



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards
in Education

Cornwall College

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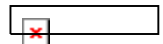
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Basic information about the college



Name of college:	Cornwall College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Dr Alan Stanhope
Address of college:	Head Office, Lombard House 8 Palace Road St Austell Cornwall PL25 4BU
Telephone number:	01726 222 718
Fax number:	01726 659 26
Chair of governors:	Philip Rees
Unique reference number:	130627

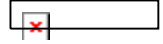
Name of reporting inspector:

Keith Abbott HMI

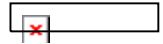
Date of inspection:

17-21 and 24-28 March 2003

Part A: Summary



Information about the college



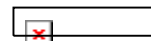
Cornwall College is one of three colleges serving Cornwall, the others being Penwith College in Penzance and Truro College. Cornwall College is one of the country's largest colleges. It has over 55,000 students and it employs over 2,000 staff. Cornwall College operates as a federation of local colleges and community based centres. Prior to August 2001, there were two members of the federation. The first, known as Cornwall College, operated from main sites in Camborne and Falmouth. The second, known as Duchy College, operated from main sites in Stoke Climsland in East Cornwall and Rosewarne in West Cornwall. Duchy College primarily offers land-based courses. In August 2001, Cornwall College merged with St Austell College. The federal organisation was expanded to accommodate sites in St Austell and Saltash. The college currently operates from these six main sites. It also provides courses at two smaller centres in Portreath and Wadebridge. Local communities are served by courses at numerous community venues in Cornwall and Devon and in the college's 13 learning shops. Throughout this report, the college site at Camborne, Pool and Redruth is referred to as 'CPR'.

Cornwall is a rural county that has suffered from a decline in traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing, mining and tourism. The low per capita income places Cornwall as one of the poorest regions in Europe. In 1999 it was awarded Objective One status for 2000 to 2006. Low average income is historically linked to high unemployment and low skill levels. Recently, unemployment has fallen rapidly to below the national average, but many jobs are seasonal and poorly paid. Skill levels remain low and many skills are inappropriate for today's needs. The post-16 participation rate in Cornwall is high, with over 75% staying in full-time education. Throughout the county, most secondary schools have sixth forms. The number of full-time students aged 16 to 18 at the college declined slightly between 2000 and 2002, but the college has grown overall, due to an increase in the number of adult students.

The college provides courses in all programme areas. It offers academic, vocational, specialist and recreational courses for school pupils, school leavers and adults. Since the college's main sites are up to 80 miles apart, many courses are offered on several college sites. About 85% of students are part time. There is substantial work-based learning provision in most curriculum areas. The college offers training for providers of sheltered housing. The base for this work is in Worcester and programmes are delivered throughout England. There are about 2,500 higher education (HE) students. The college does not provide basic skills courses for adults because the county's Adult Education Service provides these programmes.

The college's mission is 'to create lifelong learning opportunities for people, communities and businesses in areas served by the college, by working in partnership with others to provide high quality learning, skills training and related services'.

How effective is the college?



The corporate development of Cornwall College has been very effective. Governors and senior managers provide clear direction. The merger between Cornwall College and St Austell College in 2001 has led to wider participation in education across the county and significant improvements in college facilities. There is a wide range of courses. Participation by adults in education has been increased through provision in many local learning shops and community venues. The overall achievements of the college's students are satisfactory. Overall retention and pass rates are slightly above the national average at levels 2 and 3, but slightly below at level 1. The overall standard of teaching is slightly below the average for general further education (FE) colleges inspected in 2001/02. Students are well supported academically and personally. The college's key strengths and the areas for improvement are listed below.

Key strengths

- effective strategic leadership by governors and managers
- good accommodation, computing resources and specialist facilities
- wide range of courses
- extensive provision in community locations
- extensive and productive links with schools, employers and community organizations
- good guidance, enrolment, induction and tutorial support for full-time students
- monitoring of students' progress and feedback on their assessed work.

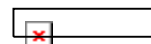
What should be improved

- the overall standard of teaching
- students' attainment in many curriculum areas

- quality of literacy and numeracy provision
- quality of most work-based learning provision
- retention rates on some courses, particularly at level 1
- sharing of good practice across college sites.

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

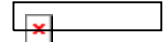


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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	Good. Good teaching ensures that retention and pass rates on most General Certification of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) courses are high. Well-motivated students make good progress on their GCE A-level courses. Students are taught in well-equipped laboratories where IT is often used effectively. There is limited provision at levels 1 and 2 and the retention rate is low for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) mathematics.
Agriculture and horticulture	Satisfactory. Pass rates are good for work-based learning and on national diploma courses but unsatisfactory on the agricultural mechanics course. Teaching is satisfactory overall but attainment is unsatisfactory in many theory lessons. The college offers a wide range of provision that meets the needs of industry.
Equine and animal care	Good. There is good teaching and achievement on equine and animal care courses. Students are well supported and assessment is effective, except for some National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) assessment practice. Staff are highly qualified and there are effective links with industry. Teaching resources for small animal courses are limited and co-ordination of animal care provision at Stoke Climsland is weak.
Construction	Satisfactory. Pass rates on NVQ level 3 plumbing and national

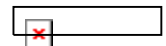
	diploma courses are very good. Retention rates on most courses are good. Pass rates on level 1 courses are poor. There is much good practical teaching. In theory lessons, there are insufficient checks on learning. The curriculum area is highly responsive to local community and industry needs.
Business studies	Satisfactory. Teaching is good on courses for adults and satisfactory on courses for students aged 16 to 18. Students are well supported and their progress is monitored systematically. Links with employers are productive. Aspects of curriculum management are unsatisfactory.
Information and communications technology	Satisfactory. Motivated adult students are taught well in a range of community locations, but much of the teaching of students aged 16 to 18 is slow and lacks stimulation. Overall achievements are satisfactory. Resources are good. The results of initial assessment are not used effectively.
Hospitality and catering	Satisfactory. Most teaching is satisfactory or better and good practical resources enhance the development of sound professional practice. Retention rates were unsatisfactory in 2002 but pass rates are generally good. Quality assurance processes are not applied consistently. There is a good range of college and work-based courses.
Sport, leisure and tourism	Satisfactory. There are good pass rates on several sport, recreation, leisure and tourism courses. Retention rates on full-time courses are generally satisfactory but completion rates are poor on foundation modern apprenticeship programmes. The proportion of good or better teaching is low. Facilities, resources and equipment are good and there are strong links with industry.
Health, social care and public services	Satisfactory. There are good pass rates on most college-based and community-based courses. There are poor achievements on work-based learning programmes. Too much teaching does not meet individuals' needs. There is a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in health, social care and childcare.
Humanities	Satisfactory. There are high pass and retention rates on most GCE A-level courses for full-time students but declining and low pass and retention rates on many adult courses. Much undemanding teaching fails to engage all students. There is good management of provision at the individual sites.
English and languages	Good. There are good achievements on many courses, in particular on GCE A-level and GCSE courses. Retention rates are declining on some language courses. There is much good teaching of well-motivated students. Students in classes with low numbers have unsatisfactory learning experiences. Part-time provision in languages across the college is extensive.
Foundation programmes	Good. Retention rates and achievements are good on most courses. Teaching and learning are good on courses for students aged 16 to 18 and satisfactory on courses for adults. Students receive good support and pastoral care from a dedicated team of staff. There is insufficient sharing of good practice.
Literacy and numeracy	Unsatisfactory. There is good teaching on community-based literacy courses and effective support for students with dyslexia, but too much teaching is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient planning to meet individual learning needs. Many staff lack specialist skills for the teaching of literacy and numeracy and some aspects of management are ineffective.

How well is the college led and managed?



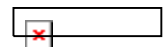
Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors work closely together. They effectively managed the merger of St Austell College and Cornwall College. Governance and strategic leadership are very good. Since the merger, the college has continued to improve its accommodation, resources, and management information and quality assurance systems. Senior managers rightly devolve considerable responsibility to managers at the different college sites. Most courses are well managed. However, senior managers are not sufficiently proactive in recognising and spreading good teaching and curriculum management practice across the college. The college plays a leading role in the regeneration of Cornwall. Its strong and productive links with a wide range of schools, business and community partners effectively help to widen participation in education.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



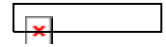
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. A significant contribution is made to education in Cornwall through the extensive provision in learning shops and community venues. These centres have been very successful in attracting about 4,000 adult students. The college's offer includes provision for students from age 14. However, most full-time students are aged 16 to 18 and around 85% of all students are adults. The college is the county's largest provider of work-based learning opportunities. The needs of students who require additional literacy and numeracy support are not met effectively, but provision for students with dyslexia is good. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. There are equal opportunities and race equality policies. An equal opportunities committee meets termly, but planning for equality of opportunity is underdeveloped. There are generally good resources for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but some college sites present difficulties for disabled students.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Pre-entry guidance and support are good. There are strong links with schools. Good quality materials provide clear information about the college and the courses available. Prior to enrolment, advice, presentations and formal interviews help students and their parents to make well-informed choices. Effective induction programmes include diagnosis of students' additional learning needs but the findings are not effectively used to identify targets in students' individual learning plans. A wide range of support for literacy and numeracy is available but many students do not take up these opportunities. There is effective support for students with dyslexia and for those with other learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Tutorial provision for students aged 16 to 18 is generally effective. On most programmes, a combination of individual and group tutorials is used to set targets, monitor progress and provide pastoral support. Residential students at Stoke Climsland are well looked after by resident wardens. The quality of tutorial support for part-time and adult students varies across sites and courses, but generally it meets their needs. Work-based learners receive good support from their liaison officers. The arrangements for giving students counselling, welfare, finance, childcare, transport and accommodation advice are well organised and used.

