



Cornwall College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience
Post-sixteen

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130627

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Cornwall College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Mr J Latham
Address of college:	Tregonissey Road, St Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4DJ
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Chair of governors:	Mr P Rees
Unique reference number:	130627
Name of lead inspector:	Alex Falconer, HMI
Dates of inspection:	8-12 May 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Cornwall College is the largest further education college in England with seven main sites and a range of community venues spread widely across the county. It has an annual budget of over £60 million and in 2004-05 enrolled about 59,000 learners on over 2,500 courses. There are two large campuses at St Austell and Camborne, each with a sixth form centre. The Duchy College provision, mainly land-based, is run from Stoke Climsland in the east and Rosewarne in the west. There is a small provision at Saltash, the Newquay site has a zoological/environmental focus and at Falmouth the emphasis is on marine engineering. The college is a Centre for Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for ICT networking, marine engineering and technology, tourism customer care and food and drink.
2. Cornwall is predominantly a rural county. On the periphery of England, it has suffered from a decline in traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing and mining. The area has the lowest gross value added per capita in England which manifests itself in low wages and low household incomes. Low average income is historically linked to high unemployment and low skills levels. Recently, however, employment has been comparatively high. The local economy is still characterised by an above average dependence on low paying industries and seasonal employment. Jobs in service industries account for a high proportion of all employment.
3. The college runs courses in all 15 of the QCA subject sector areas. Some 89% of the learners are on part-time courses and, overall, adult learners account for 89% of the learners on roll. Courses range from foundation and pre-entry level through to undergraduate and post-graduate level. Just less than half of enrolments in 2004-05 were at level 1, 22% at level 2 and 21% at level 3. 98% of the learners are white British and the remainder come from minority ethnic heritage. The mission of the college is to "create opportunities for all through high quality education and training".

Scope of the inspection

4. 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: health, public services and care; engineering and manufacturing technology; horticulture, animal care and equine; information and communication technology; English and modern foreign languages; and arts, media and publishing.

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	Satisfactory: grade 3
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

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: grade 3
Engineering and manufacturing technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
Horticulture, animal care and equine	Good: grade 2
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
English and modern foreign languages	Satisfactory: grade 3
Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

5. Achievements and standards overall are satisfactory. Success rates for 16 to 18 year olds at all levels have been at the national average for three years. Adult success rates at levels 1 and 2 have declined and were below national averages in 2004-05. Success rates at level 3 are satisfactory. Work-based learners' achievements are satisfactory and are improving. Pass rates and retention are broadly satisfactory for 16 to 18 year olds and adults at level 3. However, both pass rates and retention for adults at levels 1 and 2 were below national averages in 2004-05. In-year retention rates for 2005-06 show improvement across the college and are satisfactory.
6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Although the college has successfully improved the quality of teaching judged poor at the last inspection, the overall standard of teaching has remained the same. The lesson observation system is well organised and assessment practice is good. Learning resources and support for learners with identified learning needs are good. However, the planning of lessons is sometimes weak and the use of information and learning technology (ILT) under-developed. There is insufficient focus on measuring learners' attainment and the setting of meaningful targets.
7. Educational and social inclusion are good. The college responds particularly well to the needs of its communities and employers through strong and well established partnerships. Learners benefit from a comprehensive range of courses, providing very good progression opportunities in most curriculum areas. The college does not analyse the performance of specific groups to identify actions for improvement. Learners aged 14 to 16 enjoy the strong links that the college has established with schools. Learners have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities.
8. Guidance and support for learners are good. All learners benefit from high quality information and welfare services. Arrangements to identify the learning support needs of full-time and substantial part-time learners are good and support is provided promptly. Information and advice about progression into higher education, further training and employment are very good. Individual tutorials for full-time learners are generally good and much appreciated by learners. However, some action plans resulting from tutorial reviews lack specific and measurable targets. In addition some group tutorials lack clear objectives and fail to engage learners.
9. Leadership and management are good. There is strong senior leadership and the college plays a leading role in the social and educational development of Cornwall. Over the past few years the college has raised considerable funds to enable it to substantially improve the quality of the accommodation for

learners. Communication across the organisation is good and there is appropriate delegation of responsibility. Self-assessment, although satisfactory overall, is not evaluative enough at team level and lacks consistency. Retention and achievements have been improved in literacy and numeracy, work-based learning and in engineering. However, success rates across the college have not substantially improved since the last inspection. Financial and resource management are good and governance is strong. The proportion of staff with teaching qualifications remains low and there is limited promotion of cultural and diversity awareness in the curriculum.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

10. The college's capacity to improve is good. The new principal has a very strong commitment to raising standards. There is clear strategic vision and strong governance. In successfully addressing the most significant weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, managers have demonstrated the ability to improve weak provision. Recent decisive actions taken by the college to address weaknesses in engineering clearly demonstrate the growing effectiveness of the quality improvement systems. The college has a good record of attracting funds for capital development and is well positioned to continue improving the quality of accommodation and resources. It also has a growing capacity to increase the effectiveness and impact of its staff development activities. The whole college self-assessment report is evaluative and inspectors agree with the judgements it contains.

