

# Lincoln College

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#### **Basic information about the college**

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Name of college:	Lincoln College
Type of college:	General Further Education College
Principal:	John Allen
Address of college:	Monks Road Lincoln LN2 5HQ
Telephone number:	01522 876000
Fax number:	01522 876200
Chair of governors:	Reg Green
Unique reference number:	130762
Name of reporting inspector:	Lindsay Hebditch HMI
Dates of inspection:	13-17 January 2003

## Part A: Summary

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### Information about the college

Lincoln College is a large general further education (FE) college. In July 2002 it changed its name from North Lincolnshire College. The largest of its three sites is close to the city centre. Some 85% of the college's activity takes place here. The other two sites in Gainsborough and Louth are approximately 20 miles from Lincoln. In addition, a programme of courses is taught at 26 venues within the city and in rural towns and villages in the county.

The college draws its students from a wide variety of backgrounds within Lincoln and the surrounding dispersed rural communities. It provides courses in most vocational areas. Enrolments are increasing. In 2001/02, there were over 21,000 enrolments, the equivalent of some 5,000 full-time students. Approximately two thirds of the full-time equivalent students were aged 19 or older. There were also 437 students aged 16 to 18 who were following modern apprenticeships at foundation and advanced levels. Some 37% of students are working at level 1, 30% at level 2 and 22% at level 3. About 2% of students are from minority ethnic groups. Some 54% of students are female.

The college's mission is 'to provide high quality lifelong learning opportunities for all the communities the college serves and in response to local, regional and national need'.

### How effective is the college?

The quality of provision is good in: construction; engineering; business, administration, management and professional; information and communication technology (ICT); hospitality and catering; sports, leisure and tourism; humanities; English and communication; and literacy and numeracy. Provision in science and mathematics, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Work-based learning provision is unsatisfactory in construction, engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and in health and social care. The main strengths and the areas that should be improved are listed below:

#### ***Key strengths***

- welcoming and supportive environment
- strong leadership
- effective strategic planning
- good governance
- good financial management
- excellent specialist resources
- clean, bright and well-maintained premises
- good and improving pass rates on many courses
- well-organised and generally well-taught lessons
- effective commitment to inclusive learning and widening participation
- effective provision for ICT training in community venues and college 'learning shops'
- good range of courses

- good support for students.

### **What should be improved?**

- poor access for students with restricted mobility to some parts of the college
- unsatisfactory organisation and delivery of key skills
- poor management and co-ordination of work-based learning
- poor achievements of students on modern apprenticeship programmes
- use and accuracy of management information
- monitoring the quality of teaching in some curriculum areas
- student take-up of basic skills support.

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

*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: outstanding (grade1), good (2), satisfactory (3), unsatisfactory (4), very weak (5).*

<b>Area</b>	<b>Overall judgements about provision, and comment</b>
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass and retention rates are good in General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) physics and biology. Pass rates in GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and A-level human biology are poor. Most teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make effective use of information technology (IT) to teach GCE A-level chemistry and mathematics. Teaching in a few practical lessons is unsatisfactory.
Construction	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are good on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 courses. Teaching is good. The management of work-based learning is poor. Few learners complete the modern apprenticeship framework successfully. Support for students is good.
Engineering	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are good on most courses. Most teaching is good. Teaching of key skills is ineffective. Resources are good. Pass rates for modern apprentices are poor.
Business, administration, management and professional	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are good on most courses. Pass rates are low on level 3 courses for full-time students. Progression rates are high on accounting courses. Teaching is good on management and professional courses. The development of students' higher-level business skills is poor. Support for students is good.
Information and communication technology	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are good on most courses. Teaching on courses for adults is good. Some teaching on courses for students aged 16 to 18 is ineffective. Provision of ICT courses in the community is good. Management is good. There are insufficient links with industry.
Hospitality and catering	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good on most courses. Progression rates are high. Retention rates are low and declining on some courses. Teaching is good. Resources are very good. Key skills provision is unsatisfactory.
Sport, leisure and tourism	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good on most courses. Retention rates on Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) leisure and recreation are low.

	Teaching is good. There are high standards of assessment and internal verification. Resources are excellent. Leadership and management are good. Achievements in key skills are poor.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There is a wide range of courses. Most teaching is satisfactory. Resources have been improved and are good. There is good support for students. Assessment is poorly managed. Learner reviews for modern apprentices are poor. Students are slow to complete their qualifications.
Health and social care	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates on the certificate and diploma in childcare and education courses are good. Progression rates to employment and higher education (HE) are good. Retention rates are low on some courses. Most teaching is satisfactory. Support for students is good. The management of NVQ courses is poor. Few learners complete the modern apprenticeship framework successfully.
Humanities	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good on access and GCE A-level psychology courses. Pass rates in some GCE A-level subjects are inconsistent and low. Teaching is good, but teachers do not share good practice. Support for students is effective. Leadership of the curriculum area is good.
English and communication	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good in GCE AS and A-level English language and in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) English. Retention rates are unsatisfactory in GCE AS subjects. Teaching is good. Students' work is rigorously assessed. Course planning is excellent. There are insufficient resources to support students' independent learning.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Good.</b> Students' achievements are good. Much teaching is good. Teachers make insufficient use of IT. Procedures for identifying and responding to literacy and numeracy support needs are good. Participation rates in literacy and numeracy support sessions are poor. The management of literacy and numeracy provision is effective.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Students' achievements are satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory. Students develop good practical skills in vocational lessons. Teachers make limited use of individual objectives in lesson planning. The identification and recording of students' progress are insufficient. Support for students is effective.

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

Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors provide a clear strategic direction for the college. The principal and senior management team provides strong leadership that contributes to the high standards of achievement in the college. Pass rates at all levels and for students of all ages have improved, and most are well above the national average. Communication within the college is good. Course management is effective. However, the management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory. Self-assessment is comprehensive, but insufficiently self-critical of the quality of teaching and learning. Staff confidence in the reliability of the college's management information is low. The college has identified the causes of the inaccuracies in the management information that it produces and is striving to correct them. The college provides good value for money and has a careful and prudent approach to financial management.

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

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

The college's arrangements for guidance and support are good. Students are provided with effective and impartial guidance prior to enrolment. All full-time students complete an initial assessment to identify their individual learning support needs. There is a comprehensive range of support services available to students, which include welfare, financial, and counselling services. However, there is inadequate analysis and evaluation of the effectiveness of these services. Individual learning support and tutorial support are good. Students speak highly of the informal help they receive from their teachers. Students receive good advice and guidance on progression to employment or to higher education (HE).

## Students' views of the college

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

### *What students like about the college*

- friendly and adult atmosphere
- wide range of course provision and progression opportunities
- good supportive teachers
- quality of personal support services
- high reputation for helping students to succeed
- extensive enrichment activities.

### *What they feel could be improved*

- canteen facilities
- car parking for students
- access to computers
- toilet facilities in the Abbey and Cathedral buildings.

## Other information

The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC is responsible for ensuring that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post-inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

## Part B: The college as a whole

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

Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better	Graded satisfactory	Graded less than satisfactory
	(grades 1 to 3) %	(grade 4) %	(grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	63	30	7
19+ and WBL*	68	29	3
Learning 16-18	58	37	5
19+ and WBL*	66	32	2

*Key: The range of grades includes: excellent (grade 1), very good (2), good (3), satisfactory (4), unsatisfactory (5), poor (6) and very poor (7).*

*\*work-based learning*

### Achievement and standards

1. Pass rates at all levels and for students of all ages have improved, and most are well above the national average. College data for 2002 indicate that retention rates are also improving and are generally above national average figures.

2. The level of students' attainment in many lessons is satisfactory and sometimes good. Students in English, engineering, and in hospitality and catering demonstrate good attainment. Students work effectively in groups. They work well when undertaking practical activities, producing work of a high standard and with due regard to health and safety. In most lessons, students' written work is at the level expected for their courses. Students' written explanations are clear and well presented. The college recognises and celebrates students' achievements through a variety of awards events that cater for students from entry level to those following high level courses.

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

3. The college offers a wide range of subjects and courses for full-time students aged 16 to 18. At the time of the inspection, 26% of the 4,436 full-time students were following courses at level 3, 39% at level 2, and 22% at level 1.

4. In 2001, the most recent year for which complete data are available, pass rates on level 3 courses were in line with the average for general FE colleges. The college's overall pass rate at GCE A level

of 78% was slightly above the national average of 75% for similar colleges. Pass rates have been consistently above the national average in GCE A-level psychology, physics, English language, and sport and physical education. However, the percentage of students who achieve grades A to C is low in most GCE A-level subjects. Pass rates have been below average in business studies, accounting, law, and human biology. The college's analysis of data, which compares the students' level of performance at GCE A level with that at GCSE, shows that overall students' achievements are consistent with their GCSE point scores when they enter the college. In 2002, using this calculation, some subjects achieved higher than predicted results, for example, in GCE A-level geography and physics. Subjects with lower than predicted results included GCE A-level chemistry and business studies. The college also offers seven national diplomas and three AVCEs at level 3. Pass rates on these general vocational courses are excellent, at 100% and 98%. Retention rates on most academic and general vocational level 3 courses have been similar to national averages for general FE colleges in the years 1999 to 2001.

5. At level 2, most students follow courses leading to NVQ. In 2002, a high number of students completed the qualification successfully in the prescribed time. The success rate on carpentry and joinery, brickwork, and food preparation and cooking was 100%. Retention rates on level 2 courses are good. At level 1, most students follow courses leading to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) and NVQs. Pass rates on these courses are good. However, the retention rate for level 1 students is below the national average. Many students who follow vocational courses are also entered for qualifications in key skills. Although pass rates in key skills qualifications have improved, they remain low.

### **Adult learners**

6. Some 85% of the college's students are adults. They perform well. Pass rates in 2001 place the college in the top quartile of general FE colleges at levels 2, 3, and higher level, and above the national average at level 1. Pass rates on NVQ qualifications are excellent. Of the 3,460 students who completed an NVQ in 2002, 91% gained the qualification. Large numbers of students follow courses in ICT. Pass rates are good, but relatively few students progress to higher level courses. Retention rates on courses specifically designed for adults are generally higher than national averages for general FE colleges.

7. Pass and retention rates on modern apprenticeship programmes are poor. Significant numbers of modern apprentices leave their programmes without achieving their full qualification. Of the 83 modern apprentices who completed their programme in 2002, only 19% achieved the complete modern apprenticeship framework. This poor level of achievement is similar to the figure for the Lincolnshire and Rutland LSC. Learners who successfully complete their NVQ often fail to obtain qualifications in key skills. More trainees successfully complete NVQs in the workplace through the college's day release provision than through modern apprenticeship programmes.