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

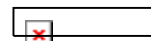
- helpful and supportive staff
- friendly atmosphere
- being treated like adults
- the learning centre at CPR
- wide choice of programmes
- good specialist facilities
- opportunities for educational visits.

What they feel could be improved

- college refectories
- car parking
- key skills teaching

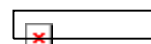
- the number of staff changes on some courses.

Other information

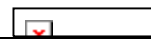


The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The 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, where inspectors have judged there to be unsatisfactory or poor provision in a curriculum area or in leadership and management, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post-inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

Part B: The college as a whole



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

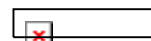


Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	55	35	10
19+ and WBL*	69	24	7
Learning 16-18	57	32	11
19+ and WBL*	69	27	4

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

* work-based learning

Achievement and standards



1. Overall retention and pass rates have remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2002. At

level 1 they have been slightly below.

16 to 18 year olds

2. In 2001/02, 3,378 students aged 16 to 18 accounted for 71% of students on full-time courses. In the same year 1,770 students aged 16 to 18 accounted for 5% of the part-time students. In the three years ending in 2002, overall pass rates on level 2 and 3 long courses were generally above the national average for students aged 16 to 18 in FE colleges. The overall pass rates on level 2 and 3 courses in 2002 were 74% and 80%, respectively. These are above the national averages of 69% and 76%. At level 1, the overall pass rate of 66% in 2002 was just below the national average of 68%. Over the three years, the trend has been of marginal improvements in pass rates at levels 2 and 3, but a slight decline at level 1. In 2001, the last year for which comparative figures are available, the college's overall pass rates placed it in the upper quartile of general FE colleges at level 3 and in the third quartile at levels 1 and 2. However, in 2002, the overall level 1 and 2 pass rates improved by 6 percentage points and 7 percentage points respectively. On average, about 2,300 students aged 16 to 18 took short course qualifications in 2000, 2001 and 2002. A good pass rate of 89% was achieved in each of the three years.

3. Overall retention rates for level 1 and 2 students aged 16 to 18 are satisfactory. At both levels and in each of the last three years, retention rates have been no more than 3% above or below the national average. The college has been much more successful in its retention of level 3 students aged 16 to 18. In the three years ending in 2002, the rate improved by 16 percentage points to 86%. This good figure places the college in the upper quartile of general FE colleges, based on the comparative figure for 2001.

4. The college achieves some of its highest pass and retention rates on level 3 qualifications. In 2002, pass rates of 100% were achieved on the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma courses in rural studies, horse management and computer studies, although the retention rate for computer studies was unsatisfactory, at 50%. In contrast, the pass rates for the national diplomas in early years education and public services were unsatisfactory, at 62% and 69%, respectively. The pass rate on the first diploma in public services was also below the national average. In 2002, pass rates were generally high on GCE A-level courses, with 100% pass rates for chemistry, sociology and English language. Only biology and psychology pass rates were below 90%. Value added analysis shows that most GCE A-level students achieve better results than would be expected on the basis of their GCSE results.

5. In 2002, pass rates were generally high on land-based courses, following low pass rates in 2001 that were partly due to the foot and mouth epidemic. In the same year, pass rates on most leisure, tourism, hospitality, catering, business administration, management and accounting courses were good. However, there were unsatisfactory pass rates on several construction courses and on some NVQ level 2 courses, for example, in food preparation, environment and conservation and hotel reception. Pass rates for GCSE mathematics and English are satisfactory. In 2002, the pass rates of 48% and 56%, respectively, were slightly above the low national average figures. Pass rates on other GCSE courses, for example, science, French and Spanish, have generally been above national averages. Students aged 16 to 18 have achieved satisfactory results in their key skills qualifications. In 2002, there were 4,521 starters on key skills qualifications. The overall retention rate was 82% and the pass rate was 57%. These rates are above the unsatisfactory national averages of 80% and 31%, respectively. However, the pass rates of young people on full-time courses taking level 1 application of number and communication key skills are poor.

6. Standards of students' work observed in lessons during the inspection were generally satisfactory or better. However, the proportion of lessons in which students aged 16 - 18 were judged to have made good progress, compared with the progress that would be expected at that point in their course, was low, at 49%. Attainment was judged to be satisfactory in 39% of lessons and less than satisfactory in 12%. Levels of attainment are generally lower at levels 1 and 2, for example, on GCSE, NVQ level 1, General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) foundation and GNVQ intermediate courses. Students in several curriculum areas produce good practical work. Examples include science and mathematics, construction, information and communications technology (ICT), sports, leisure and tourism, and health, social care and public services. Students with learning

difficulties generally make good progress, due to the good integration of work and life skills programmes.

7. Young people aged 16 to 18 on foundation and advanced modern apprenticeship programmes account for about 70% of the college's 1,900 work-based learners. Their overall retention rates and levels of achievement are unsatisfactory, although work-based learners on agriculture, crop and livestock production courses achieve well. The achievement of NVQs is satisfactory in a few curriculum areas, but the failure to fully integrate and assess key skills means that many work-based learners do not complete their programmes.

Adult learners

8. Of the 44,000 students who enrolled in 2001/02, over 38,000 were aged 19 or over. Most were studying part time and about three-quarters of enrolments were on level 1 and 2 courses. The overall achievements of adult students on long qualifications are similar to those of students aged 16 to 18. In the three years ending in 2002, the college achieved overall pass rates between three and fourteen percentage points above national averages on level 2 and 3 long courses. At level 1, the overall pass rate was above the national average in 2000 and 2002, but just below in 2001. These rates place the college in the second quartile of general FE colleges for level 1 to 3 long courses. At each level there were no significant trends over the three years.

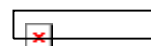
9. Retention rates for adult students on long courses declined at levels 1 and 2 between 2000 and 2002. The greatest fall was at level 1, from 77% in 2000, to 70% in 2002. This compares with a national average of 78%. At level 1, the college was slightly below the national average. In 2002, the college was just above the national average at level 3. At this level, the three-year trend is stable at around 80%. The overall retention rates for adult students generally place the college in the second or third quartile for general FE colleges.

10. The number of part-time students taking short courses has risen significantly in the last three years. The overall retention rate of 96% in 2002 is above the national average of 93% for all colleges. The overall pass rate of 95% is very good and places the college well into the upper quartile for all colleges.

11. Adult students' work, observed in lessons during the inspection, was of a higher standard than work produced by students aged 16 to 18. Attainment was judged to be good or better in 62% of lessons, satisfactory in 36% and less than satisfactory in 2%. Adult students are well motivated and achieve consistently good results in several programme areas. For example, in both 2001 and 2002, all students who started the level 3 childminder course were successful. There are also good achievements on care activities organiser courses and on the distance learning sheltered housing programmes. Many adult students take ICT courses in community venues and learning shops. These students demonstrate both confidence and competence in their use of, for example, e-mail and the Internet. However, too many adults who enrol on these courses do not complete their programmes. In a few curriculum areas, adults do not make satisfactory progress. For example, some adults with learning difficulties are not progressing well, since their lessons and activities are not sufficiently challenging.

12. Around 30% of work-based learners are adults following European funded programmes to increase skills levels as part of the regeneration of Cornwall. These work-based learners have much better achievements than the modern apprentices. Their retention rates and levels of achievement are good and the trend is one of improvement.

Quality of education and training



13. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 365 sessions. They judged that teaching was good or better in 60% of lessons, satisfactory in 31% and less than satisfactory in 9%. This profile is slightly worse than the average for general FE colleges inspected in 2001/02.

Teaching was most effective in English and languages, science and mathematics, and equine and animal care lessons, where 77%, 76% and 64%, respectively, of lessons observed by inspectors were judged to be good or better. Teaching was least effective in literacy and numeracy and agriculture and horticulture lessons where, in each case, only 44% of lessons were good or better.

14. Teaching is significantly better in lessons primarily involving adult students. Over 71% of these lessons were good or better, compared with 55% of lessons for students aged 16 to 18. The proportion of unsatisfactory lessons was also lower, at 6%, for those involving adults compared with 10% for those aged 16 to 18. Teaching tends to be better on level 3 courses. The best teaching was observed in GCE A-level lessons and the weakest in GNVQ foundation and intermediate lessons. Attendance at level 1 lessons was also lower, at 78%, compared with 85% at level 3 lessons. Where comparison could be made between the CPR and St Austell sites, teaching was generally better at CPR. The difference was most marked in the business studies and humanities curriculum areas.

15. In many of the unsatisfactory lessons involving students aged 16 to 18, teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of individuals. Many lessons proceed too slowly and they are dull because teachers talk too much. Students lose interest and achieve very little. In some curriculum areas, for example, agriculture and horticulture, and hospitality and catering, the link between vocational teaching and key skills is weak. In other areas, for example, business studies and humanities, there is too little use of information and learning technology (ILT) in lessons. In some GCE A-level lessons, the low number of students limits the range of teaching activities and teachers do not always plan their lessons appropriately when there are few students. Other teaching weaknesses include poor time management, unclear explanations, poor discipline, poor questioning techniques and failure to check students' understanding of the topics covered.

16. The more effective lessons are well planned around clear learning and assessment objectives. Students of humanities subjects are skilfully involved in discussions, group work, role play and presentations. Teachers on hospitality courses draw on adult students' industrial experience to inform and improve lessons. In most foreign language lessons, there is sustained use of the target language. In several curriculum areas, for example, leisure and tourism, relevant visits are used to reinforce learning. Students on public service courses are taught teamwork and leadership skills effectively.

