

## Grantham College

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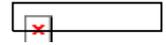
**Basic information about the college**



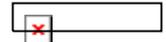
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Name of college:	Grantham College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Malcolm Saville
Address of college:	Stonebridge Road Grantham Lincolnshire NG31 9AP
Telephone number:	01476 400200
Fax number:	01476 400291
Chair of governors:	Philip Newton
Unique reference number:	130759
Name of reporting inspector:	Melanie Kavanagh HMI
Dates of inspection:	10-14 February 2003

## Part A: Summary



### Information about the college

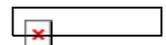


Grantham College is a general further education (FE) college in Lincolnshire. The main site in Stonebridge Road is situated in the centre of the market town of Grantham. The population of the town and its surrounding villages is approximately 36,000. The college is one of four FE colleges in Lincolnshire. The local education authority (LEA) operates a selective system for secondary education. Most school leavers recruited by the college come from four schools where, on average, the proportion of pupils achieving five or more grades A\* to C in 2001 was 21% below the national average. A relatively small number transfer from the two grammar schools at age 16. The college has formed partnerships with local schools to provide vocational education options for pupils aged 14 to 16.

The college is involved in a number of partnerships and activities at centres away from the college's main site. These include collaboration with Boston College to provide courses for about 500 students in Sleaford. Another significant initiative, under the brand name `YES', provides education and training programmes designed to attract students from groups not traditionally well represented in FE. YES is located in accommodation in the town centre, in satellite centres in the villages of Earlsfield and Harrowby and at Belton Lane Primary School. Courses include basic skills, information and communication technology (ICT) and community programmes. The college recruits approximately 70 students from abroad mainly from China and Hong Kong; self-catering accommodation is available for 77 students on the main site.

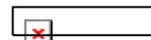
The college offers courses in all the areas of learning recognised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for funding purposes. Since the last inspection in 1998 there has been a major growth in the number of students taking courses in art and design, but a decline in students taking in engineering courses. Land-based provision, construction and retail are areas that offer a small range of courses and have relatively few students. In 2001, there were 1,076 full-time students and 5,632 part-time students in the college. Of full-time enrolments, 53% were aged 16 to 18 and 47% were adults. Over 90% of part-time students were adults. In the college, 4% of students and in the community 3% of residents have a minority ethnic background. The college's mission is `to increase the success of individuals, the community and business'.

### How effective is the college?



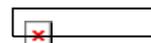
Inspectors judged the provision to be good in the areas of engineering, business, management and professional, ICT and computing, hair and beauty therapy and visual and performing arts. The areas of leisure, tourism and sport, health and social care, humanities, literacy and numeracy were judged to be satisfactory. Work-based learning in health and social care was judged to be satisfactory. No curricular areas were judged to be unsatisfactory. The college's main strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below:

### Key strengths



- good pass rates on many courses
- much effective and well-planned teaching
- a wide range of courses to meet local needs
- good central learning resources
- good tutorials and effective support for full-time students
- effective management of most curricular areas and off-site provision.

### **What should be improved**



- the retention rate on some courses
- very low attendance and pass rates on key skills
- the weak framework for the promotion of equal opportunities
- poor attendance on some courses and at additional learning support lessons
- slow progress and poor pass rates on work-based learning.

subjects and courses in the full report.

## Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

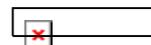


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5)

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Engineering	<b>Good.</b> Pass and retention rates are high on most engineering courses, but pass rates on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 are very low. Teaching is well planned and effective; learning materials are well produced. Work-based reviews for learners are frequent and detailed and there are strong and effective links with industry and employers. Key skills teaching is insufficiently integrated into the curriculum.
Business, management and professional	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates are high on most courses. There is much good teaching which makes effective use of resources and benefits from links with industry. Students produce work of a high standard and are well motivated. The area is well managed and assessment is accurate and well planned.
Information and communications technology and computing	<b>Good.</b> The college offers a wide range of courses for full-time and part-time students in ICT and computing. Pass and retention rates on most courses are good. Teaching is good; lessons are well-structured and learning materials are appropriate and well used. Information technology (IT) resources are good, both at college and in outreach centres.
Leisure, tourism and sport	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The retention rates are high on all full-time courses. Pass rates in leisure and tourism are poor. There is very good teaching in sports studies and specialist resources are used effectively. Teaching in leisure and tourism is poorly planned and less effective. Students receive good support and benefit, through taking additional qualifications, from good enrichment opportunities.
Hair and beauty therapy	<b>Good.</b> Much practical and theory teaching is good and pass and retention rates on additional courses in holistic therapies are high. The retention rates on NVQ level 3 beauty therapy and NVQ level 2 hairdressing are low. Specialist resources are very good and students receive effective support. Flexible arrangements for programmes widen participation and the good range of courses strengthens students' employment opportunities.
Health and social care	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are above average on most courses, but retention rates are low on full-time level 1 and 2 courses. Most teaching makes effective links between theory and work placement activities, learning resources are good and ICT is effectively used in lessons. In a minority of lessons, insufficient demands are made on students. NVQ students take longer than expected to gain their qualifications.
Visual and performing arts	<b>Good.</b> There are very high pass and retention rates on most courses.

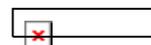
	Students receive effective tutorial support and class monitoring of their progress. Most teaching is stimulating and effective, and imaginative use is made of information learning technology (ILT) in the visual arts and creative arts curriculum. There is some inadequate accommodation and students' critical appraisal is insufficiently developed in some lessons.
Humanities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching and learning are good and students develop confidence in expressing their ideas and framing arguments. However, written work, particularly at General Certificate of Education Advanced level (GCE A level), lacks appropriate depth. Students achieve well in a number of GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and A-level subjects, but some pass rates are low. The retention rate on some GCE AS courses has declined to below the national average. There is a flexible and well-managed access programme and students successfully proceed to appropriate destinations.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Initial assessment is good, students are effectively involved in planning their own learning and in most classes there is effective differentiation. Teaching of students aged 16 to 18 is good, especially at entry level. Effective partnerships are attracting new adult students, but in community provision there is insufficient use of ILT. A low proportion of staff are qualified to teach basic skills and attendance at additional learning support classes is poor.

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



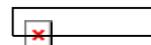
Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection in 1998, the college has widened participation in education and training, improved its accommodation, resources and management information system and reduced its dependency on franchise partners. Overall retention and pass rates are good. Strategies for maintaining the success of the college are clear and appropriate. The management of most curriculum areas is good but, on many courses, the arrangements for key skills teaching are ineffective. Good monitoring procedures ensure that managers are held accountable for the performance of their students. Aspects of the quality assurance system need improving, in particular staff appraisal, lesson observation and the use of value added data.

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



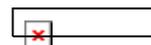
The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. Widening the participation of students from groups that are not traditionally well represented in FE, and increasing the range of courses at entry and foundation levels are key objectives in the college's strategic plan for 2001/04. Outreach work away from the college's main site is well organised through the college's YES initiative. The college has extended opportunities for adults to study at a wide range of outreach centres. Progression routes from such activities to mainstream provision and within that provision from levels 1 through to level 4 are good. There has been an expansion in courses at entry and foundation level. There is a good range of opportunities for learning which benefit from flexible arrangements for attendance. Access to most buildings and specialist resources for students with restricted mobility is good. The college is not currently in compliance with its statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Staff training in diversity issues has taken place, but there is no action plan to monitor the implementation of the college's equal opportunities policy.

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



Guidance and support for students are good. The college provides impartial advice in well-produced publicity materials which include the prospectus and the college website. Induction and initial assessment are effective. Tutorial arrangements for supporting full-time students are good and group tutorials follow thoroughly planned schemes of work. The new team of student tutors is valued by students and teachers. However, tutorial arrangements for part-time students are inadequate. Students are aware of their entitlements and of the wide range of support available to them. This support includes travel grants, counselling and childcare through the college nursery, 'Stepping Stones'. There is good support for students with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The student council provides an effective channel for communication between senior management and students; representatives from all courses are entitled to attend. Students' attendance at lessons is closely monitored, but is nevertheless, poor in key skills and classes for additional learning support.

## Students' views of the college



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

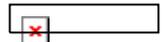
### ***What students like about the college***

- knowledgeable and approachable teachers
  
- supportive tutorial staff
  
- good access to computers
  
- fair and helpful assessment
  
- clear guidance and information on courses and careers
  
- childcare facilities.

### ***What they feel could be improved***

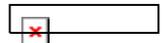
- key skills teaching
  
- some small teaching rooms
  
- availability of lockers
  
- price and variety of food in the refectory
  
- car parking at the main college site.

**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**



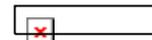
Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	66	29	5
19+ and WBL*	72	24	4
Learning 16-18	64	29	7

19+ and WBL*	69	27	4
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*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. The college offers a wide range of courses, which may be followed through full-time or part-time study. In 2001, similar numbers of students aged 16 to 18 and adult students enrolled on full-time courses. Most students aged 16 to 18 are studying at levels 2 and 3. Most part-time students are adults. Work-based training, at the time of the inspection, was provided in seven curriculum areas. Inspectors reviewed work-based training in four of these. Most students on work-based learning were in health and social care on franchise programmes where inspectors gave a contributory grade.

2. Pass rates on short courses for both age groups are excellent; 93% of students aged 16 to 18 and 94% of adult students successfully completed their courses. Work-based learning pass rates are very low. Few students undertaking NVQ achieve within the expected time and very few students achieve modern apprenticeships. The retention rate is good on most work-based learning programmes. Improved organisation and management of work-based training have begun to have an impact in some curriculum areas, but at the time of the inspection it was too early to assess the impact on achievements overall.