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

8. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 263 sessions. They judged that teaching was good or better in 65% of the sessions observed, satisfactory in 30%, and less than satisfactory in 5%. Teaching was best in hospitality and catering. In this curriculum area, 86% of the teaching was judged to be good or better. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in construction, hospitality and catering, sports, leisure and tourism, and English. The highest proportions of unsatisfactory teaching were in health and social care and hairdressing and beauty therapy, where 8.3% of teaching was unsatisfactory. The standard of teaching and learning was better on programmes for adult students than on those for students aged 16 to 18. On many courses, however, there was a mixture of these two groups of students.

9. Teachers have established good working relationships with their students. The best lessons are



well planned and set in the context of well-designed schemes of work. In humanities, teachers inspire their students with well-structured tasks and careful questioning. Much teaching is imaginative and students are involved in a range of appropriate activities, including role-play, case studies, and individual presentations. In some vocational areas of learning, the theory lessons are closely linked to practical lessons so that they complement each other. This is particularly evident in engineering, and in hospitality and catering. However, many lessons in hairdressing and beauty therapy fail to demonstrate the relevance of the work and students become inattentive. Some teachers have not adjusted their methods to take account of larger classes and expect all students to undertake identical tasks regardless of their potential or ability.

10. Full-time classes contain students of differing abilities. Some students have few GCSE grade A\* to C passes. Most teachers provide work that takes account of the range of ability of students. Lessons for adults in the college's ICT 'learning shops' and community venues cater successfully for students with different levels of knowledge and confidence with computers. However, in some lessons in health and social care and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, teachers use a narrow range of teaching methods that do not encourage the participation of all students.

11. The overall attendance rate has increased since the last inspection. In the lessons observed, the attendance rate of 79% was the same as the average observed in inspections in general FE colleges in 2002. The highest attendance rate observed was in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at 87% and the lowest in hairdressing and beauty therapy at 70%.

12. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Most hold a teaching qualification for the specialism they teach. A good number of staff have received training in ICT, which they have put to good use in their teaching. The college has made significant improvements to its accommodation since the last inspection. For example, it took over the hairdressing and beauty therapy provision from a local university in August 2002. It made an immediate investment in the accommodation and specialist resources for the area of learning and now provides industry standard equipment within an attractive working environment. Accommodation is well maintained and clean. Most rooms are suitable for the lessons that take place in them. However, a few rooms, for example, the training kitchen at Hill House, have become overcrowded. Access to some areas of the college is difficult for students with restricted mobility. There are sufficient resources for most subjects and some excellent specialist resources in sport and leisure, hospitality and catering, engineering, and ICT. Work-based learners benefit from the good quality specialist equipment both in the college and at work. The college has improved its stock of computers and other electronic learning resources. The ratio of computers to students is good. Nearly 40% of classrooms contain interactive whiteboards. Library resources are good. Students make effective use of the extensive range of computerised and multi-media learning resources available to them. There is good liaison between ICT and learning resource centre staff and curriculum leaders. ICT technicians provide effective support.

13. The assessment of most students' work is well planned and thorough. In most courses, work is marked accurately and returned promptly to students. However, in construction and ICT, the return of students' work is frequently delayed. Teachers make constructive comments, which help students to identify where improvement is needed. In a few cases, students' work is returned without basic errors in grammar or spelling being corrected.

14. The college has comprehensive internal verification procedures. These are carried out thoroughly on vocational courses, but have been ineffective in assuring the suitability of assessment on work-based learning programmes. Most full-time students are set targets that are based on their previous attainment. If their work falls below expected standards, tutors and students agree action plans for improvement. In most cases, these action plans are monitored effectively.

15. Assessment practices on work-based learning programmes are unsatisfactory. Assessments are poorly planned. Most students receive insufficient assessment. Although teachers carry out assessment when the students attend the college for off-the-job training, students are assessed infrequently at work. The staff who manage work-based learning programmes do not liaise sufficiently with students, employers, or teachers to provide students with appropriate learning goals. Learners have a poor understanding of the requirements of the modern apprenticeship scheme and

the progress they are making towards the award.

16. Senior managers have a clear and detailed understanding of the community that the college serves and have taken appropriate decisions on the range of the college's provision based on this knowledge. There is a wide range of courses that meet local needs. Strategies to increase the number of full-time and part-time students have been effective. Links with partner organisations and community groups are used effectively to inform curriculum development. Market research is also used well in developing the curriculum. An increasing number of courses are taught in community centres and in the college's learning shops, providing learning opportunities for those who are unable, or prefer not, to attend the main college premises. The college works closely with local schools to provide vocational courses for younger students. However, links with employers are insufficiently developed. The college does not have an employers' forum or procedures for involving employers in curriculum development and course evaluation. Work-based learning provision covers most occupational areas in the local economy, although the numbers of students in some areas of learning are low.

17. Students are encouraged to undertake additional qualifications and take part in the extensive enrichment programme. They value these opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills. The college has recently revised its policy for key skills and created additional teaching posts. At the time of the inspection, these measures had yet to have any effect. In many areas of learning, key skills are poorly organised and pass rates are low.

18. The college provides a comprehensive range of pre-entry advice and guidance from well-qualified staff. Staff regularly visit schools to offer advice and information. Open days and taster days provide good opportunities for students to meet and talk with teachers, collect information, and have the range of courses available to them explained. Course guides and prospectuses are attractive and easy to understand.

19. The support and guidance arrangements in the college are good. Student support and guidance are well managed and co-ordinated centrally by the student support services unit. The induction process is not tied to a particular time of year. Students starting courses at any time receive induction by using the college produced CD-ROM on induction followed by a visit from a tutor.

20. All full-time and many part-time students undertake initial assessment and diagnostic testing to determine the level and nature of the additional support which they require. Appropriate help is then offered following the assessment. Additional learning support staff are deployed effectively. They meet with the students regularly to discuss their progress and identify actions to improve their work. However, not all of the students who need additional support choose to receive it.

21. All full-time students have a personal tutor. Students appreciate their tutors and the tutorial programme. Tutors have the responsibility of planning their own tutorials within a prescribed framework. This enables them to match the tutorial programme to the needs of their particular group. Systems to advise students with personal, social, and financial problems are effective. Part-time students receive less formal, but equally effective, guidance from their teachers. There are strong and effective links with local and national support agencies. Students are helped to complete their studies. Learners on work-based learning programmes receive support from the college and their employers, though this has had little impact on improving their performance. The college uses satisfaction surveys to evaluate improvements in student support services, but insufficient use is made of measures to determine the effectiveness of the services, such as their impact on improving retention and pass rates.

22. Leadership and management are good. The college has successfully dealt with most of the weaknesses identified in 1999 in the report by inspectors of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and maintained its strengths. The principal and senior managers provide strong leadership. The college has a clear sense of purpose. The mission and strategic aims are well understood by staff. Communication throughout the college is excellent. Recruitment has increased significantly. Pass rates are good and still improving. The college has recently achieved a Beacon Award for its ICT provision and Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status in construction.

23. The college's planning processes are effective. The current strategic plan for the period 2002/03 is a comprehensive document, which includes clear and simply stated strategic objectives. Operational plans are closely linked to the strategic objectives. Systematic lesson observation linked to extensive staff development and appraisal and surveys of students' views keeps managers well informed on the quality of provision in the curriculum areas. Management at course level is effective. Good and improving standards of student achievement are evident in most areas of learning. Schemes of work are of good quality and have been revised and extended in many areas to support the introduction of new courses. Course teams meet regularly. They give due priority to improving pass and retention rates.

24. Governance is good. Members of the corporation are drawn from a variety of backgrounds in the local community and are appropriately involved in setting the strategic direction of the college. They operate within a sound framework for governance and are well informed on the main issues facing the college. They receive monthly reports from the principal on progress in the implementation of the strategic plan. When governors are appointed, they receive sound guidance on their new role. However, there is no systematic programme of training for governors.

25. Quality assurance procedures have improved since the last inspection and are mostly effective. Course teams are developing a proper understanding and appreciation of arrangements for ensuring quality. Annual course reviews and target setting help to identify where performance is unsatisfactory. Senior managers intervene promptly to ensure that suitable remedial action is taken. Subsequent actions have been largely effective in improving the quality of students' achievements on courses where weaknesses have been identified. Self-assessment is firmly established in the college and involves all staff. The college's self-assessment report is aligned to the structure of the Common Inspection Framework and in many aspects provides an appropriate level of detail. Senior and middle managers undertake an extensive programme of lesson observations to inform judgements on the quality of teaching and learning. However, in some areas of learning, the outcomes of these observations are not used sufficiently in self-assessment or in subsequent action plans. There are significant weaknesses in the management and co-ordination of the college's work-based learning programmes and its arrangements for key skills. The college has recently appointed additional staff to address the weaknesses. However, at the time of the inspection, the new arrangements had yet to have any impact on the poor achievements on modern apprenticeship programmes and in key skills.

26. The well-managed staff appraisal system contributes directly to the identification of staff development needs. The college invests substantially in professional development. Staff have good opportunities to further develop their teaching skills and acquire additional professional qualifications. The college has recently introduced an imaginative scheme that rewards teachers with additional pay increments if they achieve qualifications that are essential to the college in achieving its mission.

27. The college has experienced significant problems with its management information system. At the time of the inspection, it did not have a complete and accurate record of students' achievements in 2002. The legacy of inaccurate information has led to confusion amongst teachers. Some of them use data they have produced themselves rather than the college's management information. The college knows this, and is taking appropriate measures to improve the accuracy and reliability of its data. It has made a substantial investment in a new management information system.

28. The college actively promotes equality of opportunity for students and staff and identifies the importance of support for individual students in ensuring equality of opportunity. Many staff in student services have either achieved or are undertaking qualifications in areas including deaf and disability awareness, basic skills, and learning support development. The college has recently revised and extended its equal opportunities policies and established a committee to oversee their implementation. It has also produced a race equality policy and action plan, and has made good progress towards its implementation. An effective response has been made to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs Disability Discrimination Act. Twelve staff received training on the requirements of the act and used this knowledge to run training events with all college staff and governors. Detailed information is produced on students' performance in relation to gender, ethnicity, age, and learning needs. The information is analysed carefully and conclusions are regularly

reported to governors. The college has strong and productive links and partnerships with schools and community organisations. It is active in developing new partnerships and in addressing the needs of adult learners in the smaller rural communities in its hinterland. There is effective liaison with schools on matters of common interest and concern, such as developing programmes for disaffected pupils aged 14 to 16.

29. The college is in a strong financial position. It has significant cash reserves, which it is using to provide the majority of funding for an ambitious programme to improve its buildings and facilities. An operational surplus is projected for the next three years, with no increase in the current modest levels of borrowing. Staff are effectively and efficiently deployed. Staff costs are below the average for the sector. Staff absence is low. Detailed course costing procedure assures the financial viability of proposed new courses. The college provides good value for money.

