



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards
in Education

North Lindsey College

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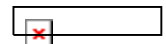
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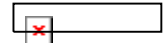
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Basic information about the college

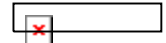


Name of college:	North Lindsey College
Type of college:	Further education
Principal:	Dr Roger Bennett
Address of college:	Kingsway North Lindsey Scunthorpe DN17 1AJ
Telephone number:	01724 281111
Fax number:	01724 294020
Chair of governors:	John White
Unique reference number:	130587
Name of reporting inspector:	John Hertrich HMI
Dates of inspection:	3-7 March 2003

Part A: Summary



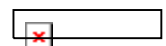
Information about the college



North Lindsey College is a medium-sized general further education (FE) college close to the centre of Scunthorpe. Its mission is to raise the participation and achievement of people in North Lincolnshire by putting the learner at the heart of high quality education and training. The college, which has outreach centres in Crosby, Brigg, Barton and Crowle, is the main provider of vocational courses and work-based learning in the area and it works closely with the nearby sixth form college, which focuses on General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced-level (GCE AS and A-level) courses. The college also liaises with North Lincolnshire Adult and Community Learning, which provides a large proportion of 19+ education in the area. North Lindsey College currently offers courses in all 14 of the learning and skills council's (LSC) areas of learning and its provision ranges from pre-entry level to higher education (HE). In 2001/02, there were 8,462 enrolments by students aged 16 to 18, most of them for full-time courses. There were 11,196 enrolments by students aged 19 or over, mostly for part-time courses. Almost 20% of the students were from those categories recognised within the widening participation framework. Just under 400 students had declared disabilities. Most enrolments are at levels 1 and 2 and 85% of full-time students are aged 16 to 18. About 56% of the students are male and 3.6% of the college's full-time students are from minority ethnic groups, a higher proportion than that for the area's population as a whole. While around 60% of students live in the Scunthorpe area, a significant number travel to the college from smaller towns and villages.

North Lincolnshire has a population of 152,000, about 40% of whom live in Scunthorpe itself. The area has been associated with the steel industry for many years and the college opened in 1953 as a technical college, largely to serve the needs of the industry. The steelworks are still a major employer, along with opportunities in the service industries, retail, distribution and construction, and in the manufacture of knitwear, furniture and telecommunications equipment. Unemployment is 2.8%, which is lower than the national average and surrounding areas but the same as in the Yorkshire and Humberside sub-region. At the age of 16, 75% of young people remained in full-time education and, in 2002, 42.6% of school leavers attained five or more GCE grades A* to C. The college recruits a significant proportion of young people with mainly D to G GCSE grades. Scunthorpe, where the college is based, has secondary schools serving the 11 to 16 age range; there are schools with sixth forms in nearby Brigg and Barton.

How effective is the college?



The quality of education was outstanding in childcare and counselling. Provision was good in motor vehicle engineering, business, hair and beauty, and literacy and numeracy. It was satisfactory in construction, engineering, information and communications technology (ICT), hospitality, catering and sports, leisure and tourism, health and social care, and visual and performing arts. Work-based learning was good in construction and motor vehicle engineering, and satisfactory in engineering.

Key strengths

- good strategic leadership and management

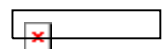
- effective guidance and support for students
- much good teaching in several areas
- good and improving achievement, especially at level 2
- responsiveness to local needs.

What should be improved

- retention rates on some courses
- attention to students' learning styles
- some uninspiring teaching of theory
- the proportion of students taking up the offer of additional learning support
- the use of ICT in lessons.

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

Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how

range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5)

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Construction	Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates for the General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) advanced are very good and are good for work-based learners. Results on other programmes improved last year and most are now at least satisfactory. There is a good range of provision and good progression for full-time level 1 craft learners to employment and the acquisition of further qualifications. Teaching of theory lacks variety and there is some poor attendance.
Engineering	Satisfactory. There are very good retention and pass rates on manufacturing courses, which are supported by very good resources. Retention rates on other courses and pass rates on engineering design courses are poor. There are good links with industry and schools, and clear progression routes. Students receive effective support but some teaching of theory is unimaginative.
Motor vehicle engineering	Good. Retention rates are good and there are some good pass rates. The wide range of courses is supported by excellent facilities and effective teaching, although some resources and methods do not meet the needs of individuals. Students' practical work is assessed particularly well and work-based learning is good.
Business	Good. Curriculum staff are effectively implementing recent initiatives to improve retention and pass rates. Teaching and learning are good. Learning is enhanced through regular and effective assessment, feedback and review. Students have good support for personal development.
ICT	Satisfactory. Overall pass rates are satisfactory on most courses, but retention rates on most level 1 courses are low. There is a wide range of courses and opportunities for progression are good. Most teaching is good or better but some unsatisfactory teaching fails to engage all learners. Quality assurance procedures are not yet fully effective in improving performance.
Hospitality, catering and sport, leisure and tourism	Satisfactory. Pass rates on many courses are good, with many learners also achieving additional qualifications. Pass rates in leisure and tourism and craft qualifications are low and some catering students make slow progress. Some teaching is poorly planned. In tourism and sport, resources are good but in catering they fail to match industry standards. Management has been successful in creating a wide-ranging programme of courses, and all staff have a commitment to improving standards through effective use of quality assurance measures.
Hair and beauty	Good. There are good pass and retention rates, supported by good quality accommodation and resources. There is a lack of clients in hairdressing and some progress on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 1 courses is slow. Teaching and learning are good and key skills are integrated effectively into vocational work. Beauty therapy students have good work experience and all students make good use of well-planned work packs.
Health and social care	Satisfactory. Pass rates on level 1 courses are good but there are some low, declining pass rates and some weak retention rates on full-time provision at levels 2 and 3. In NVQ care, learners make slow progress. Pastoral and academic support are good. Leadership and management are satisfactory.
Childcare and counselling	Outstanding. Students receive very good quality teaching from well-qualified and experienced staff, and respond with good attendance

	and pass rates. There are clear progression routes available which are taken up by students in counselling and childcare. The team has strong and effective links with local employers and development bodies. However, there are limited opportunities for students to access provision in their local community.
Visual and performing arts	Satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good. Standards of work in art and design courses are good. Pass rates for most art and design courses are good. There are poor retention rates for drama and music courses. Effective learning for all music and drama students is difficult in the environment due to insufficient soundproofing.
Literacy and numeracy	Good. Students receive good literacy and numeracy support and their progress is effectively monitored throughout their studies. There is much good teaching and some pass rates are very good. Staffing issues have affected some learning and development. Some teaching in pre-entry literacy and numeracy is unimaginative and a relatively low proportion of students take up the offer of additional learning support.

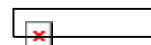
How well is the college led and managed?

Leadership and management are good. The college has clear strategic direction and works effectively with its partners to widen participation and meet local needs. Pass rates have improved over the last few years, although some retention rates are poor. Teaching and learning are good, especially for adults. The work of the governors is effective. The recently revised management structure is clear and is making a positive impact on the work of the college. Communication is good. There are effective arrangements for quality assurance and the college successfully promotes and monitors equality of opportunity. Curriculum management is at least satisfactory and good in several cases. The college's management information system is reliable and well used. The college's financial position was previously weak but is improving. Overall the college provides satisfactory value for money.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

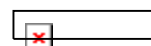
The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. The college has produced a very good race equality policy and an action plan that aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of colour, culture, ethnicity, race and religion and has made good progress in its implementation. Key performance indicators of recruitment, retention and achievement are monitored by gender, ethnicity and disability. Good links with external agencies ensure the development of appropriate initiatives to widen participation from under-represented groups. There is a good range of outreach provision in local community venues. Part-time adult students returning to learning are very positive about the college's recruitment and induction procedures and about its sensitivity to the timetabling of lessons. Good childcare facilities are available at the college. There are very good links with the Connexions service and with a range of regional employers' forums. Effective links with local schools ensure prospective students are provided with good pre-entry guidance and support. Substantial numbers of Year 10 and 11 pupils study vocational programmes at the college, though in some areas, this provision is not sufficiently based on a thorough initial assessment of pupils' abilities. Access in the college for wheelchair users and students with a range of disabilities is good.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



The college provides good guidance and support for students. Pre-entry guidance is good and there are effective links with local schools to help prospective students join the college. Students are given a good induction both to the college and to their programmes of learning. On the whole, initial assessment and additional learning support are well managed. Most students receive an initial assessment, but less than 60% have taken up support to date. The tutorial programme is broad and well managed and in most cases used effectively to monitor students' progress. There is insufficient use of data for determining the effectiveness of learning support activities. Students receive good careers advice and, where appropriate, assistance with applications to 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 atmosphere and approachable staff

- good feedback on progress

- good learning resources, including computers and library

- effective induction

- good support from staff

- the college's location and pleasant site.

What they feel could be improved

- some aspects of key skills

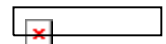
- high prices in canteen and shop

- gaps in timetables

- limited financial support

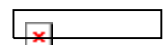
- timing of buses.

Other information

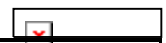


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must 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, where inspectors have judged there to be unsatisfactory or poor provision in a curriculum area or in leadership and management, 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



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

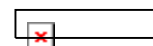


Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	63.7	31.9	4.4
19+ and WBL*	72.1	23.5	4.4
Learning 16-18	57.8	36.3	5.9
19+ and WBL*	70.6	25	4.4

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

*work-based learning

Achievement and standards



1. North Lindsey College offers over 400 courses leading to qualifications from pre-entry to HE. Part of its mission is to raise the participation and achievement of people in North Lincolnshire, for which it is the main provider of non-GCE AS and A-level courses. One of the college's current priorities is working towards good success rates for learners and a recent project has focused on improving retention rates.

2. Retention rates at levels 1 and 2 fell in the three years to 2001, when they were below the national average. Figures for 2002 show a further decline at level 1, but level 2 figures have stabilised. At level 3, retention rates have varied over the last few years, falling to the lower quartile for 16 to 18 year olds but improving for students aged 19 and above, where the figure is just below the national average. Retention rates on short courses are good. The college notes that, given the relatively strong employment situation in the area, it is natural for a proportion of students to leave courses and enter the jobs market. Pass rates have been above national averages at levels 1 and 2 in recent years and there has been a notable improvement in the level 2 figures for 16 to 18 year olds. However, pass rates at level 3 have declined consistently since 2000. In the lessons observed, the standard of adults' work was often significantly better than that of younger students. Attainment in practical work tended to be better than in lessons that focused more on theory. Work at level 2 was better than that at levels 1 and 3.

3. Attendance at lessons observed averaged 77%, slightly better than the average for colleges of this type. Across the curriculum areas, attendance ranged from 67% in construction to 87% in childcare and counselling. In most cases, attendance of 16 to 18 year old students was better than that of students aged 19 and above. However, the reverse was the case in health and social care and motor vehicle engineering.

16 to 18 year olds

4. At the age of 16, the proportion of young people in North Lincolnshire gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C is well below the national average and the college admits many students with relatively low levels of prior achievement. Pass rates at level 1, where numbers have fallen considerably in the last three years, have fluctuated but have been above the national average of 68% in 2001 and 2002. Level 2 pass rates have risen to 77% in 2002, considerably higher than the national average. As noted above, however, pass rates at level 3 have seen a steady fall to 64% in 2002. No national figures are available for short courses where the college's pass rate rose to 86% in 2002. The college is currently seeking to improve retention rates, which are below national averages at levels 1 to 3. Only at level 2 has the steady decline over recent years been halted.

5. The standard of work was at least satisfactory in all but a few lessons, and in just over half the lessons, students were making good progress. Attainment was best in some courses in business, hospitality, catering and sports, leisure and tourism, and health and social care. Many literacy and numeracy students were also making good progress. In each of the areas inspected, many students were acquiring valuable practical skills, gaining a good understanding of essential concepts and developing personal and learning skills. For example, in motor vehicle engineering, students demonstrated good control of paint spraying equipment and were able to calculate accurately gearbox ratios. In art and design, many students learned how to use tone and colour effectively.