3. In 2001/02, college policy changed and full-time students were required to enter all three key skills elements at an appropriate level as an essential part of their learning agreement. Achievement of key skills is very low; pass rates were below 10% for both age groups in 2001/02, well below the national average for colleges of a similar type. The college has recognised this weakness and has introduced a number of initiatives to address low pass rates and attendance.

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

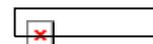
4. On level 3 courses, retention and pass rates are high. The overall retention rate in 2001/02 was at the national average and had improved significantly on the previous year. The pass rate is 8% above the national average. Pass rates for courses in engineering are particularly high and students show good practical skills in workshops. Students studying NVQs in engineering at level 2 do not complete portfolios on time and retention and pass rates on these courses are very low. Students are confident in discussion and analysis in business administration and pass rates are high on most courses. The retention rate is good on work-based learning, but students are making slow progress to achieve the qualifications. Few students achieve a modern apprenticeship. Of the 22 students who started in 1999, only five have gained the modern apprenticeship. Pass rates on leisure travel and tourism are low. Most courses in health and social care have high pass rates, but the retention rate is low on all full-time courses at levels 1 and 2. Health and social care students produce good portfolios and carry out practical activities well. In visual, performing arts and media, retention and pass rates are very high. Most work in portfolios is of a good standard, although there are some poor standards of drawing in sketchbooks. Students in humanities show confidence in lessons; they contribute competently in discussion and are able to justify their reasoning in a range of contexts. Written work in humanities is weaker than oral work, particularly at GCE A level.

### **Adult learners**

5. Pass rates for adults studying at level 2 in 2001/02 rose by 13%, well above the national average

for the sector. Retention rates for adults at level 2 fell to 10% below the national average. Pass rates for adult students studying at level 3 fell in 2001/02 to slightly below the national average. In ICT, where most students are adults, retention and pass rates have been high on most courses. Students used the computer systems confidently and students with learning difficulties and disabilities showed particular skills in using advanced features of software packages. Retention rates in NVQs in beauty therapy were low, but pass rates were average and pass rates on holistic therapy courses were high. Students in hairdressing showed a good understanding of theoretical aspects of their studies. Students undertaking part-time courses in creative studies show high levels of attainment. Foundation level students in literacy and numeracy worked effectively on their own.

## Quality of education and training



6. Teaching and learning were graded by inspectors in 147 lessons. Attainment was graded in 145 of the same lessons. Teaching was graded good or better in 68% of lessons, satisfactory in 27% and less than satisfactory in 5%. Learning was good or better in 65% of lessons, satisfactory in 29% and less than satisfactory in 6%. Overall, there is more good, or very good, teaching for adult students than for students aged 16 to 18. Teaching for adults was judged to be better than for students aged 16 to 18. The teaching in 72% of lessons for adults was good or better compared with 66% for students aged 16 to 18. Teaching is better and students' attainment higher on level 2 courses than on courses at levels 1 and 3. The learning grades were similar; 69% of learning was good or better for adult students and 64% of learning good or better for students aged 16 to 18.

7. There were significant variations in the quality of teaching between curricular areas. The most effective teaching was seen in the areas of visual and performing arts where 81% of teaching was good or better. Teaching was also good in hair and beauty therapy, engineering, business management and professional and ICT and computing. In contrast, only 53% of teaching was good or better in leisure, tourism and sport where there is very good teaching in sports studies, but the teaching in leisure and tourism is less effective. In literacy and numeracy, 58% and health and social care, 59%, of teaching was good or better. Attendance during the inspection was 80%. However, there are areas of low attendance in the college including additional support and key skills. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, attendance was low at 70%. The best attendance was in engineering and health and social care where it was 88%.

8. Most lessons are well planned, structured and organised. Handouts and other learning materials are well produced and make an effective contribution to students' progress. There are good links between practical and theoretical teaching in engineering, sports studies, hairdressing and beauty therapy and health and social care. In the most effective lessons, students concentrate well and are stimulated by the use of a suitable variety of teaching methods and activities. In many lessons, teachers monitor individual students' progress closely and give effective one-to-one support. ILT is well integrated and used in many curriculum areas, but is currently underdeveloped in others such as humanities. Working relationships between teachers and students are good and students often work with genuine enthusiasm and interest. Teaching meets the differing needs of individual students in many lessons, although there are examples of students being insufficiently stretched by the work. In a few lessons, teachers talked for too long and students were inadequately involved. There were also instances where students spent too long taking notes and did not participate fully in the lessons.

9. Resources to support learning are generally good. Most teachers are well qualified and have relevant industrial and vocational experience; 97% of full-time staff and 72% of part-time staff have a recognised teaching qualification. However, the college has experienced difficulty in recruiting staff to its expanding provision in basic skills; a low proportion of staff in this area are suitably qualified for teaching basic skills. Teachers show good subject expertise. Clear priorities are set for professional development. They are related to the college's strategic plan and identified through individual staff appraisals. In the two years to 2003, particular attention has been given to management training,

teaching qualifications, the use of IT, diversity issues, basic skills, and key skills teaching and assessment. Support staff provide effective help to teachers and students.

10. The college building provides a pleasant working environment for students and staff. The main site has undergone considerable refurbishment and includes: a new reception area; an adjoining area for advice and guidance, a centre for tutorial support; and an excellent e-learning centre. Teaching accommodation is satisfactory for most curriculum areas. Classrooms are well maintained and contain suitable learning resources including ILT. Visual and performing arts has some inadequate accommodation and some teaching rooms in the older buildings on campus are in need of refurbishment. Access to college buildings is good for students who are wheelchair users.

11. The college's centrally managed learning resources are good. Students have the use of an open access e-learning centre equipped with 75 computers linked to the Internet. There is also good access to IT resources at the college's learning centres and the library has an online catalogue of over 20,000 items. The library book stock is adequate for most curriculum areas, but, in visual and performing arts, the book stock is inadequate to meet the needs of students on new courses. There are good specialist resources for sports studies, hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and childcare and for business courses.

12. Students' progress is tracked and monitored regularly. Assessment policies are also reviewed regularly and well implemented. Initial assessment for full-time students identifies key skills and additional support needs promptly. Initial assessment is particularly effective for basic skills students. Students understand the assessment processes on their courses and consider them fair and supportive. Written and oral feedback to students is mostly good. Teachers provide full and encouraging comments and guidance on how performance can be improved. They explain grading decisions well. In a few instances, there is insufficient reference to assessment criteria and students are not fully informed on how they might achieve a higher grade. Spelling and grammatical errors are not always corrected in students' work.

13. There are sound internal verification systems in all curriculum areas. External verifier and moderator reports are closely monitored by senior managers to ensure that actions are completed and recorded. The completion of portfolios by work-based learners is unsatisfactory. Learners in engineering, health and social care and business make slow progress. The college has recognised this weakness and it has introduced new systems of monitoring and a more rigorous approach to target setting and assessment. These developments are beginning to show improvements in learners' progress. At the time of inspection, no use was made of value added data for target setting and academic monitoring.

14. In most curricular areas, the college offers a good range of courses that are designed to meet the needs of young people and adults. There have been a number of initiatives under the brand name YES to widen participation and provide opportunities for learning for people who traditionally have not taken part in FE. Foundation and level 1 provision is available in seven areas of learning and there are good progression routes to study at intermediate and advanced levels on most full-time and part-time vocational courses. An exception is in business where there is no full-time vocational provision at level 3. Students can select from 19 subjects at GCE AS and progress to further study at GCE A level in 16 of them. Student numbers determine the range of subjects offered. The college has begun to recruit nationally to its sport academies in water polo and table tennis.

15. There is a centrally run college programme of enrichment activities, mostly in team sports. In some curriculum areas, such as visual and performing arts and hairdressing and beauty therapy, there is a good programme of visits and other related activities to extend the curriculum and enrich students' experiences. In sports studies, leisure and tourism, engineering and health and social care, students broaden their learning effectively studying for relevant additional qualifications.

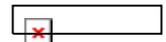
16. The teaching of key skills is managed centrally and offered as discrete provision through an essential skills study centre. All full-time programmes have weekly timetabled lessons in the centre. Pass rates and attendance are very low. Students make slow progress in the completion of portfolios. Communication between the central staff and some curriculum teams is ineffective.

Students' work produced for their main course is not routinely assessed against the criteria for key skills, and tasks set at the essential skills centre are not adequately related to the students' main programme.

17. Guidance and support for students are good. A wide range of advice and guidance is available to potential students with clear and accessible information available through a number of sources including an on-line prospectus. Interviews are carried out by student tutors who are linked to curriculum areas and who provide an impartial and informed service. Students who are unsure about their choices can consult the careers officer who works with the local Connexions service. Induction is effective and valued by students. Well-managed tutorial procedures are run by seven full-time student tutors, who provide a weekly group tutorial and are available for individual meetings with students on request. The scheme of work for tutorials covers topics that meet the study and personal needs of students aged 16 to 18 years old effectively, but is less appropriate for the adult students on full-time courses. Tutorial arrangements for adult part-time students are underdeveloped.

18. There is good support for students with learning difficulties or disabilities. The college has effective links with external agencies such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) and also uses other appropriate external agencies such as the sensory impairment service and assessment by trained dyslexia staff. Students are also supported through the laptop loan system, which is run for those who do not have access to a computer outside college. This service is popular with students and the laptops are fully used. Other support services which are available to and valued by students include financial support from the learner support fund, careers and higher education (HE) advice, the chaplaincy, the counselling service, the college nursery and after-school club.