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

11. Satisfactory steps have been taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection. All the areas previously identified as unsatisfactory at the last inspection are now satisfactory or better. Communication between campuses is more effective. The college is now fully integrated following the merger. The quality of accommodation and resources has improved significantly. External links have been further strengthened. The college is well placed strategically to play a pivotal role in the growth and regeneration of the region.
12. However, little progress has been made to raise the standard of provision that was previously judged to be satisfactory. Achievements and standards remain broadly average, and there have been no significant overall improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Aspects of quality assurance procedures are cumbersome and not yet fully effective. There is insufficient sharing of good practice between campuses. There has been insufficient progress to achieve qualified teacher status for academic staff.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- strategic leadership
- governance and clerking to the corporation
- courses that meet a wide range of learners' needs
- highly effective community links and engagement with employers, local communities and other education providers
- support for learners
- financial management
- effective use of external funds to develop college accommodation and resources.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- retention and achievement particularly for adult learners at levels 1 and 2
- links between quality assurance and quality improvement
- lesson planning
- ILT in teaching
- target setting for learners
- timeliness of completions for work-based learners
- promotion of cultural awareness and diversity in the curriculum.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

13. Achievements and standards are satisfactory and have kept pace with rising national averages. Success rates for 16 to 18 year olds on long courses at all levels have been at the national average for the past three years. During the same period, success rates on short courses were satisfactory or better. Level 3 long courses for adults have been satisfactory over the past three years. However, adult learners' success rates for long courses at levels 1 and 2 have declined and were below national averages in 2004-05. Work-based learning success rates have improved over the past three years and were satisfactory in 2004-05. Success rates were also satisfactory on accredited adult and community courses in 2004-05. There are significant numbers of adult learners enrolled on short courses of more than five weeks duration and success rates for these courses were below the national average in 2004-05.
14. Pass rates for 16 to 18 year olds on long courses are satisfactory at level 1 and level 2 and have improved over the past three years. GNVQ intermediate pass rates have improved but A* to C grade rates at GCSE remain too variable. Level 3 pass rates are best at A level and for vocational A levels. Pass rates for AS and other long qualifications rates remain steady. Retention rates have been satisfactory for the past three years. Level 1 retention rates have been at the national average for three years and at level 2, the rates improved to the national average in 2004-05. Level 3 retention has been above the national average for three years.
15. Adult pass rates for long courses have declined over the past two years. Whilst the rates at level 1 were broadly satisfactory, those at level 2 and level 3 were below national averages. Pass rates on short courses have also been below national averages but those for adult and community education have been satisfactory. Although success rates for work-based learners have improved over three years, too many learners do not complete the full qualification in the allotted time. Retention on level 1 courses declined in 2004-05 and has been below the national average for three years. At level 2, retention has remained steady but below the national average. Retention has improved at level 3 and was above the national average in both 2003-04 and 2004-05. In-year retention has improved in 2005-06. Current college data show that retention for 16 to 18 year olds and adults is at or above national averages.
16. Standards of learners' work are good in arts, media and performing arts. Although work and progress are good in ICT, the standards reached by some level 3 learners are below expectations. Practical skills are well developed in engineering, work-based learning and in horticulture, animal care and equine. In health, public services and care, learners make satisfactory progress and demonstrate appropriate understanding of relevant theory. The standard of

learners' work is satisfactory in English courses and learners demonstrate good oral skills in modern foreign languages. Learners are enthusiastic about their studies and speak highly of their teachers.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