Some of the best work was done by students who used sound prior knowledge or theory well to meet new challenges. For example, in travel and tourism, students used their knowledge of resorts and destinations effectively to prepare and make presentations. Similarly, in engineering, level 2 students drew on their experience of real production operations in their manufacturing of bars of soap. Students using drop-in facilities improved their basic literacy, for example, their phonic, punctuation and spelling skills. Weaker students often failed to acquire essential skills, found it difficult to link theory and practice or came to a lesson without sufficient preparation.

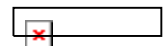
6. Attendance for students of this age group was best in childcare, engineering, health and social care, hair and beauty, and visual and performing arts. It was poorest in construction and motor vehicle engineering.

Adult learners

7. Over the last three years, the number of enrolments by adults has fallen at levels 1 and 3 but remained fairly constant at level 2. There has been a steady increase in the number of enrolments for short courses. In 2001/02, adult learners accounted for just over 60% of enrolments. Over the three years to 2002, pass rates at levels 1 and 2 have stabilised at figures well above national averages; the college's pass rates in 2002 were 77% at both levels. However, the pass rate at level 3 fell from 84% in 2001, when the national average was 69%, to 71% in 2002. Retention rates at level 1 fell to 70% in 2002, well below the most recent national average. At level 2, retention rates have varied and the 2002 figure of 75% was close to the previous year's national average. At level 3, retention rates improved from 73% in 2000 to 76% in the following two years; just below the national average. For the substantial number of adults involved in short courses, retention rates are stable at 95%, while the pass rate has risen steadily to 86% in 2002.

8. Along with its partners in the community, the college has worked hard to reach under-represented groups and to meet local needs. Many adults are acquiring valuable skills and improving their formal qualifications. The best work seen during the inspection was in hair and beauty, hospitality, catering and sports, leisure and tourism, motor vehicle engineering, business, and construction. The overall standard of work seen was better than that of students aged 16 to 18. Students were particularly good at applying their learning to new tasks. For example, in business studies, students demonstrated their good knowledge of trading accounts and balance sheets by producing accounts for manufacturing organisations. In ICT, students developed their individual learning skills and made rapid progress. Hospitality and catering students showed a good understanding of nutrition and healthy diets in their planning of menus for a range of establishments, including hospitals, schools and prisons. As with the younger age group, not all students were able to grasp the essential underpinning concepts or make sufficient progress in practical skills. Attendance during the inspection ranged from 59% in business to 89% in health and social care. It was good in work-based learning.

Quality of education and training



9. Inspectors graded teaching and learning in 203 sessions. Most teaching is satisfactory or better and the teaching of most practical work is good or better. Teaching was good or better in 66.5% of sessions, satisfactory in 29.1% and less than satisfactory in 4.4%. The teaching was excellent in less than 1% of sessions. In hair and beauty courses, all of the sessions were good or very good. In automotive engineering, childcare and counselling and visual and performing arts, over 70% of sessions were good or better and there was no unsatisfactory teaching or learning. The lessons in which teaching was unsatisfactory were spread across the remainder of the curriculum areas. The grades for learning were slightly lower than those for teaching in engineering, technology and manufacturing, motor vehicle engineering, hair and beauty and visual and performing arts. The proportion of good and very good teaching sessions has improved since the previous inspection.

Similarly, the learning of adults is better than that of students aged 16 to 18. The teaching of full-time staff is a little better than that of part-time and agency staff. Teaching on level 2 courses is slightly better than on levels 1 and 3.

10. In the best sessions, learners take risks and experiment within a highly supportive environment. Teaching imaginatively supports individual learning needs; students participate in interesting exercises and support each other well. In the good and very good sessions, teachers make clear links between theory and practice. Good use is made of the vocational background of teachers' and learners' own life experiences to support learning and develop industry skills. Students in visual and performing arts apply their theory research well to their practical work. Students are confident with the material and tutors provide a good range of support for their studies. Lively use of discussions and question-and-answer sessions is made to challenge and extend students' learning. In motor vehicle engineering, sport and recreation, and travel and tourism, facilities as good as those found in industry help prepare students for employment. Good use is made of work placements to enhance and extend learning in childcare, beauty therapy and business administration. However, hairdressing learners have limited work experience.

11. Although, in some areas, teaching and learning overall are satisfactory, for example, health and social care and engineering, much of the theory teaching is unimaginative. There is some uninspiring teaching in several areas of learning. Although all lessons are taught by vocationally experienced staff, theory lessons are often tutor-centred with an over-reliance on 'talk and chalk' methods. There is insufficient use of ICT in most sessions. In some areas, for example, sport and recreation, computers are insufficiently used to help students learn. In the poorer sessions, more able learners are not challenged enough and the needs of less able students are not met. Teaching materials, strategies and tasks are not matched closely enough to students' abilities and learning styles in such lessons. For most lessons, even where teaching was satisfactory, schemes of work and lesson plans are insufficiently detailed. In some engineering sessions and in music and drama, unacceptable high noise levels from adjoining workspaces interfere with learning.

12. Work-based learning was observed in five of the college's curriculum areas: construction; hair and beauty; engineering; motor vehicle; and business. In most cases, work-based learning is well structured and training is well co-ordinated to allow learners to practise their newly acquired knowledge of theory in the workplace. Engineering staff have helpfully re-worded the NVQ standards in language easily understood by most students, and business administration staff have produced a useful monitoring document. However, this good practice has not been shared with other curriculum areas. Most work-based learners are well supported by their employers, who take an active interest in their programmes and progress.

13. The college has done much work on key skills. Key skills are now effectively integrated into teaching in several areas, including construction and hairdressing and beauty, where they are taught by vocational staff. In other areas, for example engineering, where key skills are taught by key skills specialists, good links are made with the vocational area. In business administration, useful projects have been developed for college-based and work-based learners. Key skills are not yet sufficiently integrated into motor vehicle engineering or sport and recreation. Opportunities are missed to include key skills in some sport sessions.

14. In most curriculum areas, students are well motivated and punctual and they attend regularly. Attendance is particularly good in childcare, but is low in construction and on some computing courses.

15. Teaching staff are well qualified, many having relevant business and industrial experience, and they have good opportunities to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Following the recent reorganisation of the senior management team, the college has introduced a leadership and management training programme, and teachers have been invited to participate in units of interest to them. In-house training is free to all staff, including part-time and agency staff. Priority is given appropriately to staff needing to gain teaching qualifications and meet changing curricular requirements. The college has identified difficulties in recruiting staff to several curriculum areas and has some effective strategies to fill gaps that have adversely affected learning, as in literacy and numeracy.

16. The college site is attractive and welcoming. Buildings are well maintained and there is good access on the main site for students with disabilities. Access to the Islamic and Barton Centres is problematical for people with mobility difficulties. Most teaching areas are at least fit for purpose and some are excellent and enhance the quality of teaching and learning. For example, students in business, hair and beauty, and tourism benefit from their access to realistic work environments. Workshops for engineering, motor vehicle engineering and some construction courses, match or exceed industry standards. A purpose-built fitness suite is used effectively and the fitness and sports facilities are available to the local community. The study support centre is a valuable resource for students needing to improve their basic skills and the Beacon and Kingsway Centres provide good accommodation for college managers, HE and work with local employers. In a few cases, such as courses in computing and plumbing, accommodation does not match the number of students involved. Some practical areas, supporting work in catering, the performing arts and health and social care, are limited. Although reception and circulation areas are attractive and the college's clear house-style is evident in notices and displays, there are few easily accessible displays of students' work.

17. Resources, such as textbooks, handouts and materials, support students' learning well, and the current ratio of computers to full-time students is good at 1 to 3.5. The college's resource centre and library, recently remodelled and used well by students, supports the college's programmes adequately in most cases. There are appropriate strategies to improve links between the resource centre and curriculum teams in order to monitor and update resources. Little use was made of computers or audio visual aids in the lessons seen. A college intranet is in the early stages of development but is beginning to provide useful teaching and learning resources. There are ample well-lit car parks at the main site and at most outreach centres. Health and safety have been given priority; risk assessments are carried out efficiently and one outcome has been the provision of a suitable bus bay.

18. Overall, the assessment and monitoring of students' progress are good. All full-time students and those on substantial part-time courses have an initial assessment during the induction period. The assessment identifies an appropriate level of key skills to be achieved alongside the main qualification. Areas of additional support are identified, including any specialist equipment or service necessary, enabling the students to complete their studies. Although the preferred learning style of an individual is identified, this does not adequately inform teaching and assessment strategies. There was little evidence of additional materials or of a range of teaching and learning strategies to extend the more able or support the struggling learner in lessons. Results of diagnostic testing are shared with the student, curriculum tutor and student adviser. Additional support may include one-to-one work in the study centre, and support through small or large groups in class. However, many students do not take advantage of this additional support. Individual learning targets are negotiated during tutorials, and these inform the individual learning plan of the majority of learners. Progress towards targets is regularly monitored and reviewed effectively in most cases. Parents and, where appropriate, employers are kept informed of an individual's progress.

19. The college has a comprehensive internal verification and monitoring system. Assignments are submitted for approval to an internal verifier prior to being given to students. Assessments are well designed. Work is set at an appropriate level and is vocationally relevant. Assignment briefs are clear, identifying assessment criteria and specifying time scales for submission. Constructive written feedback along with time for discussion ensure that individuals understand aspects of their work that need to be improved. Teachers aim to return assignments within three working weeks and usually do so. There is a sound tracking system to monitor students' progress on many courses. However, there are ineffective tracking systems on some NVQ courses. Termly cross-college meetings for internal verifiers review reports by external verifiers and lead to any necessary remedial action.

20. The college has effective initiatives to widen participation and to reach under-represented groups. There are strong links between the college and the local and regional groups involved in regeneration and cultural integration. The timetabling of lessons is sensitive to the needs of adult students with childcare responsibilities. There are successful initiatives to encourage women into non-traditional subjects, including home maintenance and motor vehicle maintenance. 'Return to learn' courses successfully attract unemployed learners and the college works closely with a number of community venues, including the local Islamic centre, to provide a range of access points to FE.

The development of the college's provision is closely linked to the employment needs of the area. There is close involvement with local and national employers' forums in engineering, motor vehicle, early years and hairdressing.

21. There are good links with local schools and approximately 350 year 10 and 11 pupils currently attend around 40 different college programmes. In business administration, the links are excellent and the sessions are thoroughly prepared. However, in health and social care, too little attention has been paid to the initial assessment of pupils' abilities, resulting in some learning sessions that do not adequately meet their needs.

22. A good range of courses leading to additional qualifications is available to full-time students and many vocational tutors prescribe the additional subjects that students should study. However, there is too little access to non-accredited enrichment activities. In several curriculum areas, good use is made of visiting tutors and/or international trips to broaden students' experience. In many areas, the teaching of key skills is effectively managed and students have a clear understanding of their individual needs. There is good use of vocational evidence in key skills portfolios. However, a small number of students feel that they are studying key skills at an inappropriate level. In some areas, attendance at key skills sessions is unsatisfactory.

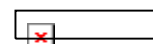
23. The college has been careful to avoid duplication of provision with other local providers of FE. In most subjects, a good range of programmes is available, though early years provision in community venues is inadequate and the college is currently developing its work with local employers to provide focused training in literacy and numeracy in the workplace. Progression between levels within the college is generally good, though there is not enough data on trends in students' progression.

24. Support and guidance for students are good. The college provides good pre-entry guidance to prospective students and there are effective links with local schools, including initial guidance and advice to year 10 and 11 pupils. The college also provides open evenings, careers events and opportunities for pupils to experience their chosen subject before making their final decision. The college provides interviews with both a vocational tutor and, where appropriate, a support tutor. Students are given a good induction to both the college and their programme of learning. College and course handbooks effectively outline the assignments and assessments involved in achieving their qualification. Students' awareness of equality of opportunity is raised during induction and all students receive a useful leaflet outlining the college's policies on harassment and bullying. Late starters receive a mini induction at the end of September. The college aims to assess the key skills abilities of all its students at the start of their programme. However, only 84% have been tested in 2002/03, and of those students identified as needing support, only 58% accepted the offer. The learning support is well managed and generally effective, and support tutors provide regular reports on students' progress.