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

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### **Science and mathematics**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass and retention rates in GCE A-level physics and biology in 2002
- effective use of IT in teaching GCE A-level chemistry and physics
- good teaching materials
- strong emphasis on the development of a professional approach to science.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- consistently low pass rates in GCE AS and A-level human biology
- unsatisfactory teaching in a few practical lessons
- failure in many lessons to meet individual needs
- insufficient impact of quality assurance procedures.

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

30. The college offers courses in science and mathematics that are well suited to the needs of students. These include GCE AS and A-level courses in biology, human biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. GCSE mathematics is offered at all of the college's campuses and in community venues. There is also an access to science course for adult students. Enrolments are increasing. Some 325 students are enrolled on GCE AS and A-level courses. Some 90% of students are full time.

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

31. Pass and retention rates on many GCE AS and A-level courses have improved and are now mostly satisfactory. In 2002, the pass and retention rates for GCE A-level physics and biology were good. However, the pass rates in GCE AS and A-level human biology have been well below the

national average for each of the three years to 2002. In GCSE mathematics, adult students are more successful than students aged 16 to 18. In 2002, 58% of adult students achieved a grade C or better, compared with only 20% of students aged 16 to 18. The college is currently reviewing the teaching of GCSE mathematics for these younger students. The attainment of most students is satisfactory. Students' written work is generally good and at an appropriate level. Physics students demonstrate good graph plotting skills. Biology students use microscopes effectively in identification and produce accurate drawings of what they see.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2000 to 2002***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	134	76	74
		% retention	72	72	55
		% pass rate	81	64	83
GCE A-level human biology	3	No. of starts	39	41	18
		% retention	67	63	78
		% pass rate	31	56	64
GCE A-level physics	3	No. of starts	9	7	12
		% retention	33	29	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GCE AS chemistry	3	No. of starts	*	17	16
		% retention	*	76	75
		% pass rate	*	38	83
GCE AS human biology	3	No. of starts	*	50	58
		% retention	*	90	81
		% pass rate	*	47	57
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts	12	12	9
		% retention	58	75	89
		% pass rate	50	75	100

Source: ISR (2000,2001) and college (2002)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

32. In most lessons, teaching and learning are satisfactory or better. There is a strong emphasis on the development of a professional approach to science. Students are taught the importance of proper citation protocols when writing reports. Teachers stress the importance of writing experimental reports correctly and in a style that would ensure that other scientists could reproduce their findings. In many practical lessons, teachers emphasise the relevance of safety protocols and explain clearly the need for them. In a lesson on soil sampling, students were aware that they needed to wear rubber gloves to safeguard against possible tetanus contamination of the sample. Some practical lessons are unsatisfactory because they have aims and objectives that are inappropriate. Students do not understand the relevance of the work or the scientific principles that it is intended to illustrate. In these lessons, although students are increasing their skills in using equipment correctly, many of the scientific benefits are lost.

33. Teachers make effective use of IT in GCE A-level chemistry and mathematics lessons. In some

chemistry lessons, the teachers use powerpoint software to make presentations that are then posted on to the college's intranet so that students can refer to them at a later date. In one lesson, students used computers in the chemistry laboratory to research a project on copper extraction. There are six computer workstations in the GCE A-level mathematics room that run mathematical practice software. However, this software is not available on the computers in the learning resource centre and students cannot use it as frequently as they would like. Teachers produce good materials to support learning. Handouts and worksheets are used effectively. Many have gaps for students to fill in for themselves. This makes the handouts a useful aid to revision. The GCSE mathematics workshop has a wide range of workbooks that help students to practice and improve their mathematical skills.

34. The individual needs of students are not always met. In some lessons, teachers do not adapt their styles of teaching to meet the needs of students of different ability. There is too much reliance on teacher-led question and answer styles of teaching, and too few checks on students' understanding. Few of the schemes of work and lesson plans include details of how the wide range of abilities in classes can be accommodated. Students are well supported in their studies. Teachers monitor their progress carefully and hold regular meetings with personal tutors to discuss whether individual targets are being met. Teachers mark work carefully and provide students with appropriate advice on how they might improve.

35. Staff are well qualified in the subjects they teach. Science accommodation is satisfactory. Science is taught in three recently-refurbished laboratories on a single floor at the main site. Two of the rooms contain computer workstations that are linked to the Internet. The rooms have a strong subject identity, but there are no examples of students' work on display. The chemistry laboratory has a small private study area with relevant texts and reference books. There is sufficient specialist equipment to meet the needs of the courses offered. The library and learning resource centre are well stocked with resources for science and mathematics students. Technician support is effective.

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

36. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The current manager has been in post since May 2002, following a major revision of the college's curriculum management structure. Staff meet regularly to discuss students' progress and how pass and retention rates can be improved. However, quality assurance procedures have yet to have any significant impact. Action plans do not address all of the weaknesses identified by staff in their self-assessment; for example, in improving the quality of teaching in mixed ability classes. Monitoring of progress against the plans is ineffective. Targets are not routinely set for individual subjects.

### **Construction**

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

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on NVQ level 2 programmes
- high levels of achievement in skills competitions
- high enrolment and good pass rates on additional qualifications in electrical installation
- good teaching
- good support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- some gaps in provision
- poor achievement on work-based learning programmes
- unsatisfactory management of work-based learning.

### **Scope of provision**

37. The college provides a range of construction programmes leading to qualifications at NVQ levels 1 to 3 in brickwork, wood occupations, painting and decorating, electrical installation, and plumbing, the national certificate and national diploma in building studies, the national certificate in civil engineering studies and the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) site management education and training scheme certificate and diploma. A number of short courses for industry, particularly in electrical installation, plumbing, and gas testing are also offered. There are some gaps in the range of provision. There are no full-time courses in plumbing and electrical installation, or craft courses available in the evening. There are long waiting lists to join courses in brickwork and plumbing. At the time of inspection, there were 717 learners, of which 131 are on the college's own work-based learning programmes. Half the learners are aged 16 to 18, and 62% attend part time. The college provides sub-contracted off-the-job training and assessment in construction crafts for 184 learners from two national training providers.

### **Achievement and standards**

38. Achievements in NVQ level 2 painting and decorating, trowel occupations, and carpentry and joinery have improved over the three years to 2002 and are good. Retention rates on NVQ level 1 programmes have declined and are below the national average. Retention rates on national certificate courses are good. However, the pass rate on the national certificate in civil engineering studies is below the national average. Pass rates and retention rates on the CIOB site management certificate and diploma programmes are very good.

39. Achievement on work-based learning programmes is poor. Between 1998 and 2000, there were 214 enrolments on these programmes, of which 39 are still in training. Almost 25% of work-based learners have exceeded their planned period of training. Three learners have been on the programme for over five years. Of the 175 learners who left the programme, only 34% achieved their NVQ qualification. Of the 55 learners who left modern apprenticeship programmes, only 24% achieved their NVQ and 4% completed the full framework, including key skills.

40. There is good support and encouragement for learners to participate in regional and national skills competitions. Achievement in these competitions is good, for example, a painting and decorating student achieved fourth place at the 2001 World Skill Olympics held in South Korea. Electrical installation students take up to three industry-recognised additional qualifications. Enrolments are good, and over 50% of students achieve at least one of these qualifications.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ trowel occupations	1	No. of starts	16	59	10
		% retention	88	**	50
		% pass rate	85	94	100
NVQ painting and decorating	2	No. of starts	18	19	40
		% retention	**	**	90
		% pass rate	56	100	100
NVQ bricklaying	2	No. of starts	40	33	28
		% retention	**	**	89
		% pass rate	86	100	100

NVQ carpentry and joinery	2	No. of starts	42	29	34
		% retention	**	**	97
		% pass rate	94	100	100
National certificate in civil engineering	3	No. of starts	14	19	18
		% retention	**	**	78
		% pass rate	83	92	80

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

\*\* unreliable data

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

41. Construction teaching is good. Students enjoy attending the college and are highly motivated. Practical sessions are particularly successful. Much practical work is of a good industry standard. Teachers relate their lessons to current industry practice and learners' experience. Students use learning packs to gain knowledge of topics before moving into the workshop area to complete their related practical training. Adult students particularly welcome this approach. Workshops are well staffed, well equipped with modern tools, and have an adequate supply of materials for practical work. There is an appropriate emphasis on health and safety and the maintenance of a safe and tidy work area. Most trade occupations have well-equipped resource centres, which contain a range of reference materials to support independent learning. However, some learners struggle to use the study packs because of the levels of literacy and comprehension skills required, whilst others would prefer more formal teaching. Modern apprentices receive effective off-the-job training.

42. Students are well supported by tutors, training co-ordinators, and employers. One employer has made arrangements to second three modern apprentices to another firm to facilitate the completion of their NVQ qualification. All students have individual tutorial sessions twice each term in which action plans are reviewed and monitored. The action plans contain detailed targets and, together with tracking sheets, allow learners to review their progress. Assessment decisions are clear and tutors give appropriate guidance to students on how they can improve their performance. Tutors identify and provide help to those learners who require additional support. The quality of initial assessment varies significantly between different trade occupations. Work-based learners in plumbing and electrical installation take an initial assessment prior to being accepted on to the programme. For other trades, there is no initial assessment or vocationally specific practical aptitude testing. Where learners are referred from Connexions, as potential modern apprentices, they are given a basic skills initial assessment to determine their suitability for the apprenticeship. The majority of learners start their programmes in September. Learners who wish to start at other times must wait until there is sufficient space in the workshop. One young learner had to wait nearly six months to start his apprenticeship.

### **Leadership and management**

43. The leadership and management of construction within the college are good. The college has recently been granted CoVE status for construction and has started to use the additional funding this provides to increase workshop provision. Course teams meet regularly and monitor the progress they are making towards meeting the targets contained in the departmental action plan. However, little use is made of numerical targets for retention and achievement. There is good liaison with local industry to identify their needs. For example, the introduction of professional updating programmes in electrical installation and plumbing. The college has introduced 'on site assessment and training', a Construction Industry Training Board initiative which allows experienced workers to gain accreditation of their competence. The management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient co-ordination of training between the business development unit and the construction department. Reviews for work-based learners are poor. Training co-ordinators do not attend course team meetings. Employers and learners do not automatically receive copies of the reviews. Targets



are seldom set.

## **Engineering**

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

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### **Strengths**

- very good retention rates on most courses
- good pass rates on most courses
- good teaching
- well-resourced provision.

### **Weaknesses**

- underdeveloped key skills
- poor pass and retention rates on modern apprenticeship programmes
- inadequate work-based assessment and internal verification.