17. The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college has made significant efforts to address weaknesses in the standards of teaching and learning identified in the previous inspection. However, inspectors did not agree with the college's judgement that the overall quality has significantly improved. In some areas, such as life skills and more recently engineering, there have been clear improvements. However, this is not sustained across the entire provision.
18. The college's lesson observation scheme is well designed and systematic. Useful departmental reports are produced and discussed with curriculum teams. Detailed action plans are carefully monitored. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has been reduced. The role of advisory teachers is well established and teachers value their role. When lessons are graded, learner attainment is not taken into account.
19. Most observed teaching was satisfactory or better. Practical work is well taught. In land-based provision, theory teaching is well linked to practice. Teaching on community courses for adults is good. The teaching of key skills has greatly improved, with an increasing focus on vocational relevance. Most learners are enthusiastic about their work and enjoy learning. Initial assessment and support for learners with identified learning needs are good. In the weaker lessons, there is insufficient planning, poor checking of understanding and a failure to engage learners. The use of ILT is poor. Target setting often lacks precision and does not sufficiently help learners. In work-based engineering provision, the planning of on- and off-the-job training is insufficient. The sharing of good practice across centres is sometimes weak. Resources and accommodation used to support learning are generally good. New classrooms and workshops are of a very high standard.
20. Assessment and internal verification systems have been standardised and are mostly good. Lead internal verifiers are effective. Most external verification reports are good and are followed by action plans which are routinely monitored. On most programmes, assessment is satisfactory. Written feedback is often good and work is quickly returned. In engineering, however, assessment practice is much weaker. In most areas, learners are kept well informed of their progress. Recording progress and achievement in non-accredited learning is not well developed.
21. Learners benefit from a comprehensive and wide range of courses that provides effective progression opportunities in most curriculum areas. Some sites specialise in training which reflects closely the industry and employment opportunities, whilst others provide courses of a more general nature. Many

- learners take advantage of the well organised county-wide transport and residential accommodation arrangements to attend college. The college provides a safe and enjoyable learning atmosphere.
22. Educational and social inclusion is good. The college responds particularly well to the needs of its communities and employers through strong and well established partnerships. It makes very good use of funding from a variety of sources to update learners' skills and to widen participation through many successful projects. A good number of projects successfully recruit learners who have been excluded from education. The Karenza Project provides child care support and learning opportunities for young parents aged 14 to 18 to help them progress to other courses. The college has extensive adult and community learning provision. Learning shops, located specifically in deprived neighbourhoods, provide good ICT training opportunities and use appropriate Learndirect courses to improve learners' literacy and numeracy skills. The college has four CoVEs. Some learning shops provide specific training courses for companies. The college works closely with over 1,500 companies and encourages them to identify their training needs and, where possible, links these to local priorities. Much training focuses on updating ICT skills in rural industries and improving business skills. The number of learners in work-based learning has increased since the last inspection and the college works closely with employers to identify new apprenticeship opportunities. The college does not analyse the performance of specific groups to identify actions for improvement.
23. Learners aged 14 to 16 benefit from strong links that the college has established with schools. Through well managed partnership work, the college has ensured that pupils receive good information about college-based courses and make informed choices. Over 1,300 pupils participate through a range of vocational courses which complements their programmes at school.
24. Learners have opportunities to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities, including events that promote learners' general health and wellbeing and encourage them to make a positive contribution to their community. They are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and work is in progress to promote healthier food choices. The college does not monitor learners' attendance at these activities and the level of activity differs on each site. Most learners enjoy subject-based enrichment opportunities which include guest speakers and visits.
25. Guidance and support for learners are good. All learners benefit from high quality information and welfare services including pre-course information, finance, accommodation, health, travel, and assistance with child care across all sites. They receive an informative student handbook which is also easily accessible on the intranet. Initial advice and guidance are very effective and the induction programme successfully helps learners settle into their studies quickly.

26. Arrangements to identify the learning support needs of full-time and substantial part-time learners are good and support is provided promptly. The take-up of additional support has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The impact on learners' progress is carefully monitored through the tutorial system. Support is particularly good for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and learners aged 14 to 16. Initiatives to improve punctuality and attendance have been successful and attendance during the inspection was good.
27. Individual tutorials are much appreciated by full-time learners. Tutorial procedures and documentation have been improved. A standard scheme of work exists for tutorials which contains important activities to be completed at specific times of the year. The college has established its own comprehensive training programme for new personal tutors. Some action plans for tutorial reviews, however, lack specific and measurable targets and some group tutorials lack clear objectives and fail to engage learners. Tutorial support for part-time learners takes place mainly in lessons. There is regular reporting of learners' progress to parents and carers of learners aged 16 to 18.
28. Information and advice about progression into higher education, further training and employment are very good and help learners develop their capacity for economic well being. Many useful and practical guides are available to assist learners in writing personal statements, applying for work and attending interviews. Learners have good access to Connexions advisers.