## Leadership and management



19. Leadership and management are good. The college has made sound progress since the last inspection in 1998. Full-time and part-time enrolments have increased significantly. It has widened participation by starting new courses in community venues and the opening of a town centre IT training centre under the brand name YES. There have been major improvements to accommodation and resources. Communication in the college is good. The culture has changed; managers and staff have a well-founded confidence in their ability to continue to develop a successful college.

20. The college's strategic aims are appropriately focused on achieving success in four key areas: students' skills and achievements; widening participation; business efficiency; and innovation. Clear operational plans address these aims as well as dealing with issues identified through self-assessment. The college also has a comprehensive curriculum development plan. Managers carefully monitor progress towards planned objectives. Most key objectives have been pursued successfully. Overall, retention and pass rates are good. Retention and pass rates on long courses remained stable between 2000/01 and 2001/02.

21. Management of most curriculum areas is good. The responsibilities of curriculum leaders and course managers are clear. Curriculum managers are held accountable for the performance of their students. Consequently students in different curriculum areas receive a broadly consistent standard of education. Well-managed curriculum areas include business studies, art and design, hairdressing and beauty therapy, visual and performing arts, ICT and computing, and engineering. In these areas, retention and pass rate targets are set for each course, regular team meetings are held, students' attendance is carefully monitored and prompt action taken when absence persists. In some areas, for example, engineering and social care, there are advisory panels of employers. Management of the college's off-site work, for example franchise contracts, work-based learning and community-based provision is good. Staff responsible for a few courses sometimes fail to comply with quality assurance procedures. In some curriculum areas, action to address low retention rates is either

absent or ineffective. The college policy that key skills should be taught by a central team of teachers has not been effective. There is poor communication between key skills teachers and teachers in some curriculum teams. Students are slow to complete their key skills work and attendance at key skills lessons is very low.

22. Financial management is satisfactory. The college failed to monitor its expenditure in 2001/02 accurately but, once the problem had been identified, prompt action was taken and the college ended the year with a small operating surplus. In the three years ending in 2002, the college broadly met its enrolment targets and operated within its budget. Until recently, it was over-dependent on franchise contracts. A reduction in this dependency has now improved the long-term security of the college.

23. Governance is satisfactory. Governors have an appropriate mix of expertise and experience. Arrangements for pairing governors with curriculum areas have improved governors' knowledge of the curriculum and helped curriculum leaders, for example by providing new links with local companies. However, no guidance is provided on how governors should carry out this role and there is no formal reporting of any meetings between governors and curriculum areas. Governors are generally well informed about the financial and academic performance of the college. For example, pass rates for both outstanding and poorly performing courses are reported to the corporation. Some reports to governors of students' achievements are not clear, because they do not explain that the overall success rates highlighted in the reports are derived from very different retention and pass rates on long and short courses.

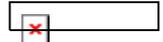
24. The college has comprehensive quality assurance arrangements for teaching teams, support services and the college's YES programmes. There are clear and appropriate guidelines on the management of course files, course team meetings, course review, self-assessment and internal verification and on how to respond to external verifiers' reports. Audits are carried out to check compliance with procedures. Senior managers identify poorly performing courses and take action to secure improvements. Some aspects of the quality assurance system are unsatisfactory. Value added information is not used. There are no individual subject reviews for GCE AS and A-level subjects. The staff appraisal system does not place sufficient emphasis on making judgements. About 15 teaching and support staff were not appraised in 2002. The grades for good or better teaching awarded by the college in its lesson observation programme were over-generous at 90%. The college's charter commitments are not adequately monitored.

25. The framework for the promotion of equal opportunities is weak. The equal opportunities policy does not adequately address race, gender and disability issues. It contains few measurable commitments. There is inadequate monitoring of the policy by managers and governors. The college is not in compliance with its statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. However, there is good practice in the college. The college's 'managing diversity' group meets regularly and the college provides very good support for individual students who have disabilities.

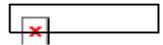
26. The college management information system meets the needs of managers and teachers. It is straightforward to use and provides reliable, up-to-date information on, for example, enrolments, attendance, retention rates, individual students' timetables, and students' achievements. Online enrolment and monthly checking of central data by curriculum leaders ensures that information is accurate. The college produces useful information on the unit cost of individual courses. Managers use this information to assess the efficiency of each curriculum area. The college does not make any value for money judgements, but overall the college provides good value for money.

27. The college has good relations with the local schools. Over 70 pupils aged 14 to 16 attend the college each week for NVQ and vocational GCSE courses. The college also collaborates with another FE college in Boston to provide courses for about 500 students in Sleaford. The college is appropriately involved in local planning through local learning and strategic partnerships. Improved press coverage in recent years has raised the profile of the college in the community.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Engineering



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

#### **Strengths**

- very high pass rates on most engineering courses
  
- high retention rates on most courses
  
- well-planned and effective teaching
  
- effective work-based learner reviews.

#### **Weaknesses**

- very low pass and retention rates on NVQ level 2 engineering foundation
  
- inadequate integration of key skills with main courses.

#### **Scope of provision**

28. The engineering curriculum area provides a range of mechanical and electrical/electronic courses. At the time of the inspection, there were 33 full-time students on General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) foundation and intermediate and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) engineering programmes. Students on these courses also undertake a level 1 or a level 2 NVQ performing engineering operations in addition to their main programme.

29. Part-time courses include national certificates, City and Guilds engineering and computer aided design. There were 122 students enrolled on part-time day and evening only courses. There are good progression rates from levels 1 to 4.

30. The college offers work-based learning contract through the college organisation 'yes 4 jobs'. There were 16 advanced modern apprentices and 6 NVQ level 3 learners in training. Engineering and YES staff manage the learning. Learner support is organised through the centralised learner support system.

31. There are strong links with industry. A sponsorship scheme operates for full-time learners; six learners were being sponsored at the time of the inspection and received an allowance, the opportunity of paid work experience and free equipment. On a school links programme, 3 local schools provided 36 pupils who were taking a NVQ level 1 performing engineering operations or a manufacturing General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) course.

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

32. There are very high pass rates on most engineering courses. GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses have pass rates above national averages for the sector. The learners on these courses are predominantly aged 16 to 18. Pass rates on the GNVQ advanced course have improved over the past three years and in 2002 were 12% above the national average. Learners on this course are usually aged over 19. National certificate programmes have very high pass rates.

33. Retention rates on most engineering courses are high, for example, GNVQ foundation and advanced programmes have above average retention rates. Retention and pass rates on the NVQ level 2 engineering foundation programme are very low. NVQ portfolios and worksheets on this course are incomplete and logbooks are not used effectively. In one instance, work completed up to nine months earlier had not been written up in portfolios. The retention rate on advanced modern apprenticeships is high, but few students complete the full framework. Students demonstrate good manufacturing workshop skills in machining and fitting. Improvements in the competence and skill levels of students are noticeable as they progress through the programme. Students produce good work in practical lessons.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GNVQ foundation (16 to 18)	1	No. of starts	*	11	7
		% retention	*	82	100
		% pass rate	*	100	100
GNVQ intermediate (16 to 18)	2	No. of starts	15	14	10
		% retention	87	71	80
		% pass rate	77	90	88
NVQ engineering foundation (16 to 18 and 19+)	2	No. of starts	25	20	11
		% retention	76	75	64
		% pass rate	47	53	14
City and Guilds 2310 CAD competencies (19+)	2	No. of starts	36	18	10
		% retention	86	72	90
		% pass rate	74	69	100
GNVQ advanced (19+)	3	No. of starts	16	11	9
		% retention	94	82	89
		% pass rate	57	67	88
National certificates	3	No. of starts	21	15	10

(19+)	% retention	90	73	90
	% pass rate	100	78	100

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

\* course did not run

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

34. There is much well-planned and effective teaching. Lesson plans have well-written learning objectives linked to schemes of work. Course materials, such as handouts, are well prepared. In one effective lesson, the teacher, after sharing the learning aims and objectives with the students, required a graded handout to be completed containing examples that increased in difficulty. This method enabled individual learning and attainment to be checked effectively. Theory is closely related to practice and good use is made of teaching aids to highlight theoretical concepts. Students play a full part in lessons and have a clear understanding of what is required of them. They are attentive, interested and well motivated.

35. Students' knowledge and expertise are built on effectively. A practical electronics assignment consisted of a theoretical background followed by the building of a circuit and subsequent fault finding. Health and safety aspects were examined and students acquired skills in soldering and the use of test equipment. The teacher guided, assisted and questioned the students effectively. The students' progress was closely monitored by the teacher and a good standard of practical and theoretical work was achieved. In a few less effective lessons, teachers talked for too long, there was insufficient involvement of students and inadequate differentiation of learning for mixed ability groups of students.

36. Resources are satisfactory for the curriculum area. The library has a good range of modern books, many of which are stocked as multiple copies. Teachers are well qualified and 86% of staff have assessor awards and 71% verifier awards. Equipment has been updated and new technology introduced, including an electronic computer-based training system, a computer-aided design suite and new machine tools.

37. Students are clear on the assessment related to their courses and understand what is required of them for successful completion of the programme. Teachers provide useful comments on returned work and the reasons for grades are fully explained. New arrangements for work-based learner reviews are effective. In reviews, teachers and learners consider the previous plan, examine achievements and outstanding requirements and agree a new action plan with targets. The process has resulted in close monitoring of learners' progress.