17. In many curriculum areas, teaching in practical lessons is generally better than in theory lessons. Students are suitably briefed about the tasks they need to perform. They are closely supervised and well supported, although in a small minority of lessons, for example, in animal care, insufficient attention is paid to health and safety. Most practical lessons in laboratories and workshops are well organised. Practical coursework in science is closely matched to examination requirements. In construction, teachers have good workbooks, demonstrations are clear and the use of protective equipment is strictly enforced. On equine studies, students have good riding tuition and plenty of time to practice riding skills.

18. Learning is generally satisfactory or better. The percentages of lessons graded good or better, satisfactory and less than satisfactory for learning were 61%, 30% and 9%, respectively. Learning was also much better in lessons involving adults, with good or better learning in 71% of these.

19. There are clear and effective policies for assessment and verification. The network of internal verifiers includes subject specialists, site-based verifiers and curriculum area lead internal verifiers who work across all college sites. The lead internal verifiers' role is to ensure that comparable standards are maintained across the college. The college's quality improvement unit monitors assessment procedures, including the activities of the lead internal verifiers. Lead internal verifiers are recent appointments, who have not yet had time to make a significant impact. Currently, their role in relation to other internal verifiers and the newly appointed cross-college curriculum leaders is not clear to all staff.

20. Internal verification on most sites and in most curriculum areas is well planned. Sampling plans indicate a degree of rigour that exceeds awarding bodies' requirements. External verification reports confirm that assessment and verification comply with national standards and meet the requirements of the awarding bodies. The college has an effective system to evaluate these reports and produce action plans to address issues raised. This involves summarising and recording external verifiers' reports and distributing the summary reports to lead internal verifiers, centre verifiers, centre heads and programme team leaders.

21. When either the course review or internal verification process identifies a weakness in assessment, the Quality Improvement Unit provides appropriate support. For example, the motor vehicle team recently identified that the delivery and assessment of NVQs in motor vehicle engineering needed strengthening. An in-depth review of the programme was organised and an action plan produced. The programme manager and curriculum standards manager subsequently monitored progress.

22. On many programmes, for example, public services, business administration, humanities, ICT, mathematics and science, assessments are regular and well structured. They clearly set out what is expected from students. Vocationally relevant assignments provide good opportunities for students to gain the evidence needed to satisfy awarding bodies' criteria. Information from assessment is used effectively in English and humanities to inform teaching and learning activities. On land-based programmes, tutors make good use of digital photographs to provide assessment evidence.

23. Most tutors provide constructive written feedback that clearly indicates areas for improvement. Written feedback is often reinforced by verbal feedback at individual tutorials. Most students' work is marked accurately and returned promptly. Tutors in many areas correct spelling and punctuation and set high standards for the presentation of work. Continuous assessment is used well to monitor students' progress on most courses. For example, meticulous records are kept of business administration students' progress. In most areas, students are kept well informed of their progress. Many students use a college planner, provided at induction, to maintain a record of their own progress.

24. The assessment of trainees on work-based learning and NVQ programmes is often unsatisfactory. Much assessment of work-based learning is not systematically planned and, with the exception of land-based activities, there is little co-ordination of the off-the-job activities and assessment in the workplace. Work-based learners on, for example, construction, ICT and sport, leisure and tourism courses are unclear about their progress, and the feedback they receive from tutors does not give them a clear indication of standards expected and achieved. Students' progress and achievement are often slow as a result.

25. There is no consistent approach to the teaching and assessment of key skills across the college. On many full-time programmes, the opportunity to assess key skills is identified in assignments. In much work-based learning, the linking of key skills to occupational assessment is weak. However, on agriculture courses, key skills are well integrated and there is good co-ordination of on-the-job and off-the-job learning.

26. Pre-entry guidance and support are good. There are strong links with schools. Good quality materials provide clear, concise and relevant information about the college and the courses available. Prior to enrolment, students and their parents are helped to understand the options available and to make informed choices through advice events, presentations and formal interviews. Many students meet with subject specialists and sample courses before enrolment. Informative induction arrangements are valued by the students. These are particularly comprehensive for residential students. The quality and effectiveness of induction procedures for those who join late are variable and many part-time students do not receive handbooks. There are good procedures to enable students to change their subject choices during the initial weeks of term.

27. The learning needs of full-time students are diagnosed through initial assessment. However, students who study away from the main sites, and some late starters, are not assessed. Initial assessment is used to determine students' key skill levels and additional support needs, but it is not often used to identify targets in students' individual learning plans. A wide range of additional

learning support is available, including support for literacy, numeracy, time management, essay writing and revision skills. Although students appreciate the availability of additional support, many identified as needing support do not take up the opportunities offered. There is effective support for students with dyslexia and those with other learning difficulties and/or disabilities. For example, students with visual impairment receive specialist support in ICT lessons and make good use of modified equipment. Learning support assistants provide valuable extra help in appropriate level 1 and 2 lessons. Able students are also well supported. For example, applicants to Oxford and Cambridge universities are offered additional tutoring and there is a support group for students who wish to study medicine.

28. Tutorial provision for students aged 16 to 18 is generally effective. Teachers are approachable, caring and supportive. On most programmes, a combination of individual and group tutorials are used to set targets, monitor progress and provide pastoral support. Students on GCE A-level programmes are set minimum target grades based on their GCSE results. Progress towards these targets is monitored twice each term through formal tests. Most full-time students have individual learning plans, but often short-term targets in these lack precision. There are good procedures for identifying and contacting students whose attendance is poor. Contrary to college policy, full-time students on some courses at CPR and Saltash do not have weekly tutorials. Support for these students relies too heavily on informal arrangements. Residential students at Stoke Climsland are well looked after by resident wardens. Tutorial support for part-time and adult students also varies across sites and courses, but generally it meets their needs. Work-based learners receive good support from their liaison officers.

29. Arrangements for counselling, welfare, finance, childcare, transport and accommodation advice are well organised and well used. The services available are described in an informative handbook and diary for full-time students. Careers education and guidance are supported by extensive literature and computer-based information. Career planning is included in many students' individual plans and it is monitored as part of their tutorial programmes. The college has close links with the Connexions service for careers and guidance interviews. It has a partnership agreement with Connexions to provide guidance and support for some adult students in the community.

30. The college serves Cornwall's local communities very well. It offers a broad range of academic and vocational courses. Many courses are offered at several college sites. Courses are offered in all 14 of the LSC areas of learning and range from entry level to HE. The college has a particularly wide range of full-time level 2 and 3 courses, but the range of level 1 courses is less comprehensive. This restricts progression opportunities for entry level students. The college has effectively widened participation through local franchise and partnership agreements and college courses taught in towns and villages throughout Cornwall. The college has opened 13 learning shops, mainly in villages. They focus on attracting new students on to entry level and level 1 ICT courses. In 2002, there were 4,000 enrolments on courses in learning shops. An appropriate range of courses is offered at other community venues. In 2002, over 700 students progressed from such courses to college provision.

31. The college works effectively with the industrial and business communities to identify and satisfy their training needs. College advisers contact local employers to discuss their training needs. Training is then provided either by the college's business service or by one of the curriculum teams. Most vocational curriculum areas have good links with their local business communities. These links are used to improve courses, for example, through work experience, industrial visits, visiting speakers and advice on course development. Staff responsible for course development also respond to students' views. For example, a change in the content of an ICT course at Falmouth contributed to a significant improvement in retention.

32. The college has strong links with schools and with the voluntary and community sector. Staff at all college sites work with local schools to provide work experience, taster programmes and vocational programmes for students aged 14 to 16. Numerous partnerships with the voluntary sector and community groups increase the range and variety of opportunities for students. Many of these initiatives attract European Objective One funding. They are designed to provide training in skills that will enable local people find, or return to, employment. For example, one project with the Community Disability Forum involves training 12 disabled people in ICT skills. Following training these

designated 'learning champions' will work with disabled people in the community to introduce them to ICT and encourage them to return to learning.

33. There is a varied programme of enrichment activities. At each site, an enrichment manager devises the range of programmes and specified times for enrichment activities, although at CPR the time scheduled for enrichment on Wednesday afternoon clashes with GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and A-level lessons. Some enrichment activities provide opportunities to gain additional awards, for example, Millennium Volunteer and Duke of Edinburgh awards. At Falmouth, sports students offer tuition in water sports to other students. This extends the range of enrichment activities and enables them to gain additional qualifications.

34. Most full-time teaching and support staff are well qualified and occupationally experienced. Part-time staff have good levels of current occupational competence, but many lack teaching qualifications and experience. There is good in-house provision for new staff to study for teaching qualifications, but many part-time staff do not take this opportunity. In lessons observed by inspectors, full-time and part-time teachers taught the same proportion of good or better lessons, but part-time staff taught twice as many less-than-satisfactory lessons. Staffing difficulties have been experienced in a few curriculum areas. For example, in construction, there are too few internal verifiers. On foundation programmes and English and modern foreign languages courses, there are high numbers of part-time staff. In health and social care, staff changes and shortages seriously disrupted one course. In all areas of work-based learning, except for agriculture, there are insufficient qualified staff to assess in the workplace.

35. Staff appraisal includes observation of teaching and it is linked to good staff development opportunities. Professional development days are allocated throughout the year. Support staff can access training appropriate for their jobs. Recent training for teachers has emphasised the development of teaching and assessment strategies. The college uses its excellent links with industry to maintain teachers' knowledge of current practice through industrial secondments, for example, to care homes, veterinary practices and leisure centres.

36. The college has been very active and effective in the development of its accommodation. It has a comprehensive accommodation strategy. Good use is made of European funds and partnership arrangements to finance the college's building programme. Developments have recently taken place at several sites, including Stoke Climsland, Saltash and CPR. During the inspection, large new workshops for construction and engineering and a new teaching block were under construction at CPR. The college has also purchased a very substantial new building in St Austell. The two centres in St Austell will be vacated and the college will begin a phased move to the new building in 2004.

