

## Stratford-upon-Avon College

### CONTENTS

---

#### [Basic information about the college](#)

#### [Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

[Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[How well is the college led and managed?](#)

[To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?](#)

[How well are students and trainees guided and supported?](#)

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

#### [Part B: The college as a whole](#)

[Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors](#)

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

#### [Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Business](#)

[Information and communication technology](#)

[Hospitality, catering, leisure and travel](#)

[Health, social care and public services](#)

[Performing arts](#)

[Visual arts and media](#)

[Humanities](#)

[English and modern languages](#)

[Literacy and numeracy](#)

#### [Part D: College data](#)

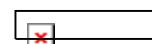
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

[Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2001/02](#)

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

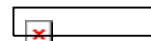
#### **Basic information about the college**



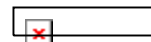
---

Name of college:	Stratford-upon-Avon College
Type of college:	Further Education College
Principal:	Nigel Briggs
Address of college:	The Willows North Alcester Road Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9QR
Telephone number:	01789 266 245
Fax number:	01789 267 524
Chair of governors:	Christine Wood
Unique reference number:	130837
Name of reporting inspector:	John Evans HMI
Date of inspection:	27-31 January 2003

#### **Part A: Summary**



## Information about the college



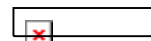
Stratford-upon-Avon College is a medium sized general further education (FE) college serving the south Warwickshire area. The college draws students mainly from Stratford-upon-Avon, south Warwickshire and the north Cotswold fringe, but substantial numbers also travel from north Warwickshire and south Birmingham. Participation rates in south Warwickshire are high. Some 90% of school leavers enter full-time or part-time education or work-based training. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) pass rates in Year 11 are well above the national average.

Students in the area, particularly those aged 16 to 18, have a lot of choice about where to study. There are several other colleges within travelling distance and there are two 11 to 18 schools and three grammar schools with sixth forms in the Stratford area. The college provides courses in 10 of the 14 areas of learning defined by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the Office for Standard in Education (Ofsted). There is provision from entry level through to level 5. There is no provision in land-based studies, construction, retailing or hair and beauty. Almost half of the full-time students are following courses in visual and performing arts, the largest curriculum area in the college. Both full-time and part-time student numbers have grown annually over the last three years. In 2001/02 the college had 4,500 students on roll, 25% on full-time courses and 75% on part-time courses. Some 80% of students aged 16 to 18 are on full-time courses, half of them at level 3. Almost all students aged 19 and over follow part-time courses and are quite evenly spread between levels 1, 2 and 3. Two-thirds of the college's students are female.

The college has a unit, South Warwickshire Training, responsible for managing work-based learning programmes and another, Stratford Enterprise Centre, to provide support for local companies. The college attracts international students, primarily to higher education (HE) and English as a foreign language (EFL) programmes. The college mission is to provide for its communities, 'learning throughout your life - choice, opportunity and success'.

The college was last inspected in February 1998. Four curriculum areas were inspected and performing arts and media was judged to be outstanding, hospitality and catering was good, and mathematics and English and access courses were satisfactory. One of the cross-college aspects inspected, support for students, was outstanding, general resources and quality assurance were good, and management and governance were satisfactory.

## How effective is the college?



This is a successful college, which has a good reputation and productive links with its local community. Retention rates are good and pass rates improved significantly in 2001/02. Much of the teaching is good and few lessons are unsatisfactory. There is effective support for students and a strong focus on continual improvement. Inspectors judged provision to be outstanding in performing arts and to be good in visual arts and media, hospitality and catering, health, social care and public services, humanities, and literacy and numeracy. Provision was judged to be satisfactory in science and mathematics, business, information and communication technology (ICT), and English and foreign languages. The main strengths and the areas that should be improved are listed below.

### **Key strengths**

- good retention rates
- effective management focused upon improvement
- good communications across the college
- industry standard specialist resources
- outstanding provision in performing arts, media and catering
- high pass rates on most courses in 2001/02
- effective monitoring of performance by governors
- good teaching, especially at level 2
- strong student support and guidance
- wide curriculum range and many opportunities for progression within the college
- good relations with employers.

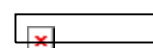
***What should be improved***

- level 1 provision
- pass rates on GCSE mathematics and English and work-based learning programmes

- initial assessment and learning support for part-time students
- use of value added data to raise standards
- key skills and the enrichment programme
- scope of literacy and numeracy provision
- accommodation and resources on some courses
- rigour of quality assurance in a few curriculum areas.

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	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Achievement is satisfactory on most advanced level programmes. On General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) science courses, students make good progress in relation to their prior achievement. There is good teaching on advanced level chemistry and mathematics courses. On the GCSE mathematics course there is some ineffective teaching and the pass rate is well below the national average.
Business	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Overall retention and pass rates on college-based courses are satisfactory overall, but pass rates on work-based learning programmes are unsatisfactory. Teaching, whilst generally

	satisfactory, too often fails to challenge students, particularly those taught in small groups. There is good academic and pastoral support for students.
Information and communication technology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are good on introductory computing courses. Some teaching is unsatisfactory on the national diploma course. Participation is being widened effectively. There is appropriate support for students. Resources are good, but those acquired recently are not being used to full effect.
Hospitality, catering, leisure and travel	<b>Good.</b> There is a wide range of provision. Retention rates are high on most courses and there are good pass rates on college-based National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) courses. Students' practical skills are very effectively developed. There are some outstanding opportunities for prestigious work placements. Learners' key skills are not being developed effectively. NVQ pass rates on work-based learning programmes are poor.
Health, social care and public services	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates are good on most college-based courses. Most of the teaching is good. The workplace is used effectively to develop learners' practical skills. Self-assessment is comprehensive and realistic. Resources for, and co-ordination of, public services courses is inadequate. Work-based programmes have poor pass rates and are unsatisfactory.
Performing arts	<b>Outstanding.</b> Attendance, retention and pass rates are high. Stimulating and challenging teaching motivates students to reach high standards in lessons. Specialist equipment and technician support are excellent. There is an exceptional range of performance opportunities and collaborative projects. Course and curriculum management are very good. There are no part-time courses. Some of the accommodation is inappropriate.
Visual arts and media	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates on the national diploma in media and Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and GCE AS art and design courses are good. Teaching and learning are consistently good across a well-managed curriculum area. Excellent resources and use of assignments in media contribute to high levels of student attainment. Resources and facilities in art and design are unsatisfactory.
Humanities	<b>Good.</b> There is a wide range of GCE AS and GCE Advanced level (GCE A-level) courses. Retention rates are good in most subjects. Pass rates are good in GCE AS history, psychology and sociology, and in GCE A-level history, law and sociology. Pass rates are unsatisfactory on a few courses. Learning and attainment are generally good, but the teaching in some lessons does not provide enough variety or challenge for students.
English and modern languages	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are good on GCE AS and A-level courses, and satisfactory on many part-time language courses. Pass rates on EFL and GCSE English courses are poor. Students are well motivated and most make good progress in lessons. Part-time evening provision is extensive and meets the need of the wider community.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Good.</b> The teaching is consistently good. Initial assessment is rigorous. Individual learning plans are effective and students achieve challenging personal targets. Management of the courses is good. The college does not have the capacity to meet national targets and the needs of the local community.

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

Leadership and management are good. The college has clear strategies to develop its provision at foundation and intermediate levels. It is implementing these strategies well to create a broader range of provision matching more closely the needs of the local community. Managers and governors monitor students' performance closely. Retention rates are high and pass rates have improved significantly on most courses. Courses are managed well and resources are deployed efficiently. The college provides good value for money. Students' views are collected systematically and used to inform decision making. There is little systematic gathering of the views of parents and employers regarding the quality of provision. The college is paying close attention to assessing the quality of its teaching and learning. On average, the grades awarded as a result of this internal assessment are more generous than those awarded by inspectors. Measures of value added are not being used effectively to raise standards. The college's self-assessment report is comprehensive and realistic.

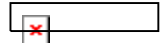
### To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

The college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. A clear strategy to develop provision to meet the needs of a broader range of students is being implemented effectively. The college has a range of policies covering equality and diversity, and their implementation is monitored by a cross-college group. The group has a clear remit and has begun to use a wider range of evidence to assess the effectiveness of the college's approaches to equality. The college has a disability statement and a separate policy covering race equality. Most of the accommodation is accessible to students with restricted mobility. A survey to check the accessibility of the accommodation has recently been completed and the college is in the process of preparing an action plan in response to this report. Prayer facilities are only available during lunch periods. There is a broad range of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Literacy and numeracy support are of a high standard, but the amount of provision is small compared with the community needs. Survey responses show clearly that students feel that teachers treat them equally and fairly.

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

Guidance and support for students are good. The college provides impartial advice and guidance for prospective students. Most students undertake a well-designed and informative induction programme. Tutorial arrangements are generally good on full-time courses, but are underdeveloped on part-time courses. The student services team provides a broad range of well co-ordinated services, including counselling and advice and guidance on welfare matters. Appropriate financial support is available to students. The college does not have childcare facilities, but does contribute towards childcare costs. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. Full-time students who are identified through initial assessment as requiring literacy or numeracy support receive timely and appropriate help. Initial assessment and learning support for part-time students are less well developed. Students' attendance is monitored closely. There is little accreditation of prior learning.

## 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***

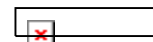
- its good reputation
- opportunities for prestigious competition and work experience activities
- helpful and supportive staff
- friendly atmosphere
- being treated as an adult
- good advice, guidance and support available.

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

- access to computers
- recreational facilities
- maintenance of buildings and facilities
- duration of the longer lessons.

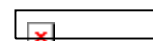


## Other information

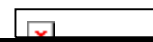


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The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

## Part B: The college as a whole



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

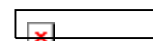


Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	66	28	6
19+ and WBL*	67	31	2
Learning 16-18	65	28	7
19+ and WBL*	71	29	0

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

*\*work-based learning*

## Achievement and standards



1. In south Warwickshire in 2001, the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE grades at A\* to C was 66%; well above the national average. The college enrolls many full-time students with good GCSE results, but has also broadened its curriculum to meet the needs of students with more limited success at GCSE. Overall, students' attainment was judged to be good or better in 62% of lessons observed. Good levels of attainment were found in a higher proportion of lessons at level 2 than at other levels, and more commonly in practical lessons than theory lessons. The previous inspection report, published in 1998, highlighted the need for the college to improve students' achievements and retention rates on some courses. Strategies adopted by the college have included closer monitoring of attendance, improved tutorial arrangements and comprehensive reviews of individual students' progress on a termly basis.

2. The largest number of enrolments are at level 3 for students aged 16 to 18, and at level 2 for students aged 19 and over. Retention rates have been consistently above national averages on most courses since 1998. The retention rate for students aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses was similar to the national average in 2000/01, but improved markedly the following year. Overall, retention rates are continuing to rise, except for adult learners on level 1 courses, where they declined in 2001/02, whilst still remaining above the national average.

3. For the three years from 1999 to 2001, the overall pass rate for students aged 16 to 18 was below the national average at levels 1 and 2, but slightly above the national average at level 3, which covers the majority of students in this age group. Over the same three years for adult students, the overall pass rate at level 1 was significantly above the national average, but at levels 2 and 3 it was lower than the national average. In 2002, pass rates for younger students improved at all levels, with very marked improvements at levels 1 and 2. Pass rates for adult students fell slightly at level 1, but improved at level 2 and, most significantly, at level 3. Overall, pass rates are now 5% above the national average for students aged 16 to 18, and 6% above the national average for students aged 19 and over.

4. The college has succeeded in improving attendance rates at lessons, although there remains scope for further progress. The average attendance rate during the college's last inspection was 76%. Average attendance in lessons observed during this inspection was 83%.

