly to assist students in planning their future. Development of relevant key skills including literacy and numeracy forms part of teaching and learning.

13. The part-time course in dental technology is specifically tailored to meet the education and training needs of employed technicians as well as statutory legislation required by the British Dental Council. The programme is highly regarded within the sector and is one of only a few run in the country. Students attend one day a week and a number travel some distance to the university as the course particularly meets the needs of students and employers. The course is subject to annual scrutiny by an industrial panel and benefits from input from a range of outside speakers currently active in the dental technology field. Many students progress to HE and on to senior positions in industry. Recent changes to the course structure have been made following consultation with students.

14. Well-established and strong links exist with the art and design and dental technology sectors and staff assess educational and training needs within each sector effectively. Art and design teachers regularly engage in professional creative practice and the faculty is involved in supporting many local and regional exhibitions. Students take part in an annual art exhibition of their work which has a high profile in the sector. Staff in dental technology are at the forefront of development work and are well represented on professional bodies.

15. The university has a well-developed strategy and a proactive approach to widening participation. Some 18% of all students come from areas with traditionally low participation rates. Summer schools for school pupils and productive links with local colleges through an accreditation scheme are used effectively to raise awareness of study opportunities for art and design within under represented groups. The selection process makes fair allowance for students with non-traditional backgrounds and is designed to identify students with exceptional talent.

16. Valuable enrichment opportunities related to art and design are available to students through visits and visiting lecturer programmes and an extensive range of enrichment activities is offered across the university.

17. Guidance and support for students are very good. Students on FE programmes have equal status to students studying on HE programmes. Personal tutors in the art and design faculty provide considerable advice, guidance and support for students with both academic and pastoral matters. A well-established tutorial system has a generous time allocation and students speak highly of the help they receive. Constructive feedback on coursework is detailed and helps students to improve their range of skills as well as challenging them to develop and experiment with different concepts and ideas. Initial support for students who find the work difficult is insufficient

18. Part-time students on dental technology course receive considerable informal support and guidance. They feel little need to use the central university support services and their awareness of the services on offer is low.

19. A wealth of support services is available across the university. These include counselling and chaplaincy services, learning support and careers guidance units, health, personal safety, accommodation and financial advice. Through a European Social Fund project, additional support for students entering HE is provided. The students' union is active and well used as a source of information on confidential advice and in an advocacy role. All services are made available on a self-referral or tutor-referral basis. Students are made fully aware of the range of services through a faculty handbook, a range of information leaflets and posters and a dedicated website. Uptake of services is analysed by faculty, but this information is not available by course and the impact of additional support on students is not measured.

20. Students receive detailed advice and guidance prior to enrolling on courses and all receive a personal interview. Students are encouraged to disclose any learning disabilities at interview and this information is then used to provide further comprehensive details of the support services available. No formal assessment of initial learning needs takes place, although a number of students take up the opportunity of screening for dyslexia either early on in their course or once they receive feedback on work. A few students only realise they need additional help at a later stage in their course. Once needs are identified, action is prompt, but this is often after work has been submitted and assessed.

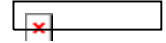
21. Students on the art and design foundation course receive valuable help with applications for HE courses. Guidance is given about suitable universities for progression in each subject area including the options available at the university. Most students on dental technology courses are already employed and the careers guidance unit helps these students to progress to higher-level posts within the dental technology sector.

22. Arrangements for effective induction are detailed and cover all the necessary aspects of university life alongside specific faculty-based issues such as health and safety. Students on the art and design foundation programme receive an induction at the start of each of the three phases of

the course.

23. Residential students are well catered for with comprehensive warden support. Measures for safeguarding children visiting the university, including risk assessments, are in place.

Leadership and management



24. Leadership and management of the FE provision are good. Strategic leadership is excellent. FE provision within the university is integrated with HE structures and systems. Although only representing less than 1% of total enrolments, a high value is placed upon FE provision. The university has a strong and committed leadership which actively promotes an agenda of widening participation and inclusivity. The strategic and three-year development plans set clear directions for the promotion of FE and take into account the local strategic area reviews and regional plans. Excellent links exist to promote widening participation and the university is responsive to its local and regional communities. Strong working partnerships have been established with numerous FE colleges as well as the local LSC. The university has a high reputation within the local and regional communities.