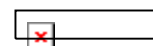
37. The CPR campus is generally good. The large new learning centre at CPR is an excellent facility and there are good new specialist facilities for hairdressing and beauty therapy. There are two sites at St Austell, located about half a mile apart. They contain some good facilities, but generally the sites are dated and do nothing to inspire students. One site has no library. The other comprises a range of buildings erected at different times as needs arose. There is no room to expand on this site and its slope makes it difficult for wheelchair users.

38. The campus at Stoke Climsland provides a very good range of specialist facilities for the land-based sector. This includes a commercial farm, an equine unit, residential accommodation and a recently built block of teaching rooms. At Rosewarne, the college makes use of a former experimental farm to deliver horticulture training and a good range of industrial techniques. The Falmouth campus specialises in marine industries. There are specialist practical facilities for boat building and boats used for marine biology moored in Falmouth Harbour. This site presents difficulties for wheelchair users. The campus at Saltash is adequate and will benefit from new developments due to commence this year.

39. Most classrooms are well decorated and present students with an atmosphere conducive to learning. Many classrooms and corridors contain displays of students' work. Many students are based in the same room for all their teaching. Some classrooms are equipped with data projectors and computers. There are a few temporary classrooms, although these are due to be replaced. The Rosewarne site does not have all the necessary laboratory facilities, so students are transported to

CPR to use laboratories and other specialist facilities. Most learning resource centres are well stocked although, in a few subjects, there is a shortage of specialist texts. Learning centres benefit from a cross-college library catalogue and effective arrangements for inter-library loans. The ratio of students to computers is good, ranging from 3:1 at some sites to 7:1 at others. Information technology (IT) equipment and software is of a high standard and is well maintained. Staff have good access to computers. Access for students with limited mobility is satisfactory, although at some sites wheelchair users cannot use the main entrance. Many buildings have lifts, ramps and appropriate facilities for students with disabilities.

Leadership and management



40. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors work closely together. They effectively managed the merger of St Austell College and Cornwall College in August 2001. Staff felt well informed during the process and are clear about their roles and responsibilities in the new structure. Since the merger, the college has achieved an operating surplus, continued to invest in new buildings and improved quality assurance procedures. In the last three years, overall retention and pass rates have mainly been at or above the national average. Overall student numbers have increased, broadly in line with the college's targets.

41. Governance and strategic leadership are very good. Senior managers and governors set clear strategic objectives. Progress towards achievement of the objectives is closely monitored and reported to the policy and planning committee of the board quarterly. Governors are well informed about the academic and financial performance of the college. They keep in touch with local issues through five college councils linked to the college's main sites. Councils have staff and student representatives and are chaired by a governor. They meet regularly and reports of their meeting are presented to the board. The councils are a necessary and successful method of representative governance. Council members make a vigorous and enthusiastic contribution to the work and development of the college.

42. The dispersed nature of the college has led managers to develop a federal management structure with a high degree of devolved responsibility. College heads, reporting to one of the two deputy chief executives, manage each of the six main sites. The executive adopts a reasonable approach by not seeking to impose uniform management practice across all sites. Courses are generally well managed at each site. Nevertheless, senior managers are not sufficiently proactive in recognising and spreading good teaching and curriculum management across the college. Most curriculum teams at each site operate independently, consequently there is duplication of effort. The college does not have a culture of sharing good teaching and management practice, nor the systems to facilitate it. Students taking the same course on different sites have different experiences and managers' accountability for the quality of provision varies across sites. Since the merger, managers have begun to address issues of consistency, for example, by appointing advisory teachers to carry out lesson observations and work with individuals and course teams to develop teaching skills. The college has also recently appointed 14 cross-college curriculum leaders, covering about 40% of the curriculum, to spread good practice across sites. The role is advisory and not sufficiently senior to ensure that curriculum teams adopt their recommendations. These initiatives have been well received by staff and some benefits have accrued, but it is too early to judge their impact.

43. The college's comprehensive quality assurance arrangements for curriculum areas, franchise activities and support services apply across all sites. Key features include lesson observation, course review, self-assessment, student surveys and staff surveys. The quality assurance cycle takes account of the need to produce reports in time to inform strategic and curriculum planning. Course reviews are carried out termly. They focus on different aspects of the common inspection framework. The resulting action plans pay appropriate attention to improving teaching, learning and achievement, however, many quality assurance procedures are new and have not yet had a significant impact on teaching and learning.

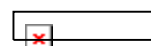
44. Communication across the college is good. The college intranet contains plentiful information, including minutes of meetings and quality improvement materials. A well-presented and detailed monthly newsletter is distributed to all staff. Some college sites also have their own newsletter. At the smaller sites there are weekly meetings to brief all staff. The college management information system is satisfactory. Current developments are designed to make information more accessible to staff. Student achievement data are now reliable, following rigorous action to correct previous problems. At CPR, attendance data are recorded on the management information system. The attendance reports are good, but the effectiveness of the system is reduced because some staff are slow to present their registers for entry on to the system.

45. Financial management is good. The college finance team is well qualified and experienced. In 2001/02, the college overcame the financial difficulties associated with the weak position of St Austell College at the time of the merger. A prudent combination of cost savings and new business initiatives enabled the merged college to generate an operating surplus in its first year. Budgets are devolved to curriculum managers. These managers have a clear understanding of course viability and staff costs. Budget holders have regular review meetings held with a member of the finance team.

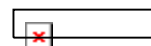
46. The college's main contribution to the promotion of equality of opportunity has been through its extensive provision in local communities. The college has a suitable equal opportunities policy and a race equality policy. The college has complied with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and made an effective response to the requirements of the Special Education Needs Disability Discrimination Act. An equal opportunities committee, chaired by the principal, meets termly. Senior managers and some staff have had equal opportunities training, but this has not yet been extended to all staff. Action plans and targets specifically related to equality of opportunity are not well developed. Although some data are collected on gender, age and ethnicity, it is not used for planning.

47. Work-based learning is managed from three college sites. In agriculture, it is well managed, but aspects of the management of the remaining work-based provision are unsatisfactory. In particular, it is poorly integrated within the college. The links between off-the-job training and assessment in the curriculum areas are inadequate.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Science and mathematics



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

Strengths

- high retention rates and pass rates for GCE A-level subjects
- good teaching

- well-equipped science laboratories
- effective links with schools
- effective use of ILT to support learning.

Weaknesses

- insufficient provision at levels 1 and 2
- low retention rates for GCSE mathematics.

Scope of provision

48. The college provides a broad range of mathematics and science courses at level 3 for students aged 16 to 18 and adults. Full-time students can choose GCE AS and A-level courses in biology, chemistry, physics, environmental science, geology, electronics, science for public understanding, mathematics and further mathematics. GCSE mathematics and GCSE science courses are offered during the day, in the evening and by open learning. Adults are offered access to HE courses in science and technology, and physiotherapy, occupational therapy and related medical disciplines. The science centre at CPR also offers degrees in science related subjects. The BTEC national diploma in forensic science is provided at CPR. There are no other vocational science courses and provision is insufficient in mathematics and science at levels 1 and 2.

Achievement and standards

49. Retention and pass rates on most advanced level science and mathematics courses are good. The pass rates for GCE AS and A-level mathematics are well above the national average for colleges with a similar intake. On GCE A-level geology, all 43 students who completed the course in the last three years were successful. Pass rates for GCE A-level biology, chemistry and physics are consistently above the national average. Pass and retention rates for GCE AS human biology at St Austell fell between 2001 and 2002. The proportion of students achieving high grades is close to the national average for most subjects.

50. Value added analysis shows that most GCE A-level students achieve better results than would be expected on the basis of their GCSE qualifications. Students of mathematics, electronics and geology achieve particularly well. GCSE science and mathematics students achieve pass rates that are consistently above the national average. However, the national average is low and the pass rates are satisfactory at best. GCSE mathematics retention rates are slightly below the national average. Many students fail to recognise the importance of key skills and pass rates for both level 2 and 3 application of number are low.

51. Students work well in lessons and are interested and attentive. The quality of their written work is good. Most GCE A-level students show well-developed mathematical techniques and sound

algebraic skills. In science lessons, students are confident when doing practical work.

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	436	362	465
		% retention	67	64	70
		% pass rate	45	51	48
GCSE science	2	No. of starts	85	84	107
		% retention	71	65	81
		% pass rate	48	58	56
GCE A-level mathematics *	3	No. of starts	98	119	54
		% retention	70	75	100
		% pass rate	94	79	94
GCE A-level biology *	3	No. of starts	67	46	37
		% retention	61	85	100
		% pass rate	88	82	86
GCE A-level chemistry *	3	No. of starts	37	32	21
		% retention	84	81	100
		% pass rate	81	85	100
GCE A-level physics *	3	No. of starts	46	33	21
		% retention	70	76	100
		% pass rate	81	92	90

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

* pass rates for 2000 and 2001 are based on two-year GCE A-level courses; pass rates for 2002 and the number of students enrolled in 2002 are based on one-year GCE A2 courses

Quality of education and training

52. Science and mathematics teaching is good. Lessons are well structured. In the best lessons, teaching activities are suitably varied and include exposition, questions and answers, group work and role play sessions. Questioning is used effectively to check students' progress and understanding and to challenge and extend their thinking. Many teachers make use of interactive whiteboards and laptop computers in practical science lessons. For example, in a human biology lesson at St Austell, the tutor used the interactive whiteboard to introduce thermoregulation. The students then used laptop computers and data loggers in a simulation of heat loss from a body with different coverings.