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

5. About 12% of students aged 16 to 18 take courses at level 1. In 2001, although 90% of them completed their course, only 50% of them achieved their qualification aim. In 2002, the retention rate improved further and the pass rate improved significantly to 74%, comfortably above the national average. On General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) foundation courses, pass rates in 2001/02 were good in leisure and tourism, and visual arts, but poor in business and performing arts. The pass rate on the NVQ level 1 course in catering is very good.

6. About 25% of students aged 16 to 18 take courses at level 2. There have been year-on-year improvements in retention rates to a level well above the national average. The overall pass rate improved last year from 8% below the national average to 2% above it. On GNVQ intermediate courses, retention rates fell in 2001/02 in business and ICT, and pass rates declined in leisure and tourism, and media. However, pass rates on the first diploma in performing arts and in public services have been very good for the last two years. In GCSE mathematics and English pass rates are poor. In 2001/02 they were 25% and 20%, respectively; well below the national average for these courses. Pass rates on NVQ level 2 courses in catering and care are high.

7. The largest numbers of students aged 16 to 18 are working towards qualifications at level 3. The overall retention rate on these courses improved to 88% in 2001/02; well above the national average. The overall pass rate had been similar to the national average, but improved in 2001/02 to some 6% above it. On AVCE courses last year, the retention rate was satisfactory in business, but the pass rate fell sharply on the double award, while increasing sharply on the single award. In art and design, the retention rate fell slightly but the pass rate remained very good. In health and social care, the retention rate was good but enrolments have declined and the pass rate fell to well below the national average. With the exception of early years, where the pass rate fell dramatically to 45% last year, pass rates on national diploma courses are higher than national averages. In public services the pass rate has been 100% in each of the last two years. On NVQ level 3 courses in catering, pass rates are very good.

8. Student numbers have declined in some GCE AS and A-level subjects, most markedly in science, mathematics, some arts subjects, English and languages. However, the number of students studying humanities subjects has increased. Pass rates on GCE AS and A-level courses are very good overall. In most subjects, retention and pass rates have been consistently above national averages. In 2001/02, 100% pass rates were achieved in GCE AS history, sociology and German, and in GCE A-level biology, dance, drama and theatre studies, sociology, German and communication studies. Only in GCE AS geography and law are pass rates appreciably below the national average for the subject.

9. Levels of attainment for students aged 16 to 18 were good or better in 61% of lessons observed, satisfactory in 30% and unsatisfactory in 9%. Attainment levels for this age group are good in business, hospitality, performing arts, visual arts and media, some humanities subjects, and on literacy and numeracy courses.

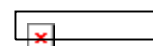
10. The college currently has approximately 180 work-based learners on modern apprenticeship programmes and NVQ programmes, the most significant areas being business, catering and care. Pass rates have remained low for a number of years. Retention and pass rates are generally unsatisfactory. In business, NVQ pass rates are poor and no advanced modern apprentices have successfully completed all aspects of the framework. The pass rate for foundation modern apprentices is similar to the national average. In catering, completion rates for modern apprentices are improving, but NVQ pass rates remain poor. In care, retention rates and NVQ pass rates have remained poor, although work-based learners do achieve a good range of relevant supplementary qualifications. The South Warwickshire training unit has acknowledged the poor retention and pass rates on most of its programmes and has developed an action plan to reduce the number of learners leaving training programmes early and to improve pass rates. A process of risk assessment has been introduced to identify learners who maybe more likely to leave training early. This process, along with new initial assessment arrangements, basic skills support, accreditation of prior learning and improved key skills training have contributed to recent improvement in retention rates on almost all programmes. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these and other improvements on pass rates.

### **Adult learners**

11. The overall pass rate for adults at level 1 has declined slightly in each of the last two years, but remains some 10% above the national average. At level 2, the overall pass rate for adult students fell below the national average in 2001, but improved significantly from 65% to 77% in 2002, which is 8% above the national average. On level 3 courses, the overall pass rate for adult students also fell sharply in 2001 to 57%, but improved considerably in 2002 to 72%, which is just above the national average.

12. Adult learners achieve well on some courses such as literacy and numeracy, counselling and on the access to HE course. Pass rates are good on computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) and European computer driving licence (ECDL) courses. However, pass rates for adults on GCSE mathematics, English, psychology and EFL courses are poor. Levels of attainment for adult students were good or better in 65% of lessons observed and were not found to be unsatisfactory in any lesson. Attainment levels for adult students were good on hospitality, care, humanities, and literacy and numeracy courses.

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



13. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded in 179 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 67% of these, satisfactory in 28% and less than satisfactory in 5%. The overall quality of teaching was good, but there were some significant variations in quality between curriculum areas. The best teaching was in performing arts, visual arts and media, literacy and numeracy, and hospitality and catering. Much of the teaching in these areas was judged to be very good or excellent. In science and mathematics and in English and foreign languages the proportion of good teaching was much lower and there were some unsatisfactory lessons. In business, ICT and humanities, teaching and learning were no better than satisfactory in a large proportion of lessons. There was no significant difference in the proportion of good or better teaching experienced by different age groups, but the proportion of lessons in which effective learning took place was slightly higher for adults than for younger students. Students on level 2 programmes experienced a higher proportion of good teaching than students on level 1 or level 3 programmes.

14. Lessons were carefully planned, involved a range of different teaching and learning methods and took account of the different abilities of students within the class. Teachers had high expectations of all students. In some lessons, students were introduced to new subjects in innovative ways. The use of a dominoes game in an EFL lesson and of ragtime music to help set the context for exploring the poetry of the Harlem renaissance in an English literature lesson, captured students' imagination and interest from the outset. Teachers make good use of their own vocational experience to enliven and add realism to topics in performing arts, visual arts and media, and hospitality. In these subjects, teaching in practical lessons is highly focused on the development of relevant skills and provides students with a challenging experience. In hospitality, catering, leisure and travel and in health, social care and public services, visiting speakers and work experience are used effectively to extend and deepen students' learning. In performing arts and visual arts and media, many of the assignments provide challenging learning experiences as well as opportunities for assessment. In most curriculum areas, teachers manage group work effectively and productively, and some teachers, most notably in literacy and numeracy lessons, make good use of peer assessment to build students' skills and confidence.

15. Much of the teaching judged to be satisfactory was adequately planned and enabled students to learn, but lacked imagination and failed to cater sufficiently for the different abilities within the class. Often this resulted in the more able students being insufficiently challenged. In some lessons, for example, students spent unproductive periods waiting for the teacher to check their work. In others, students completed set tasks in less time than the teacher anticipated and no extension activities were available. Teachers were not always skilled at using questions to check and to extend students' understanding. In several curriculum areas, such as English and humanities, students' independent learning skills are well nurtured, and this contributes to good pass rates. In the small number of lessons judged to be unsatisfactory, teachers used inappropriate teaching methods and failed to enthuse or motivate the students. In several lessons, some students made no contributions to group discussions. In some lessons in science, mathematics, business and foreign languages, teachers did not adapt their teaching methods to take account of the small group sizes.

16. The college has recently introduced a new policy on key skills. In performing arts and care, key skills work is well planned and forms an integral part of the overall programme. However, in most other curriculum areas, students' key skills are not being developed effectively. Where key skills are not the main qualification aim or do not form part of a modern apprenticeship framework, the teaching of them is too often unrelated to the vocational aims of the students. Key skills lessons are poorly attended and students have little understanding of the relevance of the key skills qualifications. The college has not developed key skill teaching arrangements that are suitable for use in the workplace. Consequently, some employed work-based learners who are unable to attend college cannot embark on a modern apprenticeship.

17. Full-time teachers are well qualified and experienced in their subject area. Part-time teachers bring valuable experience of current working practices in to the college. There are currently 70 full-time and 153 part-time teaching staff, of whom 67% and 34% respectively have a recognised teaching qualification. The college has a long-term programme to provide professional development for all unqualified teachers. Dependency on part-time teaching staff is high and the proportion of good or better teaching was significantly lower in lessons taught by hourly-paid teachers, compared with lessons taught by teachers on full-time and fractional contracts. There are shortages of specialist teaching staff in accounting, care, leisure studies, and literacy and numeracy.

18. The college has one main site close to the centre of Stratford-upon-Avon. It also provides learning in 38 community-based centres across the south Warwickshire area. The main site has no crèche facility. However, many students receive college funding towards childcare, allowing them to attend college. The college's accommodation is carefully managed. Refurbishment, adaptations and maintenance programmes are well planned to make the best use of limited resources. The accommodation is well maintained and clean. The college uses a large number of good quality temporary buildings for teaching and administration purposes. A recent room utilisation survey shows high utilisation during the day but low utilisation in the evenings. There are some small class sizes in most curriculum areas.

19. There are good library facilities and appropriate resources in all curriculum areas, with excellent

specialist equipment and technician support in performing arts and media studies. Over 90% of the college is accessible to people with restricted mobility. The college also has a range of specialist equipment to help people with impaired sight, hearing, speech or mobility achieve their learning goals. The college carefully monitors its own health and safety arrangements and those of subcontracting providers and employers. Work-based learners are employed, or gain work experience, within companies that provide excellent opportunities for skills development.

20. The college has increased the number of computers available to students and staff since the last inspection. All staff rooms and communal learning areas are linked to the college internal computer network. Students have good access to computers and other learning support material at various points throughout the main college and students can open an e-mail account with the college. The engineering department has insufficient computer-controlled and electronic testing equipment. There are shortages of modern projectors and whiteboards in mathematics and science, business administration and humanities classrooms, and there are some shortages of library books and vocationally relevant pamphlets for courses in care, ICT, public services and modern languages.

21. Assessment practice is good across the college and meets the requirements of awarding bodies. Internal verification is thorough and there are regular meetings of internal verifiers to develop and share good practice. Students' written coursework and homework are normally conscientiously marked and returned within agreed time limits. Students are usually provided with detailed and useful feedback on their work. Work-based learners receive good verbal feedback, but written feedback following assessment is sometimes inadequate. Teachers keep relevant records to monitor students' progress. In ICT there have been delays in recording marked work. In English and modern foreign languages there is no standard policy on assessment or the setting of homework.

22. Assessment in work-based learning is generally satisfactory. However, assessment plans in hospitality and leisure are not sufficiently detailed. There are delays for some students in accrediting skills gained at college and arranging for exemptions for students with recognised prior learning. There are no arrangements for on-the-job assessment in food preparation. Individual learning plans are not routinely updated to reflect students' progress. In business there is insufficient use of direct observation for assessment purposes. The monitoring of learners' progress towards the relevant qualification has been strengthened and there has been a recent improvement in the completion rates for key skill qualifications. Data about students and their achievements are used mainly to monitor performance of programmes against the local LSC contract. The data are rarely used to identify trends over time or differences in performance between programmes. No targets are set for equal opportunities and little is done to monitor the performance of students by gender, ethnicity or ability.

23. There is a very effective termly review of individual full-time students' progress, which includes clear target setting for progression towards the final qualification. However, little target setting occurs outside these arrangements. Work-based learners receive regular reviews that record progress made, but they are not set sufficient short-term goals. Parents of full-time students aged 16 to 18 receive good feedback at parents' evenings and in termly progress reports. Employers also receive good feedback on the progress of work-based learners.

24. Full-time students undergo a thorough initial assessment. The literacy skills of all full-time students are assessed. Students undertaking GCSE mathematics or a key skills qualification in application of number also have their numeracy skills assessed. Students who expect to undertake a key skills qualification in information technology (IT) have an initial assessment of their IT skills. One-to-one and small group learning support is provided within timetabled sessions built into the students' learning programme. Support is available during normal lessons and at the dedicated learning support centre in college. Lunchtime drop-in sessions are also available. Learning support can commence at any time of the year. Students speak highly of the support they receive. Approximately 25% of full-time students and 29% of work-based learners have been identified, through initial diagnostic assessment, as having support needs in literacy and/or numeracy. Support is optional and approximately 60% of those with identified needs take up the offer. The learning support needs of students on part-time courses are not systematically assessed. Currently, only 18 part-time students receive additional learning support.