25. Curriculum management is good. Curriculum management is the responsibility of the appropriate faculty and school. Communications between all levels of the faculty structure are excellent. Management structures and the processes for allocating resources are clear and understood by staff. Communications at programme level are excellent. Members of teams work well together to promote an active and stimulating learning culture. In art and design, the course is well organised to develop increasing independence of learning and approaches to visual research. Pass and retention rates are good, students' work is of a high quality and progression to HE is excellent. The dental technology course is well organised. Links to employers in dental technology are good. In art and design, there is an underdeveloped use of data to analyse a programme's performance and trends. For example, there is no use of data to inform on trends emerging during the recruitment process.

26. Quality systems and procedures are good. The committee structure is extensive. Programme, school and faculty committees ensure that a thorough examination of course performance is conducted. A new, streamlined quality system focuses on action planning and programme evaluation. Key issues are identified and discussed at programme, school and faculty levels. Deans and heads of school set clear objectives and monitor progress towards these objectives on a regular basis. However, targets in action plans are sometimes imprecise and some have no clear timescale. In art and design, the self-evaluation report is discursive and there is insufficient identification of clear and sharp strengths and weaknesses. The use of data in dental technology is thorough and provides information on performance and trends. Course monitoring takes into account the reports from external verifiers and examiners. However, the report requirements by the university from external advisers in dental technology is insufficiently detailed. The university's academic standards committee and academic board provide an appropriate supervisory overview. They receive a range of reports and are effective in evaluating the quality of the FE provision.

27. There is no mandatory system of lesson observations. In art and design, members of teams work closely together and regularly observe each other. Discussion and development of teaching and learning strategies take place. Teaching and learning fellows encourage the sharing of good practice. The university has a comprehensive staff development programme which is well used by FE staff. Part-time staff have access to the full range of staff development opportunities. A system of professional development review with the head of school is in place. These reviews are valued by staff and have a particular focus on research and staff development. The university is promoting a non-mandatory 'peer support' scheme which is designed to provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on their professional development, identify good practice and share concerns. Peer support systems, including observation, are established in dental technology. Outcomes of observations are confidential to the teacher observed.

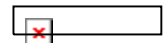
28. The promotion of equal opportunities is good. Monitoring and evaluation of equal opportunities at programme, faculty and institutional level takes place annually. Training events take place on equal opportunities issues both at faculty and institutional levels. A comprehensive estates strategy is aimed at improving access to sites. The university complies with the Disability Discrimination Act and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). Action plans are well advanced and members of staff have attended training sessions on disability, equality and diversity. In art and design, access for students with particular mobility needs is poor.

29. The university is implementing its commitment to widening participation successfully. Faculties have established productive links with colleges and schools. Saturday workshops and summer schools are organised for secondary pupils. There is a particular emphasis on linking with schools which traditionally have low progression rates for pupils to FE and HE. The university is a key participant in the Aim Higher initiative.

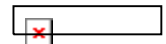
30. The university has a strong and developing management information system. Useful and comprehensive reports are produced on the web-based 'TARDIS' system. Course managers have the facility to interrogate information on a wide range of management issues. However, the use of data for self-assessment and analysing performance and recruitment trends in art and design is variable. Analysis of students' feedback remains underdeveloped in art and design. There is much informal gathering of students' views, but limited formal analysis of collated information to improve the quality of provision. The systematic use of data to assist programme management and development and to provide a tool to judge critically the quality of courses is not yet embedded in art and design. A great deal of information on aspects of university life, policies and procedures is available on an intranet site.

31. Financial management is sound. Managers have a clear understanding of budget allocation, course viability and staffing costs. Resources are of a high standard and the maintenance of accommodation is exemplary. On the basis of achievements, average class sizes and resources the university provides good value for money for its FE students who benefit from the university environment.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Foundation studies in art and design



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

Strengths

- consistently high pass rates and progression to HE

- high standards and richness of ideas in students' work

- very good teaching and academic support

- good access to a wide range of specialist resources

- effective curriculum staff team.

Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses.

Scope of provision

32. There are currently 160 full-time students on the Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma in art and design foundation course at the university. Of these, 127 are aged 18 and 33 are aged 19 or over. The course allows students to specialise, following an exploratory stage, in fine art, textiles and fashion, three-dimensional design or graphic design. The course offers a direct entry route on to the art and design degrees at the university as well as preparing students for application to other HE institutions.

Achievement and standards

33. Pass and retention rates are consistently high. In 2003/04, of the 194 students who began the course 176 were successful in gaining the diploma. The number of students achieving distinctions and merits is also high. Last year, 26% of students gained distinctions and 49% merits. The retention rate on the current course is lower than in previous years, with 21 from the initial 181 who enrolled having withdrawn. There is very good progression to HE from the course with the direct entry system to Manchester Metropolitan University degree courses welcomed by students. Some 55 students in the current year have already been offered places on Manchester Metropolitan University degree courses. Last year, 91% of completers progressed to HE. Of these, 54% went on to degree courses at Manchester Metropolitan University.