25. Attendance is carefully monitored and all students absent without authorisation are telephoned on the first day of their absence. Attendance data is collected manually and students' average attendance is calculated each month. The data cannot, however, provide useful information on detailed attendance patterns.

26. Students receive good tutorial support each week. Vocational tutors and student advisers work well together to provide a balanced tutorial programme which includes sessions on the broader social issues and specific vocational support. Students' progress is effectively monitored in regular individual tutorials. Good careers advice is available from a range of staff, including the vocational tutors, student advisers, visiting professionals and the resident Connexions advisers. Guidance and advice for those wishing to progress into HE are good.

Leadership and management



27. Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection, a new principal has been appointed and a new management structure established. The college is making good progress in establishing common goals, shared values and a single culture. Governors and senior managers have a clear view of the strategic direction of the college and of its mission in the local community. This mission is reflected in 12 strategic priorities which emphasise the college's commitment to widening participation, high quality curriculum and continuous improvement, raising students' achievement, and developing closer links with the community, local schools and employers. Since the previous inspection, there have been improvements in overall pass rates, especially at level 2, although level 3 pass rates fell back in 2003. Attempts to improve retention rates have met with mixed results.

28. Governors monitor effectively the college's progress against objectives in the operational plan. The strategic plan is based on a detailed needs analysis which considers demography, location and access, local industry needs, local employment trends and relevant social issues. The plan is underpinned by a detailed development plan with clear performance targets, risk analysis and monitoring arrangements. The development plan is updated and formally agreed by governors annually. Governors receive regular updates and reports from a range of strategic committees and many individual governors have good links with curriculum areas.

29. The college has a comprehensive and effective network of strategic partnerships including those with schools, community groups, colleges, local companies and HE. It works closely with the local education authority on its Increasing Flexibility Initiative, which involves nine local schools. A joint bid with two other colleges to form a Centre of Vocational Excellence in food manufacturing technology, engineering maintenance and business improvement techniques has been successful. A college subsidiary company has excellent relationships with local employers and provides a good range of full cost bespoke training courses.

30. The management structure is clear and effective. One of the four directorates covers the four curriculum schools, each consisting of a number of related courses, managed by an assistant director and effectively supported by course teams. Accountability is clearly and rigorously defined, and the consolidation of curriculum areas into a single directorate has led to a more consistent approach to improving teaching and learning.

31. Communication is good throughout the college. Teams meet regularly and a monthly newsletter updates staff on a wide range of issues, including strategic plans, changes to policies and procedures, staff development, finance and future events. The college intranet also provides a valuable reference point.

32. Quality assurance procedures are effective and are based on a comprehensive range of policies. There is good action planning at curriculum level and targets are reviewed regularly. A standards team monitors the performance of the college through a two-year internal inspection cycle. This process covers the work of all curriculum areas and of the management and service teams. Strengths and weaknesses are identified, action plans are agreed, performance is monitored and progress reports are fed back regularly to the academic board and governors. The self-assessment process, based on clear standards and aligned with the common inspection framework, is thorough and largely effective. In a few cases, the link between curriculum self-assessment reports and the corresponding development plans are ineffective. Since the self-assessment and development planning cycle does not align with the publication of retention and achievement data from the previous year, targets and priorities do not utilise current college data effectively. The college's self-assessment report was over-generous in its grading of several curriculum areas.

33. The college's lesson observation programme is satisfactory and the overall profile of grades awarded matches closely those given during the inspection. However, the needs of teachers are not fully met since subject specialists do not necessarily play a part in the current system. The college ensures that generic features of good practice in teaching and learning are shared through a programme of development workshops for staff.

34. Staff development is well managed and linked clearly to the college's strategic objectives and the needs of individuals. Staff are appraised annually by their line manager. Goals, targets and training needs are identified, a personal development plan is agreed, and issues related to absences, sickness and poor performance are handled systematically.

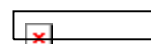
35. Curriculum management is at least satisfactory and good in several cases. Where it is most effective, managers have established a strong team culture and roles and responsibilities are understood by all. Course teams meet regularly to consider such matters as enrolments, retention rates, students' progress, curriculum planning and quality assurance. Staff are aware of the college's mission and strategic priorities, and they are fully involved in self-assessment. However, staffing difficulties in one curriculum area at the time of the inspection adversely affected some aspects of learning and development.

36. The college's management information system is reliable, well structured and easy to use. It provides accurate and up-to-date information at curriculum, school, course and student levels for a wide range of users. Staff can track students' progress easily and managers can evaluate the cost effectiveness of their programmes.

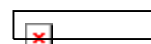
37. The college's commitment to equal opportunities is strongly reflected in its strategic priorities, structure, and policies. An equal opportunities co-ordinator and the equality and diversity committee meet termly to review policies and practice, including race relations. Staff training and students' induction programmes cover equal opportunities well. The college has been active in establishing community links in areas with substantial minority ethnic populations. For example, it has opened an Islamic centre with good information technology (IT) facilities and separate rooms for men and women. Courses are offered in outreach centres in basic skills, IT and English for speakers of other languages. Wherever possible, childcare support is offered. A curriculum audit has considered the suitability of learning resources for diverse groups and good practice has been disseminated through the college's newsletter. Most staff and students have a good awareness of equal opportunities issues. However, currently the college does not sufficiently analyse the retention and pass rates of particular groups.

38. The college did not achieve its unit target for part-time enrolments in 2001/02. The result has been a significant repayment to the local LSC. The college and local LSC have not been fully aware of the impact of this on the assessment of the college's financial health. The corporation now has a strategy for improving its financial position. A voluntary severance scheme is expected to achieve staff cost savings of £200,000 per annum in future years. The budget for part-time staff has been reduced from 6% to 4%, with a significant reduction in agency teaching staff. A revised target-setting process has been introduced to set more realistic and achievable targets for full-time and part-time students. The number of budget holders has been reduced in order to maintain a tighter control on budget spending. The process has succeeded in raising managers' awareness of the cost effectiveness of their courses and, as a result, a number of courses have been withdrawn and more will be. The deployment of resources is carefully managed. The college monitors staff workloads and room utilisation to ensure efficient use of resources. However, the accommodation strategy indicates that room utilisation is not sufficiently efficient. Overall, the college provides satisfactory value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Construction



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

The contributory grade for work-based learning is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- very good retention and pass rates on GNVQ advanced construction and the built environment

- good achievement for modern apprentices in plumbing and electrical installation

- good progression for full-time level 1 craft students

- good range of provision.

Weaknesses

- little variety in teaching methods for theory

- some poor accommodation and learning resources

- little use of targets in reviews for work-based learners

- poor attendance in some classes.

Scope of provision

39. The college provides a good range of construction programmes from level 1 to level 3. These include traditional programmes in bricklaying, wood occupations, painting and decorating, plastering, plumbing, and electrical installation. Technician programmes are also offered. There are programmes for school links and taster courses for younger pupils through the Construction Industry Training Board Construction Curriculum Centre. Students attend full time, on day release or during the evening only. Short courses for industry in electrical installation, plumbing and gas testing are also offered for professional updating and certification. At the time of inspection, there was a total of 441 students, including 74 on the college's own work-based learning programmes for plumbing and electrical installation. Nearly half the students are aged 16 to 18, most of whom are on full-time programmes, and 86% of students attend part time. Some 40% of students are on level 1

programmes. The college provides sub-contracted, off-the-job training and assessment in construction crafts for 39 students from a national training provider.

Achievement and standards

40. Retention and pass rates on GNVQ advanced courses are very good and have been consistently above the national averages for the past three years. Achievements for modern apprenticeships are good. On modern apprenticeships in plumbing, 88% of learners who left the programme achieved their NVQ while 69% completed the framework requirements, including key skills. For electrical installation, 58% of those who have left the programme achieved both the NVQ and the key skills requirements of the framework. However, there is slow progress for some modern apprentices in electrical installation. Of the 22 apprentices who started in 1989/90, seven completed beyond the expected completion date and 13 are in their fifth year and have still to complete. Retention and pass rates on many NVQ programmes were variable and some poor. The college has devised strategies to address this weakness. Full-time students undertake a short course where they can try different craft areas before they decide to pursue a trade in their chosen discipline. Although still at an early stage, retention and pass rates have improved last year.

41. Level 1 students progress well into employment and in the acquisition of further qualifications. In 1999/2000, 48 students started on the programme and of these 34 (71%) gained employment from the work experience provider arranged by the college. Some 28 of these students have subsequently returned to the college and successfully achieved their level 2 qualification. Nine have also achieved their level 3 and there are a further nine who are still working towards their level 3 qualification. A similar picture is emerging for students who started in 2000/01. Of the 56 students who started, 40 gained employment, 23 have achieved at level 2 and 20 have progressed to level 3, while nine are still working towards level 2.

42. Students' written work is good. Construction craft portfolios, in the main, are well organised and some are supported by photographic evidence. For example, one portfolio on NVQ plumbing contained detailed diagrams and photographs at different stages of the installation of a central heating system presented in a word-processed document. There is good practical skills development, particularly in painting and decorating, and bricklaying. The college provides opportunities for students to participate in regional craft skills competitions. In 2002, the college students won the Merlane Trophy for wood occupations.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Credit achievement code National Open College Network	1	No. of starts	21	38	50
		% retention	57	76	74
		% pass rate	100	97	97
NVQ trowel occupations (construction)	1	No. of starts	21	38	50
		% retention	57	76	74
		% pass rate	100	97	97
NVQ wood occupations (construction)	1	No. of starts	19	20	14
		% retention	63	70	79
		% pass rate	64	71	82
NVQ bricklaying (construction)	2	No. of starts	7	6	10
		% retention	71*	33	80
		% pass rate	100	50	100
GNVQ advanced	3	No. of starts	18	12	21

construction and the built environment	% retention	78	92*	81
	% pass rate	92	100	93

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

* data unreliable

Quality of education and training

43. Almost all of the teaching is at least satisfactory and in half of the lessons observed it was good. However, the teaching of theory showed too little variety. In many theory lessons, there was too much passive learning with students copying down notes from the board for long periods of time. In the better theory lessons, schemes of work were comprehensive and effective; lesson plans were well designed and had clear aims, and learning outcomes were identified. In many theory lessons, reference was made to realistic practical examples. Good use was made of students' industrial experience to illustrate key points. Teachers checked students' understanding regularly. The best theory lessons were linked effectively to practical activities. For example, in one theory painting and decorating lesson, the teacher explained, with the aid of a video, the production of different decorative effects. The techniques were then immediately practised in the workshop and the students produced a reflective account of what they had achieved. Learning was consolidated by a discussion of the key principles and techniques with the teacher.

44. Training in painting and decorating, bricklaying and electrical installation is undertaken in well-resourced and industry-standard workshops. However, there are insufficient hand tools for the number of learners in carpentry and joinery, and plumbing. Many tools are old, in a poor condition and need replacing. The plumbing workshops are poorly resourced and the work areas do not replicate realistic working situations. Students have to use unsuitable engineering benches and vices when working with copper pipes. Storage space for carpentry and joinery is insufficient and the work areas have become cluttered and untidy. Some of the specialist classroom teaching/resource areas are unsatisfactory. There is an adequate emphasis on health and safety.

45. Students work well both individually and in groups. Teachers provide continuous support in the form of guidance and instructions. Practical activities are generally well organised. Full-time craft learners benefit from project work in the college. At the time of inspection they were building a new facility for housing small animals.

46. Initial assessment is used well to identify an appropriate programme based on students' potential for key skills and their vocational interest. It is also used to identify any additional support needs. All students have a good induction programme that incorporates health and safety and equal opportunities issues. The progress of full-time students is monitored closely through one-to-one tutorials, during which students agree learning goals. Key skills are generally well integrated into the vocational programme. There is little use of information learning technology (ILT) by students and teachers.