38. The curriculum offered is planned and managed to provide coherence and progression. GNVQ courses start at foundation level and offer progression to intermediate and advanced levels. There are opportunities for learners on national certificate programmes to progress to HE on Higher National Certificate (HNC) and diploma courses. Students on full-time courses take an additional qualification at level 1 or 2 in performing engineering operations. These additional qualifications provide students with a broad experience and the opportunity to obtain practical engineering skills in machining and fitting operations. Key skills are taught separately and are inadequately integrated into the curriculum. There is insufficient use of relevant examples from engineering in key skills teaching.

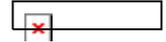
39. Initial course guidance is good and allows informed decisions to be made. Students are well supported by the college in terms of induction, learning support and tutorials. Students with physical disabilities are provided with appropriate support so that they can use the required machinery.

### **Leadership and management**

40. The management of engineering is good. Course teams meet regularly and comprehensive course files are kept. Retention and pass rate issues are discussed and targets carefully reviewed.

Student attendance is closely and effectively monitored by the course leaders and student tutors. All engineering staff are involved in the production of the self-assessment report, which includes a thorough analysis of retention and pass rate by level and by individual course. As a result of reduced engineering enrolments, courses have been amalgamated to maximise the effective use of resources. There are strong and productive links with industry and employers. These include an employer-based engineering advisory committee chaired by a college governor; a sponsorship scheme; and links with RAF stations in the locality.

## **Business, management and professional**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
  
- much good teaching
  
- a good standard of student portfolio work
  
- a well-managed curriculum.

### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient direction to students in a few less effective lessons
  
- no full-time vocational provision at level 3
  
- insufficient individual target setting for full-time students.

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

41. Full-time courses are provided in GCE AS and A-level business studies, accounting and economics together with the vocational GNVQ in business at intermediate level. GCE AS and A-level business studies are also offered in a part-time evening class. Most of the students on these courses are aged 16 to 18. A wide range of courses at levels 2, 3 and 4 is offered on a part-time

basis to adult students. These include professional courses in accounting, marketing and personnel management as well as management programmes. At the time of the inspection, there were 128 adult students enrolled on the part-time courses and 204 full-time students aged 16 to 18. In addition, 24 trainees were undertaking modern apprenticeship programmes in accounting or administration.

### **Achievement and standards**

42. Pass and retention rates on most business, management and professional courses are high. For example, retention and pass rates on NVQ at level 2 in both administration and accounting have exceeded the national average in 2001 and 2002. GCE A-level business studies achieved pass rates of 100% and 90% in 2001 and 2002, respectively, against a national average for the sector of 86%. On the certificate in personnel practice, both pass and retention rates were 100% in 2001. In 2002, the retention rate on this course was 88% and all the students passed. These results compare with a 92% retention rate and 90% pass rate nationally. On a few courses, pass rates have been poor. The short course leading to the diploma in computerised book-keeping has seen a decline in pass rates from 56% to 25% in the three years to 2002. Work-based learning trainees have been slow to achieve their qualifications. Of the 23 trainees joining the scheme since 1999/2000, 12 had not achieved within the planned timescale and were continuing with support from the college.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ accounting 1 year	2	No. of starts	13	7	14
		% retention	77	86	93
		% pass rate	30	100	85
NVQ administration 1 year	2	No. of starts	12	24	33
		% retention	92	92	82
		% pass rate	82	91	89
GCE AS accounting 1 year	3	No. of starts	**	27	46
		% retention	**	74	78
		% pass rate	**	60	67
Certificate in personnel practice 1 year	3	No. of starts	**	16	17
		% retention	**	100	88
		% pass rate	**	100	100
GCE A-level business studies 2 year	3	No. of starts	70	36	23
		% retention	89	47	87*
		% pass rate	59	100	90
NVQ management 2 year	4	No. of starts	**	7	27
		% retention	**	100	89
		% pass rate	**	80	83

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

\*GCE A-level retention rates for one year

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

43. Portfolios of evidence for assessment in management and accounting courses contain a good range of suitable evidence which is well presented and includes much appropriate evidence from the workplace. The standard of students' work in lessons is appropriate to their level of study. Students on GCE A-level programmes discuss their work confidently and use topical case studies effectively to apply theories to business practice. Business studies students prepared an excellent classroom display describing aspects of a current takeover bid, which helped them to develop a good understanding of the issues involved in their study of mergers and acquisitions. Effective use is made of the work experience of part-time professional and management students during class discussions.

44. There is much good teaching. Teachers are competent and enthusiastic about their subjects. They make effective use of good classroom resources. Schemes of work are suitably detailed and lessons are well planned and contain appropriate and varied activities to maintain student interest. Students are well supported in their learning. In the most effective lessons, students are encouraged to develop their subject knowledge and to analyse issues. Teachers organise stimulating enrichment activities including industry visits and presentations by outside speakers. Handouts and student learning materials are well produced and presented. Verbal and written feedback on assessed work is generally good and includes supportive and helpful comments. In a few cases, written feedback is brief and does not give sufficient information to help students to improve. GNVQ students undertake a work placement and go on visits to public and private sector organisations on which a major assessment is based. Such activities provide students with a good understanding of the business world. Management students studying communication were set short practical exercises that provoked lively discussion and demonstrated effectively the differing impact that verbal communication can have on recipients. In a few lessons, there is a lack of structure, tasks are not time-constrained and students make little progress.

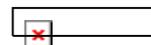
45. In work-based learning, training for administration modern apprentices is poor. There is no off-the-job training and some employers find it difficult to provide all the necessary opportunities for trainees to develop their knowledge and understanding or to provide evidence of competence for some elements of the NVQ. However, monitoring of work-based learning has improved and regular workplace visits take place to review trainee progress, assess competence and update individual work plans.

46. Teachers are well qualified and experienced in their subjects. A number of part-time staff who teach on professional and management courses are in current practice and their experience enhances their teaching. Classrooms are generally comfortable and well equipped with a range of teaching resources that includes facilities for computer presentations. Students have access to the excellent central computer facility and to computer classrooms. There is good use of the Internet for research, and professional and management students use e-mail to communicate with teachers. The college's intranet currently contains few learning materials for students. There is a good stock of up-to-date business books in the library. Assessment is well planned and closely linked to awarding body requirements. There are effective procedures to standardise the marking of assignments. Full-time students receive good support from student tutors who liaise with teaching staff to monitor attendance and progress. Effective additional learning support is provided by learning assistants in the classroom. Progress reviews for full-time students contain insufficient targets to motivate students to improve their performance. Where appropriate, additional learning support is provided by learning assistants in the classroom and by the loan of suitable equipment.

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

47. The curriculum area is well managed. Roles and responsibilities are clear and minuted meetings are held regularly at course team, curriculum area and faculty level. Teachers work effectively in teams and share good practice. Course files are comprehensive and useful. College policies are fully implemented. Quality assurance procedures are followed and monitoring of action plans from course reviews show where action is leading to improvement. The self-assessment process is well developed and, in work-based learning, data on progression and achievement are analysed and shared with teams at curricular meetings. Value added measures are not used across the curriculum area to inform course teams in detail about student achievement.

## Information and communication technology and computing



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most courses
  
- well-structured and effective teaching
  
- a wide range of courses and good progression routes
  
- a good range of learning materials on the network
  
- good provision in a variety of locations for widening participation
  
- good IT resources at college and outreach centres.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention and pass rates on GCE AS ICT course
  
- some unsatisfactory assessment practices.

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

48. There is a wide range of courses in the area of ICT and computing. ICT provision includes part-time courses from entry level to level 3. Provision at levels 1, 2 and 3 mainly consists of courses accredited by Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR). At the time of the inspection, there were 604 students studying at entry level and level 1, 310 at level 2, and 13 at level 3. Courses are offered in a variety of locations within the Grantham area. Full-time students can attend the e-learning centre at a time that suits them.

49. The numbers of students studying on the computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) courses run by YES increased from 337 in 1999 to 519 in 2001. The one-year courses and the short courses for the City and Guilds, Accreditation Syndicate for Education and Training (ASET) and European computer driving licence (ECDL) courses are in demand in the outlying areas of Grantham as well as in the town centre and college itself.

50. The computing area offers a range of full-time and part-time courses. Full-time provision includes the foundation and intermediate GNVQ ICT and national diploma courses. Part-time provision consists of computer programming, IT systems support, GCE AS ICT and computing and GCE A2 ICT courses. There were 73 full-time students studying at levels 1, 2 and 3 and 62 part-time students studying at levels 2 and 3. HNC and Higher National Diploma (HND) courses are also offered in conjunction with a local HE institution. There were 149 students aged 16 to 18 and 913 students aged 19 or over studying for qualifications in the ICT/computing area.

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

51. Retention and pass rates for most courses are high. There are high pass rates on all level 3 courses with the exception of the GCE AS ICT course where retention and pass rates are low. The CLAIT short course has improving pass rates for the three years to 2002; pass rates in that year were above the national average for the sector. GNVQ intermediate has above average retention rates and pass rates also above the national average. AVCE and ECDL have consistently had retention and achievement rates above the national average. Short courses in Internet technologies had high pass rates in 2002.