Leadership and management

Good: grade 2

29. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers have a very clear vision and strategic priorities which are effectively shared with other staff and governors. Valuable links have been developed with regional employers, schools and the local community. The college is highly responsive to change and innovation. Cornwall College plays a leading role in the social and educational development of the region, not only through its further education and training but also through higher education and its contribution to urban and rural regeneration.
30. Over the past two years, the college has successfully raised funds to enable investment of over £20m to improve the standard of accommodation, most notably at the new St. Austell campus. These capital projects have been carefully managed and have added significant value to the quality of the learners' experience.
31. Curriculum management is satisfactory and operational management of work-based learning is good. The focus of curriculum management remains locally based. There is a strong culture of delegation and accountability. All staff are appropriately consulted and involved in decision-making and quality assurance processes. Academic and vocational teams do not always make the best use of opportunities to share good practice between different campuses.

32. Communication across this complex organisation is generally good. Lines of accountability are clear. Accurate and timely information is available to managers. The new principal has introduced highly valued briefings to staff at all campuses. The college produces a regular and informative newsletter that is distributed to all staff. Communication with external stakeholders is very good.
33. The college has committed substantial resources to its quality review procedures with mixed success. Review systems are comprehensive but they are not sufficiently closely linked to delivering quality improvement. The college has successfully raised the quality of provision in areas previously identified as unsatisfactory, for example in work-based learning and in engineering. It has been much less effective at bringing about improvements in areas where performance has been judged as satisfactory, in particular to improve overall achievements and standards, and the quality of teaching and learning. Grades in the college's self-assessment report are very similar to the inspection findings. However, the self-assessment process and documentation are unwieldy and complex. The depth of analysis is insufficiently evaluative at curriculum level and lacks uniformity and consistency.
34. Financial and resource management are good. The college is effectively managing a reduction in core funding for the forthcoming financial year. Accurate financial information and advice is readily available to managers who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. There is no central mechanism within the college for senior managers to monitor staff utilisation accurately. The college provides good value for money.
35. The college has a broad range of staff development and training initiatives in place. It makes good use of staff in roles such as e-champions and advisory teachers. The planning of staff development is not sufficiently closely linked to quality improvement priorities. The college has been slow to ensure that academic staff achieve qualified teacher status. To date, only 60% of established staff have achieved, or are working towards, a recognised teaching qualification.
36. The college's response to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2002 is good. The majority of college buildings are readily accessible by learners with restricted mobility. The college has agreed a set of ethnicity and diversity impact measures with the local LSC. However, it is not fully compliant with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act as it does not monitor the performance of learners by ethnicity. There is limited promotion of cultural and diversity awareness in the curriculum and insufficient promotion of equality of opportunities to work-based learners. Child protection procedures and those for vulnerable adults are fully in place.
37. Governance in the college is strong and the quality of clerking is high. There is an appropriate skills mix amongst corporation members who are very well

informed about the college. They are regularly consulted and play a key role in reviewing the college's financial position, agreeing the strategic priorities and defining the educational character of the college. Each campus also has a college council. Under the auspices of the corporation, they act as highly effective groups to champion the priorities of each campus and to balance local interests with the wider corporate vision.

Curriculum area inspections

Health, public services and care

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

38. The college offers a range of full-time and part-time courses in health, social care and public services, from foundation to advanced level. Courses include care, early years, counselling, health studies and public services. At the time of the inspection there were 671 full-time learners, most of whom were aged 16 to 18, and 3,864 part-time adult learners. Learners have access to a variety of work placements in nurseries, schools and care homes.

Strengths

- high success rates at level 2 and level 3
- good learner progression into higher level courses, employment and higher education
- productive and effective collaboration with employers.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient emphasis on the planning and evaluation of teaching
- insufficient use of ILT to enhance learning.

Achievements and standards

39. Success rates are high. Level 2 and level 3 courses in care, early years, health studies and public services are significantly above the national average. Retention rates in NVQ early years, first diploma in public services and national diploma in health studies have improved over the years 2002 to 2005 and are now at the national average. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Their portfolios demonstrate an appropriate understanding of relevant theoretical concepts and contain appropriate references to their learning in the workplace. Behaviour and attendance are satisfactory. Progression rates on to employment or on to further and higher education are good.

Quality of provision

40. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners enjoy their lessons and teachers use a wide range of strategies to promote learning. Learners are well prepared for safe working in their placements. However, in a few lessons, insufficient emphasis on planning and evaluation of teaching hinders learning. Teachers do not always make best use of the wide range of learners' experiences that they gain in the work place. The use of ILT is under-developed. In some lessons, opportunities to extend learning through initiating

research based internet activities or through the use of interactive whiteboards are missed. The college's virtual learning environment is under-used.