### **Scope of provision**

44. The three principal programme areas of mechanical engineering, electrical and electronic engineering, and transport (motor vehicle) studies are situated in, and managed by, the school of technology. There are currently 106 learners on full-time engineering courses and 533 learners on part-time and evening-only craft and technician courses. Provision extends from level 1 to level 4. There are high levels of recruitment for specialist short courses in computer-aided design and optical fibre installation and testing. The college's business development unit manages the work-based training programme. There are 300 work-based learners on NVQ and foundation and advanced level modern apprenticeship programmes. Foundation modern apprentices and NVQ level 2 learners attend the college full time whilst advanced modern apprentices and NVQ level 3 learners attend the college one day each week for practical skills training.

### **Achievement and standards**

45. Retention rates on engineering courses are very good. Retention rates on national certificate and diploma courses have increased over the three years to 2002 to well above the national average. Pass rates for engineering courses are good. In 2002, the pass rates on the motor vehicle progression award and mechanical production competences courses were well above the national average at 94% and 82%. The pass rate on the fibre optics short courses has been at 100% for each of the last three years. However, the pass rate on the NVQ level 2 vehicle mechanical and electronic systems course is poor. Student attendance at the lessons observed was satisfactory at 81%. In mechanical workshops, learners attain a good standard of practical skills in turning, milling and fitting operations.

46. Pass and retention rates for modern apprentices are poor. For advanced modern apprentices who started their programme in 1998/99, the pass rate 9% and the retention rate was 17%. Retention rates for foundation modern apprentices are also low at 20% for 1998/99 and 31% for 1999/2000. No foundation modern apprentices have been retained or achieved frameworks from the 2000/01 or 2001/02 intakes.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
City and Guilds 6956 motor vehicle progression award	1	No. of starts	18	21	28
		% retention	82	84	74
		% pass rate	93	**	94
City and Guilds 3466 fibre optics short	2	No. of starts	208	301	155
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100
City and Guilds 2280-02 mechanical production competences	2	No. of starts	15	34	22
		% retention	87	97	91
		% pass rate	78	**	82
NVQ vehicle, mechanical and electronic systems	2	No. of starts	56	9	27
		% retention	73	56	90
		% pass rate	32	**	56
National certificate in engineering	3	No. of starts	81	50	42
		% retention	80	88	90
		% pass rate	82	100	57
National diploma in engineering	3	No. of starts	10	16	26
		% retention	56	73	84
		% pass rate	100	100	75

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

\*\* unreliable data

***Quality of education and training***

47. Teaching in engineering is good. Lessons are well planned and contain a variety of approaches to make learning interesting. Teachers give clear explanations and make good use of a data projector to display complex images. One good lesson began with a clear explanation from the teacher on starter motor testing. Students then worked in pairs to strip down a motor, examine it, identify its characteristics and faults, and finally reassemble it. The teacher visited each group in turn and asked appropriate questions to check understanding. Students learned well. An excellent lecture on the failure of materials involved a simple bending test and the examination of failed engineering components. Students then used the Internet to research information on other components. Teachers produce good materials to help students learn. The best lessons utilise a wide range of teaching aids including gapped handouts, technical manuals and actual engineering components. Modern apprentices receive effective off-the-job training.

48. Assessment of courses in the college is thorough. In mechanical workshops, work is assessed as set tasks are completed. Teachers keep comprehensive records of assessment. Students' progress is clearly displayed on wall charts in the workshop, enabling them to track the progress they are making. Assessment and internal verification practices in work-based learning are inadequate. Assessors make insufficient visits to learners in the workplace. Some learners have not been visited for over five months. Assessment plans are poorly prepared. Second-year motor vehicle apprentices have not yet been visited by an internal verifier and are unaware of the key skills requirement for successful completion of the modern apprenticeship framework. External verifier reports highlight the need to address the unacceptable assessor-to-learner ratio for motor vehicle

work-based qualifications. The procedures for developing learners' key skills are underdeveloped. Key skills are not integrated with learners' vocational programmes. There are many lost opportunities for collecting key skills evidence in the workplace. Learners do not see the relevance of key skills to their vocational programme.

49. Students receive good support from their teachers and tutors. Initial guidance is thorough and discussions at interviews allow prospective learners to make an informed choice of course. Full-time students and work-based learners are assessed during induction in literacy and numeracy. As a result of these assessments, additional learning support is offered where it is needed. The additional support is effective in helping students to achieve their learning goals.

50. Teachers are appropriately qualified. Many have extensive industrial experience. Accommodation is good. Classrooms provide a pleasant learning environment and are well equipped with teaching aids. The engineering areas within the school of technology are well resourced, with a wide range of equipment, most of which is of good quality. The computer numerical control area is of industry standard and the computer-aided design system is up to date. A dedicated computer room contains ten workstations of industry standard. The large electronics servicing area is enhanced by the provision of a computer-based training system. Some equipment in the mechanical workshop is dated, but adequate for learning basic engineering competences. The resources in the college and work placements are used effectively to develop a wide range of engineering skills for modern apprentices. Learners are encouraged to gain experience on machinery and equipment such as computer aided design and manufacturing systems and sophisticated electronic testing and diagnostic equipment.

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

51. Leadership and management are good. There is an effective line management structure and good internal communications, supported by regular departmental and programme meetings. Teachers monitor the performance of their courses closely and respond quickly when performance falls below expectations. Resources are deployed effectively to support the teaching of the curriculum. However, overall room utilisation is low. There is positive action to keep the curriculum offered up to date. The management of work-based learning programmes is unsatisfactory. Training managers do not have ready access to current and accurate data on the progress of individual work-based learners or internal and external verifier reports

## **Business, administration, management and professional**

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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass and retention rates on most courses
- good teaching on management and professional courses
- high progression rates on accounting courses
- good support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates on level 3 courses for full-time students
- poor development of students' higher level business skills.

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

52. The college offers full-time courses at GCE AS and A-level in business studies and accounts and AVCE in business. Some 134 students currently follow these courses, most of them are aged 16 to 18. No full-time business studies courses are offered at foundation and intermediate levels. Management and professional courses are available to part-time students in the day and evening. They include management at levels 3, 4, and 5, accounting at levels 1 to 4, and a range of personnel and legal executive qualifications. Part-time students can also follow a wide range of courses in office skills or secretarial courses in word-processing, shorthand, and book-keeping. There are currently 640 part-time students. The college also makes provision for 39 modern apprentices in accounts and administration and 107 work-based learners in management and administration.

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

53. There are good pass and retention rates on most courses. Retention rates are generally at or above the national average and have improved significantly in 2002 on part-time level 1 and 2 courses. Pass rates have been consistently good in the wide range of accounting and management courses, including Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) at NVQ levels 2, 3, and 4, and on the certificate in management and certificate in personnel practice. Pass rates are also good on business administration level 2 and computerised accounting level 1 courses. However, pass rates have been persistently low on level 3 courses for full-time students including GCE AS and A-level business studies and accounts and on the AVCE course. There are high progression rates on accounting courses. Of the 43 students who are currently following the NVQ level 4 business administration programme, 20 started at NVQ level 2 and 17 at level 3. Students produce a good standard of work. Written work is usually well presented. Students demonstrate good use of IT in their assignments and presentations. However, some full-time students lack the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the demands of their course.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in business, administration, management and professional, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Computerised accounts	1	No. of starts	35	43	26
		% retention	89	81	97
		% pass rate	90	96	95
NVQ accounting AAT foundation	2	No. of starts	30	45	37
		% retention	83	80	86
		% pass rate	80	90	91
NVQ business administration	2	No. of starts	7	54	27
		% retention	86	76	86
		% pass rate	100	84	86
AVCE business	3	No. of starts	*	63	78
		% retention	*	75	69
		% pass rate	*	100	64
GCE A-level business	3	No. of starts	12	23	14
		% retention	100	78	93
		% pass rate	64	46	69
Certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	26	31	39
		% retention	88	97	92
		% pass rate	95	100	92
NVQ accounting AAT	3	No. of starts	57	64	50

intermediate		% retention	82	86	84
		% pass rate	71	72	95
Certificate in management	4	No. of starts	20	13	17
		% retention	90	85	82
		% pass rate	100	73	86

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

\* course not running

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

54. Most teaching is good or better. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons carefully. In the best lessons, teachers use a range of different learning activities to sustain students' interest, and to link business theory to practice. In one successful business studies lesson, the teacher presented theories of national cultural differences and their impact upon business practice. Students discussed and analysed these theories in class, and then began to research the marketing issues surrounding the strategies of local companies trying to sell their products in specific European markets. In a professional studies lesson on recruitment and selection, the teacher made imaginative use of prepared job applications to introduce a recruitment short-listing exercise. Students examined the applications in small groups and demonstrated good skills in applying selection criteria and presenting their conclusions to the whole class. In less successful lessons, students are passive, spend too much time in note taking, and have few opportunities to develop the higher level business skills of analysis and critical evaluation. In these lessons, the attainment of students is unsatisfactory.

55. Assessment is rigorous. Work is set regularly and marked carefully. Judgements on assessment are fair, soundly based, and in most cases accompanied by helpful feedback. Students are well supported by their teachers and tutors. Course information is written in simple English and provides helpful information and guidance. Teachers give students good pre-course advice and help to ensure that they are enrolled on the appropriate level of course. Arrangements for induction are comprehensive. Teachers and tutors work together effectively to monitor students' progress. Targets are set for full-time students and progress towards achieving these targets is monitored regularly and thoroughly. Effective arrangements are in place to support students at risk of not completing their course.

56. Teachers are generally well qualified, but some have little recent industrial or commercial experience. Part-time teachers who are employed in the sector provide students with good knowledge of current business practice. Classroom accommodation and library resources at Lincoln and Gainsborough are good, with a satisfactory range of books, periodicals, and CD-ROMs. Students have access to a good standard of computer equipment and software, but business administration students lack access to a model office.

### **Leadership and management**

57. Leadership and management are good. Managers identify clear objectives, targets, and values, which staff share and support. Teachers meet regularly to plan and develop courses, to discuss what does and does not work, and to review the progress of students. Courses are well organised and managed. Targets are set for enrolment attendance, retention, and pass rates. The value of course reviews is hindered by the lack of sufficiently reliable data on students' retention and pass rates. Action plans do not always contain measurable targets.

### **Information and communication technology**

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

### **Strengths**

- good pass and retention rates on most courses
- good teaching on courses for adults
- good provision of ICT courses in community venues
- well-managed ICT learning shops.

### **Weaknesses**

- some ineffective teaching in lessons for students aged 16 to 18
- insufficient links with industry
- insufficient assessment feedback for some students.