47. Assessment and recording systems are consistent with the objectives of the course and methods of learning. On technician programmes, assignments are well written, relevant and of an appropriate level. All students are aware of assessment methods and the timing of assignments. Assessors' feedback to students is helpful and gives them sufficient direction and guidance to improve their work. Assessment is insufficiently used in the workplace. Some students have had to repeat practical tasks in the workshops when they have already displayed their competence in the workplace. Students find this frustrating and it slows their progress. There is good tracking and recording of students' achievements. Internal verification is satisfactory. For work-based students there is no effective target setting in reviews and employers are not directly involved in the setting of these targets. Individual learning plans are not updated as a result of reviews. Teachers and workplace supervisors are well qualified and experienced.

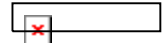
Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management of construction training within the college are satisfactory, although attendance on some courses is poor. During the inspection, the average attendance was 68%. Formal and informal communications within the construction provision are effective with regular and minuted team meetings. The roles and responsibilities of managers and other members of staff are clear, well documented and well understood by all concerned.

49. Liaison with local schools and the construction industry is good. The area is active in developing new programmes to meet the needs of students.

50. Course teams contribute to the self-assessment report following programme reviews which in turn informs the area's development plan. When making its judgements about the quality of provision, the self-assessment report for construction included the provision for which it is a subcontractor. However, the report is not sufficiently self-critical.

Engineering



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

Strengths

- very high pass rates and good retention rates on manufacturing courses
- very good resources to support learning in manufacturing training
- wide range of courses with good progression into employment and HE
- effective support for students
- strong and effective links with industry and schools.

Weaknesses

- extremely poor pass rates in engineering design
- low retention rates on many courses

- slow progress towards completion of work-based training qualifications

- some unimaginative teaching

- inadequate planning of lessons.

Scope of provision

51. The college provides a comprehensive range of full-time and part-time courses. Courses are in response to local demands and range from entry level to HE. Engineering courses include mechanical and manufacturing engineering, instrumentation and control, electrical maintenance, and fabrication and welding. Engineering design and production courses are also offered in computer-assisted design. Courses in electrical, plant maintenance and instrumentation engineering are also offered at National Certificate and National Diploma levels. There is a thriving NVQ provision at levels 1, 2 and 3 in welding and engineering. This wide range of courses allows good progression to HE courses, into apprenticeships and employment with local companies. There are 131 full-time and 565 part-time students in engineering. Some GCSE dual award (manufacturing) courses are provided in partnership with a consortium of local schools. The area also provides courses tailored to the needs of specific companies and this encourages strong links with local employers and helps to ensure that staff involved receive updating of skills in their vocational area.

Achievement and standards

52. There are very good retention and pass rates in engineering manufacture. Over the last three years, pass rates have been 100% in two instances with associated retention rates above 98%. This is in excess of national figures of 66% and 73% respectively. However, on the engineering design course, retention and pass rates are very poor. The pass rates over the last three years were 3%, 35% and 19%, compared to a national figure of 76%. Over the same period, retention rates were 78%, 74% and 70%. On work-based training, retention rates are also low in mechanical and electrical engineering. The retention figures for engineering manufacture at level 2 NVQ are 78%, 65% and 57%, compared to a national average of 80%. On National Diploma engineering and fabrication and welding courses at level 1, retention rates have decreased over the last three years. They were at 57% on the National Diploma, compared to the national average of 67%, and for level 1 fabrication and welding they were at 67% compared to the national average of 76%. There has been general decline in retention rates over the last three years. However, the management information system sometimes does not fully indicate that learners have left courses to enter employment.

53. In the lessons observed, most students worked well, either individually or in small teams, acquiring new skills and grasping essential concepts. Many applied previous learning or theory to new practical tasks, such as establishing a small-scale production line or building and testing electrical circuits. In most cases, students demonstrated essential skills such as calculation and drawing.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
National Diploma in	3	No. of starts	34	33	28

engineering		% retention	82	55	57
		% pass rate	75	61	79
National Certificate in engineering	3	No. of starts	46	25	29
		% retention	78	88	79
		% pass rate	94	82	84
NVQ in performing manufacturing operations	2	No. of starts	88	55	66
		% retention	100	96	88
		% pass rate	100	94	100
NVQ engineering manufacture	2	No. of starts	109	111	44
		% retention	78	65	57
		% pass rate	44	74	72
Engineering design	2	No. of starts	45	62	80
		% retention	78	74	70
		% pass rate	3	35	19
Welding and fabrication practice	1	No. of starts	9	36	15
		% retention	89	69	67
		% pass rate	30	37	80

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

Quality of education and training

54. All of the teaching was at least satisfactory and much of it was good, based on sound subject knowledge and effective use of good specialist resources. Very good relationships between staff and students led to a relaxed but purposeful atmosphere, conducive to good learning. Most students were highly motivated and worked well in theory lessons when they were given individual tasks while teachers provided effective one-to-one support and guidance. Teachers used question-and-answer sessions well to check and develop students' understanding but sometimes failed to direct questions to individuals. Some of the theory teaching relied on a narrow range of approaches; for example, there was little use of ILT.

55. There are very good resources in manufacturing training and these enhance students' learning. The production facility for soap manufacture provides excellent opportunities for students to gain practical experience in applying subject knowledge and quality techniques. As well as providing team building and leadership experience, the facility also offers opportunities for students to gain evidence of key skills. It is used by other courses in the curriculum school and by local companies. General workshop facilities in engineering, electrical maintenance and fabrication and welding are adequate for the courses currently offered. Resources in the workplace and associated learning are of a high standard. However, there is a lack of library books to support learning at level 3. The quality of furniture and teaching equipment in some classrooms is poor. Some lessons are disrupted by noise from adjoining areas in the workshop area.

56. There are strong and effective links with industry and local schools. An apprentice training scheme links eight local companies to the college. The 50 learners move between companies during their work-based training periods. On completion of their NVQ at level 2 they enter employment. There is normally a 100% success rate in finding employment for these learners. A major engineering institute has strong links with the college. It holds its local section meetings on the premises and donates an annual prize for instrument and control engineering students. Year 10 and 11 pupils attend the college to study for a GNVQ award in manufacturing and currently four groups are working towards a dual award. They use the college facilities to good effect. An annual

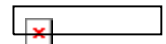
engineering challenge day is held for school pupils who take part in competitions designed to test their ingenuity in engineering design and production. During the inspection, a group of school-based learners had a one-day visit to a regional electronics company to give them a greater understanding of manufacturing.

57. In work-based training, trainees are visited on a monthly basis and are well supported by employers. The assessor in electrical maintenance has translated the NVQ units into plain language to assist learners' understanding of the content of units. There is one book for each unit and it includes typical tasks for assessment purposes and underpinning knowledge tests. Some employers pay a bursary to their learners. An apprentice award is presented at an annual celebration event. A local police officer gives frequent talks to student groups on the dangers of driving. This guidance and pastoral support initiative is very effective in raising awareness of important issues.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory. One of the governors is an engineer and regularly works with course staff to review strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment report was compiled from course review and evaluation data, to which staff contribute by regular planned meetings. The monitoring of work-based training is improving, with interim targets being set at reviews. However, reviews do not sufficiently cover equal opportunities in the workplace. In electrical maintenance, the internal verifier has not observed the assessor in assessment work in the workplace. Internal verification of academic courses is, however, satisfactory. Recent college restructuring is having a positive effect on the performance of the area. The quality of work-based learning is satisfactory and improving.

Motor vehicle engineering



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

Strengths

- extensive and appropriate range of courses and progression routes

- good retention and pass rates on the vehicle body repair part 2 programme

- good retention on the City and Guilds 398 part 1 vehicle body repair programme

- much good teaching

- excellent practical workshop facilities enhancing the students' learning experience

- good work-based learning
- good assessment of students' practical tasks.

Weaknesses

- slow completion of work-based learners' qualification framework
- key skills insufficiently embedded in the vocational curriculum
- inadequate matching of teaching materials and strategies to students' ability in some cases.

Scope of provision

59. The motor vehicle curriculum area is situated on the main college site in purpose-built accommodation. Motor vehicle courses include light and heavy vehicle mechanics, body repair, paint refinishing, vehicle parts, car sales and vehicle valeting. A good range of professional and recreational courses is also offered. The college offers a wide range of modes of attendance, including full-time, part-time, evening and work-based learning. Courses range from foundation to level 3. The programme area has good links with local industry and these have resulted in many benefits for learners, notably donations of equipment and components and the college's sponsorship of several motorsport companies. The college's motor vehicle department manages work-based learning and half of the 115 students are undertaking NVQ qualifications. Modern apprenticeship programmes are provided at foundation and advanced levels. Currently there are 45 foundation modern apprentices and 14 advanced modern apprentices undergoing training. There are 515 enrolments on motor vehicle programmes, 145 of which are full time. There are 267 part-time students. Learners aged 19 and above total 224 and mainly undertake part-time programmes. Approximately 12 full-time equivalent teachers, 3 full-time equivalent support staff and one administrator support students and staff within the department. Two training officers support work-based learners and contribute to their assessments and progress reviews.

Achievement and standards

60. Retention rates in the programme area are good. All main programmes have retention rates at or above the national average for this programme area. The City and Guilds 3980-02 vehicle body repair and the NVQ 2 in vehicle mechanics have particularly good retention rates at 100% and 94% respectively. The NVQ 2 programme in vehicle mechanical and electrical systems has a pass rate at the national average. In 2000/01, the City and Guilds 3810 motor vehicle craft studies programme had a pass rate at the national average. Many level 1 students enter programmes with very poor qualifications or no prior achievement. Retention rates for work-based learners are good but achievement of the full framework is slow. Curriculum managers and course teams have developed and implemented strategies to improve the situation. Practical work is carried out to a good standard, which is commensurate with industrial standards throughout the programmes.

61. Most students grasped essential concepts and terminology easily and acquired the skills necessary for their course. For example, students had a good understanding of a car's ignition system and could accurately identify its components. Among specific skills were the ability to 'fade' paint into adjoining panels when completing a repair, use hand tools effectively, and follow detailed scale drawings. Many students had a good understanding of the impact of cars on the environment and the economy. Most had a sound knowledge of the vehicle repair industry.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ in vehicle body repair	3	No. of starts	24	22	5
		% retention	67	58	100
		% pass rate	50	20	100
NVQ in vehicle mechanical and electronic systems	2	No. of starts	47	48	32
		% retention	47	68	94
		% pass rate	62	79	56
City and Guilds 3810 motor vehicle craft studies	3	No. of starts	12	11	*
		% retention	67	82	*
		% pass rate	58	67	*
City and Guilds 3980-02 vehicle body competences	2	No. of starts	26	25	16
		% retention	96	80	100
		% pass rate	72	100	75
City and Guilds 3980-01 vehicle body competences	1	No. of starts	66	24	44
		% retention	95	83	79
		% pass rate	56	37	71

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

* course did not run this year

Quality of education and training

62. Most of the teaching is good and much is very good. In the most successful lessons, teachers based the work on detailed planning and clearly stated objectives, often related to current industrial practice or processes. Teachers made effective use of the very good practical workshops, which exceeded standards often found in industry and which provided a realistic working environment. Often, students were able to proceed well at their own pace, either because the activities were clearly defined practical tasks or when particularly good written guidelines supported students. A few lessons were less well planned, did not sufficiently engage students or lacked pace and contained insufficiently challenging activities. In a few examples, teaching materials and strategies did not adequately meet the needs of individuals.

63. Students are guided onto suitable courses but not all students identified through initial assessment as needing additional support take up the offer. Assessment and monitoring of work-based learners are good, and are based on effective links between college staff and employers. There are also good assessment arrangements for college-based practical work, where performance criteria are clearly defined and adhered to. However, students' written work is given less attention; some errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar remain uncorrected. This is an example of a failure to embed work on basic skills in the vocational curriculum. Arrangements for verification are good and external verification reports are positive. Tutorial support for students is good and their

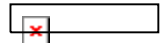
learning plans, progress and targets are reviewed regularly. Students benefit from tutorials, which involve guest speakers and subject specialists. A particularly effective session included a contribution by a police officer who talked to students about the effects of road traffic accidents.