53. Laboratory activities are well organised. Careful attention is paid to health and safety, with all students wearing laboratory coats and safety glasses for practical work after risk assessment. Teachers relate theory to practical work clearly and effectively. For instance, in a GCE A-level chemistry lesson on electrochemistry, the teacher introduced the theory. The students then constructed their own cells and were able to measure electromotive force under different conditions. The lesson concluded with a discussion of the students' findings and identification of possible sources of experimental and systematic errors.

54. Mathematics teachers give clear and careful explanations. Consolidation and reflection are strong features of lessons. Some teachers enhance learning in mathematics by using computers and graphical calculators effectively. In a few mathematics lessons, the teaching is unimaginative and some students experience difficulty maintaining their concentration.

55. GCE A-level students are assessed regularly. Teachers mark students' work carefully and include solutions and helpful comments. Teachers maintain accurate records of students' progress and regularly inform them of their progress compared with their target grades.

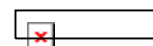
56. Teachers are experienced, well qualified and enthusiastic. Technical staff work effectively to provide equipment for practical lessons. They assist students to develop good skills and working practices. In all lessons, there were good relationships between students and teachers. Students are well motivated and work productively.

57. The departments at St Austell and CPR are well equipped. At CPR, equipment, especially for chemistry and biology, is of a high standard. Mathematics and science rooms are dated but most are well furnished and well kept. Some data logging equipment at CPR is out of date. Facilities and support for adult students are good at the Sedgemoor centre. Students are well supported by resources in the learning centre at CPR and the workshop at St Austell.

Leadership and management

58. The mathematics and science departments at CPR and St Austell are effectively led. Strong links between the two managers enable good practice to be shared across sites. Annually, courses are rigorously reviewed and action plans are produced to improve performance. Teachers are consulted about curriculum policies and feel able to influence decisions. Clear goals are set for staff and students. Better strategies are needed to address the low retention rates for GCSE mathematics. There are good links with local schools. A primary school, six-week master-class science project is run at CPR. It aims to stimulate an early interest in science. A science road show visits local primary schools in and around St Austell. Secondary school children are well informed at both sites via science days and summer schools.

Agriculture and horticulture



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

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

Strengths

- wide range of provision
- effective teaching of floristry and countryside management
- good retention and pass rates on national diploma courses

- high pass rates for work-based learning
- effective use of good resources.

Weaknesses

- some unsatisfactory teaching on horticulture and agricultural mechanics courses
- unsatisfactory attainment in theory lessons
- poor pass rates on the agricultural mechanics part 2 course
- inconsistent initial assessment, tutorial and internal verification practice.

Scope of provision

59. The college offers a wide range of full-time and part-time courses. Courses are mainly based at Stoke and Rosewarne. Work-based learning programmes are available in agriculture, countryside management, horticulture, agricultural mechanics and floristry. This includes provision for foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships. The college offers a wide range of additional qualifications. The take-up rate for these qualifications is high. It also offers a wide range of short courses for industry. At the time of inspection, there were over 1,700 college students and work-based learners.

Achievement and standards

60. Pass rates on the national diplomas in rural studies and agriculture are good. Students on the national diploma in agriculture course work at a level appropriate for the stage of their course, but the attainment of many students aged 16 to 18, particularly in theory lessons, is unsatisfactory. Modern apprentices achieve well. For work-based learners at foundation level in agriculture, crops and livestock, pass and retention rates were over 75% and 85%, respectively, in each of the last three years. Work-based learners on advanced level agriculture courses had pass and retention rates that averaged 73% and 79%, respectively over the same period. Retention rates for modern apprentices on horticulture programmes are satisfactory, averaging 55% between 2000 and 2002. Students on work-based NVQ horticulture programmes achieve well. The pass rate was 77% in 2000 and 63% in 2001. There is good progression to employment and full-time education. Pass rates on the City and Guilds agricultural mechanics part 2 course are poor and pass rates are declining on the glasshouse crop production course.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
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Foundation modern apprenticeship in agriculture, crops and livestock	1	No. of starts	29	50	40
		% retention	97	88	88
		% pass rate	91	77	80
First diploma in rural studies	2	No. of starts	8	8	9
		% retention	100	75	100
		% pass rate	100	83	100
Glasshouse crop production	2	No. of starts	115	202	157
		% retention	97	99	90
		% pass rate	100	97	81
NVQ environment and conservation	2	No. of starts	101	79	89
		% retention	63	54	64
		% pass rate	64	49	56
City and Guilds agricultural mechanics part 2	2	No. of starts	21	19	20
		% retention	100	89	85
		% pass rate	48	29	47
General examination in horticulture	2	No. of starts	55	68	67
		% retention	60	60	76
		% pass rate	44	79	93
National diploma in rural studies	3	No. of starts	8	15	12
		% retention	88	73	92
		% pass rate	100	100	100

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

Quality of education and training

61. Teaching is good in floristry and countryside management. Floristry teachers at Rosewarne use a wide range of techniques to stimulate students' interest, enabling them to participate fully and produce good work. In a practical NVQ environment and conservation lesson on brushcutters, students were involved from the outset in tasks relating to both maintenance and operation. There is some uninspiring teaching of horticulture, especially by part-time staff. For example, in a lesson on maintaining machinery at Rosewarne, students spent the first hour recapping previous work. Risk assessments are not routinely integrated into lessons, which sometimes presents a health and safety risk. The link between vocational teaching and key skills is weak on full-time courses at Stoke Climsland, but key skills are well integrated into the agricultural mechanics course at Rosewarne. There are insufficient links between the on-the-job and off-the-job training of work-based learners. Off-the-job sessions do not enable the more able learners to progress at an appropriate rate.

62. Effective use is made of farm, nursery and estate resources on all sites, with students much involved in project work on and off college sites. For example, NVQ environment and conservation students at Wadebridge have produced good work and created good community links through the Pentreath Point project. There is a good range of opportunities for students to develop skills and knowledge through work placements.

63. Staff have appropriate qualifications and experience and the use of part-time agriculture staff maintains the excellent links with industry. However, some new and part-time staff are given insufficient guidance and support to help them undertake their teaching duties. The learning resource centre at Stoke Climsland is well stocked and managed, but at Rosewarne there is a

shortage of some horticulture books. Resources for off-the-job training are adequate.

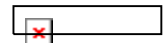
64. Assessment arrangements on college courses are satisfactory overall. Tutors effectively monitor students' progress. However, internal verification is inconsistent. There is sometimes poor correlation between grading criteria and the grade awarded by assessors on horticultural courses at Rosewarne. Feedback to students on marked work is constructive at Stoke Climsland, but often poor at Rosewarne. Assessment of learners on work-based programmes is satisfactory. Learners are visited regularly. Cameras are used effectively by assessors and by some learners to record evidence. Assessors record competencies achieved but do not fully describe the circumstances of the assessment. Often, the evidence of competence is insufficiently diverse or thorough, and there is not enough evidence of underpinning knowledge.

65. Individuals on work-based programmes receive good support from college staff. Students on college-based courses receive good pre-enrolment advice and a comprehensive induction. However, initial assessment and subsequent tutorial support of full-time students, for example, in relation to personal and social issues, are inconsistent. Tutorial support for some adult students is unsatisfactory.

Leadership and management

66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear management structure for work-based learning. There is effective use of management information to monitor students' progress, but internal verification is concentrated too near to the end of programmes. Staff are consulted about strategic and operational planning, but course teams play little part in the setting of targets for recruitment, retention and achievement. Programme files are well structured and well maintained. There is too little promotion of equal opportunities and some staff do not understand issues of diversity.

Equine and animal care



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

Strengths

- good achievements on equine and animal care courses
- effective teaching by well qualified staff
- good assessment practice on diploma and certificate courses
- good tutorial support for students
- comprehensive range of courses at all levels.

Weaknesses

- limited small animal practical teaching resources
- unsatisfactory management of animal care provision at Stoke Climsland
- some unsatisfactory assessment and internal verification of NVQs
- unsatisfactory achievement of key skills.

Scope of provision

67. A wide range of courses is offered in animal care and equine studies at Stoke Climsland, Rosewarne, CPR and Newquay. There are over 150 students on animal care courses, mostly aged 16 to 18, and over 70 students on equine courses. Courses are available at all levels. A vocational studies programme is offered for entry level students and there are full-time and part-time options at level 1 for either NVQ animal care or a college certificate. Level 2 courses include first diplomas in animal care and equine studies and a national certificate in horse management. Level 3 courses include a national diploma in horse management at Stoke Climsland and a national diploma in animal management at Rosewarne and Newquay. Over 50 students are on work-based training courses for both equine and animal care qualifications, including 24 veterinary nursing students from practices throughout Cornwall.

Achievement and standards

68. Achievements on diploma and certificate courses in equine studies and animal care are good. Retention rates are close to or above the national average. In 2002, the retention rate on the national diploma in animal management course was 26 percentage points above the national average. Attendance at lessons observed by inspectors was good, at 93%. Many students on equine courses achieve additional British Horse Society (BHS) qualifications. Work experience is used effectively to improve the skills of students in both equine and animal care. There are some unsatisfactory achievements on key skills courses. Veterinary nursing pass rates were unsatisfactory in 2000 and 2001, but improved significantly in 2002.