41. Initial assessment is good. Learners who are identified with additional learning support needs are well supported. Assessment practices are satisfactory. There are effective systems for the monitoring and tracking of learners' progress. Learners receive good support and tutorial provision is satisfactory. Many learners at all levels, including some of those attending the Karenza project for young parents and expectant mothers, progress into other courses, employment or higher education.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Course reviews take place regularly and are used by curriculum managers and their staff to inform future planning. Opportunities for staff development are good and there is a strong emphasis on teaching and learning. Collaboration with employers is good. Curriculum teams have responded well to the needs of the local community. The range of courses, including short courses in first aid and food hygiene, has been significantly increased. Resources for the teaching of practical skills are insufficient on some sites. Quality assurance systems are satisfactory. Inspectors broadly agreed with judgements contained within the self-assessment report.

Animal care, equine and horticulture

Good: grade 2

Context

43. Animal care, equine and horticulture are offered at Rosewarne and Stoke Climsland and at a number of other smaller centres. Progression routes are available from level 1 through to level 3 and higher education. A good range of part-time and adult and community education courses are also available. At the time of inspection, there were 1,357 full- and part-time learners, 795 of whom were over 19. In addition, around 250 learners were taking level 1, 840 level 2 and 270 level 3 qualifications. Some 120 pupils from local schools take part-time courses, mainly in animal care.

Strengths

- high success rates on NVQ level 1 veterinary nursing and national certificate level 2 horse management
- high pass rates on most courses
- good teaching that links theory to practice
- wide range of provision
- good practical resources.

Areas for improvement

- declining success rates on some courses
- insufficient lesson planning
- insufficient use of ILT in lessons.

Achievements and standards

44. Success rates are good. Retention and pass rates on the level 2 national certificate in horse management and veterinary nursing NVQ level 1 have been 100% over the past two years. The pass rates for most courses in 2004-05 were above national averages, for example, the national diploma and the level 2 general examination in horticulture. Success rates declined in NVQ in land-based operations (horticulture) and the advanced national certificate in animal care in 2004-05. Learners develop good practical skills and have a good understanding of health and safety. They are well behaved and enjoy their studies. Learners with low prior achievement are particularly well motivated and confident. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Quality of provision

45. Teaching is good overall and some teaching is outstanding. A particular strength lies in the way teachers link theory to practice. Practical activities are well planned and successful in most sessions. Teachers use a wide variety of activities to help learners progress and to recognise good industrial practice. Written assessments are of a good standard and internal verification

arrangements appropriate. Written feedback on assessments is helpful and assignments are regularly set and marked promptly.

46. The quality of lesson planning is variable. The best lessons are thoroughly planned and have a variety of learning activities that fully engage all learners. The less satisfactory lessons are characterised by ineffective checking of learning and activities that do not always build on previous knowledge. The use of ILT by most teachers is under-developed although learners are encouraged to use computers for written assignment work.
47. Support and guidance for learners are good. There is a wide range of provision offered in all subject areas. Courses are related to local and regional employment opportunities. Progression routes to higher education are clear. An extensive range of short courses is provided, some in partnership with a national training provider.

Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management are good overall. There is good communication through regular meetings on each campus. Staff have good access to continuous professional development which is securely linked to appraisal. Course management arrangements are effective and tutorial records comprehensive and up-to-date. Staff contribute to the self-assessment process and address actions arising where appropriate.
49. Teachers are vocationally well qualified and either teacher trained or working towards a teaching qualification. The teaching accommodation is generally good and the college estate provides a good range of practical facilities, most of which are of a commercial standard. Animal care learners have good access to a wide range of animal types through strong links with local collections. Very good equine teaching resources support high achievement.

Engineering

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

50. The college offers foundation and levels 1, 2 and 3 engineering programmes for craft and technician learners. These include full-time NVQ and national certificate programmes for 16 to 18 year olds and apprenticeships for work-based learners. Courses are also offered for 14 to 16 year old pupils from local schools. Courses include maintenance; mechanical electrical engineering and welding; marine engineering and boat-building; motor vehicle engineering; land based and agricultural engineering; and computer aided design. At the time of inspection, there were 1,720 engineering learners, 1,045 motor vehicle learners, 202 marine learners, 303 land-based learners and 100 computer aided design learners. In addition there were 274 apprentices and 88 advanced apprentices.

Strengths

- good teaching of practical activities
- productive partnerships with industry that increase opportunities for learners
- good range of courses and progression opportunities
- very good learner support.

Areas for improvement

- inconsistent assessment and internal verification
- insufficient planning of training in the workplace
- weak action planning and target setting
- insufficient use of ILT.