64. Teachers are well qualified and while some have recent industrial experience, others take advantage of the college's good links with industry to keep up to date with technological developments. Other forms of professional development, such as attending conferences and seminars, play their part in a coherent staff development strategy.

Leadership and management

65. The motor vehicle programme area is led and managed effectively. Strong industrial links have been developed between staff and employers. Areas of concern have resulted in appropriate action plans and strategies developed. Course teams meet frequently. Students' progress and performance are regularly discussed at course team meetings. Although targets are set for performance at course team level, progress in the area of target setting and monitoring is hampered by some inaccurate management information. The self-assessment report is largely accurate but is insufficiently critical of the standard of teaching and learning.

Business



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

Strengths

- effective strategies to improve retention and pass rates

- much good teaching

- thorough and regular assessment helping students to improve their work

- good support for students' personal development

- rigorous internal verification.

Weaknesses

- poor retention and pass rates in apprenticeships

- o poor pass rates on the diploma in secretarial administration

- o insufficient recording and monitoring of teachers' industrial experience.

Scope of provision

66. The college currently provides the full-time diploma in secretarial administration (DIPSA), the private secretary's diploma, the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) double award in business and the National Certificate in business and e-commerce courses for 55 students aged 16 to 18. In response to Curriculum 2000, the college replaced the advanced GNVQ business with the AVCE course and seven students continued into the second year of the AVCE course. However, due to low enrolments, a National Diploma in business and e-commerce has replaced the AVCE course this year. Full-time courses in accounting, the DIPSA and a fast-track private secretaries certificate are provided for 34 students aged 19 and over. The college provides a good range of part-time, business-related courses in accounting, business studies, administration and administrative management. Modern apprenticeships are also offered. Currently, there are 11 advanced modern apprentices, 25 foundation modern apprentices and one NVQ training learner in administration. In accounting, there are two advanced modern apprentices and three foundation modern apprentices. The college has established good links with a local school to develop the 14 to 16 national initiative and provides a GCSE business course for a group of Year 10 pupils.

Achievement and standards

67. Pass rates on the AVCE course were very good in 2001/02, showing a good improvement on the GNVQ rates. Retention rates on the private secretary's certificate in audio transcription are good, improving from 79% in 2000 to 100% in 2002, although enrolments have steadily declined. Pass rates on this course have also improved. Pass rates on the DIPSA are poor, declining from 67% in 2001 to 15% in 2002. Pass rates on NVQ level 4 accounting have declined to the national average. There are poor retention rates and poor achievement of apprenticeships, although 50% achieved an NVQ. The area has succeeded in its efforts to improve overall retention and pass rates. In the current year, the achievement of full apprenticeship programmes has significantly improved. Many current students demonstrate good research and analytical skills, their work is of a good standard and appropriate levels of attainment are reached. Much of the evidence produced by work-based learners is of a good standard and clearly demonstrates their development of sound occupational skills.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ advanced business (1999/2000, 2000/01) AVCE business (2001/02)	3	No. of starts	18	18	19
		% retention	56	56	80
		% pass rate	60	60	90
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	19	19	33
		% retention	79	89	72
		% pass rate	62	71	61
Private secretary's	3	No. of starts	33	26	9

transcription		% pass rate	42	26	60
NVQ accounting	4	No. of starts	17	6	19
		% retention	82	83	84
		% pass rate	75	100	44
Diploma in secretarial administration	2	No. of starts	*	17	19
		% retention		75	74
		% pass rate		67	15
Foundation modern apprenticeship administration	2	No. of starts	1	11	28
		% retention	100	91	57
		% pass rate	100	9	0
		% still in learning	0	18	57
Certificate in administration management	3	No. of starts	15	22	19
		% retention	93	86	79
		% pass rate	73	79	73

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

68. There is much good teaching which motivates students and extends their learning. Schemes of work and lessons are well planned. In most lessons, teachers make good use of a variety of methods to suit students' different learning styles. Teachers use probing questions effectively to confirm individual learning and challenge students. In the best lessons, lively but structured discussions help students to explore ideas. Students are encouraged and supported in the development of their computer skills. Well-designed key skills projects for ICT are used effectively. The college has good links with industry. Guest speakers provide an opportunity for students to explore further particular aspects of business, for example business planning and e-business. Visits to local businesses are an integral part of some programmes. All full-time students have a period of work experience during their course. Work-based learning programmes closely involve employers and provide good on-the-job training. Some on-the-job and off-the-job training is well co-ordinated but co-ordination remains largely unrecorded.

69. Resources are satisfactory. A good range of textbooks, videos and journals supports vocational and professional programmes. Students regularly practise administrative activities in a realistic work environment. They have access to modern computers and most classrooms, have whiteboards, overhead projectors and screens. Teaching staff have access to computers but in some areas, the ratio of computers to staff is low. Staff have relevant vocational and teaching qualifications and many are qualified assessors and internal verifiers.

70. Thorough and regular assessment is used effectively to help students improve their work. In the majority of lessons, there is frequent and often challenging assessment of students' learning and attainment. Homework is regularly set, marked and returned promptly to students with detailed written feedback, and any necessary additional support is given. Work-based learners are assessed frequently and systematically. Valid judgements are made against standards. Constructive feedback is given to students in order to identify gaps in knowledge and skills, and appropriate action plans are drawn up. An excellent document for tracking the progress of apprentices has recently been introduced to record and monitor progress and learners and employers are given copies of this document.

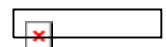
71. Good links have been established with local businesses in order to provide opportunities for work placements for apprentices and work experience for all full-time students, even though this is not a specified requirement of their programme. Timetables for mature students are sufficiently flexible to accommodate those with school-age children. Many students participate in the good range of enrichment activities available. For example, eight of the 11 students on the DIPSA are completing the British sign language course and nine students from the advanced secretarial programme are currently completing the driving test theory course. Students are encouraged to take additional related vocational qualifications such as legal and medical text processing to enhance their employability skills.

72. Support for personal development is good. Good pre-course guidance enables learners to make an informed choice. Students value the thorough induction provided and their tutorials. Initial assessment of key skills is carried out for all students to identify any additional learning needs and appropriate support is offered. The tutorial scheme is well planned through close liaison between student advisers and vocational tutors. Students are well informed and supported on a wide range of pastoral issues such as study skills, equal opportunities and disability awareness in sessions that are taught by student advisers. Personal support is provided through individual interviews, group activities and careers events. Tutorials for mature students focus mainly on career guidance.

Leadership and management

73. Effective strategies have recently been implemented to improve retention and pass rates. Curriculum area review and evaluation make good use of management information data on retention and achievement rates to set and measure targets against benchmarks. The poor retention and achievement rates of apprentices was recognised by the curriculum area through course reviews and the self-assessment process. An appropriate action plan for improvement, involving training for employers, assessment deadlines linked to individual learning plans, and a diary to monitor visits to learners has been developed and implemented. To improve retention rates on the diploma in secretarial administration, the programme has been modified to set more interim learning goals for students. There are good formal and informal communications within the business team. Since December 2002, student tracking has been improved and is now more regularly monitored across all programmes. Internal verification is rigorous. The frequency of internal verification has improved the opportunities for unit accreditation, recording of progress and feedback. Staff attend a good range of internal and external training. However, although they undertake some updating of their industrial experience, there is no system to monitor and record this accurately. The lead body for administration requires assessors to demonstrate current occupational competence.

Information and communications technology



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

Strengths

- good retention and pass rates on GNVQ intermediate ICT and computer maintenance courses

- good teaching and learning in computer application courses

- wide range of courses and opportunities for progression

- good feedback to learners on their progress.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on level 1 courses
- insufficient variety of teaching methods on full-time courses
- quality assurance arrangements of variable quality.

Scope of provision

74. The college offers an extensive range of courses from entry level to HE, at the main college site, the Kingsway Centre, the Immingham Resource Centre and at satellite centres in Brigg, Barton, Crosby and Crowle. Full-time provision includes GNVQ foundation and intermediate ICT, Business Technology Education Council (BTEC), National Diploma, City and Guilds, and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA examinations certificates in computing. Part-time courses include those leading to the CISCO Certified Network Associate qualification, and computer applications. Most courses are at levels 1 or 2 and are taught in traditional classes. A smaller number of courses are based on self-paced open learning workshops supported by tutors, supplemented on some courses by traditional classroom sessions.

Achievement and standards

75. Pass rates are very high and are rising on GNVQ ICT courses and a high proportion of students achieve high grades at the intermediate level. Pass rates are high on European Computer Driving Licence and the City and Guilds electronics and computer systems diploma. They are satisfactory elsewhere. The retention rates on the City and Guilds electronics diploma and the GNVQ intermediate in IT are good, but they are poor on the GNVQ foundation in ICT and computer literacy and information technology. On other courses, retention rates are generally satisfactory, although they have fallen below national averages in the national diploma in computer studies and integrated business technology level 2 courses for 2001/02. During the inspection, the average attendance was low at 74% and attendance at tutorials was poor.

76. Many students made rapid progress and were able to work through individual tasks, supported by knowledgeable teachers, who provided effective one-to-one support and gave clear instructions. Some adult learners were able to build their own personal computers after just four weeks. Another group could install multiple hard drives after a similar period. A computer maintenance group repaired computers for businesses based in the same outreach centre. Beginners of all ages made good progress and learned from their errors. In just a few cases, students failed to follow instructions and did not complete tasks.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
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GNVQ foundation ICT	1	No. of starts	*	8	12
		% retention	*	63	67
		% pass rate	*	80	100
GNVQ intermediate ICT	2	No. of starts	26	54	50
		% retention	46	84	86
		% pass rate	83	88	93
National diploma in computer studies	3	No. of starts	47	50	63
		% retention	74	78	61
		% pass rate	97	92	86
City and Guilds 7261 (electronics)	2	No. of starts	44	85	49
		% retention	86	80	86
		% pass rate	86	87	80
IBT 2	2	No. of starts	306	295	208
		% retention	88	87	74
		% pass rate	85	80	74
IBT 3	3	No. of starts	42	31	39
		% retention	83	94	84
		% pass rate	56	66	53
Computer literacy and information technology (1 year)	1	No. of starts	520	583	440
		% retention	79	71	69
		% pass rate	74	77	73

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

* course did not run in this year

Quality of education and training

77. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. In the better lessons, teachers motivate and engage students successfully by providing interesting tasks and by paying attention to the needs of individuals. For example, one lesson plan showed different activities in lessons for the more and less able, so that each student was challenged and stretched according to their abilities. However, in the poorer lessons, teaching is lacklustre and does not meet the needs of individual learners; the rate of progress is too slow, and the more able learners become bored and lose interest.

78. Teachers are suitably qualified and all staff have a teaching qualification or are working towards one. They have relevant technical competence, but not all have sufficient recent industrial and commercial experience. Teachers develop good relationships with learners and successfully promote good discipline in class. They keep accurate records of students' progress and provide useful written feedback on submitted work. Most students are clear about how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve. Young people are not set homework, but independent study time is included in their timetable. This successfully avoids disadvantaging learners who do not have a computer at home. Adult learners are highly motivated and make good progress. Students in computer maintenance classes and outreach centres were particularly enthusiastic. There is a systematic approach to identifying staff development needs and this is helping to broaden provision as staff develop expertise in the more technical courses. The quality of computer rooms is adequate but there are not enough rooms for the number of classes, and some timetables have long gaps while students wait for rooms to become available.

79. Assignments are well planned and have clear grading criteria. Their deadlines are staggered throughout the year and successfully avoid overloading students. Most feedback on assignments is very good and students are given clear, detailed written advice on how to improve their work. Teachers have effective tracking mechanisms for monitoring students' progress, but these lack consistency in computing and computer maintenance courses. Initial assessment and advice are good, and there are few learners who feel they are on the wrong course.

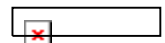
80. Links with local schools are good. However, links with industry do not currently provide sufficient work experience for students or opportunities for industrial updating for staff. Provision for New Deal clients is good in computer maintenance classes which offer qualifications that are particularly well regarded in the IT industry.