52. In most classes, students show a good understanding of basic concepts and can use the computer system confidently. Standards are at least satisfactory for all students and good or better for many. Students progress well, demonstrating competence and gaining the knowledge to pass their assessments and examinations. In many instances, students worked effectively together and especially so when asked to search the Internet for a specific piece of data. Students shared the task in order to consult as many different websites as possible in the time allowed and they then communicated what they had discovered to their peers. In another class, where all of the students had learning difficulties and/or disabilities, individual students were able to use some of the more advanced features of the software package.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
CLAIT (1 year)	1	No. of starts	395	67	87
		% retention	84	94	84
		% pass rate	66	79	60
CLAIT (short)	1	No. of starts	337	431	514
		% retention	87	93	88
		% pass rate	63	71	87
Internet technologies (short)	1	No. of starts	41	98	31
		% retention	61	89	84
		% pass rate	4	55	88
ECDL (2 year)	2	No. of starts	*	15	45
		% retention	*	93	91
		% pass rate	*	100	91

Integrated Business Technology 2 (IBT 2) (1 year)	2	No. of starts	74	23	16
		% retention	76	96	93
		% pass rate	66	82	69
GNVQ intermediate	2	No. of starts	20	12	19
		% retention	70	75	79
		% pass rate	71	56	73
GCE AS ICT	3	No. of starts	*	43	27
		% retention	*	49	74
		% pass rate	*	62	25
GCE A2 ICT	3	No. of starts	29	26	10
		% retention	86	77	80
		% pass rate	85	100	88
AVCE	3	No. of starts	36	16	14
		% retention	86	88	100
		% pass rate	87	92	92

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

\* course did not run

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

53. Teaching is well structured and effective. Lessons are well planned and make realistic time allocation for the various activities. The sequence of lessons is logical, leading to an increased knowledge and awareness of the process among students. For example, in a lesson on programming constructs, key terminology was effectively built up step by step. Teachers have a good rapport with their students and form good working relationships. A small number of students were either late for lessons or failed to attend. Latecomers were appropriately challenged without undue disruption to the lesson.

54. Teachers have a good understanding of their subject and readily answer and explain complex questions that arise in the course of their teaching. Teaching is relevant and sometimes inspirational. Students receive good individual support during their lessons which helps them to understand new or difficult concepts.

55. Teachers have produced good and comprehensive learning resources. These consist of handouts, notes, PowerPoint presentations and other relevant course materials. Resources are stored on a shared area of the IT network for student use in any part of the college. Students find the notes and presentations useful when working away from the subject classrooms. For example, students who were working on a programming problem, in the college's e-learning centre used the teacher's PowerPoint presentation to arrive at the correct solution.

56. ICT resources are good. All of the main computing rooms are equipped with modern PCs linked to the college network. All rooms have Internet access, printers and data projectors linked to a PC for PowerPoint presentations. The new e-learning centre is spacious, airy and provides an atmosphere that encourages effective study. Access to computers outside classroom time is good.

57. The provision offered through YES benefits from a variety of laptops that can be used in different geographical locations as well as a large number of PCs, all with Internet access, that can be used in their centres throughout the locality. There is also an ICT van equipped with satellite technology containing 20 laptop computers, all with Internet access, for use in the rural communities around Grantham.

58. Students on part-time ICT courses are monitored closely and receive good feedback which improves their performance. However, on some of the full-time computing courses, assessment practice is unsatisfactory. In some instances, grading criteria for the award of a pass, merit or distinction are not specified and teachers' comments to students on the quality of assessed work is not comprehensive or sufficiently helpful. These problems have been recognised and new assessment and internal verification procedures have been established. Group tutorials are well managed and relevant. Students value the encouragement and help that they receive.

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

59. Management of the area by the two curriculum leaders is good. There are regular and effective team meetings and communication between managers and teachers is good. New procedures to improve achievement have been implemented. The availability of learning opportunities for students throughout the local communities is a good example of the effective leadership in this subject area. Course files show good planning both on a day-to-day basis and for long-term course development. Governors play an active role in the curriculum area through a scheme where members of staff meet on a regular basis with a designated governor to discuss relevant issues.

### **Leisure, tourism and sport**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- very good teaching in sports studies
  
- high retention rates on full-time programmes
  
- good enrichment opportunities through additional qualifications
  
- effective student support
  
- good specialist resources in sports studies.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on full-time leisure and tourism courses

- some poorly planned and ineffective teaching in leisure and tourism
  
- insufficient monitoring of academic progress
  
- insufficient attention to improving achievement in leisure and tourism.

***Scope of provision***

60. The college offers an adequate range of courses in leisure, tourism and sport. At the time of the inspection, there were 124 full-time students studying a range of courses. A first diploma in sports science and a GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism are offered at level 2. At level 3, the college offers a national diploma in sports science and AVCEs in leisure and recreation and travel and tourism. The AVCE programmes can be studied as single awards over one or two years. A further 27 students were enrolled on physical education modules as part of a full-time GCE AS or A-level course. There is no provision at level 1 and no part-time evening or day programmes for adults.

61. Most students are aged 16 to 18. A HNC/D in sports science is available, which is a popular progression route for national diploma students. There is also a partnership arrangement where pupils from a local grammar school attend GCE AS physical education classes. All full-time students study a range of relevant additional qualifications.

***Achievement and standards***

62. Retention rates on all courses are high, but pass rates on leisure and tourism courses are low. AVCE travel and tourism, AVCE leisure and recreation and GNVQ intermediate results are well below the national averages for the sector. Most students improve their career prospects by gaining qualifications that are additional to their main programme of study. For example, all travel and tourism students complete a course for overseas travel representatives and all sports studies students complete a formal coaching qualification. There is good progression into both HE and employment from all courses. In sport, students compete regionally in individual and team sports and the college has established national academies for table tennis and water polo.

63. Most students are punctual, and in lessons they are attentive and responsive in class. Except on the GNVQ intermediate course, attendance is good. The standard of students' work in lessons is satisfactory or better. Students are enthusiastic when working on assignments that are linked to industry; their assessments show that this work develops confidence and communication skills and helps to prepare them for employment. In leisure and tourism, good use is made of a programme of work experience and visits, which aims to improve students' knowledge of the industry.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	17	12	26
		% retention	65	100	81
		% pass rate	73	75	62
Resort	2	No. of starts	11	30	30

representatives		% retention	82	90	97
		% pass rate	89	67	52
Travel agents certificate	2	No. of starts	38	50	62
		% retention	82	84	89
		% pass rate	65	76	82
Leisure and recreation	3	No. of starts	*	*	17
		% retention	*	*	94
		% pass rate	*	*	63
National diploma in sports science	3	No. of starts	10	11	*
		% retention	90	73	*
		% pass rate	43	100	*
GCE A-level physical education	3	No. of starts	18	8	5
		% retention	78	63	80
		% pass rate	40	75	100
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	3	No. of starts	64	35	*
		% retention	86	69	*
		% pass rate	81	88	*
AVCE travel and tourism (double award)	3	No. of starts	*	*	12
		% retention	*	*	92
		% pass rate	*	*	73

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

\* course did not run

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

64. Teaching in sports studies is very good. Practical lessons develop students' organisation, leadership and teamwork skills effectively. In one theory class, there was skilful use of ILT to link sports science theory to independent student research based around an interesting outdoor activity assignment.

65. In leisure and tourism, teaching is less effective. Many lessons are poorly planned. Insufficient recognition is given to the different ability levels in a class. Lessons proceed at too slow a pace and there is an over-reliance on note taking by students.

66. Assessment of students' work is fair and accurate. Feedback on most student assignments includes clear and positive comments that highlight specific areas for improvement. Internal verification of work is comprehensive and includes a good system for checking the quality of assignments given to students.

67. Support for students is good. Students value the assistance they receive from staff. An effective induction programme allows new students to settle quickly into college life. Two student tutors co-ordinate a programme of group tutorials that is well attended and includes help with careers information and study skills. There is no regular, formalised feedback to students on their academic progress. There is no use of a value added system to set short and medium term academic targets for students.

68. The specialist resources in sports studies are very good. The college has a new floodlit all-weather pitch, a human performance laboratory, fitness suite, squash court and sports hall. The fitness suite and laboratory are used effectively to help students understand different aspects of human physiology in a sporting context. In leisure and tourism, there is good access to IT resources in some rooms but other classrooms are too small for the groups of students taught in them. All staff are suitably qualified and most have successfully updated their industrial experience. The staff appraisal system helps to identify individual development needs and as a result teachers in leisure and tourism have been able to increase the use of IT in their teaching.

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

69. Management of the area is satisfactory. Communication between staff is good and there is a cycle of meetings that includes monitoring of students' attendance. Target setting is effective and uses sound management information. Staff development needs are well identified during staff appraisals. The quality assurance processes in leisure and tourism pay insufficient attention to improving students' achievement. Classroom observations undertaken by the internal college team consistently over-graded the effectiveness of teaching in leisure and tourism.

### **Hair and beauty therapy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass and retention rates in holistic therapies
- good practical and theory teaching
- very good teaching and learning resources
- flexible arrangements for programmes running to widen participation
- a good range of courses
- effective support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- o a low retention rate on NVQ level 3 beauty therapy and level 2 hairdressing courses
  
- o insufficient planning of practical lessons in hairdressing
  
- o low attendance in hairdressing.

***Scope of provision***

70. The college offers both full-time and part-time courses in hairdressing, beauty and holistic therapies. Students can take courses in hairdressing, combined hairdressing and beauty, beauty therapy and holistic therapies. The full-time and part-time provision mainly consists of courses accredited through NVQs and there are good progression routes between NVQ levels 1 and 3. The Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT) is used for unit accreditation for some beauty and holistic therapies. Additional qualifications are available for full-time and part-time students following the body massage diploma course and the courses in reflexology and aromatherapy. At the time of the inspection, there were 2 students in hairdressing on NVQ level 1 and 21 at NVQ level 2. In beauty therapy at NVQ level 2, there were 36 students and 34 at NVQ level 3. For holistic therapies, there were 19 students on courses in reflexology and aromatherapy. There were 17 students on the combined hair and beauty course.