Achievements and standards

51. Success rates for full-time learners and framework achievement for work-based learners are satisfactory. Learners work productively and demonstrate a desire to learn. Practical work is generally of a high quality standard, particularly in welding. Attendance is good. Learners' understanding and observance of health and safety regulations are good.

Quality of provision

52. Teaching is mostly satisfactory and for practical activities is good. Innovative revision activities are used in motor vehicle lessons. The planning of teaching is mostly satisfactory. ILT is well used in some lessons but not in others. At Camborne, for example, two engineering rooms have PCs and data projectors and these are not routinely used for teaching. On- and off-the-job training are insufficiently planned and monitored for work-based learners. Some employers have little knowledge about off-the-job training or requirements for the NVQ. Assessments are inconsistent and good practice is not always shared. Although

observation practice is thorough, some assessment planning does not take account of individual learners' needs. Written feedback is sometimes poor and action plans are not always monitored and followed through. Internal verification does not always identify clearly what is to be sampled.

53. The college is the major provider of engineering training in Cornwall. The range of provision from foundation level to level 3 is good. Some learners undertake additional courses such as performing engineering operations. The links with industry are good. For example, in the motor vehicle section at Camborne, an automotive parts distributor rents premises and trades from the site. Employers regularly approach the college when looking for apprentices or new employees.
54. Individual support for learners is very good. Teachers are fully aware of the educational and social needs of their learners. Support is delivered sensitively. Learners make full use of all available types of support. Liaison officers and assessors make frequent workplace visits. The setting of measurable targets for achievement is weak and learner progress is not always recorded. Employers are not always fully involved in reviews for work-based learners. Many learners have insufficient understanding of equality of opportunity and their understanding is not sufficiently reinforced during reviews.

Leadership and management

55. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers recognised that the area was underperforming and a recovery action plan was implemented. New managers were appointed and staff morale has improved. Improving teaching and learning and the provision for work-based learners are the highest priorities. Staff communication is good and teams meet frequently. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

56. The college offers a wide range of courses for IT practitioners and IT users. Progression routes are available from level 1 to higher education. Full-time provision includes first and national diplomas for IT practitioners; GCSE in applied ICT; GCE AS and A level computing and ICT. Part-time IT user courses include Start IT, level 1 and 2 computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) and the European computer driving licence (ECDL). At levels 2 and 3, part-time IT courses are offered in software development and systems support. The college has a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) in IT systems, networking and maintenance. Currently there are 700 learners aged 16 to 18 and 5,407 adults following courses in the area.

Strengths

- high success rates in AS level IT, national diploma in IT and the two year ECDL
- wide range of courses to meet community and employer needs
- good employer links and partnership arrangements
- good resources for learning.

Areas for improvement

- low retention in Start IT
- some poorly planned teaching that fails to engage learners
- lack of challenging targets.

Achievements and standards

57. Overall achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates have improved and are now high on AS level IT, national diploma for IT practitioners and two year ECDL. Pass rates are high on Start IT, CLAIT and the diploma for IT users' courses. Retention rates for the large number of learners on Start IT courses are low and well below the national average. Attendance and punctuality are good. The standard of learners' work in many lessons is good, but below what would normally be expected for some level 3 learners.

Quality of provision

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. A minority of lessons observed during the inspection were good or better, which is significantly below the proportion of good or better lessons observed by college managers. Learners are generally well motivated and work diligently during lessons and on their assignments. Learning resources are good. These include easily available interactive online materials and the effective use of a virtual learning

environment. In the weaker lessons, there is insufficient planning, poor checking of understanding and a failure to engage the learners. Assessment practice meets the awarding body requirements and there are examples of effective peer assessment in lessons. Learners' needs are appropriately diagnosed and good support is provided.

59. The college provides a good range of courses that meets community and employer needs effectively. A significant number of adult learners study in learning shops located throughout Cornwall or through a well managed distance learning facility. Learners appreciate the flexibility and convenience that this provides. Full-time learners benefit from a good range of additional IT qualifications, visits and speakers from the IT industry.
60. Support and guidance are satisfactory. Learners, especially adults in community venues, receive good individual support for their studies. Learners on full-time courses speak highly of the advice and guidance they get when completing coursework assignments. Some tutorials for 16 to 18 year olds are not effective and learners are seldom set appropriate measurable targets. The progress of adult learners is monitored but there is insufficient use of recorded targets to plan their learning.

Leadership and management

61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A number of good initiatives including staff development, sharing of good practice and investment in resources have been supported by the CoVE. Many good links have been established with employers. The college now provides flexible skills training that meets identified needs. There are successful collaborative partnerships and effective use is made of European Social Fund monies. Inspectors agreed with much of the self-assessment report which includes course and learner reviews. However, the overall quality of teaching and learning and low retention have not improved since the last inspection.

