



# Harrow College



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

Better  
education  
and care

## Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published March 2006	Provider reference 131864
--------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------

## Contents

---

Basic information about the college	3
Background of the organisation	4
Scope of the inspection	4
<hr/>	
Summary of grades awarded	6
Curriculum areas	7
<hr/>	
Overall judgement	8
Main findings	11
Curriculum area inspections	16

## Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Harrow College
Type of college:	Tertiary College
Principal:	Barbara Field
Address of college:	Harrow Weald Campus, Brookshill, Harrow Weald, Middlesex, HA3 6RR
Telephone number:	020 8909 6000
Fax number:	020 8909 6060
Chair of governors:	Trevor Bumfrey
Unique reference number:	131864
Name of lead inspector:	Vivien Bailey HMI
Dates of inspection:	16-20 January 2006

## Background of the organisation

1. Harrow College is a medium-sized tertiary college situated in the outer London Borough of Harrow. The college was formed in 1999 from the merger of two tertiary colleges. It operates on two main sites in Harrow-on-the-Hill and Harrow Weald, as well as approximately 35 outreach and community-based venues. The college's mission is to provide choice and opportunity, and to make learners' success its priority. Nearly half of the college's learners aged 16 to 18 come from other London boroughs, including 25% from Brent.
2. Harrow has the fifth most diverse population in the country with 41% of Harrow's population being from minority ethnic groups, particularly Asian. Unemployment is low at 2.3%, except in some parts of the neighbouring borough of Brent, where both unemployment and the proportion of minority ethnic groups are higher. The percentage of 15 year olds achieving 5 or more grades A\*-C at GCSE in 2004 was approximately 60% in Harrow and 54% in neighbouring Brent.
3. In 2003/04, the total number of learners on roll was 11,493, of which 2,682 were full-time learners aged 16-18. Some 33% of learners were of white ethnic origin, 17% Indian, 15% from other Asian heritage groups, and 16% from black heritage groups. The gender profile shows that 35% of learners on roll were male and 65% female, reflecting the high numbers of women on courses for adult learners. More than half of learners aged 16 to 18 were male.
4. In 2003/04, the college made provision in all of the 14 QCA sector/subject areas. In the case of horticulture, engineering and construction these were extremely low numbers. The college has a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) in health and social care and a CoVE in retail. A high proportion of adult learners were studying at level 1 or below. More than a third of enrolments for learners aged 16-18 were at level 3. There are about 55 work-based learners in 2005/06 including a small number of E2E learners.

## Scope of the inspection

5. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
  - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
  - achievements and standards
  - quality of provision
  - leadership and management

- specialist provision in: mathematics; hairdressing and beauty therapy; leisure, travel and tourism, and sport; art and design, media and performing arts; preparation for life and work; and business.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
Achievements and standards	Satisfactory: grade 3
Quality of provision	Good: grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: grade 2

*Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.*

## Curriculum areas

Mathematics	Good: grade 2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Good: grade 2
Leisure, travel and tourism, and sport	Satisfactory: grade 3
Art and design, media and performing arts	Good: grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: grade 3
Business administration and law	Satisfactory: grade 3

## Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. The college's provision is satisfactory. Success rates have improved and most are above national averages. The exception is on level 1 courses for learners aged 16-18, where they have declined to well below average in the last three years owing to a drop in achievement rates. Weak outcomes have persisted on administration, accountancy and vocational sports courses. Attendance is at an average level, but is weak on some courses, along with punctuality.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff development to improve the quality of teaching and learning on GCE AS courses has been successful, leading to improved achievements. However, there is too much unsatisfactory teaching on lower level courses, especially at level 1.
8. Initial assessment is used effectively to identify additional learning needs, and support is usually provided promptly. There is effective support for specific learning needs, particularly hearing impairment. Assessment practice is satisfactory. There is a good system for setting personal development targets, although these are not always sufficiently precise, and reviewing progress. There is good personal and welfare support for learners, and information, advice and guidance are good.
9. There is a comprehensive range of courses to meet learners' needs and interests, offering progression routes between levels of study in most areas of learning. Social and educational inclusion in the college is outstanding. There is extensive provision at the lower levels, in particular provision for learners for whom English is a second language (ESOL) and young people starting with low prior achievement. There is good provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are effective relationships with partner schools and good provision is made for 14-16 year olds. Links with employers are good in health and social care, but in other areas links with employers and opportunities for work experience are not well developed.
10. Leadership and management are good. The principal provides clear leadership and is well supported by managers and governors. Many weaknesses have been addressed since the last inspection. Management information is of good quality and well used. There are good arrangements for quality assurance, leading to improvements, and to the production of a detailed and evaluative self-assessment report. Some course level reviews are weak, however. Financial management is strong. With good use of accommodation and generally good success rates, the college provides good value for money. The promotion of equal opportunities is good and the college has responded well to race and disability legislation.



## Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college regularly reviews its performance and has taken effective action to address weaknesses through, for example, systematic and well focused staff development and the restructuring of course provision. There is a comprehensive process of lesson observation. The grading of observed lessons has improved in accuracy through the introduction of stronger moderation, and inspectors' findings on the quality of teaching broadly matched those of the college. The college's self-assessment was generally accurate and identified most of the strengths and areas for improvement noted by inspectors. It was evaluative, analytical and drew effectively on the college's accurate data. Where weaknesses have persisted, steps are being taken to address them. Whilst quality assurance procedures are good overall, the quality of course reviews is inconsistent. Targets for the improvement in success rates have been exceeded across the college as a whole, except for those of short courses which fell slightly short of target.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

12. The college has promoted improvement effectively since the inspection of 2002. Course provision in mathematics and health, social care and early years, which were unsatisfactory, have improved to good and satisfactory respectively, with a particularly strong improvement in examination results in mathematics. Success rates have improved overall, and there have been improvements in specific areas such as overall success rates on GCE AS levels, the proportion of high grades on GCE A levels and in the overall quality of provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy and art and design. Weak pass rates have persisted on a minority of courses. The development and accreditation of key skills, remains a weakness, although there are early signs of improvement through new arrangements. The accuracy and use of data on retention and pass rates have improved greatly and are now good. The college has rapidly improved its financial position which is now strong.

Key strengths of the college

*Strengths*

- good leadership and management
- significant improvements since previous inspection
- outstanding social and educational inclusion
- improving overall success rates, most of which are above average
- overall accuracy of the self-assessment report and lesson observation scheme
- good support for students
- good progression routes and widening of participation
- good opportunities for 14 to 16 year old learners
- strong financial management and good value for money

## Areas for improvement

*The college should address:*

- overall pass rates at level 1 for learners aged 16 to 18
- quality of teaching and learning on lower level courses
- consistency and use of course reviews
- attendance and punctuality on some courses
- engagement with employers
- development and accreditation of key skills

## Main findings

### Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

13. There was an improvement in overall success rates over the last three years, using college data for 2004/05. For 16 to 18 year old learners there was an improvement in success rates on long courses at levels 2 and 3, and these were well above average. However, there was a significant decline in success rates for 16 to 18 year old learners on level 1 long courses to well below average. For adult learners, success rates on long courses at level 1 were broadly average in 2004/05. At level 2, success rates for adult learners were above average and have risen slightly since 2002/03. At level 3, adult success rates were above average in 2004/05 but remained static for the last two years. Overall success rates on short courses for all learners improved over the last three years, although they were below national averages on short courses of 5-24 weeks. In work-based learning, the achievement of apprenticeship framework qualifications was low. However, the achievement of NVQs was above average. The outcomes on E2E programmes have improved, although progression rates to further study or employment are low.
14. Retention rates over the last three years were in most cases significantly above average. Similarly, achievement rates on long courses were above or broadly in line with averages for both adult learners and those aged 16 to 18. The exception to this was for learners aged 16 to 18 on level 1 long courses, where achievement rates dropped to well below average.
15. College data for 2004/05 shows good success rates in the areas inspected, for example, mathematics, hairdressing, art and design, media and performing arts, and GCE AS/A level business studies, law and sport. Learners are developing good vocational skills in hairdressing and beauty therapy, art, media, photography and performance. ESOL learners are developing their self-confidence and many are developing vocational skills alongside their language skills. The standard of learners' work on many adult and community programmes is high. Learners aged 14 to 16 are developing their motivation and vocational skills. There has been poor achievement of key skills awards for learners aged 16 to 18. Weak achievements have persisted on administration, accountancy courses and vocational sports courses.
16. At levels 1 and 2, learners aged 16 to 18 from white, mixed and black Caribbean backgrounds under-achieved in 2003/04 compared to college and national averages. At most levels, there was little difference in success rates by gender in 2003/04. The exception was at level 1, where adult males were much less likely to succeed than females, and had a below average success rate.
17. Attendance in the lessons observed during the inspection was 78%, compared to 73% in the last inspection. Low attendance and poor punctuality affected learning in lessons in art and design, media and performing arts, and in leisure,

travel and tourism and sport. Punctuality was poor in many lessons in business. There is good progression by learners between levels of study, and to higher education. The college analyses data on achievements effectively in its self-assessment and actively targets weaker areas to bring about improvements.

#### Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

18. Most teaching is at least satisfactory. There was much good teaching in mathematics and hairdressing and beauty therapy. Little outstanding teaching was observed, although it was more in evidence in hairdressing and beauty therapy and art and design, media and performing arts. The college's recently revised moderation system for grading observed lessons has improved the accuracy of its judgements significantly. Inspectors looked closely at teaching and learning in lower level courses and noted that weaker teaching tends to be concentrated particularly on entry and level 1 courses. In its self-assessment, the college identifies that little teaching is outstanding, but not that teaching is weaker at the lower levels.
19. In the best lessons teachers plan lessons well, clearly define the learning objectives and use a range of teaching strategies. Learners are actively engaged in group activities and role-play and enjoy their work. Weaker lessons lack variety and are too frequently dominated by teachers talking at length. In these lessons, teaching methods do not take sufficient account of the differing needs or abilities of all learners. Most teachers are well qualified in their subject area and hold appropriate teaching qualifications. However, in adult and community learning some teachers are not qualified and have not taken advantage of the support offered to them to achieve qualifications. There is an increasing use of information and learning technology (ILT), but this needs to be developed further in areas such as mathematics and business.
20. In adult and community learning there is some good teaching. Teachers meet the different needs of learners. There is a caring environment, particularly for older learners, and good one-to-one support. Course induction is satisfactory.
21. Initial assessment is used effectively to identify the additional learning needs of full-time and many part-time learners, and support is usually provided promptly, through in-class support assistants, in one-to-one support sessions or small group work. Adult learners are mostly directed to the college's learndirect provision for the necessary support in basic skills.
22. The use of assessment to monitor and promote learners' progress is satisfactory. In many curriculum areas teachers provide good written and oral feedback, although moderation and verification practices sometimes lack consistency.
23. There is a good system for setting personal development targets, and reviewing progress through the progress file and tutorial review for full-time learners. However, these targets are not always sufficiently challenging or precise. The

learners are positive about how the new college diploma acknowledges their successes. The use of individual learning plans for adult and community learners is weak.

24. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and includes provision for learners with profound learning difficulties or challenging behaviour. Young people feel safe in the college and there is a 'safe room' for vulnerable young learners to use. There are good progression routes from entry level to level 3 and HE courses in most subject sector areas. The college has very effective relations with local partner schools and is actively involved in establishing a 16 to 19 collegiate system across the London Borough of Harrow. Provision for learners aged 14 to 16 is good. As well as supporting local schools with their vocational courses, the college provides a discrete course for disaffected school pupils. It manages a local skills centre which is providing for over 100 school pupils to develop construction and other skills, leading to improved motivation and achievement. There are strong partnerships with local agencies to develop courses in the community, including courses designed to recruit under-represented learners with a good range of ESOL provision.
25. Links with employers are good in health and social care, which supports the college's CoVE in care. However in other areas links with employers and work experience opportunities are not well developed. Full-time ESOL learners have good opportunities to develop their language skills in a vocational context.
26. Support and guidance for learners are good. This includes effective help for individual progression and careers advice. The college has comprehensive policies on support which are put into practice by trained staff with a good knowledge of equality and diversity issues. To support low achieving learners from minority ethnic backgrounds the college has introduced a mentoring programme, involving specialist mentors from the community, which has had some impact on 'at risk' learners.
27. There is a strong commitment to meeting the diverse needs of the learners wherever possible. Issues relating to finance, health and housing are dealt with promptly using good links with local community groups and agencies. The use of additional learning support is well planned and appropriately targeted, complementing the sensitive arrangements to support vulnerable learners, although some learners are reluctant to take this up. Support for learners with disabilities, dyslexia or sensory impairments, particularly hearing impairment, is good. Specialist resources are provided quickly. Retention rates of learners receiving additional support are higher than for other learners.
28. The central tutorial programme, which includes a thorough induction, is well planned and practical. It covers aspects of health, safety and respect appropriately although there is inconsistency in the delivery. The weekly 'Bulletin' gives clear direction and focus to tutors. The procedures for tracking and following up poor attendance are good but the college recognises the need

to improve attendance further. The rules and guidance on punctuality are inconsistently applied.

## Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

29. Leadership and management are good. Since the 2002 inspection, the college has addressed many weaknesses. Managers are open and approachable, using newsletters and consultation to foster good communication, and a new management structure promotes effective liaison across sites and with part-time staff.
30. Governors know the college well and monitor its work closely. Managers are set challenging personal objectives linked to college priorities. A new performance management scheme links pay to performance for all staff, although a minority of staff have not been appraised recently. Quality assurance arrangements are clear. The college's self-assessment report is detailed and evaluative, and its findings broadly match those of inspectors. Staff are fully involved in self-assessment and planning for improvement. The views of learners and staff are generally used effectively. The lesson observation programme is comprehensive, rigorous and broadly accurate. However, many reviews and action plans at course level are weak and do not take enough account of the findings of lesson observation. There are few complaints from learners, and these are dealt with effectively. Managers generally make good use of reliable and accessible data, which has improved significantly since the last inspection.
31. The college is making good progress against its key objectives, which are to achieve continuous improvement, increased participation, sound financial health and strong collaborative partnerships. Staff and governors helped to formulate the priorities, which are articulated in a comprehensive development plan. The self-assessment report provides governors with an overview of work towards achieving college objectives.
32. The response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 has been good. The college's policies and plans are monitored and reported to governors, although the outcomes of race relations monitoring are not published. The ethnic composition of the staff now reflects more closely that of the local community. The college has made significant investment to ensure that almost all areas are accessible for those with limited mobility. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of college life. The college has appropriate procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Staff and governors have received relevant training.
33. Teachers are qualified or working towards a qualification. There are good levels of specialist, technical and support staff. Staff development is effective and is linked to college objectives, lesson observation and appraisal. Some teaching accommodation is cramped, and in the case of sport, inadequate. There is insufficient private study and social space. The college estate is overcrowded, though well maintained, and very effective use is made of accommodation.

34. The college works with partners to achieve its mission and local priorities. Financial management is very strong. The college's financial health has improved rapidly and significantly and is good. With very good use of accommodation and generally good success rates, overall the college provides good value for money.

## Curriculum area inspections

Mathematics

Good: grade 2

### Context

35. The provision comprises GCSE mathematics, GCE AS and A-level mathematics and further mathematics. In 2005/06, there are 670 learners, the large majority of whom are learners aged 16 to 18 on full-time courses. Some GCSE groups are specifically for learners on ESOL courses.

### *STRENGTHS*

- good and improving success rates
- a high proportion of learners obtain high-grade passes on advanced courses
- good teaching using a wide range of activities to engage learners
- effective and well planned co-ordination of provision

### *AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- a lack of provision to prepare all learners for GSCE mathematics programmes
- insufficient direct access to ILT facilities
- under-developed use of target-setting

### Achievement and standards

36. Achievements and standards are good. Success rates are high for most courses. The proportion of learners gaining grades A\* to C in GCSE mathematics improved from 38% in 2003/04 to 52% in 2004/05, which is above the national average for similar colleges. Similarly, success rates for GCE AS and A level mathematics have improved and are above national averages. Retention rates are high on all courses and have increased over the last three years. The proportion of learners obtaining high-grade passes in GCE AS and A level mathematics increased significantly in 2004/05. The value added to learners' prior achievements is good.
37. The standard of attainment for GCE A-level learners is good. Learners are well motivated and work well in groups, co-operating and providing good support to each other.

### Quality of education and training

38. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have considerable subject knowledge that is used well to enable learners to make good progress. A wide variety of activities is used to consolidate learning, including puzzles, card games, quizzes and mathematical crosswords. Teachers generate a secure learning environment and learners feel comfortable answering and asking



questions. An effective GCSE mathematics lesson engaged learners through an exercise in which algebraic formulae were matched to written phrases. This encouraged learners to articulate strategies for solving problems.

39. Access to ILT facilities for mathematics learners is inadequate. There is insufficient use of ILT to promote and enliven mathematics teaching. This issue was highlighted as a weakness in the previous re-inspection report.
40. There is a gap in mathematics provision at level 1. Although the percentage of learners gaining a high-grade pass in GCSE mathematics increased markedly in 2004/05, there is no suitable programme for those learners who require significant preparation in order for them to attain this standard. Staff give much help to learners outside of lessons but there are currently no timetabled sessions to provide additional help.
41. Work is set for learners regularly and it is returned promptly. Teachers correct mistakes clearly and make good use of praise to encourage learners, but suggestions on how to improve the standard of work are not always included. Teachers provide reports on learners' progress to personal tutors. However, action plans lack detailed and measurable targets, which are not used effectively to monitor the progress made by learners during their course.

#### Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management are good. Actions taken to address weaknesses have led to improvements in outcomes for learners. New subject co-ordinators work closely with the curriculum manager to plan and organise provision, and staff meet regularly. Information on the achievement of learners from different ethnic groups is not effectively used by course teams. Course reviews are descriptive rather than evaluative and action plans are not always followed.

## Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy

Good: grade 2

## Context

43. Full-time courses in beauty therapy are offered at levels 2 and 3. Hairdressing level 2 is offered as a full-time course, and level 1 is offered for 14 to 16 year old learners and ESOL learners. Part-time provision in beauty therapy includes the beauty specialist diploma and the diploma in holistic massage. There are 48 full-time 16 to 18 learners and 19 full-time learners who are 19+. There are 24 apprenticeship learners in hairdressing and 113 part-time learners in beauty therapy.

*STRENGTHS*

- high retention rates in beauty therapy
- very good attendance
- good standard of vocational skills
- good teaching
- extensive enrichment

*AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- insufficient development of key skills
- limited hairdressing provision

## Achievements and standards

44. Achievements are good overall. Success rates in hairdressing at NVQ level 2 are well above average. Retention rates in beauty therapy are high on NVQ courses at levels 2 and 3, although pass rates dipped in 2004/05 to below average. Success rates are above average on the diploma in reflexology. Attendance is very good and learners are punctual in arriving at lessons. Learners demonstrate good practical skills. ESOL learners have made very good progress and have completed one unit per month on a level 1 programme. Awareness of health, safety and hygiene is good. Learners' written work is of a satisfactory standard.

## Quality of provision

45. Teaching is good. A variety of effective activities are incorporated into well planned lessons. Level 1 learners assist level 2 learners in commercial salon lessons. This is particularly effective for ESOL learners in developing their communication skills. ILT is used effectively with many lessons involving internet research and topical group discussion. Learners demonstrate good theoretical knowledge and answer questions confidently and correctly. The assessment of learners' work is satisfactory, with helpful written feedback. Teaching methods in lessons for 14-16 year old learners are not pitched at an

appropriate level. There are missed opportunities for key skills development and assessment in lessons.

46. Full and part-time learners are given extensive enrichment opportunities. They attend trade shows, visit companies and receive product training and talks from manufacturers. Beauty therapy learners on level 2 NVQ courses are given the opportunity to compete in national make-up competitions.
47. Hairdressing provision is limited in scope. NVQ level 1 is offered to 14 to 16 and ESOL learners only and there is no entry level provision. NVQ level 2 is offered as a full-time course or apprenticeship, but is not available part-time. There is no provision at level 3 or in relevant specialisms such as African-Caribbean hairdressing.
48. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners complete their own weekly action plans and set short term, realistic and achievable targets that are discussed and agreed with the tutor. During tutorial lessons, learners' progress and NVQ achievement is recorded. Guidance is given on a one-to-one basis.

#### Leadership and management

49. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is good communication within the team. Staff development and opportunities for occupational updating are very good. Internal verification is satisfactory. There are regular standardisation meetings and good practice is shared. All staff are appropriately qualified and have thorough subject knowledge. Staff promote equality of opportunity effectively. The self-assessment report matches closely the findings of the inspection.

Leisure, travel and tourism, and sport

Satisfactory: grade 3

### Context

50. The college has significantly changed the range of courses in this curriculum area. It offers full-time courses in travel and sport from levels 1 to 3, ranging from an introductory diploma through to a national certificate in both subjects. It also offers GCE A/AS levels in sport. The resort representative and the community sports leader awards are offered as additional qualifications. There are 135 learners on sports courses and 94 on travel. Most are aged 16-18 years.

