



JOHN RUSKIN COLLEGE

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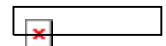
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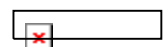
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Basic information about the college

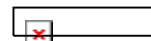


Name of college:	John Ruskin College
Type of college:	Sixth Form College
Principal:	Jennifer Sims
Address of college:	Selsdon Park Road South Croydon Surrey CR2 8JJ
Telephone number:	0208 651 1131
Fax number:	0208 651 4011
Chair of governors:	Geoffrey Jackson
Unique reference number:	130434
Name of reporting inspector:	Angela Cross-Durrant HMI
Date(s) of inspection:	26-30 November 2001

Part A: Summary

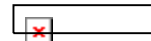


Information about the college



John Ruskin College is a sixth form college in South Croydon, Surrey. Within the borough of Croydon, there is a marked difference between some areas which are prosperous and others which are deprived. Two of the wards in Croydon are amongst the most deprived in Britain. The college has expanded its provision to meet the needs of the local community, particularly to help widen the participation of adults in education. It aims to cater for students of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. A large proportion of students come from minority ethnic groups and all students work harmoniously together. At the time of the inspection, 1,790 students were enrolled at the college, of whom 1,270 were aged 16 to 18, and 520 were aged over 19. The college offers a broad range of courses to meet a wide variety of learning needs. Full-time programmes include: three foundation level General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) courses, six intermediate GNVQ courses, eight Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) courses; 34 General Certificate of Education Advanced and/or Advanced Subsidiary level subjects (GCE A/AS level); General Certification of Secondary Education (GCSE) in mathematics and English, and a pre-GCSE course in mathematics. At advanced level (level 3), one third of full-time students were on AVCE courses and two thirds on GCE courses, though many combine AVCE and GCE study. Students who are enrolled on level 3 courses have a minimum of four GCSE passes at grades A*-C. At the time of the inspection, the college also offered 29 evening classes, mostly in information and communication technology (ICT) but also National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) courses at level 1 in cleaning and support services, and at levels 2 and 3 in early years education. The mission of the college is, 'John Ruskin College will be a leading provider of a quality educational service to those from a variety of backgrounds and activities who wish to continue education and training after the age of 16.'

How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the overall quality of provision to be good in: humanities and business; satisfactory in science and mathematics, health and social care and childcare, visual and performing arts and media, and English and modern foreign languages; and less than satisfactory in leisure and travel and in computing and information technology (IT). The main strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

Key strengths

- broad range of courses to address local need
- college's successful practices for widening participation
- effectiveness with which needs of students are met
- good personal and learning support for students

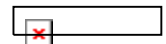
- very good accommodation and IT resources.

What should be improved

- retention and pass rates in many areas
- teaching methods and materials to meet the needs of students of mixed abilities
- implementation of the self-assessment process
- students' punctuality.

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

Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

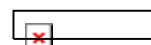


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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
Science and mathematics	Satisfactory. Teaching is at least satisfactory. There is a wide range of science and mathematics courses. Retention rates on general vocational science courses are high, but they are low on most GCE A-level courses in mathematics and science. Support for students is good.
Business	Good. Teaching is good. Pass rates on almost all courses are high. Specialist resources are good, and students receive helpful support from teachers and tutors. Students progress successfully from level 1 through to level 3 within the college. Many students arrive late for lessons.
Information and communication technology	Unsatisfactory. There is good teaching on AVCE and short, part-time IT courses. Pass rates are below national averages on most courses. Retention rates are satisfactory on GNVQ and GCE AS-level courses, but poor on most other courses. Many students are not

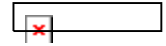
	punctual.
Leisure and travel	Unsatisfactory. Teaching is mostly satisfactory. Retention and pass rates overall are below national averages. The arrangements for moderating teachers' marking of students' coursework are inadequate. Many students are not punctual and some do not attend regularly.
Health and social care and childcare	Satisfactory. Teaching is mostly satisfactory and some is good. Curriculum management is strong. A good programme of work experience and activities in the community enhances significantly students' learning. Pass rates on the GNVQ foundation course are outstanding and good on the GNVQ advanced course. Retention rates are unsatisfactory on all courses, and many students are late for lessons.
Visual and performing arts, and media	Satisfactory. Teaching is good in art and design. Students produce some excellent work. Retention and pass rates are high. Teaching in media and performing arts is satisfactory overall, but some retention and pass rates are below national averages. Some rooms used for teaching media and music need refurbishment. Many students are not punctual for lessons in performing arts.
Humanities	Good. Teaching is good and lessons are well planned. Pass rates on some GCE A-level courses are below national averages, but on GCE AS-level courses they are high, and many students achieve grades A-C. Retention rates are sometimes low, and students are not punctual for lessons.
English and modern foreign languages	Satisfactory. Teaching in modern foreign language evening-class lessons and GCE A-level lessons is good. In English, teaching is good or very good in GCE A and AS-level lessons, but poor in some GCSE lessons. Retention and pass rates are improving on modern foreign languages courses. Some pass rates in GCSE English are high, but they are low in GCE A-level English language and literature, and retention rates are low on GCE AS and A-level courses. There is ineffective management of GCSE English courses across the college.

How well is the college led and managed?



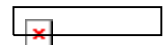
There is satisfactory leadership and management of the college. Following significant management reorganisation in 1999, senior and middle managers' roles and accountabilities are clearer, and communication throughout the college is good. However, at subject and course-team level, GCSE English is insufficiently well co-ordinated. Senior managers and governors have a clear strategic view of the direction of the college, and strategic and operational planning are well managed. Pass rates and student retention rates have fallen in recent years, and the college is working hard to address these issues. Mechanisms that have been put in place recently have improved students' attendance at the college. The college enrolls students in keeping with its policy for equal opportunities and widening participation. Some pass rates are better than the published data might indicate because of students' relatively low prior achievements. While the quality assurance system is well established and is applied to all areas of the college, teachers give insufficient weight in their self-assessment to retention and pass rates that are below national averages. Governors have insufficient awareness of some falling pass rates. Governors and staff closely monitor the implementation of the college's equal opportunities policy.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



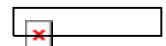
The college endeavours to ensure that its provision is educationally and socially inclusive and meets the needs of its students. Half of its students are from minority ethnic backgrounds and students work together harmoniously and collaboratively. The commitment of staff to widening participation has been demonstrated by the recruitment of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, part-time courses have been developed for adults from the local areas, the nearby Education Action Zone and those in basic service occupations in the wider area. The college has established some good links with the local community through which it has raised the profile of the college and attracted more young people to participate in post-compulsory education. There is good support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for speakers of other languages. The college offers courses at pre-foundation and foundation level, as well as at levels 2 and 3. Its equal opportunities policy is implemented fully and monitored closely.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Arrangements for recruiting and enrolling students are good, and potential students receive helpful information about courses at the college. Teachers from the college visit partner schools to give guidance to students and to conduct interviews. Guidance and support for students during their studies is strong, and there is an effective counselling service. Specific learning support for students is comprehensive and very good, and there is a well-used study skills centre, which students value greatly. While tutors monitor students' punctuality and attendance, and attendance is improving, students are still not punctual at lessons. The tutorial programme benefits significantly students whose tutors also teach them, but it is of less help to those whose tutors do not teach them for at least part of their programme.

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

- supportive teachers and tutors

- welcoming and friendly atmosphere

- respect for ethnic diversity

- excellent IT facilities
- safe and secure environment.

What they feel could be improved

- overlong tutorial sessions
- means for preventing the use of `the café' as the only social area for students
- some overcrowding in private study areas
- newly introduced `swipe card' arrangements to make them speedier
- range of sports activities.

Other information

The college has two months to prepare an action plan in response to the report. It must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors must agree the plan and send copies of it to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

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	55	35	10
19+ and WBL*	72	14	14
Learning 16-18	54	36	10
19+ and WBL	72	14	14

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

16-18 year olds

1. The college offers a wide range of subjects and courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 for full-time students aged 16 to 18. At the time of the inspection, two-thirds of the 1,261 full-time level 3 students were enrolled on GCE AS and A-level subjects, and one-third on general vocational courses. The college enrolls students with a minimum of four GCSE subjects at grades A*-C on to level 3 courses. This entry requirement is lower than for many other sixth form colleges and the average GCSE points score of students enrolling at the college has fallen from 5.1 to 4.9. This indicates that some pass rates are better than the usually published data might suggest.

2. Over the three years 1998 to 2000 most pass rates on level 2 courses were in line with the average for sixth form colleges. Most level 3 pass rates were below the national average for sixth form colleges, and in 2000, they were in the lower quartile for the sector. In 1999, the average GCE A-level points score for students taking two or more GCE A-level subjects fell to 13.9, having been 17.2 in 1998, but rose again to 15 in 2000 and, largely, this improvement has been maintained. There were some outstanding pass rates in GCE A-level electronics and economics and on the GNVQ intermediate level and the AVCE in art and design. There were good pass rates in GCE A-level business studies, French and art; GNVQ foundation-level business and health and social care; GNVQ advanced-level health and social care; and the basic level certificate in business language competence. Data on GCE AS-level subjects indicate good pass rates, for example, in government and politics, history, psychology, sociology and art. There were some poor pass rates, for example, in GCE A-level biology, computing, history, English, German, music and media, and in GNVQ intermediate and advanced leisure and tourism and in GNVQ intermediate level IT. They were particularly poor in GCE A-level human biology and GNVQ advanced IT.

