

The Ofsted logo, featuring the word "Ofsted" in a white, stylized, handwritten font on a black background.

The Sheffield College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

Published
May 2006

Provider reference
130531

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	15

Basic information about the college

Name of college:	The Sheffield College
Type of college:	General Further Education College
Principal:	John E Taylor
Address of college:	Head Office PO Box 345 Castle Centre Sheffield S2 2YY
Telephone number:	0114 260 2600
Fax number:	0114 260 2601
Chair of governors:	Mr Steve Knowles
Unique reference number:	130531
Name of lead inspector:	Colin Evans, HMI
Dates of inspection:	13 – 17 March 2006

Background of the organisation

1. The Sheffield College, a large general further education college, recruits a high proportion of its learners from disadvantaged areas and mostly from the Sheffield area. In 2004-05 it enrolled 28,000 learners, of whom 6,800 studied full-time. Some 70% of the full-time learners were aged 16-18 years. About 90% of part-time learners were aged 19 or over. Some 19% of learners are from minority-ethnic groups compared with 7% in the city's population. In 2004 a new federal structure established three colleges within a single accountable body under the single employer status of the Sheffield College. All 15 of the sector subject areas funded by the LSC are provided by one or more of the three colleges.
2. In the South of the city, Norton College which includes the "Peaks Centre" provides for approximately a fifth of the learners. Hillsborough College, a new build in the north, replacing the Loxley and Parson Cross centres in September 2005, provides for about one third of the learners. The focus of these two colleges is academic provision, art and design, leisure, business, health and social care, and information technology (IT). Centrally placed is Castle College, which provides for half the learners. The focus of this college is to provide a wide range of vocational provision.
3. The local education authority maintains seven schools with sixth forms. Five general further education colleges and two sixth form colleges including the recently established Longley Park College in North East Sheffield are within 15 miles of the college. Sheffield has a population of 530,000. The proportion of school leavers with five or more general certificate in secondary education (GCSE) grades A* to C in Sheffield is 47% which is significantly lower than the national average for England.
4. The college employs 1,400 staff. It has centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs) in digital media, health and social care, construction, and hospitality and catering. The college's mission is "to meet the agreed needs of the individual learner and build the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for the economic and social development of Sheffield and the surrounding region."

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); 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: science; construction; hospitality and catering; English language and literature and business management .

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
Achievements and standards	Good: grade 2
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

Science	Good: grade 2
Construction	Satisfactory: grade 3
Hospitality and catering	Good: grade 2
English language and literature	Good: grade 2
Business management	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: grade 2

6. Learner achievements are good. Success rates at levels 2 and 3 for learners aged 16 to 18 are consistently high. At level 1 the rate fell to the average in 2005. The adult success rate at level 2 has improved steadily and was high in 2005. At levels 1 and 3 the success rate is close to the national average. Pass rates are high at levels 2 and 3 for learners in both age groups. Learners aged 16 to 18 achieve, on average, the grades their incoming GCSE attainment predicts. Apprenticeship framework achievement has improved and is now high. Learners demonstrate good practical skills. Key skills success rates are low.
7. Teaching has improved and is now good. The teaching of practical work is good. In some curriculum areas the teaching does not consistently meet the needs of all learners. The management and teaching of key skills is improving. Learners' progress is monitored and reported on regularly. Training is provided which closely matches employers' needs.
8. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. The learners, who come from a diverse range of backgrounds, enjoy their learning, find the college safe and welcoming and are supported well. Learners are provided with a good choice of provision which meets their needs well. The college provides well for vulnerable and disabled young people. Child protection procedures are in place.
9. Learners receive good academic, pastoral and individual support. The pastoral programme is wide-ranging and delivered systematically. The individual needs of learners are systematically identified and appropriate support is provided systematically. Learners have access to a wide range of specialist support services.
10. Leadership and management are good. Leadership is highly effective. Governors and the principal set a clear direction. Management is thoughtful and consultative. Authority and responsibility are delegated effectively. The college is responsive to the needs of employers. Self-assessment is thorough and accurate, and leads to improvement. Links with employers have improved and are now strong. The links between the observation of the teaching of individual teachers and their professional development are inconsistent. Equality and diversity are promoted and monitored well, leading to widened participation.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The college's capacity to improve is good. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and outcomes are accurate. College managers and governors focus appropriately on securing improvements. Many areas previously identified as under-performing have been monitored closely, and improvements have resulted. The observation of teaching and learning programme is comprehensive and linked closely to the college's professional development programme. Action plans written after individual lesson observations are not always written clearly and are not systematically implemented. The college maintains good learner performance data. It is used with confidence by managers at all levels to monitor provision and promote improvements. Leadership is highly effective.