71. The college also has foundation and advanced modern apprentices in hairdressing for students who are work-based and attend college one day a week. There were five foundation apprentices and one advanced modern apprentices in training. The majority of students are adults; some 35% are aged 16 to 18. The college also provides classes in hairdressing for schools. The pupils work towards the vocational GCSE qualification and NVQ level 1 qualification in hairdressing.

***Achievement and standards***

72. Pass rates on hairdressing NVQ level 2 have been above, but in 2001/02 were at the national average for the sector. The retention rate has declined and was low in 2001/02. In beauty therapy at NVQ levels 2 and 3, there was a similar decline in the retention rate, but pass rates were high.

73. Pass rates on short courses are excellent. These short courses include aromatherapy, reflexology and sports massage. There has been a significant increase in the number of students taking these qualifications; in 2002, 155 students compared with 37 in 2000.

74. Students demonstrate a good understanding of theory and its link to practical skills as they work on clients.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ hairdressing	2	No. of starts	55	43	43
		% retention	84	74	55
		% pass rate	88	100	72
NVQ beauty	2	No. of starts	102	50	40

therapy		% retention	81	60	64
		% pass rate	42	90	79
NVQ hairdressing	3	No. of starts	2	5	1
		% retention	50	100	100
		% pass rate	0	0	100
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	28	50	17
		% retention	71	67	53
		% pass rate	80	83	80
Holistic therapies	3	No. of starts	14	29	50
		% retention	71	79	86
		% pass rate	38	89	93
VTCT holistic therapies	3	No. of starts	23	66	105
		% retention	79	77	92
		% pass rate	100	100	100

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

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

75. Teaching in hairdressing and beauty therapy is good; theory is effectively related to practical activities. Scientific concepts are well taught through practical experiments in both hairdressing and beauty therapy. For example, experiments identified metallic salts in the hair and found the source of infra red light; both were well remembered by the students. Teaching about the history of Ayurveda as the oldest healing science in existence stimulated and interested the students. In both areas, scientific aspects of the curriculum are emphasised in all theory and related practical lessons. Students develop a good level of professional competence. Tutors help learners to make personal decisions on treatments in the content of both hair and beauty and to apply the knowledge and experience they have gained. In some practical teaching lessons, there is insufficient attention to matching clients' needs and those of the students. This situation can lead to students repeating tasks in which they have already achieved competence.

76. The teaching and learning resources in hairdressing and beauty therapy are very good. The hairdressing and beauty therapy area in the college consists of four dedicated salons/treatment rooms. The college is sponsored by a product manufacturer and students are provided with a wide range of professional products and equipment. There are frequent professional hair shows and training events. All students can attend these events and learn from the experience of those whom they meet and watch. Learning materials are good and are used effectively. Staff are well qualified and benefit from regular opportunities for staff development.

77. Arrangements for attendance on hairdressing and beauty therapy courses are flexible and offer students and employers a wide range of choices. Full-time and part-time students can begin a course any time of the year and can study for 13 hours a week. Most students are adults and the timing of lessons takes account of their outside responsibilities. On some hairdressing courses, attendance is low.

78. Students benefit from a good range of additional courses. In beauty therapy, there is a good selection of short courses in holistic therapies. These include: diplomas in advanced nail technology; Indian head massage; accreditation for practitioners of reflexology; and a diploma in aromatherapy. Students in hairdressing can also enrol on these courses and in addition take a diploma course in colour and permanent waving. A further qualification in customer care is also offered to hairdressing students.

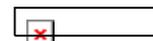
79. All students take part in an effective programme of enrichment activities which includes: visits to the clothes show; training in ear piercing; dedicated days for hairdressers to develop advanced skills in colouring and perming; and two days of training for beauty therapist on the use of specialist skin care products and treatments. Hairdressing and beauty therapy students can also work on hair and make-up for models at a local professional photographers and use photographs of their work as evidence of their skills.

80. Support for students is good. Specialist equipment enables students with physical disabilities to carry out all practical assignments. For example, bean bags and adjustable beds are provided so that all beauty treatments can be carried out. Signers accompany students who are hearing impaired and learning materials are effectively adapted to introduce difficult or unfamiliar words. One-to-one support is given to students with dyslexia. There is a good and effective working relationship between the teachers in hair and beauty, their students and the student tutors. There is regular and close monitoring of students' progress.

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

81. The leadership and management of the curriculum area are good. All courses have targets for retention and pass rates that take account of students' needs, the variety of age groups and the different courses. Regular course team and curricular meetings are held. There are comprehensive set agendas for each meeting as well as additional notes on students' progress, records of attendance, and punctuality, and retention and pass rates. The colleges' policies and practices on, for example, internal verification and staff development are also frequently discussed at the meetings. The managers of the curriculum area pay particular attention to the quality of the service offered to the students. Clearly defined meeting dates are set and kept for internal verifiers to share good practice. Clear action is taken to address issues with students through the weekly report from the student tutors. Managers act quickly and appropriately to supply any support services or equipment that may be needed.

### **Health and social care**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
  
- effective use of ILT in lessons and coursework
  
- good assessment practice on work-based courses
  
- wide range of part-time and short courses.

### **Weaknesses**

- the slow progress of NVQ candidates towards completion
  
- some undemanding teaching
  
- low retention rates on full-time level 1 and 2 courses.

### **Scope of provision**

82. A wide range of part-time and short courses is offered in a range of locations to meet the needs of local employers and the community. At the time of the inspection, there were 68 students on courses in childcare, 59 of whom were on work-based NVQ programmes at levels 2 and 3. Numbers on full-time childcare courses were low; only 38 students had enrolled at foundation and advanced levels. There is no intermediate level course. Numbers on full-time courses in health and social care courses increased in 2002/03, and 50 students were following intermediate and advanced level courses. There is no foundation level course. There were 28 full-time students on the level 2 and 3 certificates preparing for entry into uniformed services. There were 166 learners following work-based NVQs at levels 2 and 3, predominantly through franchised programmes. Of these, 6 were following modern apprenticeship programmes. The college-based short courses comprised: counselling courses for 22 students; British sign language courses for 36 students; and first aid courses for 8 students. In total, there were 116 full-time students, 225 students following NVQs in care and childcare, 9 students on part-time long courses in childcare and 66 on short courses.

### **Achievement and standards**

83. In 2002, students' pass rates improved to significantly above average for the sector on all courses except the NVQ level 3 courses. The retention rate was at or above the national average on level 3 courses, but low on all full-time courses at levels 1 and 2. In-year retention rate figures for 2002/03 for intermediate level courses and the first year of two year courses indicate a decline in the retention rate compared with the previous year. In many cases, retention rates have been below the national average. Learners on work-based NVQ programmes have been achieving low pass rates. As a consequence, assessors now agree short-term targets with learners. In the franchised programmes, partial achievement is routinely requested for candidates who leave the NVQ programmes.

84. Few full-time students achieve high grades. However, particularly good quality work is achieved by the students on the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) foundation award. Portfolios are well kept and work shows good progress over a period of time. The work of all full-time students shows effective integration of ICT into coursework, for example, good assignment booklets are produced by the students on the CACHE diploma in childcare.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
CACHE foundation award in childcare	1	No. of starts	*	*	11
		% retention	*	*	55

		% pass rate	*	*	100
First diploma in caring	2	No. of starts	16	24	19
		% retention	69	79	65
		% pass rate	100	79	91
NVQ in care	2	No. of starts	77	90	16
		% retention	52	94	94
		% pass rate	100	62	71
NVQ in early years child education	3	No. of starts	20	15	23
		% retention	90	87	91
		% pass rate	17	100	48
BTEC national diploma in caring	3	No. of starts	13	10	9
		% retention	77	60	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100
CACHE diploma in nursery nursing	3	No. of starts	30	31	9
		% retention	77	77	100
		% pass rate	100	70	100
Preparation for entry to uniformed services	3	No. of starts	9	10	5
		% retention	75	50	100
		% pass rate	89	100	100

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

\*course not running

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

85. In most lessons, teachers ensure that students make effective links between their study of theory and their practice on work placement. In childcare lessons, students make good use of modern equipment and materials in carrying out practical activities linked to their work placements. In the more effective lessons, ILT is an integrated aspect of their work. All health and care classrooms have three modern computers with a range of applications and Internet access. Both full-time and part-time students use these effectively for research and other activities in lessons. Teachers use PowerPoint presentations frequently and provide accompanying handouts that students can annotate. They plan learning objectives well, but do not always share them with students. In a minority of lessons, the teaching is insufficiently demanding or stimulating, particularly on level 3 courses. Students spend too much time on routine tasks such as copying notes. In these lessons, questions are often unimaginative. Teachers do not probe superficial answers from students sufficiently. Few teachers effectively differentiate learning by providing extension work for those students who finish individual or group work early.

86. Accommodation, learning resources and specialist equipment are all of a good standard. Teachers are generally well qualified and have recent, relevant industrial experience. Course base rooms have libraries of relevant texts and journals and are spacious, modern and well equipped. Specialist equipment enables students to develop appropriate learning activities and resources that they can use with clients in the workplace. Classrooms for courses that prepare students for entry to uniformed services are less well equipped. However, many learning activities for these students take place outdoors or in the sports hall. There is a good range of texts in the library relevant to childcare courses, but there are few books relevant to care courses.

87. There are good arrangements for marking and internal verification of assignments for full-time courses on health and childcare. Students get clear, specific verbal and written feedback that helps them to improve. NVQ candidates have been progressing slowly through their assessments which has resulted in a high proportion of them continuing into subsequent years. There have been clear improvements in assessment practices during 2002/03, including sound internal verification systems, it was too early at the time of inspection to judge their impact on the current progression rates of candidates.