25. The college provides a broad range of learning programmes from entry to HE level. It has a good reputation nationally for its performing arts and hospitality courses, and aims to provide a broad range of work-based learning programmes. The vocational curriculum covers most areas of learning. GCSE, GCE AS and A-level courses are offered in 45 subjects. There are relatively few part-time professional courses in the business area, and none in performing arts.

26. Over the last three years the college has pursued strategic objectives to develop the range of community-based courses and expand provision at foundation and intermediate levels across the curriculum. During the same period, the number of students starting level 1 and level 2 courses has increased, although an even greater increase has occurred at level 3. In some curriculum areas, for example science, engineering and humanities, the range of provision at levels 1 and 2 remains narrow. An increasing number of students progress from foundation level through levels 2 and 3 to HE. The college provides students with a variety of attendance arrangements and an increasing range of community programmes that promote widening participation.

27. Arrangements to accredit students' prior achievements are satisfactory in some, but not all, curriculum areas. Individual learning plans for work-based learners include details of prior learning and exemptions are routinely arranged to accredit relevant achievements. Students are satisfied with the range of provision and progression opportunities at the college. However, the college does not routinely request or analyse the views and perceptions of employers. Enrolment on work-based learning programmes is available at any time of the year and the college provides appropriate enrolment arrangements for students on access to HE courses.

28. The college's strategy for implementing the Curriculum 2000 reforms is weak in respect of the development of key skills and enrichment programmes. There is little emphasis on enrichment across many programmes and participation in enrichment activities is low. However, some areas of learning have been very active in developing curriculum enrichment based around their own courses. For example, in catering, performing arts and media studies, students regularly visit places of interest. Learners on work-based training programmes undertake a wide range of additional qualifications.

29. The college has strong and effective links with local schools. Open days, evening events, careers fairs and exhibitions are held throughout the year. The college has developed an extensive vocational learning prospectus for 14 to 16 year olds, allowing a structured progression to mainstream courses.

30. Market research is used well to inform curriculum planning. The college has good collaborative links with three universities, other FE colleges, and organisations such as Connexions and Learndirect. The college, through its contracts with the local education authority, provides the community with an extensive adult and community learning programme. Links with employers are good in most curriculum areas and particularly good in catering, performing arts and care. They are less developed in the sciences and humanities. Subcontracting training providers are well managed and closely monitored. Employers are clear about their role in work-based learning, very supportive of the college's training programmes and are becoming more involved in progress reviews with learners. In catering, some employers are reluctant to release adult learners from work to undertake training in college so they cannot acquire the key skills qualifications that are an essential part of modern apprenticeship frameworks.

31. The college responds well to the individual needs of people with a broad range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Appropriate taster courses are provided in most curriculum areas. Sensorily impaired students are well supported by specialist staff who make good use of the relevant specialist equipment. Appropriate staff, acting as readers or writers, help students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Computers are provided for students' personal use. The college has made relevant adjustments to its buildings and accommodation to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most accommodation is accessible to students with restricted mobility.

32. The college welfare and counselling services are very effective. The services are broad ranging, well promoted to staff and students, and heavily used. They have helped many students with

personal difficulties. Students can apply for financial assistance from hardship, access and charitable funds. Currently, 3.3% of full-time students claim an education welfare allowance. The college nurse provides general help with health issues and has good links with local health practitioners for expert advice and guidance.

33. The college does not have childcare facilities but does provide help with childcare costs through its access fund. There are few rooms suitable for conducting private interviews. The use of the welfare office for interviews on a drop-in basis is inappropriate. Welfare and counselling services are only available during term time and not in the evenings. Staff are available to provide advice and support following the publication of examination results. Telephone support is available over weekends during this period. Careers advice is easily available as the Connexions service is based on the college campus. Students also use tutors and teachers as sources of career information. The college has an adequate career information section in the library.

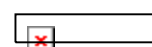
34. There are welcoming and informative arrangements to introduce prospective full-time students and their parents or guardians to the college. Adequate information is available to prospective students on college courses, services, finance, and related matters. The information and guidance provided are impartial and interviews are used to check compatibility between the applicant and the course. Part-time students are able to discuss their choice of course with relevant teachers by telephone or in person.

35. Most students are well inducted into the college. Full-time students undertake a generic induction programme, followed by one tailored to the needs of their course. Part-time students receive a less structured induction that focuses more closely on course-related matters. Work-based learners' induction is satisfactory, but some participants view it as little more than a form filling process. All students receive an informative student handbook.

36. Students are aware of the need to attend lessons and training sessions regularly and to be punctual. Absence and punctuality are well monitored. A very effective procedure for notifying tutors of absences ensures that poor attendance is quickly followed up. During the inspection, attendance was good in most lessons, with the average attendance at 83%.

37. All full-time students have a tutorial each week. Part-time students, other than those following HE and access courses, have no tutorial entitlement. Tutorials cover topics such as careers education, study skills, stress management, citizenship and university applications. External agencies come into college to undertake sessions with groups of students on specialist topics such as career options and personal financial advice. Students value the support they receive from tutors. There is no standard programme of topics that tutors are required to cover. As a result, some students are more aware than others about key issues such as equal opportunities. An efficient system to produce references is co-ordinated by personal tutors. Tutorials are also used on a termly basis to review each student's progress. Some tutors are skilled at setting clear targets for their tutees and developing action plans to achieve them. Others are less skilled, and in such cases, students perceive tutorials as lacking organisation or purpose. Tutorials have recently been included within the internal lesson observation process and a cross-college tutorial group now meets regularly to develop tutorial arrangements. With work-based learners, health and safety and equal opportunities issues are discussed at the reviews, which are scheduled every 12 weeks. Staff are quick to respond to, and resolve, issues raised as a result of this process.

## Leadership and management



38. Leadership and management are good. The college's strategic plan sets out clearly the direction in which it intends to develop. It is aligned closely to the local LSC strategic plan. Staff and governors were involved in developing the plan, and both groups support the aims and objectives it

element of the quality assurance system. One of the objectives of the strategic plan is to create more opportunities for students who wish to study at foundation or intermediate level. New courses to meet the needs of these students have been introduced. Retention and pass rates on these courses have improved in 2002 for students aged 16 to 18. There have also been improvements for adult students on level 2 courses, but success rates for adults on level 1 programmes are not improving.

39. The college has succeeded in widening participation in education and training. It has increased its overall provision and has enrolled more students with learning difficulties. It has increased the number of students taking level 1 and level 2 courses. In order to monitor more closely the implementation of its equal opportunities policies, the college has started to analyse data about students and their responses to surveys. This analysis has led to a consideration of the performance of students from minority ethnic groups, compared with the average performance of all students in the college.

40. Staff and governors support the senior managers who are seen as accessible and consultative. Staff feel well informed about the issues facing the college. Several different approaches are used to keep them informed. There is a fortnightly newsletter and the principal regularly makes presentations to staff. Meetings of a wide variety of staff groups are scheduled at the start of the year. Remits and membership of these groups are clear. Some of these groups deal with cross-college issues. For example, there is a staff group that reviews the college budget and can question the principal about it.

41. Courses and programmes are generally well managed, but there are a few areas where this is not the case. The quality of action plans, the use of management information as part of the quality assurance process, and the degree of success in raising levels of achievement all vary between schools and programmes. The high proportion of part-time staff on public services courses is adversely affecting the quality of the students' learning experience. There is a training programme for middle managers to help them improve their work.

42. The management of work-based learning programmes is satisfactory. In response to some poor retention and pass rates, managers have introduced a range of strategies that are improving retention rates. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these actions on pass rates. Targets are now set for retention and pass rates. Better co-ordination means that on-the-job and off-the-job training are starting to be more closely linked. The quality of subcontracted training is monitored. The use of improvement targets and the systematic monitoring of performance are underdeveloped. There are written guidance notes to supplement the contracts with employers and subcontractors, but monitoring the implementation of these contracts is informal and largely unrecorded.

43. Governors are well informed about the work of the college. They are closely involved in creating and approving the strategic plan. Their work is well organised. They monitor the academic performance of the college closely. The standards and performance committee receives regular and clear reports on students' performance. Governors question managers about courses that have performed poorly and require them to report on improvements. They have identified, for example, that GCSE mathematics and GCE AS law are areas needing improvement and are receiving monitoring reports on progress. They have also received reports on the performance of some work-based learning programmes. Each governor is now formally linked to a school and they are starting to make termly visits to their link school to meet staff and students.

44. The quality assurance arrangements place an appropriate emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning and on students' performance. Targets are set for retention and pass rates for all courses. Performance against these targets is closely monitored each term, when the deputy principal and heads of school meet with programme leaders to review the latest data. Action plans result from these meetings and their implementation is monitored. Some curriculum teams do not make effective use of centrally held data as part of their reviews of quality. The college has introduced an internal lesson observation system. Observers grade the quality of teaching and learning using the Ofsted grading scale. On average, the grades awarded by internal observers are more generous than those awarded by inspectors. Records of observations do not pay sufficient attention to the learning taking place. Some teachers have yet to be observed. The college subscribes to an external service that monitors how well students on GCE AS and A-level courses



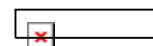
and some vocational courses perform in their final examinations, compared to prediction based on their GCSE grades on entry. These value added data have yet to be widely and effectively used in the college to set target grades for students and to help them improve their performance.

45. Staff have good access to, and engage in, a wide range of staff development activities. The college plan for continuing professional development is clearly linked to the strategic plan and focuses on improving the quality of teaching and the professional qualifications of teachers. There is an annual appraisal for all staff that looks mainly at their development needs. The scheme is being revised to give more emphasis to performance management.

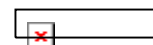
46. The college systematically collects students' views and uses them to inform its decision making. Students are surveyed at key times in the year. For example, their initial impressions of the college are gathered soon after enrolment. The survey covers all the important elements of college life, including detailed sections on teaching and learning, assessment and guidance. There are no similar arrangements to gather the views of parents and employers.

47. Financial management of the college is good. The college responded well to the criticisms in the last inspection report regarding the efficient deployment of staff. Central timetabling of staff and rooms ensures that teachers are fulfilling their contracted hours. Part-time staff costs are closely monitored. Budget holders are clear how their budgets are decided and what they cover. They receive regular reports about how the budgets are spent. Systems to allocate costs to courses are being developed, but are not yet used across the college. The average size of teaching groups is relatively low.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Science and mathematics



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

#### **Strengths**

- good and improving pass rates on science courses
- good teaching on GCE A-level mathematics and chemistry courses
- good progress made by GCE AS science and mathematics students.

#### **Weaknesses**

- low attendance and pass rates in GCSE mathematics
- ineffective teaching in GCSE mathematics
- insufficient challenge for more able students on some advanced level courses.

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

48. The college provides GCE AS and A-level courses in biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics. Some 130 students, mostly full time and aged 16 to 18, currently take these courses. There is a degree of collaboration with other local providers, and three students from a local high school attend GCE AS biology lessons in the college. Students can study science and mathematics alongside other advanced level subjects. GNVQ intermediate science is also offered by the college but failed to attract sufficient enrolments this year. The absence of science courses at foundation or intermediate levels limits students' progression opportunities within the college. The college encourages students who have not previously achieved grade A\* - C in GCSE mathematics to re-take it or to follow a key skills course in application of number. Most of the 100 students currently enrolled on GCSE mathematics are full-time students aged 16 to 18.

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

49. On most GCE AS and A-level programmes retention and pass rates are high. The GCE A-level mathematics and GCE AS and A-level biology courses had 100% pass rates in 2001/02. The overall pass rate on science courses has been at or above the national average for the past two years. Value added data indicate that many students achieve higher GCE AS grades than would be predicted, based on their previous GCSE results. However, relatively few students achieve the higher grades. Attendance and punctuality are good.