A sample of retention and pass rates in equine and animal care, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ animal care	1	No. of starts	42	26	27
		% retention	88	92	89
		% pass rate	81	33	83
BHS horse knowledge and riding	1	No. of starts	16	33	34
		% retention	94	76	79

		% pass rate	67	50	96
First diploma animal care	2	No. of starts	15	20	25
		% retention	100	90	80
		% pass rate	80	83	90
City and Guilds national certificate in animal care	2	No. of starts	13	15	11
		% retention	83	100	90
		% pass rate	91	53	100
National diploma in animal management	3	No. of starts	14	19	26
		% retention	79	79	96
		% pass rate	36	93	92
National diploma in horse management	3	No. of starts	19	16	8
		% retention	58	81	63
		% pass rate	91	92	100

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

Quality of education and training

69. Teaching of theoretical principles and practical skills is good. Riding tuition is effective. Students ride at least four times each week. Feedback following riding tuition is prompt and effective. A few teachers have inappropriate teaching styles, ineffective demonstration and questioning technique, or poor time management. Teachers link theoretical and practical work well. Good use is made of their links with industry to enhance the students' experience.

70. There are excellent and extensive equine facilities at Stoke Climsland. There are sufficient good-quality horses for teaching purposes. A grading system is used to match horses to students for riding lessons. Resources at Rosewarne and Newquay are satisfactory for animal care. There is a good range of animals and valuable links with Newquay Zoo and other animal and aquatic centres. The equine unit at Stoke Climsland and the animal care facilities at Rosewarne are well managed. The college also has a centre for small and large animals at Feadon Farm, three miles from Rosewarne. Some practical teaching areas for small animal work are too small and there is a lack of examination table provision. Low numbers of some animals restrict students' opportunities for practice.

71. Assessment practice is effective and efficient on certificate and diploma courses. It includes rigorous use of internal verification to improve the quality of students' work. Feedback on assessment is of a high standard, including specific ways in which students can improve their work. Students praise and value support from teachers. There is some unsatisfactory assessment and internal verification of NVQs. Documentary evidence records students' achievements but sometimes does not record the assessment activity. Internal verifiers place insufficient emphasis on the observation of assessment practice. Portfolios for NVQ animal care courses are good. There is evidence of careful monitoring of progress, but an over emphasis on internal verification of portfolio evidence at the expense of practical work.

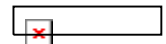
72. The range of courses is comprehensive. It includes provision at entry level for animal care students and at level 1 for both animal care and equine students. Progression is effectively managed and successful at Rosewarne and Newquay and for equine students at Stoke Climsland, but opportunities for students of animal care at Stoke Climsland are limited. Students on equine courses gain valuable experience of realistic working environments through duties in the college equine yard and local work placements. An insufficient number of additional animal care qualifications is available to students, but the range is being extended. Evening provision in animal care is underdeveloped, with the exception of dog grooming.

73. The quality of support and guidance given to students is high and much appreciated by students. Tutorials are effectively used for setting targets and monitoring progress as well as providing pastoral support. Systems for recording and tracking progress are sound.

Leadership and management

74. Leadership and management of equine courses are good. Animal care provision is led and managed well at Rosewarne, CPR and Newquay but the management of animal care provision at the Stoke Climsland site is unsatisfactory. Management of resources is effective in providing a good working environment for students. Communication between Rosewarne, CPR and Newquay is good. Staff are well qualified and make good use of staff development activities, including opportunities to take teacher training qualifications.

Construction



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

Strengths

- good pass rates on NVQ level 3 plumbing and national diploma in built environment courses
- improving and good retention rates on most courses
- good teaching in practical lessons
- responsiveness to local community and industry needs.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on level 1 courses
- insufficient checks on students' learning in theory lessons
- too many staff changes.

Scope of provision

75. The college offers a broad range of construction courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels, including craft and technician programmes. Along with craft qualifications in bricklaying, wood occupations, electrical installation, plumbing and painting and decorating, there is specialist provision in furniture craft, construction, and plant and domestic gas safety. Construction craft courses are provided at CPR and St Austell and painting, decorating and furniture craft is offered at CPR. Some provision is designed to meet specific needs in the local community. For example, the 'Construction Cornwall' project provides opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to attend college courses and work experience placements on which they are carefully monitored. There are 205 students aged 16 to 18, mainly following full-time courses, and 521 students studying on part-time day or evening courses. In addition, there are over 350 students on work-based learning programmes. The inspection did not include observation of work-based learning.

Achievement and standards

76. Pass and retention rates on plumbing courses and the national diploma course in the built environment are good. Retention rates on most courses improved significantly in 2001; they are now at or above national averages. However, pass rates on level 1 courses are unsatisfactory. For trowel occupations, they are almost 45 percentage points below the national average, while for wood occupations, they are 30 percentage points below the national average. Pass rates are also poor on NVQ level 2 bricklaying and on the advanced and foundation modern apprenticeship programmes.

77. The standard of students' practical work in electrical, plumbing, furniture and carpentry are good. For example, plumbing evening-class students were able to produce lead welds that were neat and free from defects after relatively little instruction. In carpentry, level 1 students accurately set out, measured, cut and produced door frames to a standard required by industry. Staff ensure that time is given to the production of students' portfolios. The students take pride in producing portfolios with a clear index of the evidence, which is mapped against industry standards. In a significant minority of theory lessons, students' drawing skills were underdeveloped and they could not produce the necessary annotated sketches. For example, in a foundation plumbing lesson, students were unable to produce a basic line diagram of a domestic hot water system.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ trowel occupations	1	No. of starts	54	33	69
		% retention	80	85	74
		% pass rate	63	56	29
NVQ wood occupations	1	No. of starts	110	71	78
		% retention	75	73	82
		% pass rate	93	80	41
NVQ plumbing	2	No. of starts	15	20	27
		% retention	73	75	93
		% pass rate	91	100	72
NVQ bricklaying	2	No. of starts	36	19	43
		% retention	58	47	89
		% pass rate	52	38	52
NVQ carpentry and	2	No. of starts	42	26	30

joinery		% retention	40	35	73
		% pass rate	25	44	77
NVQ wood occupations	3	No. of starts	22	19	21
		% retention	91	84	86
		% pass rate	75	63	72

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

* course not running

Quality of education and training

78. All teaching in practical electrical installation lessons is good or better. Most practical teaching is good. In these lessons, teachers challenge and inspire students. Students respond enthusiastically and make good progress. For example, in a carpentry lesson, first-year students, returning from a six-week work experience block, were required to construct a door frame. The teacher provided a neat, well-annotated drawing and mark scheme, supplemented with a completed product. The teacher capably assisted students in their construction tasks. In an electrical practical lesson, the teacher effectively observed all students as they fixed lighting and power circuits to wall surfaces. Students' answers to searching questions were clear and accurate. The lesson was supported with clear workbooks outlining practical tasks, standards to be achieved and related job knowledge. Health and safety are given high priority and the use of personal protective equipment is strictly enforced.

79. The teaching in most theory lessons is satisfactory. However, in some lessons, there are insufficient checks on learning. In one lesson, the teacher presented details of flat roof construction but did not check the students' understanding of assembly methods. Students are given insufficient preparation for key skills tests. They sit the tests too early in their courses and students returning from work experience are not given revision lessons before taking the tests. In both theory and practical lesson on both sites, students' behaviour is good. Students arrive on time and settle quickly into their studies. However, attendance at lessons during the inspection week was unsatisfactory, at 68%.

80. Teachers possess appropriate qualifications and vocational experience. New teachers are required to gain a teaching qualification during their first year of appointment. Craft workshops at St Austell are good. Relatively new facilities provide covered areas for construction activities. At CPR, the workshops are satisfactory. However, at the time of the inspection, substantial new construction workshops were being built on the site. All workshops have adequate supplies of materials and equipment for students' use.

81. Assessment on technician and electrical installation courses is fair and rigorous. Work is thoroughly assessed and marked and constructive feedback is given. On occasions, in other craft areas, teachers do not provide written advice to clarify what students need to do to achieve their aims.

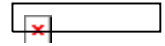
82. Most tutorial support for students is effective. In painting and decorating, a vocational study support tutor, using individual learning plans, works with students on a daily basis, recording actions and monitoring progress in both theory and practical lessons. Target setting in tutorials is often not effective. It does not assist the students to progress because no realistic, progressive, measurable actions are recorded.

Leadership and management

83. Construction provision is well managed on both college sites and is highly responsive to community and local industry needs. Joint meetings involving both college managers, Cornwall

Training Services and the Construction Industry Training Board assist curriculum planning. For example, a craft mason scheme developed at St Austell is now provided at CPR, meeting the needs of local students and employers. Growth in enrolments has led to there being too few staff to teach courses. On some programmes, significant staff changes have adversely affected the quality of teaching.

Business studies



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

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

Strengths

- much good teaching on courses for adults
- good achievements on level 4 NVQ courses
- good support for students and work-based learners
- good learning resources.

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on NVQ business administration level 2 in 2002
- low and declining retention and pass rates on foundation modern apprenticeships
- weak co-ordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training for work-based learners
- weak curriculum management.

Scope of provision

84. At the time of inspection, there were over 2,400 students enrolled on business studies courses, of whom around one-quarter was aged 16 to 18. At most college sites, there is a broad range of provision at levels 2 and 3, but too few courses are offered at level 1. In addition, at St Austell, there are no vocational alternatives to GCE A-level business studies. Consequently, some students are enrolled on courses that do not meet their aspirations. The range of professional qualifications is also limited, especially in marketing, personnel management and management accounting. Currently, some 79 work-based learners are enrolled on modern apprenticeships in administration and accounting. The college also delivers a 'modern apprenticeship for all' programme, which includes NVQ courses in management.