3. The college has begun to use a system that allows its members to calculate students' GCSE points before they enrol at the college, and the calculation may be used to predict students' GCE A-level grades. The college's report indicates that in 2000 and 2001, in half the courses students have lower outcomes than might have been predicted and half have higher outcomes. In 2001, using this calculation, there are higher than predicted outcomes, for example, in GNVQ advanced-level science, art and design and health and social care, and GCE A-level drama, electronics and further mathematics. Courses with lower than predicted outcomes included, GCE A-level music, French, media and IT and GNVQ advanced-level leisure and tourism.

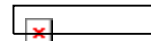
4. Retention rates on level 2 full-time courses over the three years 1998 to 2000 have been in line with the average. Over the same period in level 3 courses they have fallen. In 2001, retention rates were good, for example, on GCE A-level psychology, French, German, and art and design, and on GNVQ foundation-level business, intermediate and advanced-level science and AVCE art and design courses. They were poor on GCE A-level biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computing, English, drama; GNVQ intermediate-level IT, and GNVQ intermediate and advanced health and social care and IT courses. Data for GCE AS-level courses suggest good retention rates,

for example, in mathematics, psychology and government and politics, and poor retention rates in IT.

5. Students have had considerable success in local and regional football and basketball competitions. Students from a range of programmes, including government and politics, art and design, health and social care have gained awards and recognition in a variety of external activities. These include: the achievement of Croydon Young Enterprise award; success in the Rotary public speaking competition; gaining the British Diversity award, which recognises commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity in the community; achieving the Croydon Citizenship award and public exhibition of students' art and design work celebrating urban regeneration.

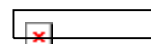
6. The level of students' attainment in many lessons is satisfactory and sometimes good. In business, for example, students are able to apply theory to practice and demonstrate good analytical skills. Students in many areas use IT well for research purposes, contribute confidently to class discussion and work industriously and collaboratively in groups. In humanities, students' presentation skills are outstanding. In many lessons, students' written work was at a level appropriate for their courses. In lessons, on GCE A and AS-level mathematics, IT, media, music and GCSE English courses, however, some students' attainments were low. Students had not developed sufficiently strong skills of analysis or problem solving. Often, their knowledge and understanding were restricted to what was obvious and they were unable to discern or judge for themselves the wider implications of the issue being discussed. Teachers develop students' key skills well from levels 1 to 3. In 2001, pass rates for key skills tests in communication and IT were satisfactory at level 3, high in IT at level 2 and very high in communication and IT at level 1. The pass rates for key skills tests in number were satisfactory at level 1 but low at levels 2 and 3.

Adult learners



7. The number of students on adult courses has risen from a small number in 1998 to over 530 at the time of the inspection. Data relating to the three years 1998-2000 indicate that pass rates and retention rates in most subjects are at least satisfactory, though sometimes where the student retention rate is high, the pass rate is low. For example, in 2001, the retention rate on the integrated business technology (IBT), course at level 3 was 19 percentage points above the national average, but the pass rate was 8 percentage points below the average. The vast majority of adult students are enrolled on IT courses and most are working towards a computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) qualification. In 2001, the student retention rate on IT courses was satisfactory and the pass rate for the CLAIT qualification was eight percentage points above the national average. Retention and pass rates are satisfactory on modern foreign languages courses.

Quality of education and training



8. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 136 sessions. They judged that teaching was at least good in 56% of the lessons observed, satisfactory in 34% and less than satisfactory in 10%.

9. Teachers have established good working relationships with their students. In most cases they plan, prepare for and manage lessons well and set students realistic but challenging tasks. In virtually all lessons observed, teachers displayed an assured knowledge of their subjects. Many teachers are able to organise and manage group and whole class discussion well, and help students to summarise key points arising out of debate and to make salient notes. Some teachers

are adept at drawing lessons to a productive close, co-ordinating students' contributions and making sure they have understood the key points. In the better lessons, teachers share the objectives of the lesson with students, help them revise previous learning to good effect and move students on to a new topic with ease. They give clear explanations of complex concepts and enable students to extend their understanding and their ability to analyse sometimes competing arguments associated with the concepts. They check carefully and regularly that students have sufficient understanding of the object of the lesson and give discreet, individual help to students in difficulty. Teachers are skilful in using questioning techniques which enable students to form conclusions for themselves. In these better lessons, students are kept to task, work industriously either on their own or with others, know exactly what has to be done and by when, are able to apply theory to practice where appropriate and their standard of attainment in lessons is good. In practical lessons, teachers and students observe carefully any health and safety requirements.

10. Teachers have devised some good materials to help students extend their knowledge and understanding and learn more effectively. They have designed other materials for students to use when measuring their own progress. In French lessons, for example, students use specially prepared handouts to good effect to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. In English lessons, teachers have created useful handouts which help students take their thinking through stages of complexity when, for example, they consider the subtle relationship between language and thought. Some teachers use equipment and learning aids effectively to help students to acquire a high level of competence. For example, in a GNVQ foundation-level business lesson, the teacher used overhead transparencies, the college intranet, and displays prepared before the lesson, as well as step-by-step explanation, to help students prepare PowerPoint presentations for the rest of the class. In health and social care, teachers have built up a good collection of relevant and topical resources, which they share for teaching.

11. Some aspects of teaching are less than satisfactory. Not all teachers manage lesson time effectively, and in some lessons, the teacher took too long to introduce a topic or task, and students were unable to complete what was required in the time available. In other lessons, the teacher overestimated the time needed to complete tasks and students finished these early and were left with nothing to do. Sometimes, group work was not managed sufficiently well and students who completed work had to wait for the teachers' solution to the task. In some long lessons, teachers failed to maintain students' interest, and students became restless and had difficulty concentrating. Some teachers rely too much on making students copy from the board and do not help them develop note-making skills. Teachers often give solutions to issues or problems too readily, denying students the opportunity to persevere and learn the solution for themselves. Lessons are sometimes slow to develop because students take a long time to settle; there is insufficient attention paid to engaging students right from the start of lessons. Most classes contain students of differing abilities and students who have relatively fewer GCSE grades A*-C than many students in other sixth form colleges. Other than in a few instances, teachers do not adapt their teaching methods or materials to ensure they meet the different learning needs of students. In addition, some tasks set for students are undemanding while others are too complex. Teachers often fail to check that all students have understood an aspect or theme of a lesson before moving on to another.

12. In the better lessons, students are encouraged to participate fully in discussion and tasks and by the end of the lesson, most are able to answer questions or offer comments knowledgeably and confidently. Students are often able to help each other; share ideas willingly; develop good research skills; are able to think things out for themselves; and are able to work well on their own, in pairs, groups, or as part of the whole class. However, some students arrived significantly late in 42% of lessons observed and in some curriculum areas, in almost all lessons. Their lack of punctuality often disrupted lessons seriously, by causing a loss of momentum or breaking the logical 'flow' of the lesson, and because time was lost bringing latecomers up to speed. Students have yet to learn the importance of good timekeeping.

13. Teaching on the courses for adults in IT, modern foreign languages and health and social care is often good or very good. Teachers use appropriate teaching methods and materials, and they have developed a strong and supporting working relationship with their students. Students are well motivated and diligent. There is also some work-based learning provision in cleaning and support services and early years education, and while training is largely satisfactory, the arrangements for

assessors to check each other's marking are not fully developed, and visits from assessors have been irregular. Consequently, the external verification of trainees' completed units of training is slow.

14. Teachers are suitably qualified in the subjects they teach, and 99% of full-time and part-time teachers who teach on full-time courses have a teaching qualification. Some 85% of part-time teachers have a teaching qualification and half of the remaining 15% of part-time teachers are working towards one. Some 57% of the specialist tutors and instructors providing learning support have relevant qualifications, and all but one of the remainder are working towards them. In travel and tourism, teachers have experience of the leisure and travel industry, but it is out of date, and in health and care, two teachers have direct professional experience in the care sector.

15. The college has recently completed a large-scale building programme. The new student services area is bright, spacious and welcoming. The new learning resources centre provides students with excellent facilities for private study and is equipped with ample stocks of texts and other materials, computers, a good range of CD-ROMs and good access to the Internet. Students are pleased with the new refectory, known as The Café. There is also a new open-plan IT suite containing 125 new high-specification computers, including excellent facilities for art and design students. Some of the teaching rooms have been redesigned or extended and a few are not yet fully refurbished following the recent building work. Most teaching rooms are fit for their purpose. However, some small rooms are used for large groups, and it is difficult for students to engage in role-play, group work and other learning activities requiring space. The college has strengthened its security arrangements and students report they feel particularly secure at the college.

16. ICT facilities are very good. There are 181 computers on open access for students to use, including those in the new IT suite. Students are generally able to work on computers with ease by booking a machine that is not in use. The ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students is outstanding at 2.7:1. However, teachers often use the IT suite for teaching whole classes and when several such teaching lessons are in operation, the noise level can be high and distracting for students.

17. Most specialist facilities, materials and resources are at least satisfactory. In modern foreign languages, for example, students benefit from good language laboratories with appropriate video facilities, and specialist languages assistants give good support to students. Evening class students, however, do not use the specialist facilities. Computing and IT students have the benefit of ample, high-specification computing facilities. However, in leisure and tourism, there is no adequate 'travel shop' to enable students to learn in a realistic working environment. The equipment for drama, graphic design and music is good, but acoustics in the new music room and adjoining studios remain poor until building errors are corrected.