34. Standards of students' work are high. Students' work demonstrates a clear understanding of the processes of visual research of media, imagery and idea generation. Students produce large quantities of work and in all specialisms the work is strong and rich in the range and freshness of ideas covered. The three-dimensional work makes good use of models and techniques and uses a wide range of materials including found objects. One student was developing a sequence of well made architectural models to examine lighting and effects of shadow on spaces. Textiles work often includes sensitive and innovative manipulation of fabric and textile material. Work in graphics includes animation, good drawing and a full exploration of typography including its incorporation into and relationship with imagery. Fine art students explore very personal issues and the strongest students produce exciting and innovative work that exploits video, animation, photography and installation work. One student was deconstructing everyday objects and reorganising them to make moving sculptures that exploit movement, sound and electrical activity. The results were visually intriguing and full of humour in the way they involved the spectator. The weaker students struggle to find a clear focus in their work and are too involved with personal content rather than exploring media and technique. The work produced in the final major projects from previous years' exhibitions shows considerable ambition. Students pay close attention to the presentation of their work. The work shows a good awareness of contemporary art and design. The range and scale of the work is impressive and includes video, sound, photography, large scale sculptures, constructions and installations, lively textiles, graphics and printmaking.

A sample of retention and pass rates in foundation studies in art and design, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
Foundation studies diploma in art and design full time	3	No. of starts	189	175	194
		% retention	96	93	97
		% pass rate	96	93	94

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

Quality of education and training

35. Teaching and academic support for students are good. All the lessons observed were good or better. One was outstanding. Most teaching and learning is carried out through thorough personal development tutorials and assessment tutorials. These develop students' thinking and approach to their work. In a tutorial to select and review a student's portfolio of work for a Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) application, the teacher discussed with the student the quality and relevance of each piece of work completed since the start of the course. The student was encouraged to select work that showed personal interests and development. The process was thorough and identified the student's own strengths effectively. Effective skill workshops and demonstrations support the tutorials and individual teaching. In the first stage of the course, the teaching is more directed through a range of workshops that develop a wide range of drawing and thinking skills. The scheme of work is well designed to encourage students to work independently and to create, research and develop ideas. Projects are well designed. Slightly more structured projects are given to students who are not yet ready to generate their own themes. Teachers use a range of teaching activities including team teaching, peer reviews, small group work, visits from artists and designers and trips to museums and galleries.

36. Accommodation and specialist resources for foundation students are good. The students use a wide range of resources and workshops. Printmaking, photography, three-dimensional wood and metal and computer workshops are excellent and there is good support from technicians. The learning resources and art and design library are excellent with book and journal collections. However, the number and quality of the toilets for female students in the foundation course building are inadequate. Teachers are well qualified and make good use of their experience as artists and designers in their teaching.

37. Students are aware of their progress. Assessment tutorials and action planning take place regularly, with at least two formal assessments per term. Good use is made of students' self-assessment and peer assessment and group assessments. Assessment of written work is thorough and written feedback is good. However, the written feedback of critical studies essays has been slow in being returned to students. Some of the written assessment on tutorial forms is brief and targets set for students are imprecise.

38. All applicants for the course are interviewed and set a short project that forms the basis of a discussion in the interview. Induction is thorough in introducing students to university facilities and includes a passport project that allows students to introduce themselves to their peers.

39. Academic support is very good. The personal tutor system, with regular one-to-one tutorials is effective. Students feel they can approach any member of the teaching staff for advice. Students have good access to a full range of student services and welfare and counselling advice within the university. Foundation students are offered testing for dyslexia and a number have taken advantage of the offer. A detailed course handbook is valued by students.

Leadership and management

40. The curriculum staff team is effective. Communication at course level is excellent. Weekly minuted meetings take place. Teachers continually refine and improve the course in the light of

Courses)	pass rate	16-18			19+		
		2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
3	Starters excluding transfers	160	157	182	46	34	29
	Retention rate %	89	88	92	80	94	76
	National average %	*	*	*	*	*	*
	Pass rate %	100	94	97	95	94	96
	National average %	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

Sources of information:

1. Institution rates for 2000 to 2003: Institution ISR.

* comparative data not available

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	100	0	0	12
Totals	100	0	0	12

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