50. Pass rates in GCSE mathematics are well below the national average. Retention rates are high, but attendance is poor and is below 50% in some lessons. Many students have weak numerical skills. Additional support is available in the mathematics workshop and through individual tutorials.

51. Levels of attainment in advanced level science lessons are good. When the lessons combine theory and practical work in an imaginative way, students take part enthusiastically, ask questions, and learn quickly. However, some of the more able students are failing to reach their full potential. Progression rates to HE and into employment are good.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	188	106	144
		% retention	61	76	83
		% pass rate	31	21	25
GCE AS mathematics	3	No. of starts	*	36	39
		% retention	*	83	90
		% pass rate	*	53	63

GCE A-level mathematics (two year)	3	No. of starts	24	16	7
		% retention	71	94	100
		% pass rate	88	46	80
GCE AS biology	3	No. of starts	*	23	21
		% retention	*	83	100
		% pass rate	*	84	86
GCE A-level biology (two year)	3	No. of starts	18	8	9
		% retention	67	88	100
		% pass rate	67	100	100
GCE AS chemistry	3	No. of starts	*	20	9
		% retention	*	80	69
		% pass rate	*	69	89

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

\* course did not run

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

52. Teaching on advanced level programmes in science and mathematics is generally satisfactory or better. Many lessons are well planned and effectively led. As a result, the work proceeds at a lively pace. For example, in a GCE A-level mathematics lesson, the teacher encouraged students to work quickly on complex trigonometric problems. Teachers keep up to date in their subjects. In biology and chemistry, up-to-date articles from scientific journals on diabetes and hair structure were used effectively to add interest to the lessons and extend students' knowledge and understanding. Students are well motivated and ask relevant questions; such as, in physics, 'What is the nature of a photon?' They are generally confident in what they are doing, work hard, and make good use of the time available. Learning in many lessons is helped by good quality worksheets. Students help one another and have good relations with teachers. Work on key skills is an integral part of some advanced level lessons.

53. In some lessons the range of teaching methods used is inappropriately narrow. For example, handouts with spaces to be filled in by the students are over used in some subjects. There are too few activities to stretch the more able students. On the other hand, less able students are well supported and value added data indicate that they achieve grades higher than those predicted on the basis of their GCSE results. The understanding of students for whom English is a second language is checked during lessons. During biology lessons, students who need it are given additional support in mathematics and chemistry.

54. Practical science activities are well organised. Students in a chemistry lesson quickly completed a chromatography exercise and were able to use the results to improve their understanding of proteins. Increasing use is being made of ICT within science lessons. In one physics lesson, for example, students used data-logging equipment and then analysed the results on computer.

55. In GCSE mathematics, many students lack basic numerical skills and understanding. They are unable to work out simple problems without help. Teachers have not taken sufficient account of their students' lack of confidence in basic mathematics when planning their teaching methods.

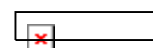
56. Resources to support learning in science and mathematics are satisfactory. Classrooms and laboratories are suitable for their purpose. Teachers are appropriately qualified in their specialist subject. There is no planned approach to vocational updating for teaching staff.

57. Students are given appropriate information and guidance about courses. They understand how they are being assessed. Assignments and homework are fairly and accurately marked and promptly returned to students, but the feedback they receive is not always sufficiently detailed to help them improve their work. Some worksheets completed by students during lessons are not checked systematically. Formative assessment and individual action planning are underdeveloped. Students are not set sufficiently challenging targets and some are not achieving their full potential.

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

58. The advanced level programmes are well organised and managed. Communication between staff is good and this enables good practice to be shared effectively on an informal basis. The GCSE mathematics programme is not co-ordinated effectively. Self-assessment procedures are well established and students participate in a termly forum to exchange views. However, the current self-assessment did not identify the weaknesses in GCSE mathematics. There is an internal lesson observation programme. On average, the grades awarded were higher than those given by inspectors. Development plans do not focus sufficiently on aspects of teaching and learning, and their impact on students.

## **Business**



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

### ***Strengths***

- strong tutorial and academic support
- good use of work experience to support learning
- well-developed business resource centre
- effective assessment and thorough internal verification
- high standard of work-based learners' portfolios.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor completion rates on advanced modern apprenticeship and NVQ programmes

- teaching which does not extend students sufficiently
- insufficient use of the Internet and the college intranet
- narrow range of part-time courses
- inappropriate teaching to small groups.

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

59. The college provides a range of full-time courses including accounting and business studies at GCE AS and A level, GCE AS economics, GNVQ at intermediate and foundation levels, and the AVCE as a single and double award. Business administration is offered at levels 2 and 3 together with a text processing skills course. A wider range of skills-based courses has been offered in the evenings, but these have not recruited sufficient students to be viable. Those who applied have been referred to the college's Learndirect provision. There are currently 450 students on college-based business programmes. In addition, there are 55 learners on work-based modern apprenticeship and NVQ programmes.

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

60. On most courses, retention rates are improving and are now above the national average, but on the GNVQ intermediate business course the retention rate fell to only 33% last year. Pass rates on several courses rose above national averages in 2002, but on others, including the AVCE double award and GCE AS accounting, they fell. Poor achievement on the NVQ course in accounting led to the course being discontinued. Retention and pass rates on work-based learning programmes are unsatisfactory. No one on the advanced modern apprenticeship programme has yet achieved all aspects of the framework. The pass rate on the foundation modern apprenticeship is similar to the national average. Nevertheless, learners on work-based learning programmes have evidence of excellent vocational work in their portfolios. The written work of most college-based students demonstrates good levels of attainment. Students' conceptual understanding on advanced level business courses develops quickly and they show confidence in applying their learning to real-life business situations. However, on foundation and intermediate GNVQ and administration courses, some students do not have the required level of knowledge and understanding.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	6	15	9
		% retention	83	93	33
		% pass rate	60	79	100
AVCE business single award (one year)	3	No. of starts	*	19	15
		% retention	*	84	87

		% pass rate	*	69	92
AVCE business double award (and precursors)	3	No. of starts	49	17	12
		% retention	88	63	75
		% pass rate	90	90	66
GCE A-level business studies	3	No. of starts	41	33	13
		% retention	83	77	92
		% pass rate	33	74	92
GCE AS business	3	No. of starts	*	21	32
		% retention	*	71	87
		% pass rate	*	87	89
GCE AS accounting	3	No. of starts	*	21	19
		% retention	*	62	68
		% pass rate	*	85	54

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

\* course did not run

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

61. Teaching is satisfactory or better. Teachers on the AVCE and the GCE AS and A-level business studies courses, in particular, succeed in maintaining students' interest and involving them in classroom activities. They often use the students' own background and local knowledge to good effect. In one lesson, a student presented a business plan for the establishment of a skateboard shop in Stratford. The level of analysis and the use of business concepts were excellent. The whole group then evaluated the plan, displaying good insight into many of the practical factors that can determine business success or failure. Students enjoyed the lesson and considerable learning took place.

62. Much of the teaching fails to stretch the students, particularly those who are taught in small groups. Seven of the ten courses observed during the inspection had a class size of eight or less. Teachers do not adapt their teaching methods to take account of small group sizes. Some teachers do not make enough use of up-to-date examples drawn from the real business world or the Internet to enliven topics and help students to see the relevance of business theory. Too much reliance is placed on textbooks for source material. The college intranet is underdeveloped as a resource for student research and academic support, although it does provide materials for HE students. Teachers ask questions to check students' understanding, but often accept answers that are descriptive rather than analytical.

63. The business area benefits from a well-equipped specialist resource centre. Teachers are well qualified. Staff involved in work-based learning programmes have an excellent understanding of their particular requirements. Extra support is provided to enable work-based learners to acquire the necessary background knowledge. All classrooms are suitable for the purposes for which they are being used. However, most lack displays of students' work or other material that could extend or reinforce learning. Students have good access to up-to-date computing facilities.

64. Initial assessment is used to identify students' individual learning needs, and the results are used to plan appropriate additional support. Assessment of students is well planned. Assignments are clearly written and relevant to the programmes of study. Students' work is marked accurately and returned promptly with sufficient comment to enable students to make progress. Rigorous internal verification promotes consistency and good practice in assessment. There are effective links with parents. Reports are sent to parents at the end of each trimester and regular parents' meetings are

held. There are frequent productive assessments on work-based learning programmes. However, on some of these programmes, insufficient use is made of direct observation as an assessment method.

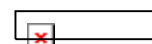
65. The college provides a good range of daytime courses suitable for students aged 16 to 18. However, there is little evening provision suitable for adult students. A limited range of professional courses is on offer, but the take-up is small. Full-time students are offered few enrichment activities, apart from work experience, which is an integral part of most programmes. This experience helps students to relate business theory to practice and contributes significantly to their interest and enjoyment. There are particularly good links with employers, who provide good work placements for modern apprentices. Some employers have provided opportunities for trainees to undertake additional training beyond contractual requirements. Better and more efficient use could be made of accreditation of students' prior learning.

66. Academic and pastoral support are effective. All students are allocated a personal tutor. Group tutorials are well planned and efficiently managed, and form an integral part of the courses. Students also have regular individual tutorials which are well documented. During these tutorials action plans are developed to help students improve their performance. Students' comments attest to the value of tutorials in supporting and developing their learning. Students also consider their induction programmes to be effective and speak highly of the support provided by the college's welfare services. Some employers have too little involvement in the progress reviews of their own work-based learners.

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

67. Course teams meet regularly to review the operation of their programmes and share information about students' progress. All staff contribute to the self-assessment report and associated action plans, although the review process is over-reliant on evidence from student surveys. Many areas for improvement have been identified. Appropriate actions have been planned and, in some cases implemented, but other issues remain to be addressed. These include the most appropriate way of teaching small groups and the use of value added measures to monitor students' performance. The management of work-based training is good but insufficient attention has been paid to the poor completion rates.

### **Information and communication technology**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good retention and pass rates on CLAIT and ECDL courses
- effective widening of participation using community venues.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- undemanding teaching on the national diploma course

- poor pass rates in key skills
- insufficient use of ILT in teaching and learning.

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

68. The college provides a good range of courses in computing and IT to meet the needs of full-time and part-time students. Full-time courses include GCE AS and A-level ICT, the first diploma in IT, and national diploma courses in computer studies. Short and part-time courses include the ECDL, computer literacy and CLAIT courses, leading to City and Guilds qualifications and a range of introductory IT courses accredited by the Open College Network (OCN). Part-time courses are available at the college during the day and in the evening, and also at nine community venues. Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma courses in computing are also offered on a part-time basis. There are 120 students, predominantly aged 16 to 18, enrolled on full-time courses, and 400 adult students on part-time courses.