18. Students' performance is assessed regularly and the results of assessment are recorded systematically. Students receive clear instructions on what they have to do for homework, in assignments, and other tasks and these usually include details of the criteria by which they will be assessed. In most curriculum areas, teachers provide students with a calendar showing when assessments will be conducted. In humanities, the timings and guidelines for how to prepare for them are displayed in some classrooms. In other areas, such as modern foreign languages, the schedules for assignments and other work are not co-ordinated and students find they have several to complete at the same time. In travel and tourism, students are told only verbally when their next assignment is due. The level of the work set for students is appropriate to their courses. Overall, teachers mark students' work thoroughly. They give written comments to students on how to improve their work and their marking is fair. In a few areas, such as health and social care, science and leisure and travel, comments are minimal or discouraging, and in media, for example, marking is too generous. Teachers of leisure and travel and of science do not always correct students' spelling and grammatical mistakes. Teachers in most vocational areas check each other's marking and increasingly, teachers on GCE AS and A-level courses are doing so as well.

19. The college has a well-established system for monitoring students' progress which is implemented during tutorials. Tutors sometimes encourage students to conduct their own assessment to review, among other things, the time they spent planning and undertaking the work

and judging whether they could have done better with more effort. Some tutors set improvement targets for students and draw up action plans to help them progress, but the quality and effectiveness of these are not always adequate. Some targets are too vague. Planning is in hand to set students minimum target GCE A-level grades, and these will be determined on the basis of the students' GCSE points score. Science teachers have been setting students grades in this way for several years. Tutors send the parents of students aged 16 to 18 regular reports on the progress of their son or daughter.

20. The college aims to be fully inclusive and cater for students of all abilities, including students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and from a wide range of different ethnic backgrounds. In 2001, 50% of the full-time students at the college were from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The college has a policy of encouraging participation in the college from a very wide range of potential students, and offers courses at basic, foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. In particular, students wishing to pursue advanced courses are required to have a minimum of four GCSEs at grades A*-C, rather than five or six as in many other sixth form colleges. There is a growing adult education provision to cater for adults in the local area, in the nearby Education Action Zone, and in low-level service occupations in the wider area.

21. The college offers a wide range of courses to meet students' needs. There are 34 GCE AS and A-level courses, 8 AVCE courses, 6 GNVQ intermediate courses and 3 GNVQ foundation courses. Students can progress within the college from foundation to advanced level. Students on foundation-level courses receive help with basic skills through numberpower and wordpower workshops. One-third of the full-time students at the college are on general vocational courses. Many combine GCE AS or A-level study with a general vocational course. Courses for adults are run at the college and at two local primary schools. At the time of the inspection, over 530 students were enrolled on part-time and evening courses. Most are IT courses and some are courses in modern foreign languages, counselling and sign language. There are also NVQ courses, such as those leading to an NVQ in early years education, at levels 2 and 3, and an NVQ in cleaning and support services at level 1. The college has analysed its enrolments in order to find out which courses in particular meet local needs. It has also taken specific action to make the work of the college better known in the local community. It has developed good links with local schools, with the local Winged Fellowship through which students experience a week's residential experience helping people in care, and with employers, many of whom provide work experience placements for students.

22. Teachers ensure that the key skills are taught as an integral part of courses. The college also runs specific key skills workshops for students on intermediate programmes, though attendance and retention rates in these are poor. There is an enrichment programme of activities to enhance students' experiences, which includes sports and a gospel choir. However, students complain that they do not have enough time to participate in many of the activities. There is also an active student council, which consists of elected representatives from all areas of the college, and it provides an important opportunity for students to express their views to college managers. The college provides a quiet room that is used for individual or collective worship.

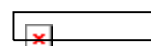
23. The college has well-organised arrangements for student recruitment and enrolment. Teachers and managers from the college visit partner schools where they give talks to and interview prospective students. Frequent and regular interviews are available in the college from December for prospective students outside the borough. Open evenings and 'taster' events help students make informed choices about the college. Enrolment at the college takes place in late August and includes an assessment of students' key skills ability. Although staff produce the results of this assessment promptly, the students are not notified of them until they have been allocated to a course and are attending their group induction. Staff do not meet with the students to discuss with them whether or not they should receive additional learning support or attend basic skills workshops. The arrangements for counselling new students about their learning needs are inadequate. There is no earlier opportunity to discuss individually the need for attendance at specific workshops. The college acknowledges that individual discussion with, and attendance plans for, students are insufficiently well organised. At the time of the inspection, around 100 students had been identified as needing help with basic skills or key skills, but only 30 were attending workshops to receive this.

24. General guidance and support for students are good. A student information office, careers staff, student activities officers and an attendance liaison officer provide good services, and there are service standards against which these are measured. The students are highly appreciative of the information and care provided. New measures for improving students' attendance are proving effective and in the week before the inspection, attendance was 83%, about 2.5 percentage points higher than at the same time last year. However, in the week of the inspection, the average attendance at the lessons observed was 80.8%. Guidance for students about higher education (HE) and training and employment is very good but there is less reference material available about employment. The counselling service is effective.

25. Students who have specific learning problems receive very good additional learning support. The arrangements include help for those who have, for example, learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particular communication skills deficiencies, emotional or behavioural problems, dyslexia, and those who need English for speakers of other languages. During the autumn term of 2001, 159 students were identified as needing specific individual support. These have been ably assisted by specialist tutors and instructors, and by learning support assistants who work with students in their lessons. Most of these specialists are suitably qualified or working towards appropriate qualifications. Students' progress is monitored systematically, but the records kept are not always sufficiently detailed and some do not specify clearly enough the learning targets that have been set. Help for students is also available in the study skills centre on a 'drop-in' basis. The service is well used and appreciated by students. In just two months since September 2001, 2,071 visits by students to the study skills centre were recorded.

26. The college has recently reviewed and improved its tutorial practices, and these are now largely effective. Tutors monitor punctuality and attendance, and they record and monitor progress being made by students in both their subjects and in their key skills. The tutorial programme enables students to work on career assignments, develop study skills, devise agreed action plans for improvement and to set targets. The system works very well for students whose tutor also teaches them for part of their programme. It does not work so well for students whose tutors do not also teach them for at least part of their programme, because progress against action plans and targets are not always pursued by the tutor and it is left to individuals to find time to discuss progress or problems with their subject teachers.

Leadership and management



27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. In the two years since 1999, the college has undergone considerable organisational change. The management structure has been reorganised and there are many new teachers in the college. In all but a few areas, the roles of staff are clear and all staff know to whom they are accountable. Communication is good. The college's new management information system is now reliable, following some initial difficulties, and staff have ready access to relevant data. Teachers are generally working well in the new team structure.

28. Governors and senior managers have a clear strategic view of the direction the college is now taking. Contributions from staff at all levels, as well as the corporation's priorities, are taken into account during the production of the strategic plan. Governors monitor effectively the college's performance against the annual operational plan. The implementation of the strategic plan is well managed. The college has widened participation in its courses, particularly by adults, and it has enrolled full-time students with fewer GCSEs than were required in 1999 and earlier.

29. However, over the three years 1999 to 2001, retention and pass rates have fallen overall. The college has set in motion several strategies to address this. It is too early to gauge their effectiveness, though student attendance has improved compared with the same time in 2000, following the instigation of stronger attendance monitoring, and the college is optimistic that this will raise retention rates. Students' poor punctuality, however, remains a significant problem for the

college. The college subscribes to a value added system, but so far it has been used solely to analyse pass rates. The college plans to use the system for setting students minimum target grades to be achieved at GCE A level, based on their GCSE points. Full-time students have lower GCSE achievements before they enrol than those in many other sixth form colleges, and this indicates that about half the students achieve better pass rates than the published data suggest. Use of the system also shows that the remaining half performs as or below what might be expected.

30. The new team structure encourages staff to work collaboratively, share good practice and analyse their performance objectively to identify strengths and weaknesses. The management arrangements work well, for example, in humanities and business. However, in some curriculum areas, management of the curriculum is less than satisfactory. For example, in English, which is one of the largest subject areas in the college, the provision is insufficiently well managed.

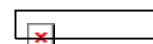
31. The college has a well-established quality assurance system that is implemented in all areas of the college. Teaching teams review their courses, assess their performance and observe lessons. Students also evaluate courses. There is a well-publicised complaints procedure and this incorporates a procedure for appealing against assessment decisions. Students' views, the findings from lesson observations and the outcomes of the complaints and appeals procedures are all taken into account in the self-assessment process. A quality assurance committee moderates all the self-assessment judgements. In general, however, the grades college staff gave for the lessons they observed were higher than those the inspectors awarded. When determining grades, subject teams did not sufficiently take into account the low retention and pass rates on many courses. Many teachers have not yet identified ways of: improving students' poor performance; meeting the diverse needs of students in the group who have differing abilities; ensuring that students who have achieved grade C or above in only four GCSE subjects are able to make progress and succeed on courses at level 3. The staff development programme has yet to prove effective in helping staff meet these challenges.

32. Governors now receive information on retention and pass rates in a more manageable form than previously. However, they are not always sufficiently aware of trends in the college's performance or the different national averages against which the college's performance can be measured. They have a more favourable view of the college's academic performance than the data justify.