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

12. The college has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Provision previously judged to be unsatisfactory is now satisfactory. Attendance is monitored closely and rigorously managed and is now satisfactory. The management of work-based learning has improved and learners' achievements have improved markedly. The implementation of quality assurance procedures at course level is now thorough and has led to improvements in provision. Accommodation has been improved substantially. Space utilisation has improved.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- high pass rates at levels 2 and 3
- learners' good practical skills
- the breadth and responsiveness of the provision to a diverse student group and to employers' needs
- good academic, pastoral and personal support for learners
- accurate self-assessment and quality assurance procedures which lead to improvement
- very good promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity
- highly effective leadership

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- the low key skills success rates for 16-18 learners

- the inconsistent links between the observation of the teaching of individual teachers and their professional development

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Good: grade 2

13. Success rates at levels 2 and 3 for learners aged 16 to 18 are consistently high. The level 1 success rate was high in 2003 and 2004 but fell to the national average in 2005. Pass rates at levels 2 and 3 are consistently high. At level 1 the pass rate dipped in 2005 to be satisfactory, having been high in previous years. Retention is high at level 3 and satisfactory at levels 1 and 2. Success rates on General Certificate in Education (GCE) Advance subsidiary and Advanced level (AS and A level) and general vocational courses are consistently high. Success rates on national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 and 2 have improved and were high in 2005. Value added data indicate that learners do as well as their incoming attainment predicts. The success rate of males is generally better than the national average. Most minority-ethnic groups do at least as well as their national averages. Key skills success rates are low. Early data for 2006 indicates that key skills test pass rates are improving. Work-based learning achievements have improved significantly and were good in 2005, when the achievement of full apprenticeship frameworks was 62%.
14. The level 2 adult success rate has improved and was high in 2005. The level 1 and 3 success rates are generally satisfactory. The pass rate at level 2 is consistently high. At level 3 it is usually high and was high in 2005. At level 1 the rate fell significantly from a high rate in 2004 to low in 2005, due largely to poor results on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision. Early ESOL results for 2006 indicate improvement. Retention at levels 2 and 3 is satisfactory. At level 1 it has improved and was satisfactory in 2005. Success rates on courses leading to NVQs at levels 2 and 3, although improving, are low. The pass rate, 89%, on employer training pilot (ETP) programmes is high. Both male and female learners do as well as the national average. The performance of minority-ethnic groups is variable. For example, Pakistani learners do well at level 3 but less well than their national average at level 1.
15. Attendance rates are satisfactory. Punctuality is satisfactory in most curriculum areas but poor in English. Learners work well in practical lessons and produce work of a good standard. For example, in catering, learners develop good practical skills and in construction, learners work in sign making, joinery and furniture making is good. ETP learners produce work of a good standard. Learners achieve good individual successes in external competitions and exams. For example, learners have gained top five places in GCE A level psychology, and in three GCSE languages. The college is one of four, out of 350 colleges which originally entered, in the final of the prestigious Nestle Toque D'Or competition. The college's self-assessment report accurately portrays the quality of learners' achievements.