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

69. Retention and pass rates have been good compared to the national averages on CLAIT and ECDL courses over the last three years, with particularly marked improvements in 2001/02. The retention rate on the GCE A-level ICT course has also been good, but on the first diploma course it has been significantly below the national average for two of the last three years. National diploma students achieved 100% pass rates in 2000 and 2001, but in 2002 the pass rate fell significantly below the national average. Achievements in IT key skills are poor. No students on the national diploma course achieved the key skills qualification last year. The department has taken steps to improve the pass rate this year. The pass rate on the first diploma course has shown a marked improvement and current students confidently demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skill in web page work and Pascal programming. The overall standard of work in ICT is satisfactory or better. Most students acquire appropriate skills and techniques, and use them confidently. Particularly good work in network design is done by students on the national diploma course. Most assignments completed by full-time students are well organised and well presented. The standard of students' initial work and supporting documentation on GCE AS projects is particularly high. Most full-time students are able to engage in confident and informed discussion using the correct terminology. They use IT equipment well in technical tasks and also in researching and producing written work. Students on the OCN 'computing for the terrified' course show high levels of commitment and their work is of an appropriate standard.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
CLAIT	1	No. of starts	441	116	69
		% retention	85	87	90
		% pass rate	66	76	87
ECDL	2	No. of starts	57	64	146
		% retention	89	61	91
		% pass rate	82	71	89



First diploma in IT	2	No. of starts	25	16	17
		% retention	64	75	65
		% pass rate	56	75	92
National diploma in computing	3	No. of starts	17	24	30
		% retention	81	71	73
		% pass rate	100	100	68
GCE A-level ICT	3	No. of starts	14	19	10
		% retention	85	58	77
		% pass rate	85	100	80

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

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

70. Teaching and learning were good in just over half the lessons observed. On the national diploma course, some lessons were delivered at too slow a pace and the tasks were not sufficiently challenging and did not take account of students' prior achievements. Learning materials on full-time programmes are of a good quality, but they are not used in ways which enable students to work at their own pace and do not include extension activities for more able students. Teachers use overhead transparencies and whiteboards effectively. They make good use of the college network to distribute prepared work to students but make little other use of ILT in their teaching. Some students make good use of the Internet and most demonstrate appropriate skills with software applications. On the first diploma course, good teaching and class management, coupled with high levels of motivation amongst the students, result in high standards of programming. In one ECDL lesson on the use of spreadsheets, students worked largely on their own, but the teacher's effective use of questioning to check understanding and the provision of very good learning materials ensured they made good progress. The learning materials prepared for the 'computing for the terrified' courses allow students to start the course at various points and to progress at their own pace.

71. Resources to support ICT courses are good. Some of the newer resources, such as data projectors, are not yet being used to their full potential. The laptops provided in the community venues are of high specification. Most classrooms are appropriately furnished. Several have a workspace separate from the computer area, but some classrooms are cramped and one community venue has unsuitable seating. Provision of computers on an open-access basis has improved. However, the computers in these areas do not provide access to all the specialist software needed for advanced courses. There are rooms where such specialist software is available, but they are not open to students when they are not being used for teaching. Computing resources for staff are satisfactory. Full-time staff have a good range of commercial and industrial experience in computing and IT.

72. The monitoring of students' progress is satisfactory. Assessments are well conceived and often cover topical issues. Assessment schedules are included in course documents but the timing of the assessments on full-time programmes creates uneven workloads for students. Assessment criteria and expectations are clearly described. Written feedback on students' work is constructive and usually provides clear guidance to students on how they could improve their performance. However, feedback to full-time students has sometimes been unreasonably late. Teachers make insufficient use of value added data to set students individual targets for achievement.

73. There is a comprehensive induction programme for full-time students, which includes diagnostic tests in communications, numeracy and IT. This ensures that students are placed on an appropriate course and that any learning support needs are identified. Students who experience problems during their course can raise them in tutorials and additional support can be arranged. Students using the college's community venue in the town centre are not assessed in this way. Some teachers on courses for adults use e-mail to provide additional learning support for their students. Students find

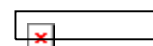
staff friendly and approachable. Student absences are closely monitored and followed up.

74. There is a high progression rate from the CLAIT course to the ECDL course. However, the progression rate from full-time level 3 programmes to HE is low, at 50%.

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

75. Management of the curriculum area is satisfactory. There are regular team meetings, which are recorded, but actions are not always given deadlines, and progress towards their completion is not always monitored. Staff are well informed about developments in the college and good use is made of informal communication networks. There is an internal lesson observation programme to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. On average, the grades awarded are higher than those awarded by inspectors. Retention and pass rate targets are set at course level and progress towards their achievement is monitored as part of the termly management review process. Self-assessment is thorough and the views of staff and students are an integral part of the process.

### **Hospitality, catering, leisure and travel**



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

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- good retention rates on most courses
- high pass rates on college-based NVQ courses
- good practical teaching in hospitality and catering
- strong links with industry and effective use of work placements
- professional standard practical resources for hospitality and catering
- effective training and assessment of work-based learners on front-of-house programmes
- good range of provision and progression routes.

### **Weaknesses**

- unsatisfactory teaching of key skills
- insufficient assessment in the workplace on food preparation and cooking programmes
- low NVQ pass rates on work-based learning programmes.

### **Scope of provision**

76. The college provides a wide range of courses in hospitality, catering, leisure and tourism for full-time students and work-based learners. These include the GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism, AVCE in travel and tourism, and the national diploma in hospitality supervision. NVQ courses are available in preparing and serving food at level 1, food service at level 2, and food preparation and cooking at levels 1, 2 and 3. NVQ level 4 in hospitality management is available for work-based learners. There are currently 180 students on full-time courses, 80% of them aged 16 to 18. There are 52 learners on work-based programmes. School link courses and a foundation degree in hospitality management ensure a strong progression route. A range of short courses is offered to meet employer needs.

### **Achievement and standards**

77. Retention rates on college courses are at or above national averages. Following steady improvement they are now particularly good on level 2 courses in food preparation and cooking, and in leisure and tourism. Retention rates on work-based learning programmes have declined. Pass rates are high on college-based NVQ courses in hospitality and catering, although 20% of students take longer than expected to complete the qualification. Pass rates are satisfactory on other college-based courses. While successful completion rates on modern apprenticeships are improving, pass rates on work-based NVQ programmes remain poor. The majority of students gain supplementary qualifications in addition to their main qualification. Progression rates are good, with 82% of craft students progressing from level 2 to level 3 last year. Most students go on to gain relevant employment. One work-based learner completed two NVQs and has recently started a third within 18 months. Level 3 students demonstrate very good technical skills in the kitchens and restaurant. A menu designed by a chef de cuisine represented a high professional standard. Students work well together in teams and display good interpersonal skills when dealing with customers.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ foundation leisure and tourism	1	No. of starts	*	15	9
		% retention	*	93	78
		% pass rate	*	14	100
NVQ preparation and serving food	1	No. of starts	26	14	21
		% retention	85	93	76
		% pass rate	95	100	100

GNVQ intermediate leisure tourism	2	No. of starts	7	12	14
		% retention	86	83	93
		% pass rate	67	100	77
NVQ food preparation and cooking	2	No. of starts	29	35	35
		% retention	72	80	94
		% pass rate	100	90	100
NVQ food and drink service	2	No. of starts	15	13	11
		% retention	67	77	64
		% pass rate	100	50	100
NVQ food preparation and cooking	3	No. of starts	33	24	36
		% retention	88	96	86
		% pass rate	85	91	96

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

\* course did not run

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

78. Most of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. In one level 3 lesson on savoury pastry dishes, for example, the teacher skilfully encouraged students to use their own ideas and creativity, while constantly challenging them to review the standard of their work against industry criteria. Students were motivated and focused throughout, and succeeded in making good quality products within the agreed timescale. Teachers make good use of their own knowledge and experience of the industry to enhance learning. In practical sessions, students have clearly defined roles and are expected to assume the corresponding responsibilities. Three levels of craft students work together in the college restaurants, which are open to the public. This provides a realistic simulation of working under commercial pressure. The interesting menus include a good mix of classic and contemporary dishes that help students develop a keen understanding of food. Assignments are well designed and vocationally relevant, and teachers provide constructive feedback that helps students to improve their work.

79. In some lessons, learning activity lacks variety. Verbal questioning is used extensively to check understanding, but many students' coursework folders consist entirely of notes and lacked evidence of other activities to reinforce and check learning. A level 3 lesson on cleaning agents was focused on domestic rather than commercial examples, and students were not required to solve problems for themselves. Classrooms are well maintained and tidy but opportunities are rarely taken to display students' achievements and work.

80. Work placements are well organised and are effective in enabling students to practice and extend their skills. Leisure and tourism students working in the leisure and conference suites of a large hotel were able to give a guided tour whilst comprehensively pointing out key health and safety requirements and describing the quality of service they would provide for disabled customers. The standard of assignment work on travel, leisure and tourism courses is high. Brochures about Stratford produced by foundation students were professionally presented and demonstrated good research and IT skills.

81. The teaching of key skills is unsatisfactory. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment for the curriculum area. Many opportunities to integrate key skills work with vocational practice and theory are missed. A lesson in application of number had no vocational relevance and provided no feedback to students on their progress. A student's curriculum vitae, produced for level 2 communication and IT, was not of a professional standard.

82. Work-based learners are employed in good quality establishments where excellent resources enable the learning objectives of the qualifications to be comprehensively met. Both trainees and employers are very satisfied with the college's fast and positive response to requests and queries. Front-of-house hospitality programmes are particularly effective. The employer of one advanced modern apprentice felt the learner had directly improved business by re-developing the establishment's menu. Work towards NVQs in food preparation and cooking has been entirely college based, and opportunities for assessment in the workplace have been overlooked. For example, several months after an employer felt that a learner had become competent in knife skills, these skills had not been assessed in the college. Key skills are also taught entirely within the college. This prevents some learners, whose employers feel they cannot be released from work, from undertaking modern apprenticeships training. The college has yet to develop arrangements to provide key skills training in the workplace. On work-based NVQ programmes, learners are not set short-term targets; progress reviews record only broad statements of the progress made.

83. Strong links with the hospitality, catering and leisure industries ensure that the curriculum meets local needs. The college has extensive links with a prestigious London hotel which provides visiting chefs and work placements for full-time students. One student recently won a coveted Gordon Ramsey scholarship. Good progression routes are available, for both college-based students and work-based learners.

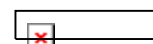
84. Prospective students receive impartial information and guidance. A structured process of initial assessment helps to ensure that students are placed on the most suitable programme. Students have good access to learning support and most take advantage of what is offered. Students speak highly of the support they receive from personal tutors. Attendance and achievement are monitored effectively. On full-time programmes, action planning in tutorials results in broad, unhelpful goals, rather than specific, well-defined targets.

85. Most teaching staff have recent industrial experience and specialists from the catering industry make valuable contributions to learning programmes. Professional standard catering facilities include training and production kitchens, and two restaurants open to staff, students and the public. The kitchens and restaurants provide a realistic working environment to prepare students for employment. Travel, tourism and leisure resources are adequate. There is a mock aircraft cabin and reservations software. Work placements are used to give students practical experience. Students on hospitality craft courses are making greater use of the Internet to access learning resources.

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

86. Management of hospitality, catering, leisure and travel provision is good. There are effective lines of communication between managers, course teams and students. Course teams operate very effectively. They hold regular meetings and record action points. Clear targets are set at all levels. Opportunities are sometimes missed to share good practice and resources across the teams in travel, leisure and hospitality. Staff appraisals contribute positively to the good professional development undertaken. Quality assurance procedures are implemented rigorously, but they have failed to identify the slow progress made by a minority of NVQ students. Self-assessment is comprehensive and realistic, and development plans are implemented promptly.

### **Health, social care and public services**



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- good and improving retention rates on college-based courses
- high pass rates on most college-based courses
- good teaching
- effective work experience.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates on work-based learning programmes
- some poor pass rates on national diploma early years and GNVQ advanced health and social care
- inadequate resources for co-ordination and learning on public services courses.

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

87. The college provides a range of full-time courses at levels 2 and 3 in health and social care, early years care and education, and public services. A foundation programme in health and social care is also available, providing a progression route to level 2 courses. Most of the 124 full-time students are aged 16 to 18. Part-time courses in counselling, sign language and first aid, and short courses in childcare are attended by 56 learners, mostly adults. NVQ programmes in care and childcare are currently followed by a further 139, mostly adult, students. Work-based learning programmes for young people and adults are available in care and childcare. All 20 work-based learners currently on care programmes are employed. They include one advanced modern apprentice, eleven foundation modern apprentices, four on NVQ level 3 programmes, and four on NVQ level 2 programmes. The 28 work-based learners currently on early years programmes are not employed. They comprise two advanced modern apprentices, fourteen foundation modern apprentices, four learners on NVQ level 3 programmes, and eight on NVQ level 2 programmes.