### *STRENGTHS*

- high pass rates in GCE A/AS level sport
- good progression for learners
- good use of task-based assignments to improve achievement
- effective development of the curriculum to meet learners' needs

### *AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- low pass rates on the first diploma in sport
- poor attendance and punctuality
- unsatisfactory teaching at level 1 in sport
- narrow range of enrichment opportunities
- inadequate accommodation particularly in sport

### Achievement and standards

51. Achievements and standards are good for GCE A/AS levels in sport. Pass rates have been above the national average on the AVCE in travel and tourism, but on other travel and sports courses they have been low. Many of these courses are no longer offered apart from the first diploma in sport. Pass rates on this course are below the national average but are increasing each year. Retention on most courses in 2004/05 was at or above the national average.
52. Attainment in lessons is satisfactory for most learners, although it is better at level 3 than levels 1 and 2. Learners' progression between course levels and to higher education is good.
53. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory especially at levels 1 and 2. Both are now closely monitored. The action taken is beginning to have a positive effect on individual learners but still has to impact more widely.

### Quality of provision

54. Overall teaching is satisfactory. Most lessons are well planned and structured and are characterised by a range of teaching methods and styles to suit

learners. Teaching at level 1 is aimed at too high a level and many learners are passive. Mentoring on the introduction to sports course is not sufficiently focused on learners' individual needs.

55. Assignments are effectively divided into a series of smaller tasks with separate deadlines for each. This system is more manageable for learners and those missing deadlines are identified as being at risk of leaving and are now carefully monitored.
56. Accommodation is inadequate particularly in sport. The college now has a strategy to address these issues.
57. Enrichment opportunities are too narrow to improve the vocational context for travel learners. This was a weakness at the last inspection. Learners do not do work experience. In sport there are too few practical activities.
58. The curriculum changed significantly between 2004/06 with the introduction of courses which are more suitable for the college's learners. There are large numbers of learners from groups which underachieve locally, such as black Caribbean young men, and those from disadvantaged areas. There are early signs that the new courses offered are likely to be more successful, for instance in encouraging motivation.

#### Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management of travel and sport, which are managed in two different faculties, are satisfactory, as are quality assurance arrangements. The overall faculty self-assessment report for sport did not identify the weaknesses relating to achievement on full-time courses or attendance, although they were identified in the course review. Promotion of equality of opportunity is good.

Art and design, media and performing arts

Good: grade 2

### Context

60. The college offers provision in art and design for some 353 learners aged 16 to 18 and 91 adult learners. The majority of learners aged 16 to 18 follow GCE AS/A level courses in art and design, graphic design, photography and textiles. Other courses include GNVQ in art and design at foundation and intermediate level, a national diploma in foundation studies in art and design, and an AVCE course in art and design. In media and performing arts there are 418 learners aged 16 to 18, and 32 adult learners. Courses include: GCE AS/A levels in drama, film, video, media and music technology, GNVQ in media and a national diploma in performing arts and in media.

### *STRENGTHS*

- high pass and success rates on many courses
- good developmental work with colour, media, photography and performance
- good progression by learners from level 1 courses through to level 3
- outstanding teaching and learning on GNVQ in art and design and GCE A level media
- effective communication between managers and teachers

### *AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- low attendance and poor punctuality on many courses
- insufficient key skills development
- lack of rigour in course reviews and self-assessment

### Achievement and standards

61. Achievements and standards are good. Pass and success rates on most courses are at or above the national average. The pass rate on GCE A level art and design was 100% in 2005 and on GCE A level media 96%. On the GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses, pass rates were 86% and 85%. Developmental work with colour, drawing, sketchbooks, media, photography and performance is good. However there was low attendance overall in the lessons observed. Opportunities for learners to develop their key skills are not well developed or effectively integrated into many courses.

### Quality of provision

62. The overall quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning on GNVQ courses in art and design and GCE A level media are outstanding and contain some examples of exemplary practice. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of learners. Attendance is high and learners make significant progress in developing their understanding and their practical skills, and are

confident in discussion and investigation. Most lessons are well planned with aims, objectives and assessment criteria. Learning advisers provide useful practical support for individual learners in some specialist areas. However, in some lessons, insufficient attention is given to the different needs and abilities of learners and there is insufficient emphasis on what learners should achieve in the lesson. Poor punctuality has a detrimental impact on teaching and learning with learners sometimes missing introductions to lessons. On some courses learners receive constructive and timely feedback that clearly helps them to make progress. However, the quality of assessment and internal verification is inconsistent across the area. The range and different levels of provision in the area of learning are satisfactory.

### Leadership and management

63. Operational management is good, with effective communication between managers and staff. Monitoring of performance is evident in minutes of meetings, through lesson observations and in course reviews. However, self-assessment reports and action plans do not sufficiently address weaknesses in teaching and learning, punctuality and attendance. Accommodation and specialist resources are generally satisfactory. Teachers are well qualified and many are artists and designers. There is an effective commitment to equality of opportunity.