Quality of provision

Good: grade 2

16. Teaching and learning are good in three of the curriculum areas inspected and satisfactory in two. Teaching to support practical work is good and supports individual learners well. In the best theory lessons teachers plan their work well, introduce an appropriate variety of activity and provide good learning materials. The use of questioning as a formative assessment tool is under-developed. Responses are often dominated by too few learners. The needs of some learners, for example, higher attaining learners, are not always fully met. Assessment is generally suitable and feedback on marked work at least satisfactory. Learners' progress is monitored regularly and reports on progress are produced.
17. As identified in the self-assessment report, key skills provision is currently a weakness. The college is implementing a wide-ranging action plan. Curriculum area managers now have responsibility for key skills provision in their area, teaching is increasingly being placed within a relevant context and staffing levels have been increased. The teaching observed by inspectors was good.
18. Work-based learning, both apprenticeship provision and ETP, are well managed. Employers are well informed about the framework requirements. Progress reviews are conducted regularly on both programmes and apprenticeship work placements are of a high quality. Learner achievement data is collected systematically and thoroughly analysed. Visits to learners on the ETP programme are made to suit the learners' work patterns. Insufficient use is made, in some curriculum areas, of the direct observation of apprentices' performance in the work place.
19. The college offers a broad range of provision which is available from entry level to level 4. Provision to widen participation is particularly good. It includes courses for learners who are at risk of non-participation in education or training. There is, for example, a large cross-college entry level programme. The college also offers vocational training through work-based provision, ETP, and sub-contracted entry to employment courses. A wide ranging vocational programme recruits large numbers of pupils aged 14-16 from many local schools.
20. The college is responsive to the needs of employers. Four CoVEs provide a range of bespoke courses for local business. Careful course design and planning for delivery ensure that the training is provided to match business needs and to minimise disruptions to business activities. Course developments draw on employers' specialist knowledge and the college's curriculum expertise.
21. The enrichment programme includes a wide range of activities. As part of this, learners are able to take part in charity events and in a celebration of cultural diversity. Additional curriculum activities for example in hospitality and

catering are effective in improving learners' self-confidence and providing valuable additional work-related qualifications. The cross-college enrichment programme is not sufficiently well promoted, and its take-up is poorly monitored.

22. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is good. Learners, who come from a diverse range of backgrounds, enjoy their learning, find the college safe and welcoming, and are supported well. The wide range of courses helps to widen participation. The college provides well for vulnerable and disabled young people, many of whom are at risk of not attending education or training. Appropriate child protection procedures are in place. The college has a thorough system for vetting staff.
23. Inspectors agree with the college's self-assessment judgement that guidance and support for learners are good. All full-time learners have a weekly tutorial which provides a broad pastoral programme. The programme includes an extended induction and a range of topics related, for example, to health, academic and financial matters. Careers advice and guidance are strong. The college's careers advisors and Connexions advisors work closely with tutors and offer appropriate and timely guidance. Tutorial support for part-time learners is satisfactory. Dedicated tutors are appointed to support part-time learners on substantial programmes. Tutors track and monitor the progress of their learners carefully.
24. Effective systems are in place to identify learners' additional learning needs, for example through initial assessment and self-referral. Identified learners are interviewed and support is offered in a variety of ways; for example, through individual support sessions and by in-lesson support. Support for autistic learners and for those with sensory impairment is exemplary. Learners who receive support are at least as successful as their peers. They speak highly of the help they receive. The college offers many specialist support services and has productive links with external agencies to which they can refer learners. Welfare and financial help is provided where needed.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

25. Leadership and management are good. The principal, senior managers and governors provide a clear strategic direction for the college. The mission and organisation of the college are understood and supported well by staff and governors. The principal provides highly effective leadership which allows managers appropriate autonomy and accountability. The restructuring into three federated colleges has improved curriculum planning and responsiveness to local needs, increased accountability and enabled staff to focus on learners' performance. Governance is good. Governors are well informed and supportive of the college. They challenge and support senior managers suitably and play an active and appropriate role in the development of the college.