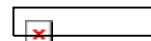
33. Governors and college staff have drawn up clear statements on equality of opportunity and harassment and have agreed a new equal opportunities policy to take account of recent legislation. All staff have undergone appropriate training on equal opportunities. Students can choose from a wide range of courses at the college and take a full part in the social and cultural life of the college. The college has appointed an inclusive learning manager to ensure that all students can participate in the college's activities, regardless of background or ability. The college closely monitors the performance of students from different ethnic groups and is making plans to respond to the findings in order to raise students' performance across the college.

34. The corporation exercises firm control over the college's finances and has steered the college sensitively through a difficult period of organisational restructuring, and prudently through a substantial building programme.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Science and mathematics



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

Strengths

- good retention rates on vocational courses
- careful monitoring of students' progress
- wide range of courses
- good progress by students on their courses and into HE.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on GCE A-level courses
- low pass rates on some courses
- students' lack of punctuality
- insufficient use of ICT in teaching.

Scope of provision

35. Most students are aged 16 to 18 and are enrolled on full-time courses. The college offers GCE A and AS-level courses in biology, chemistry, human biology, physics, electronics, mathematics and further mathematics, GNVQ courses in science at levels 2 and 3, and GCSE and separate modules in mathematics. A pre-GCSE foundation course in mathematics has been introduced this year. There are 262 students studying mathematics and 334 enrolled on science courses.

Achievement and standards

36. Retention rates on all GCE A-level courses declined in 2001 and were below the national average. Retention rates on vocational and GCSE programmes were near or above the national average. Pass rates on GCE A-level courses in chemistry and electronics were above the national

average. In 2000 and 2001, the pass rate in electronics GCE A level was 100%. In 2001, pass rates on other level 3 courses were below the national average and in human biology the pass rate was particularly low at 29%. GCSE pass rates at grades A*-G in mathematics were slightly below the national average. Value added measurements used to predict students' grades at GCE A level, based on the GCSE points they gained, indicate that some students achieve grades at GCE A level higher than predicted and some below.

37. Students' attainment in mathematics lessons is sometimes lower than expected. For example, in GCE A-level mathematics lessons, students were able to apply confidently routine algebraic techniques, but they did not have sufficiently deep or broad understanding to enable them to apply the techniques more widely in other aspects of mathematics or in relevant components of science. In science lessons, students' attainment is sometimes lower than might be expected; their progress with class work is slow and they are not sufficiently confident to participate adequately in discussion or answering questions.

38. Many students progress from level 2 courses to level 3 courses in science. This was particularly good in 2001 when 75% of the students who completed the GNVQ intermediate course progressed successfully to the AVCE course. A significant proportion of students on science and mathematics courses progress to HE, and in 2000 it was particularly high at over 80%.

A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	212	191	201
		% retention	85	77	79
		% pass rate	36	39	33
GNVQ intermediate science	2	No. of starts	14	15	16
		% retention	79	87	88
		% pass rate	64	85	71
GCE A-level physics	3	No. of starts	39	49	45
		% retention	86	79	66
		% pass rate	96	82	87
GCE A-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	109	129	100
		% retention	77	79	60
		% pass rate	90	87	80
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts	53	54	47
		% retention	65	90	70
		% pass rate	64	86	73
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	54	49	48
		% retention	74	82	70
		% pass rate	76	92	93

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

39. Most teaching in science and mathematics is satisfactory or better. Teachers plan their lessons effectively and they share ideas for lessons and curriculum design. In the better lessons, teachers

use a variety of appropriate activities to stimulate and maintain students' interest. They encourage all students to participate in discussion or answer questions, and they help develop students' note-making skills by careful synthesis of main points at key stages in a lesson. Teachers are particularly effective in helping students to review earlier learning in order to move on to new topics. Students work productively and are kept to task. In other lessons, teachers do not encourage students to persevere and solve issues or problems themselves; teachers give the answers too readily. Sometimes, teachers do not allow enough contribution from students during discussions. Teachers of the lower-level courses sometimes use teaching techniques that are too complex for the students to follow, and their use of mathematical notation is inappropriate. Teachers and students pay due regard to health and safety requirements during practical lessons. Technicians ably support the teacher and students, particularly in large groups.

40. The lack of punctuality on the part of students, both at the start of the day and after breaks, caused significant disruption in the majority of the lessons observed. Most teachers questioned students about this lateness, but the disruption resulted in time for learning and momentum being lost because teachers had to help late students settle and catch up with the rest of the class.

41. Teachers design good assignments and other tasks for students. They give these a relevant and imaginative context to excite the students' interest and make students want to discover information for themselves. For example, a GNVQ intermediate science group studied the condition under which snails survive most effectively in their natural environment by using a nearby pond. Other students studied the role of sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) and visited a vineyard designated as an SSSI. They also connected study of the vineyard with their work on fermentation, using grapes from the vineyard. Students gained good understanding of both theory and practice, and insight into local environmental issues. The assessment criteria for written assignments are clear and understood by students who make good use of IT to produce their worked assignments. Teachers mark students' work carefully and give constructive and helpful feedback to students to help them improve their performance. However, teachers make little use of IT as a teaching aid. The quality of some learning materials is unsatisfactory and some assignments and tests are poorly written by hand. The deficiency in the quality of materials is being addressed in foundation mathematics by timetabling some lessons in specialist ICT classrooms and through staff training. In electronics, teachers make effective use of computers for teaching.

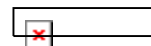
42. Students' progress through their courses is monitored closely and they receive appropriate feedback at regular intervals. In science, students are given a predicted grade, which they are expected to achieve at GCE A level, based on their GCSE grades. Teachers discuss these predicted grades with students and progress against them is reported to parents and guardians. The college has established formalised mathematics workshops which students may elect to attend, or to which teachers may refer students for specific extra learning support.

43. Classroom accommodation for mathematics is mostly of good quality. Some rooms, however, are too small for the large groups using them, resulting in little opportunity for teachers to engage students in some useful practical activities. All the science teaching takes place in well-furnished and appropriately equipped laboratories. Most are dual purpose, with separate areas for theory and for practical work, and this arrangement enables teachers to use an appropriately wide range of teaching methods. Good use is made of wall displays in the laboratories. Teachers are appropriately well qualified. Learning resources for students available in the science and mathematics areas are good. The library resources for science and mathematics are adequate.

Leadership and management

44. The science subjects are managed effectively in a discrete curriculum area. Mathematics is part of the IT curriculum area. Curriculum teams meet regularly. The science team, however, pay insufficient attention to poor retention and pass rates and, in particular, to the teaching strategies to deal with them. In mathematics, strategies designed to improve pass rates have been introduced recently.

Business



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

Strengths

- well-planned lessons and effective teaching
- good pass rates on most courses
- excellent computing facilities and business-standard software for students.

Weaknesses

- students' lack of punctuality
- insufficient use made of ICT by teachers on GCE AS and A-level courses.

Scope of provision

45. The college offers a broad range of full-time business courses, including GNVQ business at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels, GCE AS-level and A-level business studies and economics, and GCE AS-level accounting. The inspection covered all these courses. At the time of the inspection, there were 415 students enrolled on GCE AS-level and A-level courses and 196 students on general vocational courses, the latter comprising 34 students on the foundation level, 78 on the intermediate level and 84 on the advanced-level course. All the students were aged 16 to 18.

Achievement and standards

46. Pass rates are good in GCE A-level business studies, averaging over 93% in the three years 1999 to 2001, and in GCE A-level economics, averaging over 96% for the same period. Not only has the pass rate been high, but the grades achieved are higher than would have been expected when measured against their GCSE points. The pass rates on the GNVQ foundation course have been above the national average for the last three years, and were particularly impressive in 2001 at 15 percentage points above it. In 2001, the pass rate for GNVQ advanced was poor. In their first year in 2001, pass rates on the new GCE AS-level courses were good. The retention rate in GCE A-level business studies has been at or below the national average over the same three-year period. The retention rate on the GNVQ foundation course in business is very good. There is good progression of students on vocational courses within the college and several students have progressed successfully from level 1 to level 2 and then to level 3.

47. The standard of students' work in lessons, students' files and portfolios, is mostly good. In their oral and written work, students at all levels demonstrate their ability to apply concepts in practical situations and present data. For example, foundation-level students clearly understood the importance of work contracts, and students on a GCE A-level economics course applied economic theory in order to analyse the distribution of income in the UK. In some lessons, however, weaker students did not understand concepts fully or know how to apply them in practice.

A sample of retention and pass rates in business, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ foundation business	1	No. of starts	27	32	26
		% retention	66	92	88
		% pass rate	76	83	87
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	46	51	62
		% retention	87	82	76
		% pass rate	88	85	68
GNVQ advanced business (now AVCE)	3	No. of starts	41	47	47
		% retention	71	77	74
		% pass rate	89	58	63
GCE A-level economics	3	No. of starts	49	59	59
		% retention	79	90	78
		% pass rate	94	100	95
GCE A-level business studies	3	No. of starts	148	165	144
		% retention	82	77	74
		% pass rate	92	96	92

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

48. Much teaching is effective and it is particularly good on the GNVQ foundation course. Courses are carefully planned and well organised. Teachers have common schemes of work and assessment systems. In the better lessons, students were absorbed in well-planned activities which were varied in their scope. Teachers checked their understanding of topics and then moved on briskly to new ones. In a GCE A-level business studies lesson, students analysed productivity using a video clip and some newspaper articles, and then engaged in well-devised individual and group activities in order to learn from one another. The teacher also went over some concepts relevant to the topic, which the students had covered previously during their GCE AS-level course. In a GNVQ foundation lesson, teachers used a range of materials and equipment effectively to help students learn how to use PowerPoint for making presentations to the rest of their class. The teachers coached the students step by step, with the help of overhead transparencies and the college intranet. By the end of the lesson, students had produced some good presentation slides of their own. In some poorer lessons, teachers talked too much and failed to question the students effectively. Many classes contain students of different abilities but teachers seldom adapted or modified learning tasks to suit the aptitude and meet the learning needs of individual students. The IT suite has an open-plan layout and is used by individual students for private study and, on occasions, by more than one class at the same time. It is sometimes difficult for teachers to address a class in the IT suite without disturbing other people who are using the facilities there.