### **Scope of provision**

58. The college offers a broad range of part-time courses. Some 2,038 students follow these courses, 85% of them aged 19 or over. On the central Lincoln campus, the main courses are computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), European computer driving licence (ECDL) and integrated business technology (IBT). The college also offers a range of part-time courses in a number of community centres and IT learning shops. The learning shops are based at Lincoln, Gainsborough and Louth and provide courses leading to City and Guilds 7262 e-Quals level 2 IT qualifications. At the present time, the highest course available in the learning shops is at level 2. Distance learning courses are provided for Royal Air Force (RAF) personnel and other students. College staff make regular visits to training centres at RAF camps to provide short taught elements and pre-assessment sessions, to conduct reviews, and to assess work. When air personnel are posted away for a period of time, they continue with their studies and keep in monthly contact with their tutor by e-mail. The college also provides full-time courses leading to GNVQ foundation and intermediate qualifications and the AVCE ICT. Some 75 students follow these courses; most of them are aged 16 to 18.

### **Achievement and standards**

59. Pass and retention rates are good. The City and Guilds 7261 certificate course has maintained a pass rate that is well above the national average for each of the three years to 2002. The college enters more than 2,000 students each year for this qualification. Most full-time courses have high pass rates. However, although pass rates are good, the number of students who progress to higher level courses is modest. Attendance in lessons and in the learning shops is good.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communication technology, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
CLAIT	1	No. of starts	1,195	848	444
		% retention	82	86	78
		% pass rate	71	78	73
GNVQ foundation IT	1	No. of starts	*	35	18
		% retention	*	91	94
		% pass rate	*	75	100
City and Guilds 7261	1	No. of starts	1,133	2,308	1,892

certificate		% retention	64	66	76
		% pass rate	79	75	78
ECDL	2	No. of starts	107	130	144
		% retention	97	92	88
		% pass rate	41	66	64
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	*	28	48
		% retention	*	89	83
		% pass rate	*	96	93
IBT II	2	No. of starts	368	271	146
		% retention	90	94	83
		% pass rate	77	82	82
AVCE ICT	3	No. of starts	*	66	19
		% retention	*	77	100
		% pass rate	*	100	84

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

\* course not running

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

60. The teaching on courses for adult students is good. On a City and Guilds 7262 course, a group of students with different levels of ICT knowledge were introduced to a computer application that enabled them to work with images for the first time. The teacher skilfully developed the lesson in short steps, and constantly checked on and reinforced students' understanding. The teacher demonstrated techniques on an interactive whiteboard and supplemented the demonstration with simple handouts. By the end of the lesson, all of the students had learned how to manipulate and group images and confidently demonstrated their new skills. Some lessons for students aged 16 to 18 lack planning and do not always sufficiently address intended learning objectives. Sometimes lessons fail to extend the ability of students to build on their existing knowledge and understanding. As a result, some students make slower progress than they should.

61. Most coursework and assignments are well designed and meet awarding body standards. The overall quality of the portfolios of students on full-time courses is satisfactory. Assessment criteria are clear and the materials used for assessment are appropriate. Work is marked regularly and is returned promptly. Most marking is accurate, but does not provide sufficient constructive advice to help students to improve. Internal verification on the GNVQ courses is not carried out frequently enough.

62. Most teachers are well qualified in the aspects of ICT that they teach. Teachers make good use of many of the staff development opportunities that are available to them. However, there is insufficient industrial updating for staff involved in the teaching of practitioner qualifications such as the AVCE. The standard of accommodation is good. Most classrooms are spacious, but some become hot and stuffy when class sizes are large. Some classrooms have data projectors and interactive whiteboards, although the projectors have to be used with highly reflective whiteboards where screens are not available. The learning shops provide good access for students to high specification computers. The learning packs, which have been produced by the college, are of a good standard. Adult students find them easy to understand. The college library is well stocked with reference manuals and electronic learning aids.

63. Students receive good support from their teachers and tutors. Prospective students in the

learning shops are able to attend taster sessions before choosing their course. They then participate in a comprehensive induction programme that helps them to understand course requirements. Students who are new to FE particularly value this process. Standardised individual learning plans have recently been introduced for students in the learning shops. These help tutors to monitor students' progress effectively. Tutors regularly review individual student's progress, but the reviews are often too brief and do not allow students sufficient time to contribute to the review. Full-time students receive good pastoral support and subject-specific support from their personal tutors and teachers.

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

64. Leadership and management are good. Three managers share the responsibility for managing ICT and computing programmes in the college, its learning shops and community venues. To ensure the effective management of the provision, the college has appointed two e-learning and information learning technology (ILT) curriculum managers to developing the curriculum and manage the implementation of the college ILT strategy. There is insufficient communication between teachers in the three schools. However, communication between teachers within and between the learning shops is very good. Good practice is shared effectively. Regular meetings address progression, assessment, and internal verification.

### **Hospitality and catering**

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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on most courses
- good progression
- good teaching and learning
- very good resources.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low and declining retention rates on some courses
- unsatisfactory key skills provision.

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

65. The college offers a broad range of courses in hospitality and catering. Full-time provision includes City and Guilds 3330 preliminary cooking and the national diploma and certificate in hotel operations and supervision. There is also a foundation studies programme that enables students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to gain experience and a level 1 qualification in hospitality. NVQs in food preparation and service at levels 1, 2, and 3 are available to full-time and part-time students. Part-time provision includes basic, intermediate and advanced food hygiene courses, the British Institute of Innkeepers programme, the foundation in health and safety certificate and the foundation certificate in nutrition. Currently, 112 students, mostly aged 16 to 18, are on hospitality courses and 257 students on catering courses. In addition, 16 work-based learners attend college one day a week for off-the-job training.

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

66. Pass rates on most courses are good. In 2002, the pass rates on NVQ level 1 food preparation



and cooking and City and Guilds 3330 preliminary cooking were well above the national averages at 100% and 86%, respectively. Pass rates on National Licensee Certificate courses are also high. Retention rates are low and declining on some courses. The retention rate for NVQ level 1 food preparation and cooking has declined from 86% in 2000, to 61% in 2002. Students make good use of the opportunities they have to progress between courses. Of students who complete a level 1 course successfully, 98% progress to level 2, 36% progress from level 2 to level 3, and 25% progress from level 3 to level 4. Many students who leave the college on completion of their course progress into employment in prestigious local and national hospitality establishments. Attendance in lessons is very good at 87%, but is unsatisfactory in the key skills lessons in NVQ level 2 food preparation and cooking.

67. All students acquire good practical and social skills. Students work well together as a team and display good social skills when dealing with customers. Students have good awareness of health and safety and hygiene. They produce good portfolios of evidence. On courses at levels 1 and 2, the portfolios mainly contain evidence of observations and written questions. Level 3 portfolios contain a much wider range of evidence.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in hospitality and catering, 2000 to 2002***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ food preparation and cooking	1	No. of starts	28	40	23
		% retention	86	73	61
		% pass rate	68	67	100
City and Guilds 3330 preliminary cooking	1	No. of starts	*	17	12
		% retention	*	82	58
		% pass rate	*	100	86
NVQ food preparation and cooking	2	No. of starts	14	7	43
		% retention	93	29	79
		% pass rate	57	100	65
Professional certificate in hotel and catering international	3	No. of starts	*	12	13
		% retention	*	92	77
		% pass rate	*	100	75
National licensee certificate	3	No. of starts	183	215	220
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	88	93	97

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

68. Most of the teaching in hospitality and catering is very good. Schemes of work are well prepared and lessons carefully planned. Teachers link theory to practical examples from industry and with work that students will undertake in the college. Teachers make good use of their own knowledge and experience. Students have clear roles and responsibilities in production kitchens and other service areas. During most lessons, in production kitchens and in the restaurant, students work under appropriate commercial pressure. In a demanding session in the restaurant, students worked together effectively to provide good service to customers. The teacher used the presence of a small child in one group of customers and a diabetic in another to revise special dietary requirements and

health and safety issues with the students. In theory lessons, teachers plan a sufficient variety of learning activities to maintain the interest of students, or extend more able students by providing them with more demanding tasks.

69. The practical assessment of NVQs is well organised. Students are assessed in appropriate settings and accurate decisions on competence are made. Internal verification is effective. Provision for key skills is unsatisfactory. The restaurant and kitchens are not used sufficiently in the identification and recording of key skills evidence. Although key skills are integrated in some courses, this is not always the case. Students derive little benefit from key skills lessons. Pass rates in each of the key skills are poor.

70. Students speak highly of the personal support and guidance they receive from tutors. Induction and tutorials are well planned and include introductions to health and safety, food hygiene, and a series of topics on employment. The college has developed a 'B active Programme' to provide students with opportunities to participate in enrichment activities. Take up of these activities is good. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from their learning support assistants.

71. All staff are well qualified and experienced and have appropriate teaching, assessor, and verifier qualifications. The college is promoting industrial updating of their skills. Resources are very good. The restaurant and kitchen areas have a good variety of specialist equipment to support learning, and provide excellent environments in which to prepare for employment. Classrooms are bright and airy and well equipped with a range of different training resources.

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

72. The provision is well managed. There is good leadership and managers have high expectations. Programme teams meet regularly; actions are agreed and followed up. Good practice is effectively shared across the provision. Lesson observations take place regularly and are noted in staff appraisal records. Unsatisfactory teaching is addressed through the college's mentoring system. Pass and retention rate targets are set for most courses. Equality of opportunity is strongly promoted and programmes integrate students with learning difficulties effectively.

## **Sport, leisure and tourism**

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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on most courses
- good teaching
- excellent sports resources
- high standards of assessment and internal verification
- good leadership and management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rate on the AVCE leisure and recreation course
- poor achievements in key skills.

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

73. The college provides courses from entry level to HE. There are currently 210 full-time students and 35 part-time students. Almost all students are aged 16 to 18. Courses include: GCE AS and A2 physical education; first diploma and national certificate and diplomas in sport and exercise sciences; AVCEs in leisure and recreation and in travel and tourism; and GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism. There is currently no level 1 provision, but plans are in place to develop it. Many level 3 students progress to the degree courses in sport that are available at the college. A wide range of additional qualifications is available, including NVQ sport and recreation at levels 1 and 2, and the advanced certificates in overseas resort operations. The college also has its own football academy and provides academic and vocational qualifications for the football scholarship scheme at Lincoln City Football Club.

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

74. Pass rates on most courses are good. The pass rate on NVQ level 1 sport and recreation was 100% in 2001 and 2002. Pass rates on GCE AS and A-level sport and physical education have been well above the national average for each of the three years to 2002, and more than half of the successful students have achieved high grades. The pass rate on the AVCE travel and tourism (single award) was good at 91% in 2001 and 2002. Retention rates on most courses are similar to the national average. However, on AVCE leisure and recreation, the retention rate is well below the national average.