26. Quality assurance procedures are well established and thorough. Data is detailed, accurate, and readily accessible. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment reports, but felt there was insufficient emphasis on the quality of teaching. Courses which under-perform are subject to rigorous review and improvement processes. All teachers are observed teaching and links between overall training needs and the professional development programme are clear. Several areas of provision have been improved through the application of these quality assurance procedures. In some cases action plans arising from individual teaching observations are not clear enough or their implementation monitored insufficiently rigorously. The links between appraisal and observation are often too far apart to help effect timely improvements.
27. The college has appropriate policies on equality and diversity which are effectively implemented. The statutory requirements of the amended Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Special Education Needs and Disability act are met. The college makes very good use of data to monitor participation and success according to gender, ethnicity and disability. Successful direct action is taken to improve the performance of groups identified through such measures.
28. The management of resources is good. Financial management is good and the college has made substantial investment which has improved the accommodation. Learners have good access to ICT and other learning resources. College staff are well qualified and experienced. The college provides good value for money.

Curriculum area inspections

Science

Good: grade 2

Context

29. The provision consists of a level 1 foundation science course, GCSEs in biology, chemistry, physics, and human physiology and health, GNVQ intermediate science, and a level 2 Access course. At level 3, there are GCE AS and A level courses in biology, human biology, chemistry and physics and an A level in applied science. There is a National Award in forensic science, an AVCE double award in science and Access to Higher Education courses in pure science and health and science. Some 1,200 learners were enrolled in 2005-06, half of whom are full-time learners. Three quarters of the full-time learners are aged 16 to 18 and nearly all part-time learners are adults.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on all GCE A level sciences and GNVQ intermediate science
- learners good practical skills
- effective support for learners
- well-resourced laboratories

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low pass rates on GCE AS Biological Sciences
- teaching which does not meet the needs of all learners

Achievements and standards

30. Learners' achievements are good. There are high success rates on GCE A level sciences and GNVQ intermediate science. A few subjects, for example GCSE physics and GCE AS human biology, have low success rates. Pass rates on the GCE AS biological sciences are low. Value added data indicates that learners generally do as well as their incoming attainment at GCSE predicts. Attendance and punctuality are good. Learners work accurately, safely and with confidence in practical work.

Quality of provision

31. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The best teaching is well planned and managed and makes use of good quality learning materials. The use of recently developed methods and materials is succeeding in introducing a good level of variety into the teaching. In one biology theory lesson on xylem and phloem such methods succeeded in engaging the learners fully and good questioning by the teacher helped to verify that the learners had understood the theory. Information and learning technology (ILT) is used well in some lessons. Learners receive good levels of support from teachers during

practical lessons and respond well. Insufficient attention is given to ensuring all learners are following the lesson or are productively engaged in learning. For example, in some lessons a minority of learners answer the questions posed by teachers and in a few lessons extension work is not provided when needed.

32. The range of science provision meets the needs of learners well. External speakers provide special lectures. A college devised course has been developed in forensic science. Learners on Access provision appreciate the college's links with Sheffield Hallam University.
33. Science staff provide their learners with good support. The tutorial programme is effective. Learners understand and are involved in the target setting process. Learner attendance is monitored closely and absence chased promptly. Learners are set homework regularly and frequently. It is marked and returned promptly with helpful feedback on performance.

Leadership and management

34. Resources for science are good. Laboratories are well equipped and benefit from good technician support, helping learners develop good practical skills. Teachers are well qualified. Curriculum management is good. Health and Safety is addressed well. Risk assessments are explained to learners. All staff are involved in the production of the self-assessment report, which is accurate in its judgements.

Construction

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

35. Courses include the traditional construction crafts, and sign-writing, as well as building services programmes in electrical installation and plumbing. Also offered are National Certificates and Diplomas in civil engineering and construction. Building services programmes were not inspected. School links programmes provide for nearly 100 pupils aged 14 to 16. Work-based learning is delivered in construction crafts and building services. A joinery workshop is solely available to female learners. The area achieved CoVE status recently. Some 1,270 learners are enrolled on construction work. Nearly three-fifths are adult learners.

STRENGTHS

- high rates of achievement of apprenticeship frameworks
- good standard of learners' practical work
- broad range of programmes
- good specialist accommodation and equipment

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates on the national diploma course
- inconsistent teaching of key skills in some areas
- insufficient observation of learners' performance in the workplace

ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS

36. Success rates in construction are satisfactory. The completion rate for apprenticeship frameworks has improved and at 66%, is now good. Success rates on some full-time courses have declined and are now low. For example the National Diploma success rate has declined from 69% in 2003 to the low rate of 28% in 2005. Learners produce good practical work, particularly in sign-making and furniture, and in the women's workshop where learners produce furniture of a good standard.