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

88. Pass rates are good on most college courses, being at least at, but often well above, national averages for the last two years. There has been a steady improvement in retention rates over the same period, and retention rates on most courses are above national averages. Students develop a good range of appropriate skills through planned work experience. Good work placements provide high standards of professional practice. Students are able to apply their college-based learning effectively within care settings. Conversely, good use is made of work experience in college lessons

and assignments. Many students achieve useful additional qualifications such as first aid and sign language. Most students progress to further study or relevant employment.

89. Pass rates have been poor on work-based programmes for the last three years. Few learners have achieved an NVQ, although all achieve some vocationally relevant qualifications, such as first aid, sign language and basic food hygiene. Retention rates on most work-based programmes are poor, although retention of foundation modern apprentices on early years programmes is improving.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
First aid at work (one year)	1	No. of starts	53	66	139
		% retention	79	100	99
		% pass rate	100	100	88
First diploma public services	2	No. of starts	17	15	10
		% retention	71	87	90
		% pass rate	17	100	89
NVQ care (direct care)	2	No. of starts	35	57	13
		% retention	91	74	89
		% pass rate	88	72	93
Certificate in counselling skills	2	No. of starts	35	57	13
		% retention	91	74	89
		% pass rate	88	72	93
National diploma public services	3	No. of starts	22	10	17
		% retention	95	80	75
		% pass rate	44	100	100
National diploma early years	3	No. of starts	28	17	16
		% retention	86	82	86
		% pass rate	67	100	45
GNVQ advanced health and social care	3	No. of starts	17	9	7
		% retention	88	67	86
		% pass rate	86	60	67

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

***Quality of education and training***

90. Most teaching is good or better. Lessons are well planned and effectively draw on students' life and work experience. Most teachers use appropriate teaching methods which motivate students and help them to develop a broad range of knowledge and skills. A few teachers fail to engage all the students or do not check that they understand what is being taught.

91. All students complete a diagnostic test during a well-planned induction period. The induction programme for work-based learners in care does not ensure that all learners understand the course requirements. On college courses, students' preferred learning styles are identified, but teachers do not make full use of this information when planning their lessons. Full-time students gain key skills at an appropriate level, but the key skills work is not fully integrated with the vocational work. Recent

attempts to make key skills work an integral part of the work-based programme have given learners a greater appreciation of the relevance of key skills to their work in early years and care.

92. Assessment and internal verification practices are satisfactory. Coursework is vocationally relevant and set at an appropriate level. Assignment briefs give clear guidance on what is required of students, including criteria for grading. The feedback provided by teachers varies in quality, but generally students are clear on what they should try to improve. The standard of most students' work is high, demonstrating both understanding of the topic and well-developed independent study skills. The work is usually well presented and contains evidence of wider research, sometimes from the Internet. Work-based assessors provide satisfactory feedback to learners but fail to meet the NVQ requirement to emphasise the key underlying values of care and early years.

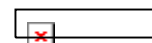
93. College-based students are given adequate advice and support during formal and informal tutorials. Students have termly reviews of progress, which culminate in individual action plans. At their regular progress reviews, work-based learners receive feedback on their performance and on the progress they are making towards the relevant qualification. There is no central tracking system to record and monitor individuals' progress. Collaboration between employers and assessors on work-based programmes is good. Parents and employers are kept informed about learners' progress.

94. Staff are appropriately qualified and vocationally experienced. Most staff have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. There are six assessors for care; two are work-based assessors, but only one is currently active. There are three assessors for early years; none are work based. Assessors carry out the internal verification. The work-based assessors hold appropriate awards. The co-ordination of the public services courses, which are highly dependent on part-time teaching staff, is inadequate. Most classrooms are fit for purpose, but a few are too small for the groups using them. Resources for practical activities are good. Liaison between curriculum and library staff is good. Library resources are adequate, except for those relating to the public services courses. Teachers compile topic resource files and involve external speakers in lessons. Teaching staff keep up to date through external curriculum events and extensive contact with agencies in the sector.

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

95. Regular team meetings are used effectively to monitor and plan provision. Teams are well motivated and there is a strong focus on strategies to improve retention and pass rates. Steps are taken to ensure that the high proportion of part-time teachers is kept informed. Self-assessment is suitably self-critical and results in development plans with clear improvement targets. There are regular meetings of the small work-based learning team, but these do not pay sufficient attention to teaching, learning and achievement. Issues raised in meetings are not always followed by sufficiently decisive action.

### **Performing arts**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
- very good teaching



- excellent performance opportunities
- wide range of full-time provision from level 1 to HE
- high standard of specialist equipment and technician support
- very effective curriculum and course management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- no part-time courses
- inadequate accommodation for some lessons.

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

96. The school of creative and cultural studies offers a wide range of academic and vocational full-time courses. Provision is strong in the three main areas of performing arts: drama, dance and music. In addition, a small number of students study technical production. There are GNVQ foundation and first diplomas in performing arts. At level 3 there are GCE AS and A-level courses in drama and theatre studies, dance, and performance studies, and national diplomas in performing arts and popular music. Students can progress to a Higher National Diploma and a degree in performing arts, provided in association with Coventry University. There are no part-time courses, although the college is planning to introduce GCSE drama as an evening course for adults. Performing arts students represent almost one quarter of the college's full-time students. The large majority are aged 16 to 18. Half of these students are enrolled on the first and national diploma performing arts courses.

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

97. Student achievement is consistently good on performing arts courses. On most courses, retention rates are well above national averages. Pass rates have been consistently high. In the last two years, 100% pass rates have been achieved on five different courses. The proportion of passes at the higher grades is also good. In 2002 it was 50% on the GCE A-level course in drama and theatre studies, and 77% on the GCE AS course. In 2002, only the foundation course had a low pass rate.

98. The standard of students' work in lessons is very good. Students on the national diploma in performing arts achieve practical skills of a high standard. The frequent opportunities for all students to be involved in performances in college accelerates the development of confidence in front of an audience and emphasises the dedication required to undertake performance work. Students work

very effectively in teams. The average attendance in the lessons observed was 85%.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
First diploma performing arts	2	No. of starts	33	39	33
		% retention	91	84	87
		% pass rate	83	100	93
GCE AS drama and theatre studies	2	No. of starts	*	46	51
		% retention	*	80	94
		% pass rate	*	89	94
National diploma performing arts	3	No. of starts	58	55	45
		% retention	81	74	73
		% pass rate	91	100	88
National diploma popular music	3	No. of starts	36	23	36
		% retention	83	57	81
		% pass rate	58	100	85
GCE A-level drama and theatre studies	3	No. of starts	60	48	27
		% retention	95	79	96
		% pass rate	96	94	100
GCE A-level dance	3	No. of starts	19	22	8
		% retention	81	70	100
		% pass rate	80	89	100

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

\* course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

99. Most of the teaching is good and much is very good. In many lessons, students' imagination was fired, their skills and creativity were strongly encouraged, and as a result they developed their own creative ideas. Assignments are often set which reflect professional drama situations. First diploma students were set the task of preparing for an audition for an action movie, which required them to learn unarmed combat skills. The energetic and enthusiastic teacher encouraged the students to choreograph their own short fights to music. Strong emphasis was placed on correct health and safety procedures to avoid injury. The students rapidly accomplished the task to a high standard, while having enormous fun acquiring these new performance skills. The lesson was recorded on video by a technician for assessment purposes.

100. Staff create a vibrant learning environment. Teachers challenge the students' notion of traditional art forms as well as training them in the core performance skills. Students on the national diploma in popular music perform outside college regularly. Many have their own bands. The 2000 tour to Brighton, Leamington and Stratford, featuring covers and original material, was very well received by audiences and the local press. Although confident in practical work, many popular music students find the music theory part of their course difficult. There are currently no music instrument lessons available as part of the course. Regular theme events are held at the college. Preparing and performing evening tributes to the Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Elvis Presley and the Beatles provides students with a solid foundation in a wide range of popular music styles. For the past two

years, students have been involved in contemporary arts projects, working jointly with visual artists. This year, students will work for three weeks with artist Gavin Turk on the Air Guitar exhibition. This unique collaboration will demonstrate the way in which music composition is influenced by the visual arts. Students will be assessed on this as part of their national diploma coursework, providing an excellent opportunity to develop self-management and team working skills, as well as their composition skills in a public performance context.

101. A comprehensive programme of performances is presented in the college theatres, ranging this year from work by modern authors such as Alan Bennett and Peter Barnes, to Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*. There is a high rate of progression to HE from GCE A-level drama and theatre studies, with a significant number of students entering performing arts colleges for specialist career training.

102. All teachers have appropriate specialist skills; many have professional backgrounds in their particular area of expertise. Students appreciate the dedication and hard work of their teachers, and find them very supportive and encouraging. Every student is interviewed or auditioned to ensure enrolment on the correct course. This contact with their teachers prior to starting the course helps students settle in to college life smoothly. There is a well-organised tutorial system. Students receive regular feedback on their progress. Assignments are marked and returned quickly. Comments on students' work are generally thorough and encourage students to develop and improve. Course teams have an impressive knowledge of each student's strengths and weaknesses. Lesson plans indicate where individual students may have special needs or require particular attention.

103. A high standard of specialist equipment is available to students. Student musicians train on digital and analogue recording and editing systems, band equipment is in good supply and students have good access to college IT facilities. Technical students in drama learn in a well-equipped studio theatre and technician support for all courses is efficient and well organised. Most accommodation is in good order and the facilities for dance are exceptional. Some lessons are held in temporary buildings and the availability of appropriate rooms has not kept pace with the increase in student numbers on some courses. At times this leads to overcrowding or places constraints on the type of learning activities that can be undertaken.

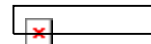
104. A distinctive feature of the provision is the excellent range of collaborative work undertaken by students. Popular music students have recently worked with media students on a pop video, and with dance students, composing music to the dance students' own choreography. Students enjoy the opportunities to see each other's work regularly during the weekly 'golden hour'. The good reputation of the college's performing arts provision helps to attract unusual opportunities for outside collaboration. Performing arts students successfully worked on the district council's campaign in National Food Safety Week. They took their production *Much to Do about Health* to 43 primary schools to promote food safety and healthy eating.

105. Imaginative timetabling has enabled students to collaborate with the college's Springboard course on a community arts project. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities devised workshops with national diploma students on themes such as 'jungle' or 'under the sea', using speech, movement and music to explore ideas on the environment. The resulting performance, *Our Community*, was recorded on video and shown in the college. The outcome of this work raised the profile of joint and inclusive projects, whilst introducing students to different styles of theatre. This has created a career interest in community arts for some of the participants.

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

106. The course team is a very cohesive unit. Staff work closely together and are strongly supportive of each other's work. Staff often collaborate on performance projects and part-time teachers are fully involved. There is very effective management of the curriculum and course teams meet weekly with the head of school. The self-assessment process is part of the course review cycle and resulted in a reliable self-assessment report. The course monitoring and evaluation system ensures that staff have clear improvement targets to work towards and leads to the methodical analysis of the issues that arise.

## Visual arts and media



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on the national diploma media course
- good teaching and effective learning
- high standard of students' work
- very good resources and facilities in media
- good course management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor resources and facilities in art and design
- insufficient emphasis on drawing from observation.

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

107. The college provides a good range of full-time and part-time programmes in visual arts and media. This includes GNVQ intermediate courses in art and design and in media studies, national diplomas in fine art and media production, and GCE AS and A-level courses in film studies, art, photography and media studies. There is a small cohort of level 1 students following an art and design foundation programme, as well as developing their numeracy and literacy skills. A variety of part-time courses are offered during the day and evening, both at the college and in the community.