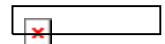
49. Teachers have developed good working relationships with students and the atmosphere in lessons is purposeful, polite and friendly. Teachers give effective individual support to students. Students' lack of punctuality reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning throughout the business area. Some students arrived late at virtually all lessons. Teachers often have to spend valuable time repeating themselves for the benefit of the latecomers. Teachers use ICT as a teaching aid very well in vocational courses, and expect students to make good use of the excellent computerised facilities in the college to carry out research and to produce work. Teachers, however, on GCE AS and A-level programmes make insufficient use of it as a teaching aid.

50. Teachers set work at an appropriate level for their students. They ensure that level 3 work is sufficiently demanding for students to demonstrate a range of relevant evaluative and analytical skills. Level 1 assignments are broken down into small sections to enable students to work through them progressively. Teachers mark students' work thoroughly and give helpful written advice on how students can improve. They use common marking schemes for most courses, and teachers in the larger teams, who are involved with vocational courses, moderate each other's marking to check consistency and fairness.

Leadership and management

51. The business area is well managed and teachers work effectively as a team. Teachers have begun to set target grades at GCE A level which students are expected to achieve. The targets are based on teachers' professional judgement. The college plans to use students' GCSE points to determine future target grades on the basis of students' GCSE points scores. The curriculum area's performance is reviewed annually with the principal. However, course teams do not analyse carefully enough the slow progress in reaching national averages in some courses. Students' views are collected and analysed, and while the vice-principal compares findings from all curriculum areas across the college, the teachers in the business curriculum area do not know the extent to which the views of their students differ from those of other students across the college.

Information and communication technology



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- broad range of courses
- some very good teaching on the AVCE IT course and short IT courses for adults
- particularly good modern computing facilities.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory standard of students' work on most courses

- low pass rates on nearly all courses
- low student retention rates on GCE A-level computing and AVCE IT courses
- insufficient action to help students with poor IT skills
- students' lack of punctuality.

Scope of provision

52. The college offers a broad range of courses in IT and computing at GNVQ intermediate level, AVCE, GCE AS and A-level courses. There are 434 students on full-time courses. Of these, 69 students are enrolled on the GNVQ intermediate IT course, 102 on the GCE A and AS-level computing courses, 178 on the GCE A and AS-level IT courses, and 85 on the AVCE IT course. The number of adults on short IT courses varies throughout the year. At the time of the inspection, around 500 adults were enrolled on these courses.

Achievement and standards

53. Student retention rates on intermediate-level GNVQ IT and in 2000 on GCE AS-level IT courses were around the national average, but were below it on GCE A-level computing and AVCE IT courses. Pass rates are below the national average on all these courses.

54. On GNVQ and AVCE programmes, the standard of students' work observed in lessons and in students' files is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory on GCE A and AS-level courses. On the AVCE IT course, students had produced some very good work. This had been used by the students to train groups in IT outside the college, and which had been very well received by the trainees. Through this work the students had not only improved their IT skills, but their personal and social skills as well. In contrast, the quality of GCE A and AS-level students' work, particularly in computing, showed unacceptable variation. In some instances, the students lacked the necessary skills to cope with the demands of their course. For example, in one GCE AS-level computing lesson, some students were able to undertake the programming of a simple logic game. Others on the same course lacked a basic understanding of the software package being used and were unable to make appropriate progress, even with considerable assistance from the teacher. Students who had been on an IT course previously, such as the GNVQ IT course at intermediate level, were usually able to make steady progress on the GCE AS-level course. However, in most lessons observed, a significant number of students had acquired little or no skill in IT before they joined the course and teachers did not take sufficient account of their needs. Despite students' poor IT skills teachers did not give these students different tasks or special learning materials to help them catch up with other members of their group.

A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communication technology, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion	1999	2000	2001
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		year:			
CLAIT short course for adults	1	No. of starts	261	324	186
		% retention	93	87	89
		% pass rate	74	69	79
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	41	50	67
		% retention	83	88	66
		% pass rate	50	55	66
AVCE IT	3	No. of starts	18	32	36
		% retention	67	78	78
		% pass rate	100	55	21
GCE A-level computing	3	No. of starts	62	96	54
		% retention	71	53	61
		% pass rate	60	74	64

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

55. Teaching is generally satisfactory and some is good. In the better lessons, teachers plan and structure their work well and ensure that students are able to cope with the topics introduced. For example, in a GCE AS-level computing lesson, the teacher gave a clear explanation of how data are stored and manipulated in a computer. Students were then required to work from a well-prepared worksheet, which enabled students to progress at their own pace. However, some students' ICT skills were poorer than those of their peers and they required a disproportionate amount of the teacher's time to enable them to deal with the task. This resulted in the teacher spending too little time with the more able students.

56. The quality of teaching IT courses for adults is very good. Teachers establish good working relationships with students, set appropriate tasks, assess work well and record and check students' progress thoroughly. Students produce work of a high standard.

57. Teaching and learning are sometimes affected adversely by the inappropriate size of rooms or the configuration of desks, and by some of the teaching aids used. While there is a good supply of modern computing equipment, there are sometimes inadequate facilities for teaching a whole class at once. For example, in one room, the lack of a display projector capable of being seen by a whole group resulted in the teacher having to fall back on the use of a worksheet, but this alternative method of delivery was not successful. Sometimes, the groups are large and there is insufficient space in the smaller rooms for the teacher to move readily around the room to check students' learning. A broken overhead projector had not been repaired and prevented the teacher using specially prepared materials.

58. Teachers mark students' work carefully and give them constructive feedback on their performance. However, some teachers fail to ensure that students complete homework on one topic before moving on to the next, and this prevents students learning as much as they should. For example, in a GCE A-level computing lesson, many students had not completed the background reading associated with a central processor unit's Fetch/Execute cycle. Their lack of the required background knowledge slowed the rate at which the new topic could be dealt with; most students were unable to complete the practical task in the time available.

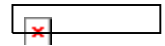
59. Persistent lateness by some students disrupted a significant proportion of lessons observed and threatens an otherwise good relationship which exists between students and teachers. Teachers are usually aware of students' individual needs. For example, the needs of students with restricted

mobility are considered fully when teachers select activities for coursework. In general there is good support for students and generally good careers advice.

Leadership and management

60. Leadership and management of the computing and IT curriculum area are sound. However, there is insufficient sharing of some good practice by the teachers. For example, not all team members follow the good practice used by some teachers to address the problems of persistent student lateness and absenteeism. All full-time teachers are observed twice a year and the findings from observations are used to identify ways of improving teaching and learning. At the end of the year, for the purpose of course review and self-assessment, teachers analyse course pass rates and students' retention rates. Action is then planned to improve these. Such action so far, however, has failed to stem the fall in pass rates. The college acknowledges that there are weaknesses in this curriculum area and is devising strategies to rectify them.

Leisure and travel



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- some well-planned lessons
- students' effective use of IT to conduct research
- improving retention rate on GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism
- good tutorial support for students.

Weaknesses

- low student retention rate on GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism
- low pass rates on GNVQ intermediate and advanced leisure and tourism
- ineffective teaching in many lessons

- inadequate arrangements for checking teachers' assessment of students' coursework
- students' lack of punctuality
- failure of AVCE travel and tourism students to complete necessary coursework.

Scope of provision

61. The college offers GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism, AVCE in travel and tourism and in leisure and recreation, and GCE A and AS-level physical education courses. There are 154 students aged 16 to 18 on leisure, travel and tourism courses and 65 on physical education courses.

Achievement and standards

62. In 2001, the pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate and advanced leisure and tourism courses were below the national averages, but well above the national average in GCE A-level physical education. The proportion of students gaining high grades on the GNVQ intermediate and advanced leisure and tourism courses is very low. The retention rate on GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism has been below the national average for the three years 1999 to 2001; on the GNVQ intermediate course they have been around the national average, but have improved significantly in 2001 to above the national average, having been below it in 2000.

63. In 2001, only 14 of the 23 students enrolled on the AVCE travel and tourism two-year double award course progressed from the first to the second year of the course. Students' progress on this course is slow. Of those who have continued into the second year, none have successfully completed the required coursework for the first year. At the time of the inspection, five students had completed five of the required six units of work for formal assessment and the remainder had completed even fewer. On the two-year AVCE leisure and recreation single award course, all the students progressed to the second year. There is satisfactory progression within the college of students from the GNVQ intermediate to the AVCE course. Of the students who completed the GNVQ advanced course, now the AVCE, in 2001, 53% went into employment and 25% went on to HE courses.