Quality of provision

37. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons teaching is well planned and makes good use of ILT. In theory lessons teachers regularly change activities to maintain learners' interest. Team teaching in workshops provides good instruction to learners. The quality of the teaching of key skills is inconsistent. Good use is sometimes made of vocational learning materials which embed key skills. Preparation for key skills tests is unsatisfactory on some programmes.

38. The assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. Practical work is assessed appropriately and helpful feedback given to learners. Insufficient use is made of the direct observation of learners' performance in the workplace. This weakness limits the range and validity of the evidence gathered and slows down the achievement of the NVQ.
39. The broad range of programmes available provides good opportunities for progression from level 1 through to technical and professional qualifications. Specialist courses such as sign-writing are provided and the women's workshop is a good response to equality and diversity.
40. Support and guidance for learners is good. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored. In the lessons observed attendance was high and punctuality good. Learners receive good personal support. Where appropriate this support is provided within lessons and workshops.

Leadership and management

41. Leadership and management are good. Close monitoring of work-based learning has helped raise achievement rates substantially. Specialist accommodation and equipment in construction are good. Significant investment has improved facilities since the last inspection, and funding for the CoVE is helping further improvements.
42. Curriculum team leaders manage teaching and learning satisfactorily. Work-based learning provision has been improved. The frequency of lesson observation has increased and its accuracy has improved. The college's lesson profile is representative of the quality of the teaching and learning in the area. Managers' evaluation of the provision is rigorous, and managers are aware of the area's strengths and what should be improved.

Hospitality and catering

Good: grade 2

Context

43. Sheffield College is part of a CoVE partnership and offers programmes at levels 1, 2 and 3 including full-time NVQ programmes for 16-18 year olds, part-time programmes for 14-16 year olds and adults, apprenticeships and short courses. There are 176 full-time learners, 79 learners on substantial part-time programmes, nine apprentices, 417 pupils aged 14 to 16 and 100 adults on employer training pilot programmes.

STRENGTHS

- learners' good food preparation skills
- high success rates on food preparation and bakery programmes at level 2
- much good practical teaching
- productive links with industry
- excellent support for learners

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates level 1 bakery
- insufficient variety in the teaching methodology used in theory lessons

Achievement and standards

44. Learners' achievements are good. Full-time learners have high success rates on food preparation courses at all levels and bakery courses at level 2. The success rate on the full-time bakery level 1 programme is low. Apprentice framework achievement rates are low. Recent changes have been made and new apprentices are making satisfactory progress.
45. Learners develop good practical skills in food preparation. They participate successfully in regional and national competitions, gaining experience and making contact with major employers. Current learners are finalists in the Nestle Toque D'or competition. Another has won Junior Master Chef. Key skills achievement rates are low. Measures to address this have been put in place. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

46. Much of the practical food preparation teaching is good. Teachers make good use of demonstration techniques and use questioning and discussion well to extend learners' knowledge. Learners are motivated, enthusiastic and enjoy learning. In theory lessons an insufficient variety of teaching and learning methods are used and too little use is made of ILT. Assessment and internal verification is satisfactory.

47. A wide range of qualifications is offered which meet learners' and industry needs well. Productive links exist with industry. Learners regularly work alongside celebrity chefs. They work at prestigious outside catering events and prepare and serve food at major local conferences. Learners gain new skills and experience working with professional chefs, and experience a wide range of ingredients and cookery methods. The 14 to 16 provision enables young learners to attend college one day per week. Many attend the Saturday junior chefs' programme.
48. Support for learners is excellent. Full-time learners have a weekly pastoral tutorial and regular individual tutorials. Activities are well structured and cover appropriate topics. Learners' progress is recorded and monitored carefully. Good support is given to learners with additional learning and social needs. Support for learners with autism and sensory impairment is particularly good.