81. There is good access to careers advice and guidance for 16 to 18 year olds. The tutorial system provides students with good support. A weekly tutorial is included in the timetable for full-time students and this is effective in helping them to catch up on missed work, or to receive extra individual support. Specialist teachers provide effective support for those with additional learning needs. However, not enough students are encouraged to take up the offer of support. As has been recognised by management, support and guidance at one outreach centre have been poor. There are inadequate strategies for improving attendance in some courses or for analysing the causes of poor attendance.

Leadership and management

82. Computing teaching is provided within three of the college's curriculum areas, each with its own manager. There is good teamwork and commitment to widening participation within the community provision. Quality assurance procedures are inconsistent. Although there are many instances of good practice, this is not sufficiently well shared throughout the area of learning. For instance, some course reviews are thorough and rigorous, while others fail to identify weaknesses, and fail to use targets and benchmarks to evaluate performance. Although the self-assessment reports lack detail and do not identify weakness in provision, the current managers have recognised most of the issues noted by inspectors, and have already started to take action to improve matters.

Hospitality, catering and sport, leisure and tourism



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

Strengths

- good and some very good pass rates on many courses
- wide range of resources in tourism and sport
- good progression routes in sport and tourism
- good additional qualifications in sport, tourism and uniformed services

- high standard of industry practice in sport.

Weaknesses

- some poor planning of teaching and learning
- some hospitality accommodation not reflecting industry standards
- insufficient progression routes for craft based students
- poor pass rates in GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism and craft NVQs
- some slow progress in practical catering courses.

Scope of provision

83. A good range of sport and tourism courses is provided from level 1 to level 3. There are good progression routes for students in sport and tourism on full-time courses. The range of courses in hospitality and catering is limited and there are insufficient progression routes for craft-based students. Short courses for the licensed trade and in food hygiene meet the needs of the local hospitality industry. There are 170 full-time students following courses in sport, uniformed services and leisure and tourism and 58 full-time students following courses in hospitality and catering. Part-time student numbers are low, particularly in sport, leisure and tourism. Arrangements are made to allow students to modify programmes to meet their needs. Many full-time sport and tourism students gain additional qualifications, such as awards in airfares and ticketing and as community sports leaders.

Achievement and standards

84. Pass rates on GNVQ programmes and short courses in hospitality and catering are good. There are high pass rates on the certificate in professional cookery courses. Retention and pass rates on NVQ programmes in catering are very variable and in some cases are poor because of the very low numbers starting courses. Students on NVQ catering courses can build up an individual programme of learning but success rates are still poor. Pass rates in NVQs in sport are good; level 1 pass rates are well above the 62% national average and 100% of students passed in 2002. Sports students achieve high standards in industry practice and use the fitness centre to develop customer service and operational skills. Pass rates on GNVQ leisure and tourism are below the national averages of 74% with 56% of students passing in 2002. Students in all subject areas demonstrate a good grasp of the theory underpinning their practical work. All full-time students attend key skills. Some assessment of these skills takes place in the college restaurant, fitness centre and travel agency. The quality of students' written work is good and course files are generally well presented and

organised. Most students are working at appropriate levels and produce some good quality class work.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hospitality, catering and sport and leisure and tourism, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ sport and recreation	1	No. of starts	29	33	13
		% retention	72	64	77
		% pass rate	90	90	100
Certificate in professional cookery 3220 1 year	1	No. of starts	23	13	19
		% retention	78	85	84
		% pass rate	78	91	90
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	16	15	18
		% retention	75	80	89
		% pass rate	50	75	56
First diploma science (sports studies)	2	No. of starts	*	18	12
		% retention	*	72	83
		% pass rate	*	92	90
NVQ sport, recreation and allied occupations	2	No. of starts	22	19	18
		% retention	86	84	94
		% pass rate	100	88	76
Pre-entry to uniformed services	2	No. of starts	25	15	15
		% retention	48	53	60
		% pass rate	100	50	89
GNVQ intermediate hospitality and catering	2	No. of starts	12	8	6
		% retention	42	75	100
		% pass rate	100	67	100
Basic food hygiene (short)	2	No. of starts	457	510	689
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	98	98	94
National diploma in travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	21	26	21
		% retention	90	73	50
		% pass rate	75	100	90

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

* course did not run in this year

Quality of education and training

85. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. The better lessons are characterised by their relevance to current industrial practice, and the good variety of class activities in some lessons challenges the students to consider ways of applying their knowledge. Students in an AVCE travel

and tourism group were able to teach each other about UK resorts and develop their presentation skills. Having spent time researching major cities, resorts and attractions they then involved the rest of the group in an innovative competition based on 'The Weakest Link'. Some NVQ sports students stuck labels onto each other to identify the body's major muscle groups and then visited the fitness room to see how those muscles moved and reacted in a training session. This information was then used well in the practical operation of the fitness equipment. In some lessons, there is insufficient planning and students are not encouraged to take notes or ask questions. Some poor tracking of students' progress adversely affected their overall achievement. For example, a catering student was not given opportunities to work in an area of production that would have allowed completion of a specific unit, but instead was doing tasks that had already been assessed as competent. There is some over-reliance on traditional teaching methods and students are not always challenged to extend their learning.

86. Resources in sport and tourism are good. The sports and fitness facility operates as a fitness club with paying clients and students help to run the facility. All three realistic working areas in the curriculum area are being used effectively to support learning. Some accommodation in hospitality and catering does not reflect industry standards. All teachers have good industry qualifications and experience. They provide good role models and bring up-to-date knowledge and experience to the classroom. For example, uniformed services students are improving levels of fitness by following realistic armed forces training programmes. Students are well supported in terms of learning resources. Materials and equipment are mostly up to date. The travel and tourism base room is particularly well resourced and students work from current manuals and IT based training systems. Maximum use is made of a new multi-use games area.

87. Assessments are vocationally relevant and well designed. Students receive positive and encouraging feedback on written work but guidance is not always given on how to improve grades. Students' files are well maintained and many indicate good progress. Internal verification processes are generally rigorous. There is some ineffective tracking of students' progress. All full-time students are assessed when they begin their studies. Students and staff use this assessment as a focus for individual learning plans. The wide choice of additional qualifications in sport and tourism means students can follow a programme of study that suits them. The choice of additional subjects in hospitality is more limited. Students are given good advice about their course at an initial interview. They also receive an effective induction to their programme and the industry they want to work in. Links with industry are good across all areas, particularly in uniformed services and catering. Enrichment activities are offered to all students and sport and uniformed services students are heavily involved in college sports teams. The strong tutorial support for all full-time students is tracked effectively and gives students the chance to be active in monitoring their own performance.

Leadership and management

88. The curriculum managers provide energetic and effective leadership. Course team meetings are held monthly and a clear record of action points is kept. Courses are well organised but some group timetables are poorly designed. Course teams contribute to self-assessment but development plans have not always been followed through and do not always lead to the desired improvements. The self-assessment report accurately identifies most strengths and weaknesses but not some important issues relating to teaching and data. Communications within the curriculum area are good. The new management structure ensures that curriculum areas are sensibly grouped. This is helping in planning for the future and in improving current performance, particularly in relation to teaching and learning. Group sizes on full-time courses are generally good and decisions have been made to subsidise some smaller groups. This has meant that additional subjects can be offered to full-time students to enhance their learning programme. Some full-time groups have been put together when numbers have fallen and this has been well managed by the teaching team. The use of agency staff is limited but when there is a specific need specialist staff are brought in.

Hair and beauty



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

Strengths

- good pass and retention rates

- high quality accommodation and resources

- good teaching and learning

- effective use of well-designed work packs

- good integration of key skills into courses

- well-planned work experience for beauty therapy students.

Weaknesses

- lack of clients in hairdressing

- slow progress in NVQ level 1 hairdressing courses

- little differentiation in lesson planning

- limited work experience for hairdressing students.

Scope of provision

89. The college offers a good range of provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy for both 16 to 18 and adult students. Full-time courses include NVQ courses in hairdressing at level 1 and 2 and in beauty therapy at levels 2 and 3. Level 3 hairdressing is not offered although it is planned for

September 2003. There is also a full-time, 'return to learn' 2-year hairdressing course designed for mature students. The beginners' hairdressing part-time course is also designed to fulfil the needs of mature students. In order to respond to local needs, a gents' barbering evening course has recently been organised. There are also currently 20 work-based learners on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes in hairdressing. Amongst the part-time beauty courses are reflexology, Indian head massage, body massage, manicure and pedicure and cosmetic make up. The return-to-learn beauty therapy course is a one-year part-time course and again is designed for mature students. The college has responded well to the needs of adult learners and continues to introduce courses that are flexible and can meet the needs of this group. The area offers taster and links courses for schools. This provision for the 14 to 16 cohort includes the opportunity of a formal qualification; an NVQ 1 in hairdressing for the pupils of the school.

Achievement and standards

90. There are good pass rates on most courses. Pass rates on hairdressing levels 1 and 2 in 2002 were 92% and 87%, both well above the national average of 86% and 79%, respectively. Pass rates on full-time level 3 beauty therapy courses have been more varied; in 2001, they were at 100% and in 2002 56%, compared with a national average of 80%. Pass rates on part-time beauty therapy courses are generally well above the national average with some courses continually gaining pass rates of 100%. Retention rates are good and on most courses they are above the national average. Students are gaining good practical skills on most courses and are acquiring the ability to work well with clients in a commercial situation. There is slow progress on the NVQ 1 in hairdressing with only two students achieving this qualification on the target date.

91. Most students make satisfactory progress, developing good professional skills and learning the importance of commercial standards. Students' good practical skills were demonstrated well in lessons that involved clients. In a few cases, students in the 16 to 18 age range were making poor progress towards their target qualifications. This was usually because students had an inadequate grasp of the concepts and skills needed to answer questions or handle new material.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hair and beauty, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Hairdressing NVQ	1	No. of starts	25	25	34
		% retention	88	80	75
		% pass rate	100	50	92
Hairdressing NVQ	2	No. of starts	17	70	104
		% retention	47	74	68
		% pass rate	75	91	87
Beauty therapy NVQ	2	No. of starts	37	31	36
		% retention	78	77	69
		% pass rate	59	82	72
Beauty therapy NVQ	3	No. of starts	14	13	17
		% retention	100	77	94
		% pass rate	79	100	56
Diploma in reflexology	3	No. of starts	15	12	14
		% retention	100	100	93
		% pass rate	93	100	100
Body massage certificate	3	No. of starts	42	39	35
		% retention	69	87	83

		% pass rate	90	97	100
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Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

Quality of education and training

92. The standard of teaching and learning is good. The teaching is particularly good and all the sessions were good or very good. All sessions have clear lesson plans, based on detailed schemes of work. Lessons are planned with clear objectives which are shared and discussed with students at the start of lessons. Although individual needs are met in most lessons, there is little evidence of planning to ensure that this happens. There is good use of the work packs that have been developed by the staff. These are used effectively by students in theory sessions and when completing projects to reinforce their learning.

93. Practical sessions are well planned and managed to ensure that students are kept productively employed even when there are no clients available. The lack of clients is often a problem in hairdressing and limits the assessment opportunities for some students. Professional standards are promoted and students learn the need for good customer skills. Assessment is carried out in these sessions and students understand the process and they are given constructive feedback at the end. These practical sessions are enhanced by the high standard of the accommodation.

94. The salons are of a good commercial standard with appropriate décor and they provide a supportive and realistic working environment for students in both hair and beauty courses. There is a particularly spacious reception area with many opportunities for retail sales. The salons are well equipped but there is a need to replace some of the electrical equipment in beauty therapy. The students use high quality products and computers are available for students' use in salons.

95. Students generally respond well in theory sessions which are planned to motivate and interest participants. Teachers use a good range of appropriate resources, such as up-to-date products and videos, to reinforce learning. There is good use of effective questioning, tests and gapped handouts to check learning. However, teachers could make more use of direct questioning in some classes.

96. Key skills have been effectively integrated into the work and all students complete a vocational project and attend well-planned IT sessions. There is evidence of their good IT skills in many of the well-presented projects. Appropriate key skills sessions are also available to help students who have to complete the external tests.