75. Pass rates in key skills qualifications are good. For example, in 2002 the pass rates in communication and application of number at level 2 were 17% and 19%, respectively. The college has addressed this weakness by using staff in the programme area to teach key skills. During the inspection, attendance in key skills lessons was higher than that recorded by the college in 2002, but still well below that observed in other lessons.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in sport, leisure and tourism, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ sport and recreation	1	No. of starts	66	12	71
		% retention	71	**	72
		% pass rate	74	100	100
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	55	47	56
		% retention	82	**	93
		% pass rate	84	100	75
National diploma in applied science (sports studies)	3	No. of starts	29	20	25
		% retention	72	**	72
		% pass rate	90	100	78
GCE AS sport and physical education	3	No. of starts	*	23	13
		% retention	*	96	77
		% pass rate	*	95	100
AVCE travel and tourism (single award)	3	No. of starts	*	38	28
		% retention	*	**	79
		% pass rate	*	91	91
AVCE leisure and recreation (single award)	3	No. of starts	*	22	27
		% retention	*	**	56
		% pass rate	*	100	73

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

- *course not running*
- *data unreliable*

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

76. Teaching is good. Schemes of work and lesson plans are appropriately detailed and clear. Teachers use a variety of teaching styles and regularly praise and encourage students for their achievements. Good use is made of IT in lessons. In a successful lesson on the impact of economic development on the development of sport, the teacher used a CD-ROM to explain the differences between three countries. Students then demonstrated good skills in research and analysis by extending their research to intranet sites and reference books. Good attention is paid to health and safety factors related to exercise. In a few lessons, planning is poor with a lack of suitable work for the different abilities of students and insufficient activities for them to undertake. In these lessons, too much time is spent copying notes.

77. Effective links have been made with local schools. Students coach schoolchildren as part of their training. Assessment is well designed and challenging. It is appropriate to the qualification on all courses. Grading criteria are clearly explained to students. Teachers provide helpful feedback on assignments, which is appreciated by students. Internal verification procedures are comprehensive and work well. Managers closely monitor the tracking of internal verification.

78. Students are well supported by their teachers and tutors. Course handbooks provide helpful information and guidance. The well-managed induction programme helps to identify those students who could benefit from additional support and guidance. Teachers ensure that the lessons take account of these needs. The importance of good attendance is given a high priority.

79. Teaching staff are well qualified, with relevant experience for the courses that they teach. Many have contacts within the industry. This keeps them up to date with current issues in their area, such as coaching for specific sports. Staff, who also teach on the HE programmes, are involved in research in sports science. Teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and their students. There are excellent sports facilities to support learning and enrichment activities. These include a sports hall, two training areas, one with excellent free weights, a fitness room, three discrete equipped laboratories for sport science, and off-site playing fields for the outdoor practical lessons. Teaching and learning are supported by good access to computers and textbooks.

### **Leadership and management**

80. Leadership and management are good. Teachers share a clear sense of purpose. Communication between team members is effective, through close contact and regular meetings at which curriculum development issues are discussed and action plans revised. Schemes of work are detailed and teachers work together closely to ensure that their courses meet the needs of students. They are committed to improving pass and retention rates, and share good practice within the team. Self-assessment and target setting are used to ensure that actions that have been agreed to achieve improvement are monitored. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.

### **Hairdressing and beauty therapy**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### ***Strengths***

- wide range of courses
- good support for students
- good resources.

### ***Weaknesses***

- slow completion of qualifications
- poor learner reviews for modern apprentices
- poor management of assessment.

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

81. The provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy was transferred from a local university in September 2002. Some 174 students follow NVQ programmes at levels 2 and 3 in hairdressing and beauty therapy. There are currently 230 part-time students who are following NVQ programmes or courses in Indian head massage, body massage, reflexology, nail techniques and nail art, cosmetic make up, manicure and pedicure, and sports massage. Some 113 learners follow work-based learning programmes and a further 98 learners are undertaking modern apprenticeships.

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

82. The achievement data that the college inherited on the transfer of the provision were incomplete and unreliable. No conclusions on the past performance and progress of students in this area of learning could therefore be drawn.

83. The standards of attainment of college-based students observed in lessons and in students' portfolios are mostly satisfactory. However, there are insufficient clients for hairdressing and beauty therapy students to be assessed working under the pressures of a busy commercial salon. The prior learning of students is not systematically considered by teachers. These factors contribute to the slow progress which some students make towards completing their qualification.

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

84. Most teaching is satisfactory. The best lessons are characterised by stimulating teaching, with students benefiting from the enthusiasm of highly motivated teachers. Students find the linking of theory and practice helpful in enabling them to remember complex techniques. However, some lessons are poorly planned and provide students with few opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not always identify the key points in the lesson, and students become confused. Students receive good pastoral support from their tutors. Initial assessment is thorough and helps to identify the learning needs of students.

85. Assessment procedures are poorly managed. Some students take several months to complete the basic units of the NVQ and there are long periods between assessments. Little evidence from the students' workplace or part-time jobs in salons is used towards their NVQs or key skills qualifications. Communication between teachers and tutors is ineffective. Teachers have insufficient information to help them to plan assessments, or to assign students to appropriate clients for their assessment. In awarding body assessment logbooks, the summary tracking sheets are often incomplete. Most students are unsure about their current progress with assessment, and cannot readily gain access to the information. Action planning for individual learners is weak. Work-based learners are not set clear and demanding targets or deadlines to ensure good progress throughout their training. Non-completion of targets goes unchallenged. Teachers are not always aware of the targets set at reviews and are therefore unable to follow them through in the salon. Learner reviews are cursory. Key skills are fully integrated within the curriculum. However, modern apprentices do

not understand the key skills requirement of their programme. The weak assessment practices and poor recording of assessments are not being identified by internal verification.

86. The college has made a substantial investment in resources for hairdressing and beauty therapy. The accommodation and equipment, particularly in beauty salons, now meet industry requirements. However, most of the hairdressing facilities are located on the first floor and are reached by stairs, making it difficult for people with restricted mobility or health problems. There is a plentiful supply of specialist equipment and good commercial products are used in treatments. The college is increasing the stock of textbooks, reference books and journals in the library. The current resources are insufficient for the amount of students who use the library.

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

87. New management has had a positive effect on the provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy since its transfer to the college in September 2002. There have been significant improvements in curriculum planning, resources, and support for students. The college has acted promptly to provide support for teachers who are new to FE and to the college. Course teams work well together and regular team meetings are encouraging a growing sense of purpose and confidence amongst staff. Managers are aware of the inherited weaknesses in assessment, key skills, and the management of work-based learning and are developing strategies to remedy them. However, it is too early to assess the impact of these changes.

88.

### **Health and social care**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) certificate and diploma in childcare and education
- good progression to employment and HE
- interesting opportunities to extend learning
- good support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on some courses
- poor achievement on work-based learning programmes
- lack of differentiation in lessons
- unsatisfactory management of work-based learning programmes.

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

89. There are 580 students, including 105 adults, currently following courses in health and social care, early years care and education, counselling, and work-based learning for young people and adults. The college offers national diploma and certificate courses in both early years and care and the first diploma in care. CACHE programmes include the diploma and certificate in childcare and education and a foundation award in caring for children. Counselling programmes are offered at

introductory, intermediate, certificate, and advanced diploma level. Forty younger students are following work-based learning programmes at NVQ levels 2 and 3 in early years. A further 56 are following the NVQ level 3 dental nursing programme. A range of short courses is available in several locations across the county including counselling, sign language, and a first aid at work course which is franchised through the college by St John's Ambulance. There are no plans to provide additional courses to meet the requirements of the Care Standards Act, however a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in care practice is planned in collaboration with the University of Lincoln. The majority of programmes are offered at the main college site in Lincoln. A range of short courses and workshops for adult NVQ students are held in community venues and at the Gainsborough and Louth campus.

### **Achievement and standards**

90. Pass rates on most courses are satisfactory. Those on the CACHE certificate and diploma in childcare and education courses are good. However, the retention rates on the CACHE diploma and the national diploma in early years have been poor in each of the three years to 2002. Adults and young people on work-based learning programmes produce poor achievements. In 2001, 26% of adults who started the programme achieved NVQ level 2 in 2001, whilst only 8% of students aged 16 to 18 who started a foundation modern apprenticeship completed it. High proportions of work-based learners continue beyond their agreed training period. The majority of full-time and part-time students who successfully complete their course progress to relevant employment, further study, or HE. Students gain in confidence and develop wider key skills including working with others, problem solving, and research skills, although these are not accredited. Students gain relevant additional qualifications to improve their employability.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
First aid at work	1	No. of starts	1,239	1,194	1,106
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	99	100	100
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	38	25	31
		% retention	68	72	84
		% pass rate	85	100	96
Certificate in counselling skills	2	No. of starts	32	18	27
		% retention	91	100	85
		% pass rate	100	100	87
National diploma in care	3	No. of starts	*	19	22
		% retention	*	**	82
		% pass rate	*	**	76
CACHE diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	44	21	24
		% retention	70	86	71
		% pass rate	100	100	100
National diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	29	24	21
		% retention	55	83	81
		% pass rate	93	93	82

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

- course not running

- *data unreliable*

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

91. Most teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a range of well-chosen activities to add interest to their lessons. In a lesson that was well planned to review possible pressures faced by families on low incomes, the teacher sensitively encouraged students to review a range of issues affecting health and well being. Students used their findings to identify possible effects on children and the impact on their responsibilities as nursery nurses. In less effective lessons, lesson plans and schemes of work fail to ensure individual learning needs are clearly identified and met. Teachers fail to maintain students' interest or check individual learning. Students benefit from interesting opportunities to extend their learning. They visit care settings in London and the Netherlands to broaden their understanding of working with people with disability or those from minority ethnic communities.

92. Assessment procedures are thorough. There is an effective process for obtaining direct observation evidence for trainees aged 16 to 18 on work-based learning programmes in early years. Work-based assessment starts early in the programme, and the assessor provides detailed feedback to trainees and their employers. Assessment on college courses is well managed. All assignments are verified to assure their vocational relevance and that they are at an appropriate level to meet course requirements prior to distribution to students. Assignment briefs give clear guidance including grading criteria. Teachers give detailed and constructive feedback on assessed work. Internal verification is rigorous.

93. All full-time students and modern apprentices work towards achieving key skills qualifications at an appropriate level. Learners on work-based learning programmes complete a diagnostic assessment within the first two weeks of their programme. The assessment is used to identify the level of key skills study and any additional support requirements. The results also contribute to learners' individual learning plans. Learners are aware of the areas they need to improve, however, few take up the opportunity to gain additional support. There is little integration of application of number or ICT key skills within the vocational area, although communication is developed through specific unit assignments.