Leadership and management

49. Resources are satisfactory. The restaurants, production kitchen, bar area and demonstration theatre, have been refurbished using CoVE funding. Other kitchens provide adequate facilities, although some equipment is old and some is not working. Teachers are appropriately qualified and have relevant current industrial experience.
50. Curriculum leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication, management of resources, appraisal and the sharing of information at meetings is satisfactory. The minutes of meetings do not always state clearly who is responsible for actions or the timescale for actions to be completed. The self-assessment report accurately reflects the quality of the provision. The observation of teaching and learning process has not yet led to improvements in teaching.

English language and literature

Good: grade 2

Context

51. Nearly 2,200 learners were enrolled on English courses in 2004-5. Two thirds were aged 16 to 18 and nearly two thirds were female. Two thirds studied full-time. At level 2 GCSE courses are supplemented by an on-line option and a credit based equivalent to GCSE. Courses are offered at both GCE AS and A level in English language, literature and language and literature. There is an on-line alternative in GCE AS language and literature.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates
- good teaching and learning
- courses which meet the diverse needs of learners
- effective pastoral support for learners
- good curriculum management

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- poor punctuality which disrupts learning
- the use of value added data
- poor ILT facilities on one college site

Achievements and standards

52. Success rates on most courses are high. Most learners achieve well. Pass rates are consistently high and retention rates at least satisfactory. Of the 249 learners enrolled on the GCE A level subjects in 2005, 246 passed. Value added data show that level 3 learners achieve at least grades predicted by their level 2 attainments.
53. Learners' written work is usually thorough and well organised. Some of their writing is lively and strongly individual. Learners enjoy their studies. In lessons they work well together, and make good individual contributions. Many are reluctant to enter into debate with each other. Too much learning is disrupted by poor learner punctuality.

Quality of Provision

54. Teaching and learning are good. Tutors are purposeful. They successfully communicate the standards they expect of learners. Lessons are well planned and provide good opportunities for learners to participate and experience different ways of learning. Learners usually make significant progress in lessons. Teachers use high quality resources including on-line material and worksheets. GCSE English courses incorporate topics, for example pop culture,

which relate well to the interests of younger learners. Differentiated tasks help individual learners to work at an appropriate level. In some lessons teachers restrict the opportunities learners have to contribute. Good use is made of ILT in many lessons. At Norton College the ILT facilities are limited. Inter-active whiteboards, for example, have been installed but are not operational.

55. The range of courses provides well for the diverse needs of learners. There are progression routes through from level 1 to level 3. The level 2 English course for mature learners provides an appropriate learning experience. On-line courses for GCE AS level language and literature and GCSE English enable learners who are unable to attend college regularly to acquire qualifications.
56. Learners receive good academic and personal support. In lessons learners who need extra help receive it. Learners' marked work contains a wealth of helpful comment. Pre-course guidance and careers and higher education support are very effective, as is the range of support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Leadership and Management

57. Curriculum management is good. Courses are efficiently managed and well resourced. Teams work well together and are well led. The lesson observation programme provides clear and helpful feedback for improvements. Its link to appraisal has not yet been fully established. The self-assessment process is rigorous and accurate. It makes good use of achievement data but does not use value added information effectively. Effective action has been taken to address weaknesses previously identified through self-assessment. More effective action is needed to improve punctuality.

Business management

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

58. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in business management, professional studies, and trade union studies. Nearly 750 full-time learners study business management courses, 260 part-time learners study on professional courses and 320 part-time learners on trade union courses. Most provision is at level 3. Full-time level 1 provision is delivered through the college foundation studies programme.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on most GCE courses
- good pass rates on trade union studies courses
- effective development of learners' research and study skills
- good management of trade union provision

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low success rates on many professional courses
- insufficient attention in the teaching on meeting individual needs
- unsatisfactory management of professional studies provision
- insufficient focus on teaching and learning in quality assurance procedures

Achievement and standards

59. Success rates are high on most GCE courses. They are high, for example on AS accounting and business studies, and on 'A' level accounting and law. Success rates on many professional courses are declining and are now low. Key skills success rates are low. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. Most learners produce a satisfactory standard of work, and make steady progress. Pass rates on trade union studies are high. These learners show high levels of motivation and enjoyment, and make good progress in developing their computing and negotiation skills.