Achievement and standards

85. Pass rates on most courses are at or above national averages. In 2002, management and accounting pass rates were significantly above the national averages. However, pass rates on NVQ accounting level 2 and 3 courses declined between 2001 and 2002. The college has identified the reason for this and is taking appropriate action. Retention rates on NVQ administration level 2 and GCE AS business studies are significantly below national averages. Many adult students successfully develop their confidence and skills. This enhances their career and HE prospects. Retention and pass rates on advanced modern apprenticeships are generally satisfactory. On foundation modern apprenticeship programmes, retention and pass rates are low and declining.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ administration	2	No. of starts	32	56	47
		% retention	88	86	57
		% pass rate	64	88	84
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	74	40	81
		% retention	85	93	88
		% pass rate	80	95	64
NVQ administration	3	No. of starts	18	32	26
		% retention	83	94	84
		% pass rate	67	73	92
GCE A-level business studies *	3	No. of starts	85	61	43
		% retention	58	67	98
		% pass rate	73	93	93
GCE AS business studies	3	No. of starts	**	70	45
		% retention	**	91	71
		% pass rate	**	91	84
Diploma in medical secretarial studies	3	No. of starts	28	28	32
		% retention	93	93	83
		% pass rate	73	87	73
NVQ accounting	4	No. of starts	47	31	42
		% retention	100	90	93
		% pass rate	44	100	91
NVQ management	4	No. of starts	74	25	22
		% retention	89	100	82

		% pass rate	95	100	100
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Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

* pass rates for 2000 and 2001 are based on two-year GCE A-level courses. Pass rates for 2002 and the number of students enrolled in 2002 are based on one-year A2 courses

** course not running

Quality of education and training

86. A good rapport between staff and students promotes effective learning in the majority of lessons. Teachers generally prepare their lessons well but, in some theory lessons, insufficient attention is paid to the different needs of individuals. There is much good teaching, particularly on adult courses. In the better lessons, teachers effectively promote discussions. Some teaching is imaginative. For example, in a teacher education lesson, students made hats from various materials. In the following lesson, the teacher skilfully used the activity to analyse a key learning theory. In a business administration lesson, the teacher used peer assessment and role play to develop students' skills in managing interviews.

87. Standards of teaching are not consistent across all sites. At St Austell, there is little teaching that is good or better and there is a significant minority of unsatisfactory lessons. In many lessons, teachers do not meet the needs and interests of all the students. In a business lesson, the teacher explained concepts to students without involving them or encouraging them to think for themselves. There is little use of ILT in lessons. Interactive whiteboards are available in many classrooms, but staff do not use them.

88. The standard of teaching accommodation is good, but sometimes open plan areas and computer rooms are inappropriately used for formal teaching. Students' work and other displays provide a vocational context for base rooms. Students make effective use of computers and library resources in their assignment work. Staff are generally well qualified and have appropriate vocational experience.

89. Staff regularly set and mark classwork and homework. Marked work is returned promptly. Detailed feedback helps students to improve their performance. Meticulous progress records enable individual target setting to be effective. However, internal verification is not carried out as planned on some courses. Standardisation of the assessed work of NVQ students is not effective. Academic and pastoral support for students is good. The preparation of individual learning plans involves students and employers, where appropriate. Additional support needs are identified accurately through initial assessment. Both full-time and part-time students make good use of the additional support provided.

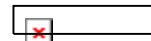
90. Work-based learning in business does not satisfy the needs of learners, although the liaison officers work effectively to support and guide the trainees. Although most learners are employed, there is no systematic evaluation of their jobs to ensure that there are sufficient opportunities to achieve their NVQ competences. Links between on-the-job and off-the-job training are often ineffective and many employers are unaware of the content of college-based training. Training of administration leading to NVQs is based on the college year, with no training over the summer. Arrangements for the delivery of key skills are unsatisfactory. For example, accounting trainees did not meet their key skills tutor during their first term.

Leadership and management

91. Course teams meet regularly to deal with student issues and administrative matters. Across the sites, there is not consistent satisfactory curriculum management. Unsatisfactory aspects of management include course reviews that lack rigour and self-assessment that fails to identify significant weaknesses. Resulting action plans are not effective in raising standards. A significant number of courses do not have handbooks and students are not sufficiently aware, at the start of

their courses, of what they will be studying or what will be required of them.

Information and communications technology



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

Strengths

- high pass rates on GNVQ intermediate ICT
- good teaching of well-motivated adult students
- extensive range of community provision
- good learning resources.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on City and Guilds computer applications courses
- narrow range of teaching methods on full-time courses
- ineffective initial assessment to guide individual learning plans.

Scope of provision

92. The college offers a wide range of courses from entry level to level 4 for students aged 16 to 18 and for adults. Full-time provision for school leavers includes GNVQ intermediate and Advanced Vocational Certification of Education (AVCE) ICT, GCE A-level computing and ICT, and a national diploma for IT practitioners. However, no GCE A-level programmes are offered at Saltash or Falmouth. The offer to students aged 16 to 18 provides appropriate progression routes to employment or HE. There are few progression opportunities for adults, because courses are mainly at levels 1 and 2. Most courses for adults are taught in the college's wide network of learning shops and community venues. The 13 learning shops are designed to appeal to adults and they are well sited in town centres across Cornwall and in Plymouth.

Achievement and standards

93. Retention and pass rates for ICT are uneven. Pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate course are good and consistently above the national average. The national diploma in computer studies has unsatisfactory retention rates, but there were good pass rates in 2001 and 2002. Retention rates on the City and Guilds courses in computer applications are poor. Many adult students who enrol on this course do not complete the full qualification. The punctuality and attendance of full-time students is good.

94. The standard of students' work is good. Most students demonstrate confidence and competence in their use of ICT. Many students develop good practical skills. Adult students are enthusiastic about their learning. Many adults develop skills in using word processing, databases, spreadsheets or e-mail. This improves their opportunities for employment. For example, a local builder attending a learning shop was developing a client database and using e-mail to send quotations. In another lesson, retired adults were competently using the Internet for e-mail and research. One student had managed to access American immigration records to trace a relative who had emigrated in 1914.

A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds certificate in computer applications	1	No. of starts	1,102	855	780
		% retention	20	30	40
		% pass rate	89	96	85
Computer literacy and information technology (one year)	1	No. of starts	356	1,079	1,030
		% retention	84	89	83
		% pass rate	79	67	70
Integrated business technology	2	No. of starts	518	526	415
		% retention	90	89	87
		% pass rate	77	52	52
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	52	27	11
		% retention	70	81	82
		% pass rate	76	76	89
GNVQ IT / AVCE advanced IT *	3	No. of starts	23	28	43
		% retention	64	76	74
		% pass rate	83	81	69
National diploma in computer studies	3	No. of starts	29	31	43
		% retention	58	77	50
		% pass rate	57	96	100
GCE AS ICT	3	No. of starts	**	48	46
		% retention	**	86	76
		% pass rate	**	84	74

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

* GNVQ IT course changed to AVCE advanced IT in 2002

** course not running

Quality of education and training

95. There is some good teaching but none is outstanding. Most lessons plans are adequate, but some fail to include tasks that facilitate the more able students to develop at an appropriate rate. In many lessons for full-time students, teachers use their up-to-date commercial knowledge to make lessons interesting. There are good, detailed assignments and exemplar material. Teachers give effective individual support. A narrow range of teaching techniques are used. There is little that is innovative or inspirational and opportunities are missed to involve students in group work. Teachers in the learning shops effectively help adults to develop their ICT skills. They circulate among the students, helping and encouraging them and intervening when difficulties are encountered.

96. Tutors regularly set and mark work. Assignments are clear, relevant and of an appropriate standard. They include guidance on development of key skills. Grading criteria are clear and informative. Tutors provide good feedback, commenting on students' presentation and communication skills as well as technical content. Portfolios of work are well organised and contain evidence of summative assessments, but little evidence of the effective use of formative assessment.

97. The learning support needs of full-time students are assessed on entry and support is provided where necessary. However, neither initial assessment nor entry qualifications are used effectively to promote individual target setting or to inform the differentiation of activities in lessons. In the learning shops, systems for the tracking and reviewing students' progress are underdeveloped. Arrangements are in place to meet the particular needs of some students. For example, visually impaired students have access to modified keyboards, textured images of screens and specialised software to enlarge characters.

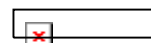
98. There are good ICT hardware resources at all sites. The designation of the college as a Centre of Vocational Excellence has supported the development of ICT resources. The reliable ICT systems are well supported by technical staff. The range of software and programming languages used is generally good, but some software used at Saltash is dated. Access to the Internet is very good and well used by students. All learning shops provide convenient good study facilities. Most provide good access for students with restricted mobility. The majority of the learning materials are of good quality. However, some materials used in the learning shops are inferior to materials used for the same courses on college sites.

99. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff and an extensive staff development programme, including work-shadowing opportunities, to enable staff to keep up-to-date. However, staff development has not placed enough emphasis on improving teaching.

Leadership and management

100. Management of ICT courses is satisfactory. Quality assurance procedures, including internal verification, are well established. There are regular team meetings and teachers are fully involved in the self-assessment process, but insufficient attention is given to reviewing teaching and learning and limited use is made of feedback from students. Schemes of work often fail to identify an appropriate range of teaching activities. A high priority is given to supporting the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Hospitality and catering



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

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

Strengths

- good achievement on most programmes
- good teaching and learning of adults
- effective integration in lessons of students on different courses
- good use of practical resources to develop sound professional practice.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates in 2002
- poor pass rates for work-based learning
- incomplete application of the quality assurance processes.

Scope of provision

101. Cornwall College has a wide range of provision for hospitality and catering. The CPR and St Austell sites provide full-time and part-time craft cookery and food service courses at level 2 and a full-time hospitality studies programme at level 3. In addition, advanced craft hotel reception, bakery and a supervisory programme for those employed in the industry are provided at CPR. Very few part-time courses are run for adult students. Work-based programmes using the modern apprentice framework involve trainees from across the county. The college also provides food hygiene and licenced trade courses. At the time of the inspection, there were over 500 enrolments on full-time and part-time courses and over 150 work-based learners.