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

108. Pass rates on the national diploma in media studies, GCE AS art and AVCE art and design courses are well above national averages. In 2001/02 the pass rate on the AVCE course reached

100%, but against the backdrop of a falling retention rate. Students' attainment in lessons is generally good. On the national diploma in media the standard of students' work is outstanding. The students produce work of a strongly vocational nature to a high professional standard, demonstrating their ability to integrate theoretical learning and practical skills very effectively. Achievement on an evening course in photography has been very poor and alternative provision is to be made available from next year.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GNVQ intermediate media	2	No. of starts	30	24	24
		% retention	73	92	96
		% pass rate	64	73	65
National diploma media	3	No. of starts	35	38	59
		% retention	68	68	78
		% pass rate	88	96	93
GCE AS art and design	3	No. of starts	*	38	25
		% retention	*	86	83
		% pass rate	*	94	89
AVCE art and design (and precursors)	3	No. of starts	25	14	20
		% retention	76	71	67
		% pass rate	89	90	100
GCE AS film studies	3	No. of starts	*	65	60
		% retention	*	75	92
		% pass rate	*	85	69
GCE AS media studies	3	No. of starts	133	68	70
		% retention	79	72	73
		% pass rate	90	83	86

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

\* course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

109. The teaching in most lessons is very good and students learn effectively. Teaching is well planned and structured, and provides students with challenging learning opportunities. In media, some adventurous assignments provide students with extensive learning and assessment opportunities. In one assignment on the media course, for example, students were able to work on location as a film crew and gained relevant vocational experience in the various roles within a production team. Teachers place an emphasis on learning by experience. Practical projects provide good vehicles for students to apply their theoretical learning. Teaching on GCE AS and A-level film studies and media studies is intellectually demanding and generates an enthusiastic response from students, who enjoy the challenge and rigour of the subject. In art and design there is insufficient emphasis on drawing from observation to develop students' visual literacy, and an over-reliance on working from photographs and pictures in books and magazines.

110. Key skills work is an integral part of art and design courses. Learning styles analysis has been used to enable students to explore how to improve their own learning. They responded

enthusiastically to the opportunity to identify their own preferred learning styles, and devised a personal action plan to improve their approaches to learning. Media students worked on an assignment to produce a pop video. They developed skills in working as a production team with access to excellent television and studio recording facilities, and the standard of the final work was high.

111. The accommodation and resources available for media studies, photography, digital technology and film studies are very good. There are excellent moving image production facilities, which are well managed by specialist technicians. The equipment is very up to date and is used efficiently. The resources and facilities available to support art and design courses are unsatisfactory, particularly in three-dimensional design, textiles and fashion. Teaching staff are well qualified and have recent professional experience in their own specialist subjects.

112. Assessment opportunities are well planned. Integrated assignments, planned by staff with a range of subject specialisms, enrich the learning experience for students. A creative and challenging location assignment for first-year media students was set in Cornwall, and involved a professional producer and a lighting cameraman from the BBC. The students had to produce a documentary video and a fictional video, which were presented later in an evening showing for parents and the public. The assignment was a resounding success, students gained valuable vocational experience working with professionals and the quality of the finished work was outstanding.

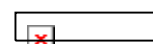
113. Students understand the assessment procedures and the criteria for success. The assessment policy has clear attendance and punctuality targets. A range of tools are used to promote continuous improvement in assessment practice, including evaluation and feedback sheets for completion by students and staff. Formative and interim assessments are used effectively to monitor students' progress. Feedback to students is generally good, although in art and design, the feedback comments on students' work do not always make clear what is necessary to improve performance.

114. Students speak highly of the advice and guidance they received at interview and during the induction process. There are planned tutorial sessions each week, including group activities and individual reviews. Tutorials cover a range of activities and topics, including progress reviews, personal issues, preparation for work placement, applications to HE and careers advice. In a group tutorial on progression for level 2 students, they compared their existing skills with those required for progression to the next level and identified any skills which were missing. This increased their motivation and helped them to develop an action plan. Some students felt that tutorials were not well organised and had no clear purpose. Students receive helpful subject-specific advice from specialist staff which helps them to develop a clear vocational focus. Progression to HE from level 3 vocational courses in 2002 was high at over 80%.

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

115. Management of the curriculum area is good. Communication between staff and with students is good, and course teams understand their responsibilities. Courses are well planned and co-ordinated. There is a strong focus on providing students with good quality teaching and learning experiences. There is a programme of internal lesson observations. On average, the grades awarded are higher than those awarded by inspectors. Liaison between teaching teams is strong, as demonstrated by the highly effective integrated assignments. Resources are well managed and fully utilised.

## **Humanities**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on most GCE AS and A-level courses
- good attainment by students during lessons
- extensive range of level 3 courses
- well-managed access to HE course.

### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory pass rates in GCE AS law and geography
- use of some ineffective teaching methods.

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

116. Humanities courses are based in the school of science and humanities. Advanced level courses are provided in psychology, sociology, history, law, geography, government and politics, and general studies. Psychology, at GCE AS and A level, attracts the largest number of students, some 150 this year, and there is also a GCSE evening class in psychology. Some 108 students are taking GCE AS general studies. Law, history and sociology are available at GCE AS and A level, and attracted some 75, 50 and 45 students respectively. Geography and government and politics courses are relatively small, and consist of around ten students on each. The access to HE course consists of a core of study skills, mathematics and IT, together with academic options in law, geography, history, psychology and sociology. Access students may study full time over one year or part time over two or three years, and begin their study at one of three entry points in the year. There are currently 38 full-time and 20 part-time students on the access course. There is no level 1 provision.

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

117. Retention and pass rates are significantly above the national average in GCE AS and A-level history and in GCE AS psychology. In GCE AS and A-level sociology and in GCE A-level law, students achieve well in examinations and retention rates are satisfactory. In GCE AS history and geography and in GCSE psychology, pass rates are significantly below national averages, although retention rates on these courses are satisfactory. Most advanced level students perform satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment, but some do not perform as well in final examinations as might be expected on the basis of their entry qualifications. Students on the access to HE course achieved well in 2001/02, but retention and pass rates in the two preceding years were unsatisfactory. Students' coursework and in-class contributions demonstrate good levels of attainment on GCSE, and GCE AS and A-level courses.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCE AS law	3	No. of starts	*	49	75
		% retention	*	78	81
		% pass rate	*	53	58
GCE AS history	3	No. of starts	*	29	23
		% retention	*	93	96
		% pass rate	*	85	100
GCE AS psychology	3	No. of starts	23	90	99
		% retention	96	68	90
		% pass rate	45	64	78
GCE AS sociology	3	No. of starts	*	18	21
		% retention	*	72	81
		% pass rate	*	100	100
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	41	9	36
		% retention	68	67	94
		% pass rate	67	80	73
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	16	24	11
		% retention	75	54	82
		% pass rate	67	46	100

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

\* course did not run

***Quality of education and training***

118. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in all the lessons observed. In the most effective lessons, students were well motivated, participated enthusiastically in discussions, and responded well to questions from the teacher. Effective learning was demonstrated in the quality of students' responses to tasks set by teachers and in their written work in class. For example, in an access to HE lesson, students were studying sociological explanations for different levels of educational attainment in the United Kingdom. They made good use of personal experience to illustrate a range of sociological approaches, and they challenged the teacher with questions and requests for further explanation of the points under discussion.

119. In less effective lessons, teachers relied on a narrow range of teaching methods, which did not inspire or challenge the students. For example, in a law lesson, students spent too much time taking down dictated notes and copying notes from an overhead projector. In several lessons, students were asked to work in small groups on questions that had been photocopied, often poorly, from a textbook. Some students finished these tasks in a shorter time than the teacher had allowed. They were not given supplementary work and some became bored and restless. Very few lessons involved the use of ILT resources. Unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality are identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Average attendance in lessons observed was 83%. Punctuality was poor in many lessons. In lessons with scheduled breaks, time was often wasted as students failed to return promptly after the break.

120. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Most have a recognised teaching qualification.



There is a good level of participation in appropriate training and development activities. The library is well stocked with relevant textbooks and other educational resources to support students' learning. Students have adequate access to IT resources, including the Internet, although at peak times demand exceeds supply. Classrooms are well equipped and appropriately furnished. There is poor soundproofing in the temporary classrooms used in humanities, and in some rooms, overhead projectors are of poor quality and screens are inappropriately located. There are inadequate private study areas for students and no dedicated recreational space where humanities students can meet informally in their free time.

121. Students' work is marked thoroughly and accurately. Teachers write helpful and constructive comments on coursework. Work is returned promptly in most cases. Access students correctly cite references and bibliographies, and teachers comment on this when they mark the work. External verifier reports also identify high standards in the assessment of students' work. Internal moderation on the access course is weak; an issue also highlighted by external verification. Internal moderators do not write constructive comments to help improve the quality of assessment.

122. The humanities curriculum area offers a wide range of courses at level 3. The timetable for GCE AS and A levels has been organised so that students can also study subjects such as theatre studies, foreign languages and sciences. Students value the broad range of subject combinations open to them. Access students can also select from an extensive range of subjects, including the social sciences, history, law and geography. Additional options are offered in biology, chemistry and environmental science. The access team has recently introduced more specific pathways towards careers in the health and legal professions, humanities, social sciences and social work. A pathway to nursing is planned. Access courses are organised flexibly to encourage wider participation. Students can begin the course in September, January or March, and can combine daytime and evening options. Additionally, students can achieve the qualification in three terms of full-time study, or part time over two or three years. A fast track enables some students to complete their programmes in two terms of full-time study.

123. All students are inducted into the college when they begin their studies. Access students who begin their studies in January or March have a brief induction and are mentored by another access student. Students starting a GCE AS programme are invited to subject taster sessions to help them make informed choices about their programme of study. Students value this experience. Work experience does not form part of the GCE AS or A-level programmes.

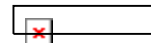
124. Guidance and support for students are satisfactory. All prospective full-time students have an interview with a member of the course team. Students without a level 2 qualification in mathematics or English are offered the opportunity to study at GCSE level. All full-time students undertake an initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and IT support needs. Appropriate learning support is made available to those students who would benefit. There is a scheduled programme of tutorials. These are valued by access students, but many students on other courses question their usefulness. Tutorials provide an opportunity to discuss personal issues which impact on students' work, but are much less effective in setting improvement targets for individual students and monitoring their progress. Students also have a subject-based tutorial each term to review and record progress within the subject. Completed reports are copied to personal tutors and to the parents of students aged 16 to 18. However, this procedure does not satisfactorily address issues arising between subject tutorials. Helpful and supportive tutors spend considerable unscheduled time with students. Careers information and guidance are good, and all students receive good advice and guidance about HE opportunities and progression.

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

125. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers provide clear direction and there are agreed targets for each course. The access to HE course is particularly well managed and succeeds in meeting a diverse range of student needs. All staff contributed to the self-assessment. Some weaknesses were overstated and inspectors awarded a higher grade for the curriculum area than the college itself. Managers are clear about weaknesses in achievement on some courses and have drawn up comprehensive action plans to address them. A well-developed lesson observation system is used to monitor the quality of teaching. The profile of lesson grades arrived at by this process was

better than that resulting from inspectors' assessments.

## English and modern languages



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on GCE AS and A-level courses in English and communication studies
- students' good independent learning skills
- extensive and effective use of the language being studied by part-time students
- good progression between levels of open college language courses.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor and declining pass rates on GCSE English course
- poor pass rates on EFL courses
- failure of some GCE AS and A-level students to achieve their potential
- low recruitment to GCE AS and A-level French and German courses.

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

126. The college provides a wide range of courses including GCSE English, GCE AS and A-level English and communication studies, GCE AS and A-level French and German, national OCN courses at levels 1 to 3 in French, German, Italian and Spanish, and English as a foreign language (EFL) at five levels. The range of language courses offered attracts students from a large catchment area. Over 250 students follow GCE AS and A-level courses in English and communication studies.