Quality of provision

60. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners develop effective research and study skills. Valuable academic support is given to learners outside lessons, and effective use is made of the learning resource centres. The better lessons are well-structured, use a wide range of teaching activities to engage student interest and develop critical thinking skills. For example, in a lesson on issues affecting criminal sentencing, the teacher made effective use of group discussions and mini case studies to promote understanding. In some lessons to adults good use is made of learners' work experiences to widen their skill and understanding. The planning and use of activities to meet individual needs is insufficient. In less successful lessons, teachers do not always fully

engage or challenge all learners. Lesson plans rarely show how individual learners' needs will be met. The use of assessment to plan and monitor learners' progress is satisfactory.

61. Courses meet the needs of learners, and offer clear progression routes from foundation to higher levels. The range and take-up of subject enrichment activities on full-time courses is satisfactory, for example, employer visits and field trips on level 3 business courses. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. The tutorial system appropriately supports full-time learners.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The trade union studies programme is well-managed, and has strong links at national and local level. Management of professional studies courses is unsatisfactory. There is no effective strategy to address the declining achievements and enrolments onto the programme. Equipment and accommodation are good at Hillsborough and the Peaks Centre and satisfactory elsewhere. Staff are appropriately qualified. Staff development and appraisal are satisfactory, but there are no formal arrangements for industrial updating. All staff contribute to the self-assessment process. Reports are mainly accurate, but are not sufficiently focused on the quality of teaching and learning.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	02/03	4393	60	55	5	6872	51	53	-2
	03/04	4091	64	59	5	4610	59	57	2
	04/05	3276	59			5671	53		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	41	76	58	18	44	86	48	26
	03/04	67	63	63	0			55	
	04/05	87	69						
NVQs	02/03	163	65	57	8	85	38	63	-25
	03/04	213	46	57	-11	91	40	63	-23
	04/05	148	74			75	59		
Other	02/03	4189	60	55	5	6743	51	53	-1
	03/04	3811	65	59	6	4517	59	57	2
	04/05	2900	58			5592	53		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	02/03	3369	58	50	8	4001	53	50	2
	03/04	3510	62	56	6	3853	56	52	4
	04/05	3090	64			4330	57		
GCSEs	02/03	1671	66	58	8	927	62	54	9
	03/04	1760	67	64	3	945	63	57	6
	04/05	1451	67			1052	64		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	435	65	53	12	47	51	47	4
	03/04	397	64	58	6	37	51	55	-3
	04/05	441	67			20	65		
NVQs	02/03	491	32	41	-9	371	29	54	-25
	03/04	420	47	49	-2	336	40	52	-12
	04/05	365	58			387	44		
Other	02/03	772	55	47	8	2656	52	48	4
	03/04	933	57	52	5	2535	56	51	5
	04/05								

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	02/03	5008	73	58	15	2528	57	50	7
	03/04	4886	70	60	11	2754	50	51	-1
	04/05	4720	72			2681	55		
A/A2 Levels	02/03	1299	88	80	8	250	78	66	11
	03/04	1311	88	83	5	238	71	69	3
	04/05								
AS Levels	02/03	2496	72	57	15	431	59	48	11
	03/04	2262	69	59	11	395	55	49	6
	04/05								
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	902	59	47	12	199	56	46	11
	03/04	592	54	49	5	103	46	43	3
	04/05	973	61			84	46		
NVQs	02/03	61	59	47	12	237	35	46	-11
	03/04	81	64	49	15	381	29	47	-17
	04/05	64	56			328	42		
Other	02/03	250	57	50	7	1411	56	51	6
	03/04	640	53	49	4	1637	51	52	-1
	04/05								

National averages for 2004-05 not available

GCE A level and AS level data for 2004-05 not available in a disaggregated form

“Other” qualification data for 2004-05 not available