88. Full-time students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities including residential weeks, off-site training visits, additional courses, and visiting speakers. Franchise candidates and their assessors take up additional training including IT and job-related courses. Opportunities for students on NVQ programmes in childcare to gain achievements in key skills are reduced because often they cannot be released for college-based lessons.

89. Full-time health and care students receive good pastoral support, both from their student tutors and teachers. There is insufficient emphasis on academic support to promote the competencies and approaches that students need to complete their courses successfully. Learning support to meet students additional support needs is provided in lessons for intermediate and foundation level groups. NVQ work-based learners on franchised programmes are well supported. They have scheduled weekly sessions with their assessors whom they can also contact outside working hours.

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

90. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Communications are effective and all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. They work well as a team and support the high number of part-time teachers. Quality assurance activities are carried out according to college procedures and staff are aware of weaknesses that have been identified in their curriculum area. Action for improvement is not always effective. For example, actions taken to address weaknesses in levels of retention have not succeeded in bringing about improvements. Management of the franchised programmes is good. Regular assessor visits, spot checks, good evidence gathering and record keeping activities contribute to sound quality assurance activity.

### **Visual and performing arts**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- very high pass rates on most courses
  
- much stimulating and effective teaching
  
- integration of imaginative ILT learning into the curriculum
  
- good support for students.

### **Weaknesses**

- some inadequate accommodation
- insufficient planning for the development of students' critical appraisal skills.

### **Scope of provision**

91. At the time of the inspection there were 132 full-time students studying in the curriculum area. This level of recruitment represents a significant increase in student numbers compared with 2001. The college offers national diplomas in graphic design, design crafts, multi media, media journalism and performing arts. There are also first diplomas in performing arts and GNVQ intermediate and foundation. There were 287 part-time students attending a range of City and Guilds creative studies courses and GCE AS and A levels in media, theatre studies and art. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18.

### **Achievement and standards**

92. There are very high pass rates in GCE AS art, GCE AS photography, GCE AS media, Edexcel national diploma in design and excellent pass rates for part-time adult students on City and Guilds courses. Pass rates were 100% for interior design in 2001 and for embroidery in 2001 and 2002. A City and Guilds national medal was awarded to a student in 2001 for the quality of her work. GCE AS photography has increasing numbers and in 2001/02 retention rates of 92% and pass rates of 95%. The retention rate in the national diploma in design (graphics and design crafts) has been consistently above national averages for the three years to 2002.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
City and Guilds interior design	2	No. of starts	16	12	12
		% retention	81	83	83
		% pass rate	100	100	88
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	6	5	7
		% retention	50	75	86
		% pass rate	100	67	50
GCE AS photography	3	No. of starts	*	61	48
		% retention	*	74	92
		% pass rate	*	96	95
GCE AS media studies	3	No. of starts	*	14	41
		% retention	*	86	80
		% pass rate	*	92	97
National diploma	3	No. of starts	20	13	30

design: graphics, design crafts		% retention	80	85	83
		% pass rate	100	82	100
GCE AS art studies/fine arts	3	No. of starts	7	24	22
		% retention	71	71	73
		% pass rate	100	76	94

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

\* course did not run

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

93. Most teaching holds students' attention and stimulates their learning. Lessons are well planned and structured and effectively differentiated to match students' different abilities. Teachers use the students' prior knowledge and research skills to develop project work on an individual basis, but this approach is not always reflected in the lesson plans. In the most effective lessons, individual and group work are well integrated and students make good progress. Schemes of work are evaluated at the end of each unit and contribute to the planning for the next year.

94. Students contribute well in lessons and make good progress, particularly those in courses for national diploma in graphic design, national diploma in performing arts and GCE AS drama. In drama and performing arts, students work together with confidence.

95. Many staff are current practitioners and use their industrial knowledge effectively to promote learning. In the national diploma in graphic design, industrial studio practice is simulated with second-year students working on live projects.

96. Most teaching engages the students' attention, but some does not sufficiently challenge the students to develop a critical ability. Where the teaching is less effective, the students are not challenged to extend their ideas beyond a satisfactory solution before moving on to the next task. Generally students respond well in question and answer sessions, showing maturity in their comments and a respect for the views of others. In one drama class students were moved effectively from an academic discussion of Arnaud to a practical exploration of the work. In performing arts, a vigorous warm-up exercise led to the vocal exploration of Gregor's voice changing from human to insect in *Metamorphosis*.

97. Imaginative ILT learning is integrated into the curriculum. In design crafts, the 'Automata' project was developed using ILT and integrated into the final assessment. Graphic design students produce innovative web pages. In particular, the City and Guilds floristry students use computer-generated images of letterforms to develop design work. In a NAFAS floristry lesson, students effortlessly used the digital camera to record work before recycling the flowers.

98. Although accommodation is generally satisfactory, some accommodation is inadequate and affects learning adversely. Whilst a rationalisation of resources has taken place in order to accommodate the new first diploma and national diploma in performing arts, these students are timetabled to use inappropriate rehearsal space with a solid floor. Physical warming up exercises must be undertaken with caution, which limits the range of activities and performances.

99. Five new full-time programmes were introduced this year, including the HND in graphic design, each with specific resource needs that differ from the established programmes. The photography studio and darkroom are cramped, even for the small groups that are timetabled to use them. Inadequate extraction in the three-dimension design crafts workshop directly impinges on learning as it limits the use of materials and certain sculptural activities. The library has insufficient specialist books and periodicals particularly for the newer expanding courses. The Internet is used for research on the history of art. However, students do not always discriminate between appropriate sites and those that lack the academic rigour needed to support research at this level effectively.

100. Assessment is thorough. Students are clear about assessment procedures and guidelines in the student handbook are confirmed at each briefing. Most teachers provide prompt, suitably detailed assessment feedback and make suggestions for improvement to full-time students. In most lessons, teachers build discussion opportunities into the practical sessions, which are then formally recorded. Students are invited to add their own comments on their individual learning plans. Student feedback and evaluations in performing arts are then used to plan further learning. For example, in their feedback students said they wanted more time to get into a role when warming up and performing in front of the group. The teacher referred back to this comment, agreeing to increase the time for preparation before performance. In visual arts assessment, feedback is used to plan future learning activities.

101. Students are well supported by their teachers and value the extra time that they are given. The college student tutor system is valued by students, and the tutors frequently work as part of the staff team in the studios. Students receive clear guidance on appropriate courses. Parents of students aged 16 to 18 are invited to attend interviews and meet the staff. Direct links to parents have resulted in improved communication over students' absence. University and College Admissions Service (UCAS) applications and employment opportunities are fully discussed with students. Progression to HE and related employment is good.

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

102. Leadership and management are good. There is good communication between staff teams at course level; course management is effective. Staff contribute to curriculum development and are energetic in their support of students. Equal opportunities are effectively integrated into recruitment and curriculum delivery. Quality assurance procedures are implemented and lead to improvements in retention and pass rates, but there is no overall action plan that is regularly monitored.

## **Humanities**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on many GCE AS and A-level courses
- an effective access to HE programme
- much good teaching
- the effective development of students' critical and verbal abilities.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates in GCE AS law and history
- lack of appropriate depth in some written work
- insufficient support for study skills
- a lack of individual subject reviews and value-added analysis.

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

103. The humanities provision comprises GCE AS and A-level subjects in law, history, geography, sociology, psychology and religious studies. Most students studying these subjects are aged 16 to 18. Enrolment on these programmes has increased substantially over the three years to 2002/03. Total enrolments for GCE AS humanities subjects at the time of inspection were 154 and for GCE A2 were 93. Progression between GCE AS and A2 grew in the three years to 2002/03 from 55% to 70%. GCE AS law and psychology are offered as evening classes. Part-time students can attend daytime classes. In the access to HE programme, humanities is represented by a social sciences covering psychology and sociology. The access to HE courses attracted 41 students. The course is flexibly organised on a semester basis to allow enrolments twice in every academic year and is timetabled to suit the domestic needs of adults returning to learning. A short preparatory access course is also offered to adults and provides a route onto the main access course.

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

104. For GCE AS and A-level humanities subjects the pass rates of students who completed their studies in 2001/2002 were mixed. There were very high pass rates in GCE AS sociology at 97% and GCE A-level sociology at 100%, which reflected a generally improving trend. Other successes included pass rates above the national average for the sector in GCE AS geography and GCE A-level psychology. Pass rates in GCE A-level history and GCE AS psychology were at or above national averages. There were poor results, substantially below the national average, in GCE AS law at 36% and GCE AS history, at 22%. In relation to the total numbers completing the GCE AS and A level in humanities subjects, 36% of students gained passes above the national averages, 42% near the national average and 22% below the average. The retention rate on GCE AS humanities subjects has declined over the three-year period to 2002. The college recognised this weakness and has changed the admissions policy and entry criteria to level 3 courses. On the access to HE programme, the retention, pass rates and progression of students who complete their courses are very good.