94. Support for students is good. All students receive sufficient information to enable them to make an informed choice of course. Interviews and the well-planned induction programme offer time to evaluate choice and change direction within the first few weeks if appropriate. Formal and informal tutorials provide opportunities for advice and support whilst monitoring progress. Support sessions for NVQ candidates in Louth and Gainsborough are held monthly. Parents and employers are kept informed of progress.

95. All staff hold relevant vocational qualifications and have gained, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. Accommodation is satisfactory. There are good resources to support practical activities. Good links with library staff ensure that book stocks are kept up to date.

### **Leadership and management**

96. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new management team has recently been appointed. A range of strategies have been introduced to improve the planning and organisation of the programme area. Course teams now meet regularly to review progress and to provide evidence for self-assessment. The current self-assessment report is descriptive rather than evaluative and lacks targets. However, a well-developed business plan clearly sets targets and timescales. The management of NVQ programmes is unsatisfactory. There is no link between on-the-job and off-the-job training for young people on work-based learning programmes. Employers are not given information on the programme of underpinning knowledge which is taught at college. Some employers have little or no knowledge of NVQs or key skills qualifications.



## Humanities

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

### **Strengths**

- consistently good pass rates on access and GCE A-level psychology courses
- much good teaching
- effective support for students
- strong and supportive leadership.

### **Weaknesses**

- inconsistent and low pass rates on some GCE A-level courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice.

### **Scope of provision**

97. The college provides courses for access to HE and at GCE A level in geography, history, law, psychology, and sociology. Most GCE A-level students study full time and are aged 16 to 18. GCSEs in psychology and sociology are available as separate courses and as part of the 'kickstart' programme for students resuming education after disrupted schooling. At the time of the inspection, there were over 700 enrolments on the courses being inspected. Some 120 of these were part-time students.

### **Achievement and standards**

98. There are good pass rates on the access course, and in GCE A-level psychology. The pass rates on other GCE A levels have been inconsistent. Geography, history, and sociology have each had one year in the last three in which the pass rate has fallen well below the national average. The pass rate in GCE A-level law has been low for the three years 2000 to 2002. Pass rates at the higher grades are below the national average in history, law, and geography. The comparison of GCSE scores at entry with the grades that students finally achieved confirms underachievement by a significant number of students in these subjects. Pass rates in GCSE subjects are satisfactory. Retention rates have improved significantly on most courses since 2000. Much of the students' work seen during the inspection was thoughtful and thorough, but some students have difficulty in structuring and expressing their ideas effectively. Students make good contributions to discussion and group work, and show a good grasp of what they are studying. Attainment in lessons is satisfactory.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE sociology	2	No. of starts	65	34	59
		% retention	63	62	68
		% pass rate	63	57	68
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	48	45	26
		% retention	69	73	96
		% pass rate	87	52	92
GCE A-level history	3	No. of starts	31	22	15

		% retention	74	82	93
		% pass rate	42	79	100
GCE A-level geography	3	No. of starts	14	20	15
		% retention	64	75	93
		% pass rate	100	43	93
GCE A-level law	3	No. of starts	24	22	22
		% retention	33	50	86
		% pass rate	71	70	68
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	64	58	133
		% retention	80	72	79
		% pass rate	96	100	100
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	73	79	57
		% retention	71	66	96
		% pass rate	91	98	93

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

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

99. There is much good teaching. Most lessons are well planned and confidently taught by well-qualified and experienced teachers. Teachers establish clear aims and objectives for their lessons. They use a variety of teaching methods and use a good range of resources, including interactive whiteboards and video, to support learning. In a GCE AS history lesson, students learned about the General Strike by reviewing cuttings from contemporary newspapers and listening to a recording of a BBC news broadcast from the time. These resources clearly demonstrated a range of contrasting attitudes to the strike by different sections of the community. Students worked well in groups and gave perceptive and thorough feedback. In a GCE A-level psychology lesson, a brief video clip vividly illustrated a particular technique of lie detection, based on close observation of minute changes of facial expression.

100. Group work is used effectively in many lessons. In a GCSE sociology class, the students worked well in groups to define poverty and evaluate its impact on peoples' lives. A very clear worksheet gave a focus to their work. They drew on experiences from their own lives, and the teacher used this positively and sensitively when the groups presented their findings. In a few lessons, teaching was pedestrian at times and failed to provide enough opportunities for students to contribute. In some of these lessons, students enlivened proceedings by raising issues themselves. In others, their interest waned.

101. Teachers recognise that their students are of widely differing ability. They provide a wide range of effective support for students who have difficulties in coping with the work. Extra 'clinics' are provided for small groups or individuals, and additional teaching is offered to students preparing for re-sit examinations. Students also receive good advice through feedback on their written work, although in some cases suggestions for improvement could be more detailed and more closely related to the assessment objectives for the assignment. Individual learning plans are formed and revised through regular individual interviews with course tutors. Progress is related to individual target grades, which are based on students' GCSE results. Some individual plans and reviews do not record progress and targets in sufficient detail, although others are very thorough. Worksheets and course handbooks support learning by indicating the scope and sequence of work and by helping students to prepare for assignments.

102. Teaching accommodation is good. At present, humanities teaching is spread over several parts

of the college. This inhibits the development of shared resources. The library and learning centre provide a wide range of additional learning resources and comprehensive guidance on their use. The extensive book stock has been recently updated to match current syllabus requirements.

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

103. Leadership is strong and supportive. The area is well managed. Recent changes in the curriculum management structure have led to more direct leadership from within the area. There is a strong emphasis on improving teaching and learning to raise students' achievements. This has led to a very rigorous analysis of how some courses are taught. Staff development opportunities have enabled some staff to widen their expertise. Staff meetings have become more purposeful and productive. Some existing policies, for instance for dealing with unauthorised absence, have been applied more rigorously. Staff and students welcome these changes. Courses are well managed. Schemes of work are detailed and clearly indicate the methods and resources to be used. External assessment procedures are effectively implemented. The self-assessment report is mostly sound and thorough, but judgements about the quality of teaching are too general. There is insufficient sharing of good practice in teaching and learning, resource development, and the review of individual students' progress.

### **English and communication**

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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates in GCE AS and A-level English language and GCSE English
- good teaching
- excellent course planning
- rigorous assessment of student work.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory retention rates on GCE AS courses
- insufficient resources to support students' independent learning.

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

104. The college offers GCE AS and A-level courses in English language and English literature, GCE AS communications and GCSE English. GCE A-level courses are offered in the evening on two college campuses. GCSE English is available on all three campuses and at two local community centres. GCE AS and A-level classes are open to both students aged 16 to 18 and adults. There are currently 220 students following GCE AS courses, 65 students following GCE A-level courses and 190 students taking GCSE English.

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

105. Pass rates are good on GCE AS and A-level English language. In 2002, the pass rate on both courses was 100%; 41% of students achieved grades A and B, which is significantly higher than the national average of 30%. Students achieve better than their grades on entry would indicate. Pass rates on GCE AS and A-level English literature are lower than the national average. However, value added data indicate that students are achieving their expected grades. The pass rate in GCE AS communications is poor. Results in GCSE English are good. In 2002, 61% of students achieved A to

C grades as against a national average of 49%. There are some low retention rates. Retention rates on GCE A-level English language and English literature in 2000 and 2001 were well below the national average. Retention rates on the new GCE AS courses are disappointing. In GCE AS English language in 2002, only 75% of students completed the course. Progression from GCE AS to A2 in English is low. The number of students who take the second year of a GCE A-level course has fallen since the introduction of Curriculum 2000.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in English and communication, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	181	185	177
		% retention	72	78	78
		% pass rate	60	**	61
GCE A-level English language	3	No. of starts	37	45	18
		% retention	59	58	89
		% pass rate	73	95	100
GCE AS English literature	3	No. of starts	*	78	75
		% retention	*	81	79
		% pass rate	*	75	80
GCE AS English language	3	No. of starts	*	49	51
		% retention	*	65	75
		% pass rate	*	94	100
GCE AS communications	3	No. of starts	*	20	16
		% retention	*	70	81
		% pass rate	*	100	54
GCE A-level English literature	3	No. of starts	64	55	18
		% retention	67	65	94
		% pass rate	84	85	82

Source: ISR (2000, 2001) and college (2002)

- course not running
- unreliable data

***Quality of education and training***

106. Much of the teaching in English is good. Lessons provide a good range of learning activities and most have a sharp focus. Students are always clear of the purpose of the activities. A high level of student participation is a characteristic of the teaching of English. Group or pair work is a feature of lessons. In the best lessons, group work is skilfully managed. Students are given appropriate tasks and are good at exploring issues together. Question and answer sessions are particularly well managed. Student contributions are handled positively and developed and challenged appropriately. Students clearly feel able to try out ideas or suggest interpretations within lessons. Student concentration and commitment is impressive. In a GCSE class, a challenging group of younger students worked in small groups to create a poem from a selection of words and phrases. They were fully focused on the task and were clearly proud of the poem they produced. The tasks given to students in a minority of lessons are insufficiently challenging and reviews at the end lesson add little to the learning.

107. English courses are extremely well planned. Teaching schemes of work are thorough and clearly describe the objectives of each lesson, including the learning activities and the role of the teacher through the lesson. The development of subject skills is incorporated in each unit of work. There is a strong emphasis on preparing students for external examinations. The schemes of work given to students are not as effective as they do not contain references to work that is to be completed outside of the lessons. There is little use of IT in English. Students are guided to useful web sites and many of them use word processing in their coursework, but insufficient use is made of electronic resources to support individual independent learning.

108. Assessment is rigorous. Students receive good guidance on what is expected of them and they are appreciative of the high levels of individual support they receive. Every opportunity is taken to allow students to pursue areas of interest to them in GCE A-level English language. The teachers provide appropriately differentiated tasks for individuals. One student, who is interested in politics, undertook an investigation of the linguistic features of one of Tony Blair's speeches. Another drew on his interest in World War Two to produce some original writing based on the 'dambusters' raid on the Moln and Eder dams. Internal verification is effective. Standardisation and moderation of work operates across all sites and ensures consistency in assessment. Student work is carefully marked. Staff keep detailed records of work completed. Grading is accurate and linked to external standards. Teachers provide helpful written comments and a detailed summary. Students are clear about what they need to do to improve.

109. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. All have relevant degrees and teaching qualifications. A high priority is given to professional updating, with particular emphasis on syllabus developments. Staff expertise in the use of IT in teaching and learning is being addressed, but their skills are still limited. Much teaching takes place in two large classrooms. One of these is not suitable because a high level of noise leaks from the room next door. Students are well provided with relevant texts and textbooks. A good range of handouts and guidance sheets are provided to support learning. These tend to be single sheets handed out in each lesson, often several in a lesson. Students do not always manage these resources well.