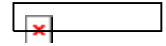
97. Beauty therapy students have well-planned work experience in a variety of prestigious organisations. Some of these work placements involve students in residential placements for periods up to two weeks. Some students gain employment as a result of these placements.

98. College staff make regular visits to the 20 work-based learners in their salons and effective reviews are carried out with the employers present. Employers have been provided with good guidance on the co-ordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training. Little work-based assessment takes place, although this is available where requested. Work-based learners enjoy their day in college and work with enthusiasm and interest in their practical sessions.

Leadership and management

99. There has been a new management structure since September last year. The new manager has worked effectively to ensure a team approach and staff feel that new structures have been introduced with the minimum of disruption. Roles and responsibilities are clear and understood by staff. There are regular, minuted and actioned meetings at course and departmental level. A clear course review structure links into a rigorous self-assessment process. Staff are involved in this process and the self-assessment report is generally accurate.

Health and social care



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

Strengths

- good pass rates on level 1 programmes
- productive links with external partners to develop work-based learning
- effective tutorial support
- good progression across the range of courses.

Weaknesses

- low and declining pass rates on first diploma and national diploma care
- weak retention rates on national certificate/diploma
- poor facilities for practical care training
- slow progress in NVQ care.

Scope of provision

100. The college offers a range of full-time and part-time provision in health and social care. There are 70 full-time 16 to 18 year students and 40 students who are 19 or over. Part-time provision currently has 29 16 to 18 year students and 358 who are 19 or over. Students are able to work towards: the BTEC first, national certificate and diploma in both care and health studies; NVQ from level 2 through to the registered manager award; GCSE and GCE AS psychology; and GCE AS biology. They can follow an access to HE programme and a range of short complementary programmes, including those in first aid and stress management. The majority of courses take place during the day and at the main site, although there are some part-time courses during the day and in

the evening. There are good progression routes from foundation through to HE, employment or professional training. Higher-level courses include a degree/diploma in nursing, midwifery and social work and courses to enable care homes to meet the legal requirements contained within the care standards act of 2000. The inspection covered full-time and part-time courses, including work-based provision.

Achievement and standards

101. There are low and declining pass rates on BTEC first and national diplomas in the caring services. The pass rate on the BTEC First Diploma has fallen from 92% in 2000 to 71% and 67% in 2001 and 2002, well below the national average. The national diploma is consistently low at 60% in 2001 and 33% in 2002 against the national average of 91%. Pass rates on the National Certificate are 88% and 100% in 2001 and 2002 but retention rates are at 50% and 55% for the period. Pass rates are high on GNVQ foundation health and social care at 100% from 2002, and are good in short level 1 provision including that in first aid and health and safety.

102. Retention rates are weak and inconsistent. The BTEC national diploma is well below the national average at 46% and 52% in 2001 and 2002, respectively. The BTEC national certificate care is between 50% and 55% in the three years from 2000 to 2002. Progress on NVQ care programmes is slow with a significant proportion continuing learning in the three-year period. For example, in 2001, there were 188 level 3 students, with 102 continuing and 42 achieving the full qualification.

103. Most students were making good progress in the lessons observed. For example, students were developing good research skills, learning about sensitive issues by engaging in effective role play, improving their analytical evaluative skills through case studies, and exploring legal and practical issues in caring for patients. There were good examples of students applying their earlier learning to new situations, including placement settings. Most presentations and assignments were of a good standard.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ foundation HSC	1	No. of starts	9	12	14
		% retention	56	83	71
		% pass rate	80	100	100
BTEC first diploma in caring services	2	No. of starts	24	20	23
		% retention	63	85	78
		% pass rate	92	71	67
NVQ care	2	No. of starts	*	52	21
		% retention	*	54	76
		% pass rate	*	64	80
BTEC national diploma in caring services	3	No. of starts	*	13	21
		% retention	*	46	52
		% pass rate	*	60	33
BTEC national certificate in caring services	3	No. of starts	23	16	11
		% retention	52	50	55
		% pass rate	80	88	100
First aid at work (HSE)	1	No. of starts	568	531	477

approved)	% retention	100	100	99
	% pass rate	100	99	100

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

* course did not run in this year

Quality of education and training

104. In most of the lessons observed, the teaching was good or better and there were examples of very good practice. In the most effective lessons, teachers encouraged students to take risks in order to promote personal and professional development. In a stress management lesson, learners evaluated their own assertiveness through challenging role-play scenarios that were created from their own personal programme. The teacher encouraged discussion, giving careful guidance and support and paying particular attention to individual needs. In an enrichment lesson, students examined the influences of tone, pitch and clarity through a series of practical communication exercises designed to build confidence in public speaking and presentation. In less effective lessons, teaching was less creative or challenging. There was a reliance on note taking through copying from the whiteboard or from dictation.

105. Effective tutorials provide good support related to personal, academic and career issues. Students are effectively involved in assessing their own performance. Their self-evaluations are used as a basis for monitoring progress and targeting the next stage of learning.

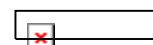
106. Staff are well qualified and gaps in work-based learning have been filled. Most of the accommodation and resources are satisfactory. However, there are some poor facilities for practical care training. Access to one classroom is sometimes limited because it is shared with other curriculum areas.

Leadership and management

107. Leadership and management within the area are satisfactory. Some lesson and peer observation is taking place, but this has not been extended to assessment in the workplace. Managers give appropriate attention to equality of opportunity in an area which naturally embeds care values and principles within its curriculum.

108. There are productive links with external partners to develop work-based learning. They include the Independent Care Group Training Association, Lincolnshire Development, Lincoln University and Lincsnet. These partnerships enable the curriculum area to use government funding to support employment-focused training and to research and develop alternative assessment methods for NVQ 2 care training for both the private and public sector.

Childcare and counselling



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

Strengths

- some very good and excellent pass rates

- some very good teaching and learning
- very good relationships with local employers and development agencies
- good internal progression
- well-qualified and vocationally experienced staff
- well-motivated students.

Scope of provision

109. The college offers courses at levels 1 to 4. In 2002, there were 192 full-time enrolments on Council Awards in Children's Care and Education childcare courses. Most students were aged 16-18, but there was a substantial minority of adult students. In addition, 536 part-time students followed a variety of courses including NVQs in early years, counselling, learning support, and behaviour management. All current provision is on the main college site, predominantly on a daytime only basis, but with a number of evening courses and some Saturday workshops. Full-time students can take relevant additional qualifications in food hygiene, lifting and handling, first aid, and baby massage, and an enrichment programme is available across the college.

Achievement and standards

110. Pass rates are excellent on full-time courses. There has been 100% success in all full-time childcare courses in 2001/02, and at levels 1 and 3, this success has been maintained over the past three years. Many students gain additional qualifications in the courses listed above. Part-time pass rates have been variable, but have generally been above national averages since 1999. Retention rates have declined over three years on the diploma in childcare and education. Figures to date for the current cohort show a substantial improvement. On other full-time courses, the retention rate is above national averages for colleges of the same type. Retention rates on part-time courses have been close to national averages over three years. There is excellent progression in both counselling and childcare.

111. Students acquire sound theoretical knowledge, and a wide range of relevant practical skills, including those in art and craft and baby massage techniques. Attainment was at least satisfactory and, in the majority of lessons, good. Work placements are seen as a valuable teaching resource, and there are strong links between college-based and placement-based aspects of the programme, reinforced by effective support from placement providers and regular visits from the teaching team. Portfolios are well organised and cross-referenced. The attendance rates in observed lessons were 86%. Students arrive punctually and show a high level of commitment and enthusiasm. Group activities are well managed, and in their contributions to discussions, students show a clear awareness of the vocational and ethical implications of childcare work. In a practical class teaching baby bathing techniques, issues of cultural diversity were explored and students shared their views about the cost of various products and possible repercussions for household budgets.

A sample of retention and pass rates in childcare and counselling, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Medic first aid paediatric	1	No. of starts	59	153	115
		% retention	100	97	97
		% pass rate	100	97	97
Certificate in practical infant and childcare skills	1	No. of starts	19	27	29
		% retention	79	70	86
		% pass rate	100	100	100
Certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	33	31	33
		% retention	82	74	83
		% pass rate	89	95	100
Diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	49	41	54
		% retention	92	83	70
		% pass rate	100	100	100
NVQ 3 early years care and education	3	No. of starts	14	4	15
		% retention	57	75	93
		% pass rate	100	100	*
C and G 7321 certificate in learning support	3	No. of starts	34	77	77
		% retention	82	84	89
		% pass rate	93	88	71
Professional development qualification in counselling	X	No. of starts	66	57	42
		% retention	89	80	74
		% pass rate	83	73	81

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

* data unreliable

Quality of education and training

112. There is much good teaching. Lessons are well planned, have a good variety of activities and approaches and reflect the needs of individual students. Teachers create a friendly and purposeful environment. Students comment that they feel supported and encouraged to achieve. There are close links with placement providers, including the college's own nursery, to ensure that the skills being developed in the classroom can be put into effect in real situations. Placement staff are actively involved in assessment. Likewise, there are many opportunities to bring placement experiences into classroom activity. In one practical class, foundation students showed particularly good awareness of equal opportunities issues when considering a play activity for a sick child. They challenged an assertion that sewing was an activity for girls, and made sure that cut-out figures showed ethnic diversity. The students were able to describe health and safety implications of their products. In another class, students were invited to explore physical, imaginative and creative play using a range of play resources. Mature students on a behaviour management course explored definitions of bullying by recounting their own experiences and commenting on practices in their workplace. Counselling students are encouraged to be honest and open in videotaped role-plays.

113. Teachers make regular checks to ensure that their students understand their work, and have

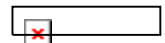
effective strategies to meet the needs of individuals. In particular, assessed work is given detailed feedback identifying strengths and possible improvements, and progress is reviewed regularly. There is a comprehensive internal verification system. The teaching staff work very effectively as a team, and college and agency staff contribute fully to the provision. Teachers are well qualified and appropriately experienced in a range of relevant skills which are drawn upon in lessons. Opportunities for professional updating have been taken up, and the team is careful to ensure their teaching reflects the best current practice. Full-time courses are well structured around patterns of work experience and college-based delivery. Part-time courses are accessible to adult students. There are timetabled key skills lessons, and students also work on an assignment designed to integrate key skills into a vocational context.

114. Accommodation is good and most teaching rooms have displays of students' work and informative posters. Craft equipment is readily available as are a range of childcare resources. These resources reflect ethnic and gender diversity. Although good IT facilities are available on a drop-in and bookable basis, there are none in vocational classrooms. The college's learning resources centre has too many outdated texts in this curriculum area. Increased recruitment in childcare courses has led to some accommodation and timetabling difficulties.

Leadership and management

115. Management is clear and effective. The team follows college procedures for review and evaluation, making good use of the data available. Parents and carers of prospective full-time 16 to 18 year old students are invited to a briefing evening while interviews are taking place. They are kept well informed about progress during the course. There are well-established links with the local early years partnership, including contributions to a video providing information about training opportunities and careers in childcare. Outreach provision is underdeveloped. Currently the response to the widening participation agenda is limited; there are limited opportunities for students to access provision in their local community. A link curriculum governor has begun to take an active interest in the work of the staff and students.

Visual and performing arts



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

Strengths

- good standard of work in art and design and music

- much good teaching in art and design

- good learning environments for art and design students

- effective assessment practices.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates for drama and music courses
- poor learning environment for music and drama students
- limited range of courses.

Scope of provision

116. The curriculum area has a range of full-time courses, mainly for 16 to 18 year old students, including AVCE art and design, national diplomas in drama, graphic design and music, first diploma in performing arts and GNVQ intermediate in art and design. Students over 19 years old take the diploma in foundation studies in art and design. Recruitment is generally good for art and design courses, which account for approximately two thirds of full-time students in the curriculum area. Recruitment is poor for music and performing arts. There is no full-time level 1 provision. Full-time students can choose additional courses such as GCE A-level art and those in metalsmithing/jewellery, dance or video production. There are very few part-time learners.