## Preparation for Life and Work

Satisfactory: grade 3

## Context

64. Courses are offered from pre-entry to level 2 on the main college sites and in a variety of community venues. There is a large programme of part-time and full-time courses in ESOL, including vocational courses for ESOL learners. There is a smaller range of courses in literacy and numeracy and an E2E programme. Key skills are offered to all full-time learners aged 16 to 18. In 2005/06 there are 2,604 learners on preparation for life and work courses, excluding key skills, the large majority of whom are learners aged over 19 who are taking part-time courses in ESOL.

*STRENGTHS*

- good gains in learners' personal skills
- good progression between levels of programme for ESOL learners
- good operational management in ESOL and basic skills

*AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- poor retention and achievement on the franchised provision
- weak development and accreditation of key skills
- insufficient attention to individual learning needs in a minority of lessons

## Achievement and standards

65. Achievement is satisfactory overall. There is good achievement on assignment-based entry level courses. New ESOL qualifications were introduced last summer, when the first pass rates were low. However, pass rates for the part award taken by learners in December 2005 showed an improvement. Retention and pass rates on the franchised provision are poor. Achievements in accredited key skills were low in 2004/05 for the full qualifications, although good proportions of learners achieved passes for their portfolios at level 1.

## Quality of provision

66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons there is effective planning of activities and learners' progress is monitored and recorded, and learners rapidly gain in confidence and develop their personal skills effectively. In the weaker lessons, there is too much emphasis on the teacher talking, and an over-reliance on worksheets. In some lessons, insufficient account is taken of learners' individual needs. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Some late starters are not provided with induction. Standards of equipment and resources are satisfactory. Most teaching staff are well qualified or studying for a qualification.



67. Many learners on part-time and community courses progress onto ESOL intensive courses, while learners aged 16 to 18 progress to ESOL programmes with a vocational aspect. These prepare learners effectively for GCSE or level 2 courses. The basic skills programme for adult learners is small and is not adequate for those learners who hope to join access programmes and need to improve their writing skills.
68. The development and accreditation of key skills is weak. A new policy is being implemented and some progress has been made in integrating the use of key skills assignments into mainstream programmes. The skills are not yet effectively developed within vocational contexts.
69. There is good support from learning support assistants for learners with physical disabilities and learning difficulties. Volunteers help adult basic skills learners in lessons.

### Leadership and Management

70. The management of ESOL and basic skills provision is good. Managers work effectively with co-ordinators and tutors to improve provision. Quality assurance of teaching and learning is effective. The effective monitoring of attendance and punctuality has led to improvements. There is a comprehensive staff training programme, although this is not always attended by agency staff. The staff are involved in developing the self-assessment report, which reflects many of the inspection findings. The promotion of equality and diversity is good.

## Business Administration and Law

Satisfactory: grade 3

## Context

71. The college offers full-time courses from level 1 to level 3. The 761 full-time learners are mainly aged 16 to 18 and follow courses including GCE AS and A levels, BTEC national certificate, GNVQ intermediate, BTEC introductory certificate and OCR certificate in administration. The 153 part-time learners are mostly adults following Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) courses at levels 2, 3 and 4.

*STRENGTHS*

- high success rates on GCE AS and A level business studies and law
- good progress by learners in lessons
- excellent progression to further study
- outstanding promotion of equality and diversity

*AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT*

- low pass rates on accounting levels 3 and 4 and administration courses
- poor punctuality in lessons
- under-developed higher level skills on advanced business courses
- lack of rigour in course reviews and self-assessment

## Achievement and standards

72. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates are high on GCE AS and A levels in business studies and in law and are above the national average. Pass rates are low on accounting courses at levels 3 and 4. Pass rates in administration are also low. Progression is excellent with a high number of learners moving on to further courses in the college. The standard of learners' assessed work is good. Attendance is good but punctuality was poor in many lessons observed.

## Quality of provision

73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and structured to address the needs of all learners. Teachers make good use of collaborative learning. In a GCE A level business lesson learners were set a challenging exercise, working effectively in pairs to produce a business report. Learners are well motivated and make good progress in lessons. Teachers set a variety of successful learning activities, and key skills are fully integrated within the business and law curriculum enabling learners to collect evidence as it occurs. However, many learners on advanced level courses have insufficient opportunity to develop higher level skills, such as those of research, analysis and evaluation. Information technology is not well used to support and enhance learning.

74. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Initial assessments are used effectively to identify additional learning needs, and satisfactory support is provided. Targets are set appropriately for learners and regular reviews take place to monitor progress. Good advice and guidance is provided for careers and higher education. Parents are kept well informed of learners' progress. Learners on administration courses benefit from work experience, but there are few business-related activities to enrich the business curriculum and no links with employers of part-time learners.

#### Leadership and management

75. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Internal lesson observations are accurately graded. Most course reviews are insufficiently analytical and action plans lack detail. Inspectors identified some strengths and areas for improvement which were not acknowledged in the self-assessment report. Good teamwork enables staff to share materials. The promotion of diversity within the curriculum is outstanding. Teachers are appropriately qualified and participate in effective staff development. Resources are satisfactory and accommodation is adequate.

## Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

**Table S-1: College success rate for level 1 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age**

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	01/02	245	62	53	9	319	56	50	6
	02/03	483	64	56	7	1,815	63	55	8
	03/04	1,364	51	60	-10	2,802	56	59	-3
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	160	64	54	11	13	31	41	-11
	02/03	185	68	60	8	10	80	47	33
	03/04	197	66	65	1	7	71	52	19
NVQs	01/02	23	65	52	13	11	64	49	15
	02/03	27	56	56	0	7	29	57	-28
	03/04	16	56	61	-5	14	64	62	2
Other	01/02	62	53	53	1	295	57	50	7
	02/03	271	61	56	5	1,798	63	55	8
	03/04	1,151	48	60	-12	2,781	56	59	-3

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream Level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

**Table S-2: College success rate for level 2 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age**

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	01/02	1,475	65	50	15	570	60	48	12
	02/03	1,647	65	52	13	570	56	49	7
	03/04	2,374	62	56	5	623	63	53	9
GCSEs	01/02	925	77	54	23	143	71	53	17
	02/03	1,067	73	57	16	167	63	55	8
	03/04	1,286	76	61	15	155	77	59	19
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	380	46	56	-10	29	45	50	-5
	02/03	393	54	59	-4	22	59	53	6
	03/04	382	57	63	-6	23	48	57	-9
NVQs	01/02	103	35	43	-8	135	71	45	27
	02/03	100	48	42	6	125	68	49	19
	03/04	63	68	52	16	94	63	53	9
Other	01/02	67	57	49	8	263	51	48	2
	02/03	87	43	50	-8	256	45	48	-3
	03/04	643	35	54	-19	351	57	52	5

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2001/02 to 2003/04, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

**Table S-3: College success rate for level 3 long qualifications by qualification type, expected end year and age**

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	01/02	4,012	64	60	4	998	41	50	-10
	02/03	3,687	69	62	7	779	53	51	2
	03/04	3,843	68	64	4	693	58	53	5
A1A2 levels	01/02	1,111	82	80	2	108	71	57	14
	02/03	1,047	87	82	6	105	81	63	18
	03/04	1,100	88	84	4	103	82	66	16
AS levels	01/02	2,245	60	60	0	167	38	47	-9
	02/03	2,136	64	61	3	130	48	48	-1
	03/04	2,131	62	63	-1	95	53	50	3
GNVQs and precursors	01/02	586	49	47	2	47	45	43	2
	02/03	471	52	50	2	48	40	45	-6
	03/04	476	56	52	4	38	58	43	15
NVQs	01/02	29	21	49	-28	106	46	41	6
	02-03	9	22	51	-28	81	49	45	5
	03/04	19	53	54	-1	75	47	47	0
Other	01/02	41	32	54	-22	570	34	54	-20
	02/03	24	29	55	-26	415	51	54	-3
	03/04	117	45	56	-11	382	56	56	0

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college  
2003/04 to 2004/05

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	42	4%	33%	78%	50%
	Advanced	13	0%	32%	31%	50%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	26	0%	35%	-	47%
	Advanced	2	0%	30%	-	45%

\* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

\*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	41	4%	16%	57%	27%
	Advanced	12	0%	19%	42%	33%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	45	0%	20%	13%	28%
	Advanced	-	-	-	-	-

\* The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year

\*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

1. Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2003/04 to 2004/05

Year	Number of starts in year	Achieved Objectives *	Progression **	Still in learning
2003/04	7	1	1	0
2004/05	31	23	10	1

\* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

\*\* Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period