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

110. Leadership and management are good. There is good teamwork amongst the English teachers and good working relationships between the co-ordinators and managers in the school. There is a regular cycle of meetings that cover relevant business. The provision is effectively co-ordinated between sites. The whole team prepares a comprehensive self-assessment report. However, the report is not always sufficiently self-critical. There are no data kept on attendance in spite of the fact that attendance is an acknowledged weakness.

### **Literacy and numeracy**

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

#### ***Strengths***

- good student achievements
- much good teaching
- effective procedures for identifying and responding to literacy and numeracy support needs
- effective management.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- some poor participation rates in literacy and numeracy support sessions

- limited use of IT.

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

111. Provision is offered through the school of advanced and continuing education. During 2001/02, there were a total of 407 full-time and part-time students. The skills for life curriculum team operates dedicated part-time literacy and numeracy programmes at the Lincoln, Louth, and Gainsborough campuses and a small number of community outreach venues. The team also provides literacy and numeracy support for students on vocational and academic programmes. There is small, but developing, provision to meet the needs of new basic skills students. The number of students on primary basic skills support is relatively small in relation to the overall size of college provision and identified need. The skills for life targets for the college, as identified in the learning partnership basic skills strategy, are an additional 350 students by August 2003 and an overall increase of 800 students by August 2004. The college is confident of meeting these targets. There are some strong partnerships with community-based learning centres, and a nursery school. The college has very close links with Lincolnshire County Council's family learning initiative.

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

112. Most courses in literacy and numeracy lead to accreditation. There are some good levels of achievement, particularly in primary basic skills provision. Data supplied by the college indicate that pass rates for literacy and numeracy programmes are at or above the national average and have shown a continuous improvement over the three years to 2002. Students' learning plans are a clear result of initial screening and assessment, and are related to the core curriculum in literacy and numeracy. The progress recorded on these plans and the good quality of students' work demonstrate that students are generally achieving their potential in literacy and numeracy. Students also make significant gains in confidence and personal development skills.

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

113. There is much good teaching. Lessons are well planned and use a broad range of teaching strategies. In the best lessons, basic skills needs are carefully matched to the vocational specialism of students. In a support session for level 1 motor vehicle students, numeracy was taught very effectively through the calculation of tyre pressures, both theoretically and through measurement on a vehicle. Teachers, co-workers, and volunteer tutors work well together to jointly plan support strategies for individual learners. In a successful literacy lesson for part-time adult students, eleven students were supported by the teacher and five appropriately qualified volunteer tutors. The teaching methods used took careful account of the different abilities of the students in the group. The teacher and tutors challenged the students to do their best. During the course of the lesson, the students were able to develop additional skills in IT, listening, and speaking. At the end of the lesson, the teacher encouraged students to record what they had learned. The records they made in their individual learning plans demonstrated how effective the lesson had been and provided a useful base for subsequent lessons. There is limited use to date of IT within literacy and numeracy. IT resources have been significantly improved, but teachers are still developing strategies to use them effectively in teaching.

114. There are effective procedures for identifying and responding to literacy and numeracy support needs. All full-time students and a significant proportion of part-time students undertake basic skills screening and initial assessment. Students with identified needs are invited for an interview to assess further assessment and to arrange support. Students on discrete basic skills courses are interviewed by specialist staff and then work with their tutor to develop an individual learning plan. The plans are of a very good standard, and progress towards achieving the targets they contain is carefully monitored. Students are clear about their learning goals and how they are progressing towards them. Students feel well supported by this process and speak highly of the encouragement and practical help provided by their tutors. In a lesson for adult students in a community based learning centre, the teacher skilfully used evidence from individual learning plans to deliver an effective group session in making oral presentations. Participation rates in many of the support sessions are poor. The college has yet to devise strategies to monitor the progress of the students who decline support. The strategy to develop vocationally based basic skills facilitators has not yet

had an effect.

115. Teaching staff are suitably qualified. Co-workers and volunteer tutors support learning effectively, and all have basic skills qualifications or are working towards them. Accommodation is satisfactory, although the provision of quiet areas for individual interviews is limited.

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

116. Most aspects of leadership and management are good. Some of the current provision was transferred from a local university in September 2002. Staff who transferred to the college at this time have been successfully introduced into the skills for life team. The management team is energetic and committed to developing strategies to improve the provision. There is a strong team ethos. Teachers feel well supported. Course management is good. There is no college-wide strategy for literacy and numeracy, although college staff are involved in planning activities with both the local learning partnership and the local LSC.

### **Provision for students with learning difficulties/disabilities**

Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good development of practical skills in vocational lessons
- effective links with a range of external agencies
- effective support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- limited use of individual objectives in lesson planning
- insufficient identification and recording of student progress
- insufficient sharing of good practice.

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

117. The college offers a range of opportunities for students with a broad range of learning difficulties. The foundation studies programme, at pre-entry, entry, and level 1, allows students to sample vocational areas of learning within the FE environment. Currently, there are 187 students enrolled at the three main campuses, approximately half of these are full-time students aged 16 to 18. The curriculum framework has been revised to ensure that the provision meets individual student needs. This has resulted in the introduction of non-certified courses. There are some 57 adult students who follow the new 'reach out' programme. This aims to integrate students into the community through the development of work skills in the areas of horse care, horticulture, and food preparation.

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

118. The majority of students on full-time courses work towards accreditation, usually through the Open College Network (OCN), but the data on achievements could not be disaggregated for inclusion in this report. Students who complete their courses demonstrate good practical skills. For example, students learning horticulture cleared an overgrown area of land and built their own polytunnel to enable them to seed and pot their plants. Adult working relationships are evident in many groups, and responses to work and community opportunities are good. Work experience is

arranged with local employers and within the college. Over the three years to 2002, 27 students have progressed on to mainstream vocational courses or into employment as a result of this work experience. Attendance on all courses is very good and punctuality is excellent.

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

119. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, but there are few examples of very good teaching. The best teaching was observed in vocational courses that provided students with the opportunity to develop and apply practical skills. In catering, food prepared by the students is used in the attached residential nursing home and sold in the canteen. In horse management, students have the opportunity to work and ride with students on full-time equestrian courses. Where teaching is less effective, teachers use a narrow range of teaching methods and do not take sufficient account of the needs of individual learners. Some inappropriate lesson activities or resources were observed. For example, in one lesson, students were copying information that they could not read or understand. One student, who is registered blind, was given pictorial worksheets, which he could not see.

120. Lesson plans do not focus sufficiently on the learning goals identified in the students' individual learning plans. Where goals are recorded they are often broad and imprecise; opportunities to develop and monitor incremental progression are missed. The recording of individual student progress is inconsistent. Individual learning plans do not identify short-term learning goals. Information is often verbal, and the written records that are available are sometimes imprecise and lack the detail necessary to measure the progress made by individual students.

121. Enrichment activities are promoted to develop and extend student knowledge and skills. Opportunities available include Millennium Volunteers in partnership with Connexions, team enterprise and a range of sporting activities. There are strong links with local social education centres, National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children (MENCAP), community learning disability teams, mental health community teams, specialist Connexions advisors, and a good range of local special and mainstream schools. These links provide collaborative support networks for students and their parents/carers.

122. Students feel well supported by their teachers and the positive and constructive relationships that exist promote learning and confidence. Teachers provide good pastoral support for students. All full-time, and substantial numbers of part-time students participate in group and individual tutorials. Induction is effective and provides information and access to welfare and counselling services. A committed staff team provide effective support on personal issues through individual contact with students, parents, carers, and advocates. An experienced Connexions advisor supports students in the transition from college to employment.

123. The staff team are well qualified and have good access to staff development opportunities. All staff have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications and many have specialised qualifications in sign language, learning disabilities, and counselling. Accommodation has improved significantly. A dedicated training flat and a separate office skills area have recently been developed on the Lincoln campus. However, the student kitchen, currently used for the food management unit on the reach out programme at Hill House, is too small for the numbers of students who use it.

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

124. Leadership and management are good. The management style is open, consultative, and supportive. Staffing levels have increased this year, reflecting the commitment of college senior management to this curriculum area. The team has a strong commitment to improving standards and developing learning opportunities for adults and young people. Staff meetings are held regularly. Although communication is good, there is currently no formal, consistent system for identifying and sharing good teaching and learning practice across the entire provision. Models of existing good practice within the area are not used to raise standards.



**Part D: College data**

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**Table 1. Enrolments by level of study and age**

Level	16-18	19+
	%	%
1	20	35
2	31	58
3	34	7
4/5	2	0
Other	13	0
Total	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: provided by the college in 2002*

**Table 2. Enrolments by curriculum area and age**

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments %
Science and mathematics	111	71	4
Land-based provision	38	59	2
Construction	154	135	6
Engineering	237	190	8
Business administration, management and professional	256	394	12
Information and communication technology	182	1,815	38
Retailing, customer service and transportation	1	3	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	303	65	7
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	0	0	0
Health, social care and public services	190	171	7
Visual and performing arts and media	66	34	2
Humanities	116	60	3
English, languages and	99	41	3

communication			
Foundation programmes	186	226	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,939</b>	<b>3,264</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2002

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long courses)	Retention & pass rate	16-18			19+		
		1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01
1	Starters excluding transfers	1,016	792	803	2,063	1,365	3,211
	Retention rate (%)	81	72	79	73	77	74
	National average (%)	80	80	79	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	52	66	77	62	76	75
	National average (%)	59	65	68	60	66	68
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,247	1,254	1,133	1,952	1,663	1,718
	Retention rate (%)	73	74	74	64	78	80
	National average (%)	76	76	76	79	79	78
	Pass rate (%)	80	83	78	85	84	80
	National average (%)	65	66	69	62	65	69
3	Starters excluding transfers	907	912	1,847	1,209	1,570	1,391
	Retention rate (%)	67	69	76	74	79	81
	National average (%)	75	76	77	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	66	73	76	77	82	81
	National average (%)	72	74	76	62	66	69
4	Starters excluding transfers	*	35	72	545	598	463
	Retention rate (%)	*	71	83	80	81	85
	National average (%)	83	79	82	84	81	84
	Pass rate (%)	*	90	66	78	77	75
	National average (%)	64	66	55	56	56	53

Note: Summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is General FE and tertiary colleges).

### Sources of information

1. National averages: Benchmarking data 1998/99 to 2000/2001: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, The Learning and Skills Council.

2. College rates for 1998/99 to 2000/2001: College ISR (Individual Student Record).

\* too few students to provide a valid calculation

**Table 4. Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level**

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	67	28	5	111
Level 2 (intermediate)	63	33	4	70
Level 1 (foundation)	67	28	5	36
Other sessions	65	31	4	46
<b>Totals</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>263</b>

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