64. Students' attainment in the lessons observed was satisfactory and sometimes good. Students are able to demonstrate good research skills and use of IT, and in some lessons they produced good examples of realistic materials often used in the leisure and travel business. In many lessons, students contribute confidently during class discussions. They benefit from work experience as part of their courses and most find it valuable in understanding the requirements of the industry.

A sample of retention and pass rates in leisure and travel, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	35	23	23
		% retention	80	74	82

		% pass rate	68	81	63
GCE A-level physical education	3	No. of starts	46	36	54
		% retention	80	61	58
		% pass rate	84	81	90
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	3	No. of starts	32	19	27
		% retention	53	53	59
		% pass rate	53	60	81

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

65. Some lessons are well planned and effective. Teachers in these lessons maintain students' interest through a range of effective activities. For example, students make presentations, watch appropriate and informative videos, and use IT for research. Teachers check students' understanding and then move them on to new material at a pace that keeps students fully engaged throughout the lesson. In a quarter of the lessons observed, teaching was unsatisfactory and aspects of teaching in some of the remaining lessons were less than satisfactory. Shortcomings included teachers' failure to set challenging learning objectives for students; poorly structured lessons in which students were unclear of how long they had to complete work; teachers' unclear explanations of topics or instructions for tasks; and the lack of some teachers' occupational expertise, which affected adversely the accuracy of some information being given to students. The punctuality of students at lessons is poor and disrupts teaching and learning while teachers try to deal with latecomers. Students' attendance is sometimes as low as 53% or 63%. Students' absenteeism often results in a poor learning experience for students. For example, in some lessons students were unable to continue group work from the previous lesson because some members of their group were absent. In other lessons, so many students were away that it was not possible for the students to work in groups and develop team-working skills.

66. Although teachers are appropriately qualified, they lack recent experience of the travel, tourism and leisure industries. There is an appropriate range of books, journals and newspapers in the library, and four informative computerised on-line specialist resource databases are available for students' use. Teachers make little use of the specialist travel resource centre to enhance students' learning.

67. Assignments are appropriate for the course requirements. Teachers provide generally clear tasks and set them in the appropriate industrial context. Visits, such as those to Legoland, are an integral part of assignments and during these, students have to gather relevant information and materials for their work. The written feedback on students' marked work is too brief, and it is not always clear whether a student has successfully completed the assignment. There are inadequate internal verification arrangements in leisure and travel to check teachers' assessments of students' coursework.

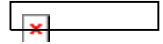
68. Students receive good tutorial support and careers advice. Tutors also help students to develop key skills and study skills. Key skills are assessed by subject teachers where they are an integral part of the curriculum, and by tutors in tutorials. In particular, the presentations made by students as part of their course assignments are used to develop and assess their communications key skills. Students undergo initial diagnostic assessment during their enrolment and induction period in order to identify any needs for additional learning support. Personal tutors and study skills tutors monitor students' progress and tutors monitor students' attendance closely.

Leadership and management

69. Day-to-day management of courses is satisfactory and communication between staff in the course teams is effective. Team meetings take place each week. However, some teachers fail to

implement necessary actions identified in team meetings. Some course self-assessment reports, and the curriculum area self-assessment report, fail to acknowledge weaknesses in teaching and learning. No monitoring takes place of progress toward meeting targets and objectives set following self-assessment.

Health and social care and childcare



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

Strengths

- outstanding pass rates on GNVQ foundation course
- good leadership of health and social care courses
- useful work experience and related activities for students
- success of many students in progressing within the college and to HE.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory student retention rates on all courses
- poor pass rates on GNVQ intermediate course
- insufficiently demanding work for students in many lessons
- students' lack of punctuality in many lessons.

Scope of provision

70. The college offers an appropriate range of full-time GNVQ health and social care courses from foundation through to advanced level. The AVCE in health and social care has replaced the GNVQ

advanced course, and the college offers the AVCE as both a single and a double award course. There are 17 students enrolled on the GNVQ foundation, 27 on the GNVQ intermediate, 40 on the AVCE double award, and 16 on AVCE single award course. The vast majority of students on these courses are aged 16 to 18. The college also offers part-time NVQ courses at level 2 and level 3 in early years care and education. All the students on these courses are adults. The programmes are delivered at various locations in the community. NVQ level 2 students are working part time on a voluntary basis, and NVQ level 3 students are already employed in the early years education sector. There are seven students on the NVQ level 2 course and 13 on the NVQ level 3 course.

Achievement and standards

71. Pass rates on the GNVQ foundation course are outstanding; they were well above the national average for the three years 1999 to 2001, and at 100% in both 1999 and 2001. On the GNVQ advanced course, they have been above the national average in two of the three years. Pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate course are poor and consistently well below the national average. Students achieve few distinction-level passes, but the value added scores are positive. Standards of students' assessed work are appropriate for the level of course they are undertaking and sometimes good. Students on the AVCE course gain other achievements through their work in the community. In two of the three years since 1999, for example, a student has won the Croydon citizenship award. A significant proportion of students progress from the foundation to the intermediate-level course, and from the intermediate to the advanced-level course. A few are successful in progressing through all three levels. Approximately 70% of health and social care students go on to HE courses and others gain relevant employment.

72. Student retention rates on all GNVQ courses are unsatisfactory. In 2000, the student retention rate on the GNVQ intermediate course was above the national average, but in other years retention rates have declined on both the GNVQ foundation and intermediate courses to well below national averages. The retention rate is improving on the GNVQ advanced course, though it is still below the national average. Student attendance for these courses is a little below the college's target. Pass rates and retention rates on NVQ programmes are unreliable. However, data suggest that some retention and pass rates are poor. Strengthened co-ordination and monitoring of these courses appear to have improved retention compared with the same time in 2000. Students' attainment in lessons was low. Students sometimes took too long to complete tasks and needed much help from the teacher, for example, when students worked with case studies. Poor behaviour on the part of some students interrupted the progress of lessons and students should have completed more work in the time. Sometimes teachers put forward their views rather than allowing students to form opinions of their own.

A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care and childcare, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ foundation health and social care	1	No. of starts	10	9	11
		% retention	90	67	45
		% pass rate	100	83	100
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	22	29	19
		% retention	73	86	63
		% pass rate	75	72	67
GNVQ advanced health and social care	3	No. of starts	33	19	18
		% retention	55	58	67
		% pass rate	94	82	91

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

73. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and most use a relevant variety of learning activities to sustain students' interest and concentration. In the better lessons, teachers guide students through lessons at a lively pace and have high expectations of them, to which they respond positively. In one such lesson on the developmental stages of a group dynamics, students themselves worked well in small groups against challenging deadlines. Firstly, they produced a definition of a group and later explored the advantages and disadvantages of working in a team, and the factors which contribute to an effective or ineffective team. Students demonstrated a good level of understanding. The teacher strengthened students' learning by giving a presentation using overhead transparencies, which helped the students to reflect on the dynamics of their own group work and relate what they were learning in theory to real work in the sector. In poorer lessons, teachers fail to extend students' knowledge and understanding. They sometimes do not check that the learning objectives of the lesson have been achieved. In one lesson, students reported back verbally on the outcomes of their work in groups, wrote them on the whiteboard, copied them into their notebooks, and proceeded to the next task without any discussion or input from the teacher and did not know whether they had performed adequately. In a few lessons, teachers laboured points and moved the lesson on too slowly. Students lost concentration, became listless, and the behaviour of some distracted others from applying themselves to the task. Students' lack of punctuality disrupted many lessons. The teacher had to go over ground already covered for the benefit of latecomers and valuable lesson time was lost.

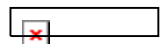
74. Schemes of work are good. Students benefit from a wide range of work experience placements and visits to relevant places of interest enhance students' learning. Second-year students on the AVCE course have established a 'health promotion unit' for the college that enables them to acquire skills relevant to their future careers ambitions. Learning materials, texts and other resources in the learning resources centre are good. The curriculum team has created its own additional resource base, which contains many useful materials for both the teachers and students. Some classrooms are equipped with interactive notice boards. Some rooms are sometimes too small for the size of the GNVQ intermediate groups using them, and they inhibit the range of learning activities that can be used. Staff are well qualified academically, but very few have relevant professional experience in the health and care sector.

75. Teachers assess students' work rigorously and return it to students promptly. Written feedback on parts of assignments often lacks helpful comments and the final overall comments are sometimes rather discouraging to students. Tutorial programmes are well planned. Most students are aware of their progress and what they need to do to improve. Tutors follow up absences quickly and there is good contact with parents. Tutors give of their time generously to support students. Any additional support needs are diagnosed early in the year and appropriate support is organised. Learning support assistants attend course team meetings, which helps them focus their work on the particular needs of individual students.

Leadership and management

76. Leadership of health and social care courses is good and gives a clear sense of direction. Teachers implemented a strategy in the autumn term of 2001 to improve retention and this has led to some improvement, compared with the same time in 2000. Teams plan the courses effectively and promote equality of opportunity through all they do. Teachers carry out self-assessment regularly, but they have placed too much weight on some strengths, and they awarded grades to the lessons they have observed that were higher than those awarded by inspectors.

Visual and performing arts, and media



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

Strengths

- good teaching and learning on most courses
- high pass rates on many courses
- good retention rate on art and design courses
- good use of specialist resources in art and design.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on GCE A-level music, drama and media courses
- low pass rates on GCE A-level music and media courses in 2001
- poor teaching accommodation for music and media
- students' lack of punctuality in performing arts lessons.