105. Many students on entry to their courses have low prior attainment. Within lessons, most students show clear gains in both their subject knowledge and wider academic skills. Many gain significantly in confidence, particularly in their verbal skills, through regular participation in well-managed critical debate. The standard of some students' written work is low. Although arrangements exist to provide study skills support for both GCE A level, GCE AS and access students, they are not sufficiently emphasised at an early stage in students' courses to aid their progress and attainment. All students are required to undertake key skills as part of their overall study programme, but attendance at these sessions, at 52%, is very low. There is insufficient integration of key skills into subject teaching.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCE AS law	3	No. of starts	*	25	21
		% retention	*	67	62
		% pass rate	*	69	36
GCE AS history	3	No. of starts	*	14	29
		% retention	*	86	83
		% pass rate	*	58	22
GCE AS sociology	3	No. of starts	12	31	42
		% retention	92	94	78
		% pass rate	27	93	97
GCE AS psychology	3	No. of starts	11	40	90
		% retention	91	83	70
		% pass rate	80	82	81
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	8	16	14
		% retention	38	43	93
		% pass rate	67	100	100
GCE A-level history	3	No. of starts	12	17	5
		% retention	83	65	100
		% pass rate	50	71	80
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	52	41	37
		% retention	79	90	92
		% pass rate	89	91	100

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

\* course did not run

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

106. The quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory and often good. Lessons are well prepared. Teachers use an appropriate range of methods to maintain interest, promote participation and to encourage debate. In most cases, they achieve a good response from both adult students on access courses and students aged 16 to 18 on GCE AS and A-level courses. Most students show good development in their understanding and interpretation of concepts and contrasting theoretical traditions. Students are encouraged to contribute and discuss ideas freely. They develop confidence in framing and presenting arguments. On the access courses, students are progressively acquiring skills and knowledge that are characteristic of undergraduate study. However, much teaching is insufficiently differentiated and does not fully address the range of students' abilities.

107. Students show poor note-taking skills and essay writing techniques and are slow to record salient points arising from class discussion. For example, in history and geography, although students' verbal comments and arguments are often well considered and show careful reasoning, written responses to timed exercises in class sometimes lack depth and fluent expression. In some cases, students rely too heavily on teachers' notes rather than fully trusting their own ideas and responses.

108. In each of the subject specialisms, students are taught to evaluate source material

appropriately and show that they can discriminate effectively in the use of various materials, data and information. In sociology and psychology, students demonstrate their skills of interpretation and use of specialist vocabulary. In other subjects, teachers fail to insist on precise use of terminology or check sufficiently that students have a clear understanding of specialist terms. Students undertake a good range of research and investigative work and are provided with web-site references to widen their range of source material for assignments and essays. There is insufficient integration of ILT within subject specialist teaching and the use of ILT materials for humanities subjects is underdeveloped.

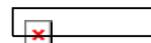
109. Students are well supported by their subject tutors and receive good verbal and written feedback on their assessed work. There is helpful guidance in identifying how work should be improved. The tutorial framework provides a programme of pastoral support for the GCE AS and A-level students. However, there are no arrangements for the routine tracking of individual students academic progress against their predicted scores on entry. Teachers are well qualified in their subject specialisms and bring good scholarship and academic standards to their teaching. Most of the subject specialisms are taught by a single teacher and there are insufficient opportunities for shared practice other than within the rest of the humanities team. Staff are well supported in updating their subject knowledge and skills.

110. Accommodation is satisfactory and classrooms are equipped with a good range of teaching aids, which are well used by teachers. Rooms in Elsham House, although restricted in size, provide an appropriate setting for access students and humanities subjects. There is a good range of up-to-date textbooks available to students. The range and relevance of texts in the learning resource centre is appropriate, but there are some shortages of specialist subject materials, for example, in religious studies.

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

111. Leadership and management are satisfactory. GCE AS and A-level humanities courses are managed within the broader curriculum area of business, humanities, English and modern foreign languages. Although adequate, the arrangements lack sufficiently thorough procedures for monitoring, identifying and addressing issues at subject level. There is compliance with the college's quality assurance procedures, but individual subject reviews do not form part of this framework. Value added analysis is not used as a routine instrument for analysing subject performance or monitoring individual student progress against predicted scores. Regular course meetings are held and minuted. Communication is effective and humanities and access teachers work well together.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good teaching of students aged 16 to 18
  
- effective differentiation in most lessons
  
- good independent learning

- effective initial assessment
- effective partnerships for attracting new students
- effective involvement of students in planning their learning.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention rates on a few courses
- insufficient use of IT in community-based learning
- a low proportion of staff with basic skills qualifications
- insufficient liaison between vocational teachers and tutors
- poor attendance at additional learning support classes.

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

112. The college offers separate specialist literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses for part-time adult students and literacy and numeracy within entry level courses, mainly for students aged 16 to 18. Literacy and numeracy support is provided through discrete key skills classes for students aged 16 to 18, through Royal Society of Arts (RSA) English at level 1 for students aged 16 to 18, and in opportunities for additional support. At the time of the inspection, there were 398 students on literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses, 90 on entry level courses, 17 on RSA English, 82 on key skills at level 1, and 151 students were receiving additional learning support.

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

113. Most pass rates for formal qualifications are at or above national averages for the sector. Students are successful in developing the ability to work independently. Students work effectively to improve skills such as presentations and writing. Most students are making satisfactory progress towards their individual learning goals and some are making good progress. They talk confidently about the progress they are making and can relate this progress to its effect on their everyday life.

Retention rates on OCR English and ESOL basic are low. Action has been taken to address this shortcoming and in-year figures for 2002/03 show that the retention rate is improving.

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

114. Teaching, learning and attainment are satisfactory. There is good teaching of literacy and numeracy for students aged 16 to 18, particularly at entry level. In these lessons, students enjoy learning and are very well motivated. They participate fully in discussions and show that they understand the concepts being taught. They are able to apply what they have learnt to tasks undertaken. In a key skills lesson, students were able to identify questions for a survey, which showed they understood the difficulties in questionnaire design. In another lesson, students wrote short stories. The content of these stories was good and students were able to explain the most important aspects of short story construction. Teachers plan lessons well for different levels of ability and age groups. For example, individual learning plans are used effectively to develop appropriate skills within groups of students with differing abilities.

115. There is insufficient liaison between vocational teachers and additional learning support tutors, which reduces the opportunities to set learning within a vocational context. Attendance and timekeeping at additional learning support are poor; students arrive late and disrupt teaching and learning.

116. Community accommodation and IT resources are good. The college's classrooms at the local shopping centre are pleasant and well furnished. They all have computers networked to the college's system, ensuring that students have the same access to learning resources as students on the main site. Although 12 laptops have been purchased to improve access to IT in community-based classes, there is still insufficient use of IT to enhance learning. A very low proportion of staff hold appropriate qualifications to teach literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

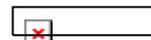
117. Use of initial assessment is systematic. Students are involved effectively in planning their learning goals and in monitoring progress. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress are effective. Students regularly review their progress with teachers. Adult students, in particular, fully understand the documentation and feel that it is an important part of their learning. In a community-based numeracy class, two new students were immediately welcomed and given an informal, but thorough assessment task that helped to identify their learning goals accurately. Students aged 16 to 18 on entry level courses enjoy monitoring their progress on the individual charts that they keep in their folders. In one lesson, students evaluated each other's progress. They undertook this assessment sensitively and effectively. Students found this a positive and very motivating task.

118. Programmes and courses adequately meet the needs of students. Effective partnerships have successfully attracted new adult students. The number of adults on literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses rose from 170 in 2002 to 398 in 2003. Of these, 115 are attending classes in new community venues. Students can attend the college's centrally located Learndirect centre. In a developing aspect of the college's work, classes are held in the local shopping centre, in the workplace, in a public house and in isolated rural areas. Students are well supported. They benefit from the availability of good information about courses and value the help they receive from staff highly.

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

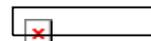
119. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been additional full-time appointments and new systems have been introduced, but at the time of the inspection it was too early to judge the full impact of these changes in improving the leadership and management of the area of learning. Demanding targets for recruitment, retention and pass rates have been set. Progress against recruitment targets is monitored on a monthly basis.

## **Part D: College data**



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

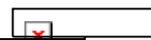
Level	16-18	19+
1	17	42
2	40	31
3	36	12
4/5	0	1
Other	7	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>



*Source: provided by the college in 2002*

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

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments %
Science and mathematics	575	256	5
Land-based provision	0	38	0
Construction	40	72	1
Engineering, technology and manufacture	116	231	2
Business administration, management and professional	253	1,599	12
Information and communication technology	710	1,457	14
Retailing, customer service and transportation	72	355	3
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	607	1,166	11
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	89	207	2
Health, social care and public services	459	3,769	27
Visual and performing arts and media	252	270	3
Humanities	408	285	4
English, languages and communication	637	129	5
Foundation programmes	305	1,296	10



<b>Total</b>	<b>4,523</b>	<b>11,130</b>	<b>100</b>
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Source: provided by the college in 2002

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	242	283	255	853	933	635
	Retention rate (%)	77	75	83	84	87	82
	National average (%)	80	80	79	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	77	49	80	81	69	81
	National average (%)	59	65	68	60	66	68
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	527	763	618	1,028	1,409	1,205
	Retention rate (%)	75	80	78	85	86	79
	National average (%)	76	76	76	79	79	78
	Pass rate (%)	84	66	75	92	74	67
	National average (%)	65	66	69	62	65	69
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	520	786	823	982	904	797
	Retention rate (%)	77	83	75	84	86	75
	National average (%)	75	76	77	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	72	71	78	89	60	77
	National average (%)	72	74	76	62	66	69
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	3	2	0	95	88	70
	Retention rate (%)	*	*	*	88	89	89
	National average (%)	83	79	82	84	81	84
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	*	96	49	64
	National average (%)	64	66	55	56	56	53

Note: summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is general FE/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1999 to 2001: Retention and Achievement Rates in

2. College rates for 1999 to 2002: College ISR.

\* too few students to provide a valid calculation

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	67	29	4	72
Level 2 (intermediate)	71	24	5	42
Level 1 (foundation)	65	31	4	23
Other sessions	70	20	10	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>147</b>