The English and drama areas co-operate well. Some 90 students are enrolled on EFL courses, which include the key and preliminary English tests, first certificate, and advanced and proficiency certificates. GCSE and GCE AS English language and literature are offered as evening courses. Part-time language courses recruit well, with over 200 students in the current academic year. Recruitment to GCE AS and A-level French and German is low.

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

127. Achievement in GCE AS and A-level English language, literature, and communication studies is good. Pass rates on GCE AS and A-level communication studies courses are excellent and on all GCE AS and A-level English courses they improved in 2002. The proportion of students who achieved A and B grades in GCE A-level English literature in 2002 was significantly above the national average at 35%. However, the proportion of high grades in GCE A-level English language was only 8%, compared with the national average of 25%. Value added data indicate that, on average, English students achieve lower grades than would be predicted on the basis of their GCSE results, and that those with low entry grades make least progress. In GCSE English, pass rates at grades A to C have declined over the last three years to 20%, which is less than half the national average.

128. Despite the claim to the contrary in the self-assessment report, pass rates on EFL courses are poor. However, some of the students' oral work in lessons is of a high standard. In a Spanish lesson, students were able to quickly master the language needed to order basic food and drink in a bar and ask for the bill. In some lessons, even the most reticent students attained good levels of oral fluency. Students perform effectively in groups and are adept at assuming roles to improve their use of the target language.

129. Full-time GCE AS and A-level German and French courses have very good pass rates, but recruitment and retention rates are low. Adult evening language courses have generally good retention and pass rates.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in English and modern languages, 2000 to 2002***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Spanish	1	No. of starts	16	15	18
		% retention	81	87	88
		% pass rate	46	85	87
Preliminary English test	1	No. of starts	18	*	32
		% retention	78	*	82
		% pass rate	43	*	50
First certificate in English	2	No. of starts	19	*	25
		% retention	84	*	92
		% pass rate	44	*	43
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	95	104	113
		% retention	75	73	79
		% pass rate	49	46	20
GCE A-level English language	3	No. of starts	24	15	15
		% retention	91	80	67
		% pass rate	89	75	90
GCE A-level English	3	No. of starts	106	70	59

literature		% retention	86	85	93
		% pass rate	100	84	93
GCE A-level communication studies	3	No. of starts	36	14	24
		% retention	75	69	79
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GCE A-level German	3	No. of starts	8	3	4
		% retention	88	67	50
		% pass rate	75	100	100

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

\* course did not run

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

130. Teaching is generally satisfactory or better. Most lessons are well planned and consolidate students' prior learning. Feedback to students is positive and encouraging. Students are well motivated and many are able to conceptualise and express ideas with confidence. In English, topics are often treated in imaginative ways. One teacher used ragtime music to introduce students to the poetry of the Harlem renaissance. In another lesson on *Othello*, students worked effectively in groups, skilfully reading extracts from the play for a presentation on Desdemona's character. Students gained a very good understanding of Shakespeare's techniques of characterisation.

131. In many modern foreign language and EFL lessons, students demonstrate a fluent command of the language they are studying. In a level 3 Italian class, the teacher introduced the complexities of the imperfect subjunctive tense with a domino game. This placed new language in an enjoyable context and gave students the incentive to practice the structure. In an EFL class, a teacher sensitively handled topical news items to introduce language register and idiom. Students produced their own news bulletins to a high standard and gave detailed feedback on each other's performance.

132. In some lessons the teaching is unimaginative and students do not perform to their full potential; tasks are not thoroughly explained and students are not clear about how to make progress. Some teachers are not skilled in using questions to monitor students' learning and to sharpen their understanding of key concepts. In some modern language lessons, teachers fail to exploit opportunities for students to interact in the language they are learning.

133. Resources are adequate. Classrooms are suitably equipped with overhead projectors and whiteboards. In English, there are some interesting displays about set texts and writers, but insufficient use is made of good quality student work for display purposes. Full-time students have adequate access to IT resources, but teachers do not make sufficient use of such resources in their teaching. Students on evening courses do not have adequate access to IT resources. The language centre is not exploited to its full potential. Some of the learning materials held in the centre are of poor quality. There is no official recording or monitoring of usage in order to assess the effectiveness of the centre.

134. Assessment and the monitoring of student' progress are satisfactory. Students are set written work at regular intervals and assignments are promptly returned with helpful comments. Teachers' comments on EFL students' homework are particularly informative, providing clear and succinct guidelines on grammatical structures. Students on advanced level courses are not set target grades. They are not always clear exactly what they need to do to improve their written work and to fulfill their potential.

135. Induction on GCE A-level courses is thorough. Students are issued with course handbooks

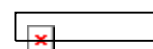
detailing syllabus content, and coursework and examination requirements. Induction on EFL courses is superficial, particularly for students starting a course after the initial enrolment period. The English team has extended the curriculum by providing a key skills course in communications as an alternative to GCSE.

136. Students are well supported. English staff provide lunchtime workshops to consolidate work carried out in lessons and organised visits to local theatres. In languages, students receive specialist initial advice and guidance from a full-time guidance officer in the language centre. Students' preferred learning styles are assessed on entry, but there is little evidence that the information is used effectively to plan teaching. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported.

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

137. The management of English and modern languages is satisfactory. In English, strong emphasis is placed on teamwork and staff share good practice, particularly in terms of resources and course planning. Teachers worked together to produce the curriculum area self-assessment report. They have set demanding targets for retention and pass rates, most of which have been met. New staff are well supported by the programme manager. Course meetings are regular, but do not give sufficient attention to pass rates. Value added data are not used effectively to set clear goals for students and to monitor their progress. In EFL, management decisions have not led to improvements in pass rates. In GCE AS and A-level languages there is a clear strategy to address the problem of low recruitment.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good teaching
- effective initial assessment
- effective individual learning plans with challenging personal targets
- high standards achieved by students
- excellent support for all students.

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient provision to meet the needs of the community
- inadequate staff training.

### **Scope of provision**

138. There are 147 adults and 26 students aged 16 to 18 on a range of literacy and numeracy courses. There are also 16 students aged 14 to 16 on the New Start programme. Just over half the students are on full-time courses; of the remaining part-time students, 80% attend courses in the college and the rest attend courses in community venues. The number of students on college-based courses has remained static over the last three years and there has been a modest growth in student numbers in the community.

### **Achievement and standards**

139. Retention and pass rates on all courses are at, or above, national averages. Progression rates into further study, training or work are satisfactory. Well-developed individual learning plans include realistic, but challenging, personal targets that allow students to monitor their own progress. Progress reviews are effective. Attendance rates on all courses are high.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Certificate in communicative skills	1	No. of starts	106	79	15
		% retention	91	91	93
		% pass rate	75	62	100
'Springboard'	1	No. of starts	*	80	53
		% retention	*	96	100
		% pass rate	*	99	100
Achievement test - literacy	1	No. of starts	90	112	67
		% retention	87	89	100
		% pass rate	92	88	78
Achievement test - numeracy	1	No. of starts	*	*	50
		% retention	*	*	100
		% pass rate	*	*	94

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

\* course did not run

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

140. Literacy and numeracy provision is carefully designed to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of individual students. Lessons are planned carefully. The teaching is good. Committed and enthusiastic staff create a supportive environment that promotes effective learning.

141. The teaching in nearly all the lessons observed was good or very good. The most effective learning took place when there were clearly defined learning outcomes linked to an individual learning plan, and when appropriate assessment techniques built on students' prior knowledge and skills. All lessons included a variety of appropriate teaching approaches, which captured and maintained students' interests. Tutors used question and answer sessions effectively at the end of each lesson to plan the targets for the next session. The involvement of positive peer assessment in this process provided a strong encouragement to meet the challenge of the next learning goal.

142. Teachers skilfully reduce students' anxieties through their friendly and sensitive approach and their good understanding of specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. With adult students, too few opportunities are created for students to work together in groups and solve problems collectively. In one good example of group work the teacher engaged the whole class in discussing and celebrating their achievements at college.

143. All the teachers have undertaken baseline training in basic skills, but further training is needed. There are too few staff to increase the amount of provision to the level required by current national targets and to meet the needs of the local community.

144. Accommodation for literacy and numeracy is very good. Access to computers has improved since the last college development plan, but has yet to be matched by relevant staff training and on-line learning materials. The paper-based learning materials are of good quality. Resources are efficiently and effectively used. Staff are developing useful links within the community and with external agencies.

145. Support for all students is excellent. Additional learning support in literacy and numeracy for students on a wide range of college courses is effectively organised. Students who receive additional support say they feel more confident of completing their courses. The help provided in the classroom is timely and sensitive, and teachers avoid seeming to patronise or pressurise students.

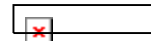
146. The 'springboard' course for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is an effective programme which enables students to acquire social skills that can be applied in real-life situations. The course promotes students' independence and social capabilities through their participation in nationally accredited land-based activities. The college provides appropriate support and students are able to attend literacy and numeracy lessons.

147. Adult students feel valued by the college and enjoy their lessons. They speak highly of the teachers' commitment and understanding of their individual aspirations and interests. There are awards ceremonies to celebrate students' achievements. One adult student, who had received an award from a premiership footballer, showed obvious pride in the associated newspaper article displayed on the classroom wall. Opportunities to build self-esteem through such displays of student achievements are not used sufficiently.

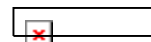
### ***Leadership and management***

148. Leadership and management of this area of work are effective. A clear direction has been set which has promoted improvement in the quality of provision. Good co-ordination of literacy, numeracy, and additional learning support has underpinned the development of a college-wide strategy to raise the profile of this work. Quality assurance and self-assessment procedures are effective. The lesson observation scheme is successful in identifying training needs and is linked well to the self-assessment process. Targets for growth based on local research and appropriate marketing are part of a coherent strategy to widen participation among groups currently under-represented in FE.

## Part D: College data



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



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	13	19
2	33	16
3	38	11
4/5	0	2
Other	16	52
Total	100	100

Source: Provided by the college in January 2003

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



Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments %
Science and mathematics	1,341	639	15
Land-based provision	0	11	*
Construction	0	5	*
Engineering, technology and manufacture	24	92	1
Business administration, management and professional	344	727	8
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	310	429	6
Health, social care and public services	207	1,814	15
Visual and performing arts and media	980	1,302	17
Humanities	3,321	1,051	33
Foundation programmes	83	518	5
Total	6,610	6,588	100

Source: Provided by the college in January 2003



\* = less than 0.5%

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	904	451	419	539	443	364
	Retention rate (%)	82	88	92	85	87	81
	National average (%)	80	79	*	78	78	*
	Pass rate (%)	61	51	74	79	77	75
	National average (%)	65	68	*	66	68	*
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	993	831	787	595	603	554
	Retention rate (%)	80	83	84	91	82	87
	National average (%)	76	76	*	79	78	*
	Pass rate (%)	62	58	71	73	65	77
	National average (%)	66	69	*	65	69	*
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1,453	1,765	1,722	477	510	432
	Retention rate (%)	82	77	88	88	82	85
	National average (%)	76	77	*	78	78	*
	Pass rate (%)	79	76	82	68	57	72
	National average (%)	74	76	*	66	69	*
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	6	0	21	53	28	122
	Retention rate (%)	100	**	86	94	82	81
	National average (%)	79	82	*	81	84	*
	Pass rate (%)	33	**	82	35	10	82
	National average (%)	66	55	*	56	53	*

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

\*data not available

\*\*numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

*Sources of information:*

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

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

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	65	30	5	100
Level 2 (intermediate)	74	23	3	39
Level 1 (foundation)	65	26	9	34
Other sessions	50	50	0	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>179</b>

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2003. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

Office for  
Standards  
in Education