Scope of provision

77. The college offers a good range of full-time courses in visual and performing arts subjects, and media. Provision includes: GNVQ intermediate and AVCE art and design; GCE AS-level and A-level art and graphic design; GCE AS-level dance and music technology, GCE A-level music and drama. There are also courses in GCE AS-level and A-level media. Enrolments increased in 2001 following the introduction of new GCE AS-level provision, which formed part of the college's response to the new Curriculum 2000 arrangements. There are 253 students on art and design, 137 on media and 98 on performing arts courses. Nearly all students are aged 16 to 18. The inspection covered all provision in the area.

Achievement and standards

78. Pass rates vary significantly across the courses; some pass rates are well above the national

average and some are well below it. The pass rates in art and design are consistently high. For example, there has been a 100% pass rate on the GNVQ advanced, now AVCE, in the three years 1999 to 2001, and on the GNVQ intermediate courses. Pass rates on the GCE A-level art course have also been well above the national average over the same period. However, in performing arts and media, some pass rates are poor. In 2001, the pass rate in GCE A-level media was below the national average; in GCE A-level music the pass rate fell from 100% in 2000, to only 43% in 2001; in GCE A-level drama there was a 100% pass rate, but only 54% of students completed the course. Student retention rates have been well below the national average in GCE A-level drama and media for the three years 1999 to 2001, and though numbers on the GCE A-level music course are small, the retention rate has been poor over the same period. In 2001, students on the GNVQ advanced course in art and design earned the opportunity to exhibit their project work, on urban development, at an exhibition sponsored by the Royal Institute of British Architects, as part of the Stephen Lawrence Awards.

79. Art and design students are able to work on their own in the studio, which provides them with an industrious and productive environment. In performing arts, the standard of students' work in lessons in music and dance is broadly satisfactory, and good in drama. Some work is very good. For example, students on the GNVQ advanced course in art and design had visited the surrealism exhibition at the Tate Modern as part of an imaginatively conceived assignment for the purpose. They produced some impressively good work, which demonstrated clearly their comprehensive appreciation of surrealism. Some media students' essays, dance students' practical work and music students' aural tests demonstrate insufficient development of students' critical and analytical abilities.

A sample of retention and pass rates in visual and performing arts, and media, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	17	17	21
		% retention	82	76	83
		% pass rate	93	85	94
GCE A-level art and design	3	No. of starts	61	70	63
		% retention	89	73	83
		% pass rate	90	91	94
GCE A-level media	3	No. of starts	26	78	53
		% retention	73	71	60
		% pass rate	83	78	72
GCE A-level music	3	No. of starts	9	9	10
		% retention	67	56	70
		% pass rate	100	100	43
GCE A-level drama	3	No. of starts	31	32	26`
		% retention	74	66	54
		% pass rate	75	88	100
AVCE (formerly GNVQ advanced)	3	No. of starts	20	15	25
		% retention	90	67	80
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

80. In general, the quality of teaching is good. In the better lessons, teachers had planned and structured their lessons well. Schemes of work and lesson plans in art and design are particularly imaginatively designed to ensure students cover the full scope of awarding body requirements and learn to think and operate on their own. In the better lessons, teachers ensure students are able to think for themselves once they have given clear introductions to topics. For example, in a drama lesson, students demonstrated their skill at interpreting play scripts whilst staging short scenes from 'A Doll's House'. The teacher provided a clear introduction to the task and posed some searching questions to elicit a detailed and accurate level of analysis of the topic from students. In a music technology lesson, the teacher provided a thorough introduction to relevant theory using handouts, and then encouraged students to experiment with ways of recording a drum kit, using coincident pair microphones. Students extended their theoretical knowledge and practical skills successfully by experimenting with the use of microphones, mixing desks, and digital multi-track recording and effects. Many students are purposefully engaged in their lessons and responsive to effective questioning by teachers. However, in media, dance, music and music technology courses, there were a number of fundamental gaps in students' knowledge and the students were not as motivated to follow up issues independently. Teachers sometimes fail to provide appropriate reference material to help students fill the gaps in knowledge or resources to help them extend their learning. The lack of differing methods and tasks in some dance and music lessons fails to address the needs of the less experienced students.

81. The art and design studios are well appointed and maintained. Students have a comprehensive range of supporting reference books and other texts. In media, the main teaching room is not yet fully furnished following recent building work. The new drama studio is well equipped. A newly developed music classroom and adjoining studios are well equipped, but they are poorly designed, small and cluttered, have poor acoustics and soundproofing, and are in a poor decorative state. Courses in graphic design have recently been relocated to a newly constructed studio, which is adjacent to the new IT suite which contains an excellent industry-standard computing facility. However, the scanning and image capture facilities are insufficient when teachers have to teach some whole classes together. Technical support for creative computing and music technology is good. Teachers are appropriately well qualified.

82. Most teachers mark students' work carefully, monitor and record students' progress well and provide full reports to parents twice a year. Teachers of vocational courses check each other's marking thoroughly. In media, however, some teachers do not mark work effectively and their marking is too generous; and this weakness has also been identified by the college's external verifier. Teachers do not share their marking methods or moderate each other's grading of students' work.

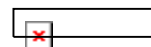
83. Support for students is good. Students regularly progress to further specialist study. In art and design, a 'compact' arrangement exists with Croydon College, which gives priority of places for students at the college who wish to progress to its pre-degree foundation programme. In art and design, there is good progression of students from level 2 to level 3 courses within the college.

Leadership and management

84. The creative arts area was established as a curriculum area in 1999. Courses within art and design are well organised and co-ordinated. Teachers in the different subjects are beginning to share good practice. They hold regular team meetings and record necessary actions. In some areas, part-time teachers are insufficiently involved in course planning and other course team activities.

85. Some key weaknesses were identified through self-assessment and the college is attempting to address them. Some teachers do not yet analyse sufficiently thoroughly pass rates and retention rates, and action plans to remedy poor performance are inadequate. A new system is being implemented to address student absence and early indications are that attendance has improved in the autumn term of 2001 compared with the same time in 2000.

Humanities



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

Strengths

- good teaching
- students' highly-developed presentation skills
- wide range of activities to extend students' learning
- good course planning
- good pass rates in GCE AS-level subjects.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates in some GCE A-level subjects
- some poor retention rates
- students' poor attendance and timekeeping.

Scope of provision

86. The college offers a good range of humanities subjects. The inspection covered a selection from the range: GCE A and AS-level government and politics, history, psychology and sociology. A total of 371 students, aged 16 to 18, are enrolled on these courses.

Achievement and standards

87. Pass rates on GCE A-level psychology and sociology courses are in line with national averages for sixth form colleges. Pass rates for GCE A-level government and politics, and history, have fallen to below the national average. However, in 2000, of those who pass GCE A-level government and politics, 73% gained grades A-C, and 60% in 2001. The pass rates at grades A-C were above the national average in GCE A-level sociology and history in 1999 and 2000. A high proportion of students enrolled in this area have achieved fewer than five GCSE passes at grades A*-C. Analysis of their pass grades at GCE A level, based on their GCSE points, shows that significant value added has been achieved by students in all subjects. Student retention rates are good in GCE AS-level subjects. They have fallen to below the national average in GCE A-level government and politics, history, and sociology.

88. The standard of students' attainment observed in most lessons and in students' work is satisfactory or better. Students' written work is appropriate to the level of their courses. Students work collaboratively in groups. They have developed particularly well their key skill of communication and are able to give confident presentations to the rest of the class. For example, history students had prepared a talk on 'The Red Terror' and were able to present their findings confidently and clearly. Students display effective critical skills when dealing with texts. They are able to analyse source information meaningfully. They follow through logical arguments well and can judge the validity of competing theories.

A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GCE A-level government and politics	3	No. of starts	15	17	22
		% retention	87	71	77
		% pass rate	85	82	82
GCE A-level history	3	No. of starts	38	39	44
		% retention	34	82	77
		% pass rate	90	72	71
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	64	70	69
		% retention	84	71	87
		% pass rate	90	80	90
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	50	65	36
		% retention	72	62	61
		% pass rate	85	92	86

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

89. Most teaching is good. Teachers work together to devise good schemes of work and plan their lessons carefully. Working relationships between teachers and students are constructive. In most lessons, teachers encourage students to develop critical and analytical skills. For example, in a psychology lesson, students used video clips from 'Big Brother' and field studies to design coding systems for observation. Some teachers make sure students acquire and understand specialist vocabulary. Students are able to undertake independent research and some devise interesting and original approaches when developing their argument for or against a particular point. A history student used the Internet to find an examination paper on animal behaviour, originally designed for eleven-year-olds in National Socialist Germany. Students worked methodically, checked the answers, and discussed the implications of the way in which the contents of the curriculum were linked to ideology. Many teachers check regularly that students have understood what they were

meant to. They all set tasks that require students to present their views to the rest of the class and they develop students' key skills well. There is a good range of additional activities to enrich students' learning, including debating competitions, mock elections, conferences, revision workshops and 'subject surgeries'.

90. Some teachers do not move students from one aspect of a lesson to the next sufficiently briskly to maintain their interest. Many classes contain students of different abilities, but teachers do not vary their methods or materials to suit the needs of the students. There is poor attendance and timekeeping in some lessons. This sometimes impairs significantly students' progress because teachers leave students to carry on as best they can while latecomers catch up with the rest of the class. The college is taking action to address the weaknesses.