Achievement and standards

117. Pass rates for most art and design courses are good. Students on the diploma in foundation studies in art and design regularly achieve the high levels of pass rates that students achieve nationally. Although pass rates for students who complete music and performing arts/drama appear good, the very low retention rates show that overall achievements have been poor over time.

118. Level 2 and 3 students on art and design courses produce work of a good standard that is displayed well in studios and corridors. Music students demonstrate good musicianship in performances and recordings. Drama students work to a satisfactory level but show limited skills in sight-reading and discussion.

119. There is good progression from art and design and music courses into HE. Level 2 students mainly progress onto level 3 courses. Retention figures at the time of inspection show that some courses are already below what they were at the end of the last academic year. Attendance for classes observed was satisfactory at 83.6%.

A sample of retention and pass rates in visual and performing arts, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
National diploma in design/AVCE art and design (01-02)	3	No. of starts	32	25	24
		% retention	81	92	83
		% pass rate	100	100	95
Diploma in foundation studies art and design	3	No. of starts	19	23	16
		% retention	79	91	94
		% pass rate	87	90	87

GNVQ Intermediate in art and design	2	No. of starts	25	17	17
		% retention	80	76	82
		% pass rate	95	50	71
NOCN part-time (drawing and painting, jewellery, sewing, soft furnishing)	1	No. of starts	62	28	27
		% retention	81	68	70
		% pass rate	92	74	100
National diploma in performing arts (incl. music 00-01, 99-00)/national diploma drama (2001-02)	3	No. of starts	22	33	14
		% retention	64	61	36
		% pass rate	100	94	80
National diploma popular music	3	No. of starts	-	-	14
		% retention	-	-	57
		% pass rate	-	-	100
First diploma in performing arts	2	No. of starts	-	16	16
		% retention	-	69	69
		% pass rate	-	91	91

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

Quality of education and training

120. Most of the teaching observed was good. There was some very effective teaching in art and design; it was well planned and used stimulating integrated assignments. Students enjoyed developing ideas creatively and being given the opportunity to do so at length. Teachers discussed progress with individual students and set clear and manageable targets. In a few lessons, teachers used unvarying approaches but there were good examples of teachers effectively changing methods and activities to motivate and challenge students.

121. Following a presentation in one music lesson, students practised how to operate a piece of equipment using a helpful and detailed handout. In another lesson, students considered recording techniques by reflecting on the production work of Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys. In a drama lesson, the teacher had chosen an appropriate script for the mainly female group and developed their understanding of acting styles. There were three level 2 performing arts students who were mainly taught with first-year level 3 students; this presented some difficulties for teachers who had to work at two levels. For example, in a lesson where these three students were normally taught as a single group, the carefully prepared lesson was affected due to the absence of one student and late attendance of the other.

122. Art and design students work effectively in attractive studios that also serve as base rooms. The studio for foundation studies in art and design was dominated by an impressive display of different objects and materials to stimulate students' analytical drawing skills. Students can also work with technical support in specialist areas for three-dimensional design, ICT, fashion or print. Some students said their course was expensive, as they had to purchase their own art and design materials.

123. The learning environment for music and drama/performing arts is poor because of the absence of any soundproofing. Music can be heard throughout the area and this adversely affects the learning of all students. The music studios are generally well equipped and technical support is available and used well. Although the drama studio now has theatre lighting, an absence noted in the last inspection, it is limited as a performance space.

124. Assessment practice is good. Students on art and design courses know when assessment is informal (formative) and when it is final (summative). Assessed work is returned in good time. Feedback from internal verification is effective, especially for inexperienced assessors in drama. Clear guidance is given to assessors to ensure that vocational assignments are also appropriate for the assessment of key skills.

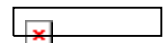
125. The range of programmes and courses below level 3 is limited, compared to the profile of the local area. Although plans were made for a level 1 course in art and design for September 2002, there was insufficient recruitment. Action is currently being taken to recruit more students for this and other courses. Although additional courses are available for full-time students few enrichment activities are provided. Part-time provision is very limited.

126. There is good guidance for applicants to art and design courses. Drama applicants do not, however, undertake an audition, the usual practice for this type of course. Induction is generally effective. A diagnostic assessment is used at the beginning of the course to identify learning styles and levels of key skills, but some students did not understand the purpose of this. Students value highly the support and advice they receive from course tutors about their course and from student advisers on personal matters and on applying for courses in HE. Three students with disabilities were given good help in getting to classrooms and studies.

Leadership and management

127. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new management team has inherited some long-standing poor retention and pass rates for music and drama. It has already discontinued courses that had very poor achievement and recruited the necessary qualified teachers. Staff welcome the management changes and have contributed to the self-assessment report and development plan. The plan is, however, not sufficiently specific in dealing with continued poor retention rates on drama and music courses. Course meetings, which include student representatives, are held regularly and deal effectively with urgent matters. The college's curriculum area report is generally accurate in its description of the area's key strengths and weaknesses but has significantly over-graded the standard of students' work.

Literacy and numeracy



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

Strengths

- good support for literacy and numeracy

- good pass rates

- much good teaching

- effective monitoring of students' progress.

Weaknesses

- staffing issues adversely affecting learning and development
- some unimaginative teaching in pre-entry literacy and numeracy courses.

Scope of provision

128. Literacy and numeracy are taught as a core element of full-time courses, as additional support within the study centre and as primary provision. There are 47 students on pre-entry and entry-level courses. All students on vocational courses working towards key skills at levels 1 and 2 have literacy and numeracy skills development. Some 129 students attend pre-booked sessions in the study centre for additional support and a further 69 students receive additional help in class. There are 57 students in primary provision enrolled on literacy and numeracy courses, which include a course for students with dyslexia and a small amount of workplace tuition.

129. The college is part of the local learning partnership and is building strong community links to widen participation. The college manages on behalf of the partnership a basic skills study centre. This is a resource base which any partner organisation can access. The college is further developing its work with local employers to provide focused training in literacy and numeracy in the workplace.

Achievement and standards

130. Retention and pass rates on adult literacy and numeracy awards at entry level are very good. In 2001/02, retention and pass rates on both courses were 98%. These tests replaced City and Guilds wordpower and numberpower, which had low retention and variable pass rates. Retention and pass rates on Edexcel skills for working life are similarly good with 83% retention rates and 96% pass rates in 2001/02. A significant number of students with a history of disaffection and exclusion are enrolled on this course.

131. Standards of work are satisfactory or better for the majority of students. Students improve their confidence and develop personal and learning skills which enable them to progress. Additional literacy and numeracy support is highly effective and results in most students making good progress towards their main qualification aim. Attendance during the inspection was 74 %

A sample of retention and pass rates in literacy and numeracy, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds 3794 numeracy and numberpower	1	No. of starts	41	27	*
		% retention	83	81	*
		% pass rate	35	100	*
City and Guilds 3794 communication wordpower	E	No. of starts	17	8	3
		% retention	76	75	100
		% pass rate	0	50	100
Edexcel skills for working life	E	No. of starts	*	*	29
		% retention	*	*	83

		% pass rate	*	*	96
City and Guilds adult literacy award	E	No. of starts	*	*	44
		% retention	*	*	98
		% pass rate	*	*	98
City and Guilds adult numeracy award	E	No. of starts	*	*	44
		% retention	*	*	98
		% pass rate	*	*	98

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

Quality of education and training

132. There is much good teaching within primary provision, in the study centre and in the development of literacy and numeracy key skills lessons. In the most effective lessons, teachers use a range of methods to stimulate and motivate students. For example, students practising the correct use of question and exclamation marks in an adult literacy class used their own experiences to draft a short piece of text. These were word-processed. Individuals then decided where the punctuation marks should go in the various short texts. This generated a great deal of interested discussion and resulted in a high level of learning. Lessons are stimulating and students have frequent opportunities to practise core skills.

133. Some teaching in pre-entry literacy and numeracy work is unimaginative and some of the materials used are unsuitable. For example, students complete cut-and-paste activities or practise coin recognition using inappropriately priced food samples. Computers and suitable software are available to students. However, no specialist ICT resources are used to reinforce literacy and numeracy concepts for students on pre-entry courses.

134. Curriculum planning is effective. All full-time and substantive part-time students undertake on-line initial assessment. Over a thousand students have been assessed this year, and 310 were identified as requiring additional support. Just over half of those identified have taken up the support. No action is taken to monitor students who do not take up the offer. If identified as requiring support, students also complete a diagnostic assessment to ensure that their particular learning needs are accurately identified. The resulting information is used to agree the students' individual learning plans, which record long-term and short-term goals. These are used to plan lessons that will meet the needs of individual students. The quality of the goals recorded both in learning and in lesson plans is variable. In primary provision, some goals are imprecise and emphasis is placed on behavioural objectives as opposed to learning tasks. In additional learning support, a few student records have no long or short-term recorded goals. Students' progress is monitored effectively every six weeks. Progress towards identified learning goals is reviewed. Where students are receiving additional support, information is shared with vocational teachers and tutors to reinforce learning progress.

135. Good support for literacy and numeracy is provided through the study centre and in class on a range of vocational programmes. Students feel well supported and the positive and constructive relationships promote learning and confidence. However, no formal analysis of the impact of this literacy and numeracy support has been carried out. There is no joint planning of in-class support and the amount of information that the support teacher has about the lesson and the course is variable.

Leadership and management

136. The deputy director line manages the members of staff involved in basic skills and basic education on behalf of the directorate of learner support services. Staff sickness and retirement and a high number of newly appointed staff have adversely affected some students' learning. For example, a literacy class for students with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) had no teacher for

three weeks and half of this group of students left the course.

137. Despite these difficulties, managers and staff have worked hard to maintain an appropriate level of provision and there is clear evidence of an effective response to the national core curriculum. Literacy and numeracy staff benefit from attending courses to update their professional knowledge and some new staff are undertaking qualifications in basic skills. There are regular team meetings and staff are involved in the production of the self-assessment report which accurately reflects the work seen during the inspection.

Part D: College data

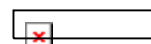
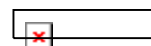


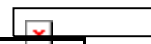
Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2001/02



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	39%	35%
2	42%	32%
3	17%	14%
4/5	0%	1%
Other	2%	18%
Total	100%	100%

Source: provided by the college in spring 2002

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2001/02



Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments %
Science and mathematics	773	213	6
Land-based provision	2	0	0
Construction	221	193	3
Engineering, technology and manufacture	407	592	6
Business administration, management and professional	309	1598	12
Information and communication technology	981	2031	19

Retailing, customer service and transportation	16	37	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	614	943	10
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	290	256	3
Health, social care and public services	572	1828	15
Visual and performing arts and media	202	121	2
Humanities	111	216	2
English, languages and communication	855	218	7
Foundation programmes	1601	417	13
Other	0	25	
Total	6954	8688	100

Source: provided by the college in spring 2003

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
1	Starters excluding transfers	1374	885	802	1827	1280	947
	Retention rate	80	73	72	75	75	70
	National average	80	79		78	78	
	Pass rate	63	76	74	78	79	77
	National average	65	68		66	68	
2	Starters excluding transfers	1402	1317	1093	1442	1305	1377
	Retention rate	75	73	74	79	73	75
	National average	76	76		79	78	
	Pass rate	55	69	77	77	80	77
	National average	66	69		65	69	
3	Starters excluding transfers	704	630	734	890	829	739
	Retention rate	78	76	71	73	76	76
	National average	76	77		78	78	
	Pass rate	80	74	64	78	84	71

	National average	74	76		66	69	
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	0	2	0	69	79	59
	Retention rate	n/a	50	n/a	88	82	81
	National average	79	82		81	84	
	Pass rate	n/a	n/a	n/a	72	67	46
	National average	66	55		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/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1997/98 to 1999/2000: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.

2. College rates for 1997/8-1998/9: Benchmarking Data 1997/98 to 1999/2000: Retention and Achievement Rates, produced by the Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.

3. College rates for 1999/2000: provided by the college in spring 2001.

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	26	5	71
Level 2 (intermediate)	71	28	0	70
Level 1 (foundation)	65	28	5	35
Other sessions	51	37	11	27
Totals	66.5	29.1	4.4	203