Arts, media and performing arts

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

62. The college offers a wide range of courses in arts, media and performing arts in a number of locations across the county. Progression routes are available from level 1 through to undergraduate studies. In addition, a good number of adult and community education courses run in a range of venues. Full-time provision includes graded music qualifications, GNVQ foundation and intermediate level 2 courses at GCSE together with a wide range of level 3 courses in music, music technology, media, dance, art and design, performing arts and photography. Currently there are over 4,000 enrolments at level 1, 290 at level 2 and 300 at level 3. Around 26% of the enrolments are 16 to 18 year olds. The remainder are adults, a good proportion of whom are on part-time courses in community venues.

Strengths

- high pass rates on a range of courses
- wide range of courses that meet learners' needs and aspirations
- good assessment and tracking of learners' progress
- productive use of individual support in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- declining success rates on the national diplomas in performing arts and graphic design
- insufficient ILT provision in art and performing arts
- poor punctuality which disrupts other learners.

Achievements and standards

63. Overall the standard of learners' achievements is satisfactory. Retention is mostly satisfactory and best on full-time level 3 courses. In 2004-05, pass rates were high on a range of courses, such as the first diploma in performing arts, A level art and design, level 3 dance courses and AS media and photography. The bulk of courses, both full-time and part-time in adult and community education, have satisfactory pass rates that have improved slightly over the past three years. However, pass rates were below national averages in 2004-05 in AS music and music technology, as were success rates in the national diplomas in performing arts and graphic design. Learners on full-time courses and on adult and community education courses make good progress. They show developing levels of confidence and achieve satisfactory standards overall. Although attendance is good, poor punctuality disrupts learning in a significant number of lessons. Progression to further education and higher education is also satisfactory.

Quality of provision

64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lesson plans are detailed and teachers prepare their courses well. In the best lessons, there is a variety of interesting and challenging activities for learners, progress is good and learners are enthusiastic. In other lessons, however, teachers do not follow their lesson plans and there is little variety in teaching style. Aims and objectives of lessons are not always shared with learners. There is little use of ILT to enhance learning and in some subject sessions there is insufficient access to hardware or relevant software. Assessment practices are rigorous and recent changes to the internal verification system have brought about improvement. The quality of written feedback to learners is good and assignments are regularly set and marked. Learners' progress is effectively recorded through ILPs, individual tutorials, target setting meetings and assessment feedback sheets. There is good individual support in lessons which stimulates learners' interest and promotes achievement.

Leadership and management

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report which accurately analysed learners' achievement. Managers and teaching teams have put in place strategies to improve success rates by early intervention, but it is too early to evaluate their impact. The new accommodation at St Austell has considerably improved the environment for learning. Overall, however, resources are satisfactory. Appraisals for staff are up-to-date and continuing professional development opportunities are good. Cross-college and cross-site coordination are not yet well developed. Managers have plans to develop IT resources and integrate skills for life into relevant courses.

English and modern foreign languages

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

66. The college offers a range of courses in English and modern foreign languages. The provision includes advanced courses in English language and literature, English literature and English language along with GCSE English. French, Spanish, German, Italian and Russian are also offered at advanced level. In addition there are GCSE courses in French and Spanish and courses in Japanese, Cornish and English as a foreign language. At the time of inspection, the area had 1,054 learners of whom 717 are adults. Forty learners were enrolled on distance learning programmes in English. Around 330 16 to 18 year old learners take full-time courses during the day.

Strengths

- good development of learners' speaking skills in modern foreign language lessons
- good individual support to meet learners' needs
- wide range of courses to meet local needs.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient sharing of good practice
- inadequate range of subject enrichment
- underdeveloped use of ILT in lessons.

Achievements and standards

67. Learners' achievements are satisfactory. Pass rates have been consistently above the national average on GCE A level English literature and language for the last three years, but declined on AS level French to below the national average in 2004-05. Retention rates are satisfactory but were low on GCSE English and Spanish in 2004-05. The standard of learners' written work is satisfactory and some is good. Learners are keen and enthusiastic to learn and their behaviour is good. In modern foreign languages, there is effective development of the speaking skills of learners with good focus on the use of current vocabulary. Attendance is good.