91. Teachers mark students' work thoroughly and return it to them quickly, and students can speak individually with teachers about their work. Some teachers have designed helpful assessment sheets to provide feedback to students on their performance; the best include clear guidance about how students can improve.

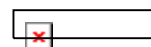
92. Tutors help students to evaluate their own progress. They record and monitor students' progress well, draw up action plans which are agreed with students, and send regular reports to parents. Specific plans are devised for individual students needing particular types of support, such as help with revision.

93. The standard of accommodation and resources is high. Students' work is displayed to good effect in many teaching rooms. Teachers are appropriately qualified in the subjects they teach and have teaching qualifications, or are working towards them.

Leadership and management

94. History, government and politics are managed in one curriculum area together with English and modern foreign languages, and sociology and psychology are managed in another area with health and social care and leisure and tourism. Within this arrangement, humanities teachers work effectively in small subject teams. They plan courses very well. Teachers plan lessons well, they make efficient use of resources, and they share good practice. Subject teams assess their performance effectively using the college's self-assessment and quality assurance systems.

English and modern foreign languages



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

Strengths

- good teaching on GCE A and AS-level courses
- good examination results in GCSE English and GCE A-level French
- good oral work on all GCE A/AS-level courses

- good use of video and language laboratories in modern foreign languages.

Weaknesses

- poor student retention rate on GCE A and AS-level English courses
- poor pass rates in GCE A-level English language and literature and in GCE A-level German
- ineffective management of GCSE English provision
- inadequate quality assurance on English courses.

Scope of provision

95. Courses in GCE A and AS-level English literature and English language, and the combined literature and language course, are well established. There are 140 students on the GCE AS-level courses, and 80 taking the GCE A-level courses. GCSE English is offered across the college to all students who have not previously achieved grades A*-C, and 200 students are enrolled on the programme, divided into eight groups. The college offers GCE A and AS levels in French, German and Spanish to full-time students. The number of students taking modern foreign languages has declined. There was just one student enrolled for GCE AS-level German in 2001, for whom the college made special arrangements, and the number studying Spanish is small. The college runs four Spanish evening classes for some 40 part-time adult students in total. There are 45 full-time students enrolled on the GCE A-level French course.

Achievement and standards

96. Pass rates in GCE A-level English language and English language and literature fell well below the national average in 2001. The pass rate in GCE A-level English literature was just below average. However, the value added system the college uses for judging students' GCE A-level performance against their GCSE entry qualifications indicates that they achieve better pass rates than their GCSE grades might predict overall. Pass rates on GCE AS-level courses are similar to those achieved at GCE A level. GCSE examination results in English are good at 57% grades A-C, which is well above the national average. Pass rates in GCE A-level French are above the national average, but in GCE A-level German they are below. The pass rate on the basic level Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Spanish certificate in business language competence course is well above the national average. Student retention on GCE A-level English literature and on GCE AS-level English courses has been satisfactory, but it is well below average on the GCE A-level English language, English language and literature, and the GCSE English courses. In 2001, retention rates on all modern language courses were good.

97. The standard of attainment in virtually all GCE A and AS-level lessons observed was satisfactory or better. Students on English courses enjoy class discussion, debate and argument. In

the better lessons, they volunteer answers and readily express ideas coherently and, at times, at length. Formal presentations on narrative structure in novels indicate that students can undertake effective research, express ideas logically and clearly, and handle questions with confidence. Many students work very well on their own. The standard of students' written work is appropriate to the level of their courses. Modern foreign languages students participate in lessons enthusiastically and confidently. GCSE students' attainment in a few lessons observed was less than satisfactory. A few GCSE students lack interest in the course and their attendance, punctuality and conduct are often poor.

A sample of retention and pass rates in English and modern foreign languages, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
RSA Spanish certificate in business language competence	1	No. of starts	*	*	16
		% retention	*	*	63
		% pass rate	*	*	60
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	164	146	167
		% retention	79	77	69
		% pass rate	55	58	57
GCE A-level English literature	3	No. of starts	44	30	43
		% retention	81	83	81
		% pass rate	84	100	94
GCE A-level French	3	No. of starts	30	28	21
		% retention	68	64	90
		% pass rate	78	88	89
GCE A-level German	3	No. of starts	13	9	12
		% retention	54	63	91
		% pass rate	100	100	80
GCE A-level English language and literature	3	No. of starts	84	96	68
		% retention	80	83	66
		% pass rate	82	92	69
GCE A-level English language	3	No. of starts	25	24	32
		% retention	80	88	56
		% pass rate	74	89	83

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

98. Teaching is at least good. Teachers of GCE A and AS-level subjects prepare their lessons carefully, exhibit enthusiasm for their subjects, and encourage students to give of their best. They have devised some effective handouts and course documents. Modern language lessons are conducted entirely in the language being learnt and students are presented with challenging materials on video and audiotapes, which test their listening and comprehension skills. Students respond well to the challenge. Teachers devise materials which enable students to extend their

vocabulary and help them to consolidate their grammatical knowledge. In a French lesson, the teacher showed an excerpt from a film about the French resistance in the second world war, and then asked students to fill in a 'gapped exercise', which exposed students' weaknesses in spelling and the use of accents. This made students realise the necessity for revision and meticulous work to rectify their weaknesses. A flamenco style film of Lorca's *'Bodas de Sangre'* (Blood Wedding), was used very effectively to help students to understand the cultural background of the play. Through a teacher's skilful management of a role-playing exercise, students in a GCE A-level German lesson presented clearly both sides of an argument on an environmental issue. Foreign language assistants support teachers and students effectively. Teachers use an appropriate and effective range of teaching strategies in English lessons. For example, students working in groups and pairs prepared notably good commentaries on Iago's soliloquies in Shakespeare's *'Othello'*, and analysed intelligently the roles of Desdemona and Cassio. The teacher sustained a lively lesson by asking regular and searching questions and providing helpful comments. In a GCE A-level English language lesson, the teacher dealt effectively with tense and modality with well-prepared handouts, and led the class gently to the central hypothesis - whether thought is governed by language. Sometimes, in GCE A-level and AS-level English, and particularly in GCSE lessons, teachers relied too much on a single teaching strategy which failed to sustain students' interest. In several English lessons, and in one modern language lesson, students spent too much time on unprepared reading aloud, even though it was clear they did not understand what they were reading.

99. Teachers and tutors monitor students' progress carefully. Individual learning plans for students are insufficiently developed in this subject area, but students receive good support informally from their teachers. Teachers mark students' work regularly and give appropriate comments to help students improve their performance.

Leadership and management

100. English and modern foreign languages form part of the humanities curriculum area. GCE A and AS-level courses are managed effectively; English teachers work well as a team and communication is good. Teachers have developed effective schemes of work, particularly for the recent requirements of Curriculum 2000, and they share good practice. Modern foreign language courses are well led by the assistant manager of the curriculum area, who is a linguist. Evening courses for adults are managed effectively by the adult education manager. GCSE English courses are poorly managed. Students' punctuality and attendance are poor, and some classes are managed inefficiently. In the English area, lesson observations and self-assessment have not been thorough, and teachers have not analysed sufficiently thoroughly some poor retention and pass rates.

Part D: College data

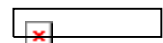
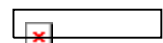


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	1	31
2	16	28
3	83	2



4/5	0	0
Other	0	40
Total	100	101

Source: provided by the college in spring 2001

Note: the percentages in column 19+ have been rounded up and hence do not add up to 100%

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments %
Science	1,137	612	35
Agriculture	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0
Engineering	51	0	1
Business	528	237	15
Hotel and catering	80	54	3
Health and community care	72	384	9
Art and design	500	46	11
Humanities	1,225	66	26
Basic education	0	0	0
Total	3,593	1,399	100

Source: provided by the college in spring 2001

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000
		1	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	*
	Retention rate (%)	*	*	*	*	*	*
	National average (%)	78	81	82	72	69	74

	Pass rate (%)	*	*	*	*	*	*
	National average (%)	69	71	77	67	75	76
2	Starters excluding transfers	758	734	615	48	86	123
	Retention rate (%)	80	82	76	85	85	93
	National average (%)	79	80	82	71	71	75
	Pass rate (%)	85	88	88	78	90	85
	National average (%)	84	85	82	75	77	77
3	Starters excluding transfers	1,733	1,571	1,846	64	27	68
	Retention rate (%)	77	79	77	73	81	69
	National average (%)	77	78	80	62	65	69
	Pass rate (%)	86	80	80	61	81	71
	National average (%)	86	85	85	69	71	74
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Retention rate (%)	**	**	**	**	**	**
	National average (%)	89	**	**	75	71	**
	Pass rate (%)	**	**	**	**	**	**
	National average (%)	96	**	**	74	67	**

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

* data incomplete

** not applicable

Sources of information:

1. National averages: *Benchmarking Data (1997/98) to (1999/2000): Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, The Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.*

2. College rates for 1998/99 - 1999/2000: *Benchmarking data 1997/98 to 1999/2000: Retention and Achievement Rates, produced by the Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.*

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

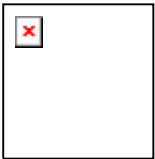
Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level

				▼
Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of

	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	sessions observed
Level 3 (advanced)	61	35	4	104
Level 2 (intermediate)	38	33	28	21
Level 1 (foundation)	36	27	36	11
Other sessions	0	0	0	0
Totals	56	34	10	136

Note: figures are rounded and may not total 100%

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