Quality of provision

68. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory and some of it is good. In the best lessons, teaching is well matched to the needs of each learner. These lessons are well structured and allow learners to build on their previous knowledge and to contribute collaboratively and productively. However, a few English lessons are poorly planned and more able learners dominate. Written work is generally marked quickly and accurately and returned with helpful advice on how it may be improved. Teachers rely heavily on printed learning

materials and insufficient use is made of ILT or audio-visual aids. The range of subject enrichment is inadequate and there are too few trips or visiting speakers to enthuse learners and widen their horizons.

69. Support for learners is good. Teaching staff give freely of their time and learners take advantage of this. Initial assessment is used to identify individual learning needs and on GCE A level courses progress is effectively monitored against target minimum grades. For a minority of learners, target setting is insufficiently detailed and does not clearly identify the improvements needed. Learners aged 16 to 18 benefit from good progression routes.

Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff appreciate that managers are accessible and support learning with new initiatives. There is insufficient sharing of good practice. For example, quality assurance processes are inconsistently applied. At St Austell, there is variable quality of the planning of teaching and learning, and approaches to assessment differ. The application of the lesson observation process on this site has not led to improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. At Camborne, the quality of planning and assessment is good and the course review process involves all staff. Inspectors agreed with the majority of the key findings identified by the college in the self-assessment report.

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	1411	48%	56%	-8%	7257	60%	55%	5%
	03/04	1905	52%	60%	-8%	6873	54%	59%	-5%
	04/05	2147	58%			5531	47%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	39	69%	60%	9%	17	29%	48%	-19%
	03/04	24	88%	65%	23%	8	13%	53%	-41%
	04/05	36	72%			5	60%		
NVQs	02/03	219	42%	56%	-14%	194	30%	57%	-27%
	03/04	227	44%	61%	-17%	230	42%	62%	-16%
	04/05	311	55%			301	46%		
Other	02/03	1133	49%	56%	-7%	7043	61%	55%	6%
	03/04	1654	52%	60%	-8%	6635	54%	59%	-5%
	04/05	1800	59%			5225	47%		

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	2140	51%	52%	-1%	3758	51%	49%	2%
	03/04	2061	52%	56%	-4%	3541	50%	53%	-3%
	04/05	2165	56%			3051	48%		
GCSEs	02/03	291	54%	57%	-3%	1146	48%	55%	-7%
	03/04	317	53%	61%	-8%	801	45%	59%	-14%
	04/05	287	60%			235	45%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	166	57%	59%	-2%	35	60%	53%	7%
	03/04	109	69%	63%	6%	20	40%	56%	-16%
	04/05	178	79%			19	47%		
NVQs	02/03	510	47%	42%	5%	752	54%	49%	5%
	03/04	632	49%	52%	-3%	925	52%	53%	-1%
	04/05	508	55%			1008	52%		
Other	02/03	1139	52%	50%	2%	1822	51%	48%	3%
	03/04	1003	51%	54%	-3%	1793	51%	52%	-1%
	04/05	1192	53%			1789	45%		

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	3943	66%	62%	4%	3061	49%	51%	-2%
	03/04	3544	67%	64%	3%	2645	52%	53%	-1%
	04/05	3150	68%			2498	51%		
A/A2 Levels/	02/03	978	83%	66%	17%	101	61%	53%	8%
	03/04	790	90%	70%	20%	118	75%	54%	21%
	04/05	674	90%			85	64%		
AS level	02/03	1813	65%	66%	-1%	320	45%	53%	-8%
	03/04	1710	64%	70%	-3%	244	46%	54%	-8%
	04/05	1252	67%			124	33%		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	713	58%	50%	8%	145	45%	45%	0%
	03/04	164	57%	52%	5%	45	58%	43%	15%
	04/05	101	60%			73	41%		
NVQs	02/03	65	65%	51%	14%	763	47%	45%	2%
	03/04	52	62%	53%	9%	590	49%	47%	2%
	04/05	87	59%			847	54%		
Other	02/03	363	49%	55%	-6%	1731	49%	54%	-5%
	03/04	828	54%	56%	-2%	1648	52%	56%	-4%
	04/05	1036	55%			1369	51%		

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	375	47	33	69	50
	Advanced	231	36	32	60	50
2004/05	Apprenticeship	241	39	35	52	47
	Advanced	99	25	30	53	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	389	26	16	40	27
	Advanced	224	20	19	34	33
2004/05	Apprenticeship	247	22	20	30	28
	Advanced	129	17	19	36	30

* 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'

Table 5

Outcomes for Employer Training Pilots and National Employer Training Programmes managed by the college 2003-04 to 2005-06

Year	Number of starts in year	Planned learning completed *	Still in learning
2003/04	21	19	0
2004/05	244	173	20
2005/06	455	170	255

* These are key learning objectives identified for each learner following an ETP or NETP programme