Achievement and standards

102. Retention rates have fluctuated in recent years. In 2002, retention rates on most college programmes fell, by up to 15 percentage points, from levels previously above the national average. On all courses, except NVQ level 1 food preparation and cookery, retention rates are significantly below the national average. This decline has been recognised and action taken has improved retention in 2002/03. Pass rates are good. With the exception of the NVQ level 2 programmes in food preparation and cookery, and hotel reception, pass rates in 2002 were more than 10 percentage points above national averages.

103. Students on craft courses generally achieve good standards, although some are taken through

their programmes too quickly and fail to develop an adequate knowledge, understanding and experience of food commodities and dishes. The quality of advanced craft work is high. Students have a good success record in catering and bakery competition work. Supervisory level students make excellent contributions in class, often drawing productively on their industrial experience. The written work of students is appropriate to the level of their programme.

104. Overall, retention rates of work-based learners are satisfactory; approximately 50% of learners finish their training course. The proportion that achieves the full award is low, at between 10% and 20% of starters.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ food preparation and cooking	2	No. of starts	43	72	75
		% retention	77	81	55
		% pass rate	64	89	66
NVQ serving food and drink	2	No. of starts	112	33	58
		% retention	70	76	61
		% pass rate	64	68	88
NVQ hotel reception	2	No. of starts	13	15	13
		% retention	80	93	67
		% pass rate	100	92	25
NVQ craft bakery	2	No. of starts	13	15	13
		% retention	38	93	53
		% pass rate	100	92	90
NVQ food preparation and cooking	3	No. of starts	22	25	22
		% retention	64	96	45
		% pass rate	100	85	90
BTEC national diploma in hospitality	3	No. of starts	23	23	22
		% retention	64	87	67
		% pass rate	93	93	93

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

Quality of education and training

105. Adults experience good teaching with high standards being set by their teachers. An appropriate range of learning activities is conducted at a pace typical of work in the industry. The sharing of students' industrial experience makes learning relevant to their employment. In some lessons for students aged 16 to 18, teachers fail to explain the learning objectives. In some practical kitchen and restaurant sessions, it is not made clear what individual students should concentrate on. The students in practical lessons are taught good professional standards and strong emphasis is placed on health, safety and hygiene. Teachers produce good learning materials but in some lessons these are not used effectively. Consequently, students do not develop independent research and application skills. In many lessons, students with different abilities who are pursuing different qualifications are well integrated. At St Austell, students with learning difficulties benefit from the good discrete provision at levels 1 and 2 and from the opportunities to work with students on other courses.

106. The range of food production, bakery and food service work environments provides students with good industrial experience and realistic assessment opportunities. However, some kitchen equipment needs updating or repair. At St Austell, there are inadequate changing and showering facilities for students. The mix of full-time and part-time teachers provides a productive balance that ensures stable course management together with the opportunity for students to gain knowledge of current industrial practice.

107. The management of assessment is good. Students have a clear idea of the assessment pattern for their course and the assessment criteria. This enables them to ask tutors for practical assessment and helps maintain appropriate pace through their award. However, initial assessment does not always clearly identify the additional support needs of students and internal verification on some courses has been less than satisfactory, due to an insufficient number of qualified verifiers.

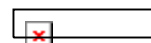
108. All students have regular individual tutorials every five or six weeks. In some cases, these helpfully assess progress and set targets for future work. Other tutorials are not effective. There is good pastoral support for students. Contact is maintained with parents to encourage regular attendance and punctuality. Good support is provided for identified individual learning needs, including support workers who assist in classrooms and practical areas. Liaison officers provide employers and work-based learners with good initial information and encourage candidates to consider the best form of training from the good choice the college offers. All trainees have well-documented regular reviews that involve their employers.

Leadership and management

109. The arrangements for leading and managing the curriculum and the operational aspects of hospitality courses are understood by staff and generally work effectively. Programme managers fulfil their day-to-day role effectively, but quality improvement relies mainly on informal action. Classroom observations and appraisal are not clearly linked to staff development, and action points identified in programme reviews and self-assessment are not rigorously implemented, monitored and evaluated.

110. The two work-based learning programmes managed from CPR and St Austell are significantly different, but operate within the same sound management framework provided by the college training unit. At CPR, most trainees attend college once a week for training and assessment, but the start dates for cookery are inflexible and restricted to twice a year. At St Austell, most trainees are assessed in the workplace, can start at any time, but have no off-the-job training and are provided with few learning resources.

Sport, leisure and tourism



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

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

Strengths

- good pass rates on NVQ level 2 sport and recreation, GCE AS and GNVQ intermediate courses
- good facilities and resources

- very good provision and take-up of additional qualifications and enrichment opportunities
- well-developed partnerships with industry and local schools.

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for foundation modern apprentices
- unsatisfactory pass rates on some part-time courses
- too many poorly structured or dull lessons
- insufficient provision at entry and foundation levels.

Scope of provision

111. Sport, leisure and travel full-time provision includes a GNVQ intermediate course in leisure and tourism, AVCE courses in leisure and recreation and travel and tourism, a BTEC national diploma in sports studies and GCE A levels in sports, games and recreation and physical education. NVQs in sport, recreation, travel services and activity leadership are offered. Entry and foundation level courses are not available. A wide range of travel, sports and coaching courses are provided for both part-time and full-time students. Students also participate in team games and outdoor activities including canoeing, rock climbing and sailing. The college has recruited approximately 40 foundation modern apprentices in activity leadership, based at outdoor activity centres throughout Cornwall.

Achievement and standards

112. Pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism, GCE AS sport, games and recreation and GCE A-level physical education courses are good. In 2002, the pass rates on these three courses were 88%, 97% and 100%, respectively. Pass rates on the NVQ level 2 in sport, recreation and allied occupations are also above the national average. Pass rates on the AVCE courses in leisure and recreation and travel and tourism are satisfactory. Pass rates on part-time courses range from outstanding to poor. For example, in 2002, the Association of British Travel Agents Certificate (ABTAC) advanced certificate pass rate was 100%, but the higher sports leader award pass rate was 26%. Retention rates are good on GCE AS and A-level courses and satisfactory on the GNVQ intermediate course and on NVQ programmes in sport, recreation and allied occupations. Retention rates are consistently unsatisfactory on the NVQ level 2 travel services course. Pass rates for the foundation modern apprenticeship, in 2002, were poor. Of the 40 students who enrolled on the programme, 14 successfully completed all aspects of the programme within the planned time.

113. Students' attendance is good and was at 89% in lessons observed by inspectors. Students are well motivated. Most work is well presented and of a high standard. Students use ICT well and their work contains some good examples of word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets and databases. During the inspection, students demonstrated good research skills and worked effectively on their own and in groups. Students on the GCE AS sports and BTEC national diploma in sport courses demonstrate good practical and coaching skills and the ability to relate practice to theory. Students on the AVCE travel and tourism course worked well together, organising a complex event. Progression rates are good. In 2002, all AVCE students progressed to HE or employment related to their course.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	34	23	25
		% retention	90	82	67
		% pass rate	78	67	88
NVQ sport, recreation and allied occupation	2	No. of starts	20	13	29
		% retention	90	77	78
		% pass rate	89	75	67
GCE AS sport, games and recreation	3	No. of starts	*	21	36
		% retention	*	72	81
		% pass rate	*	100	97
AVCE leisure and recreation	3	No. of starts	*	*	36
		% retention	*	*	76
		% pass rate	*	*	88
AVCE travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	*	*	50
		% retention	*	*	59
		% pass rate	*	*	81

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

* course not running

Quality of education and training

114. Most teaching is satisfactory or good. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of their students who work productively on demanding tasks that enable them to develop a range of skills, including planning, analysis, evaluation and group working. For example, students on the BTEC national diploma in sports science planned, delivered and evaluated a successful volleyball coaching session to primary school children. In a significant minority of lessons, students were not sufficiently involved. In these lessons, there was an over-reliance on copying notes and questioning was not used effectively to check students' understanding. Other teaching weaknesses include poorly structured lessons, unclear objectives, slow pace and failure to take into account the different aptitudes of students. On full-time courses, teachers' assessment is well planned and thorough. Feedback to students explains how they can improve. However, insufficient attention is paid to poor grammar and spelling.

115. Teachers are experienced and well qualified. They have established very good links with industry. Collaboration has enhanced the vocational relevance of sport, leisure and tourism courses through sponsorship of student awards, extensive work experience opportunities, provision of

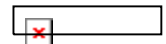
resources, guest speakers and numerous educational visits. Students have good access to ICT and use it competently. Classrooms contain displays of vocational materials and students' work. Resources, facilities and equipment are good. The libraries contain up-to-date books and periodicals. Sports halls, gymnasiums and fitness suites are well equipped. Indoor and outdoor climbing walls are of industry standard, and good use is made of the local countryside for outdoor activities.

116. Good individual learning plans ensure that training programmes for work-based learners' meet the needs of individuals. Well-planned training includes an intensive six-week programme to prepare students for employment. This includes, for example, lifesaving training, climbing instruction, kayaking and map exercises. Instructors are experienced in on-the-job training and make accurate assessments of students' learning needs. Training is structured to cater for different levels of ability, but training in key skills is inadequate. Communication with employers is good and college staff make regular visits to review students' progress. However, there is insufficient written feedback to work-based learners on assessments of their performance, knowledge and understanding.

Leadership and management

117. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Course teams on each site work well together but there are no structures in place to share good practice between sites. Team meetings are well documented, but infrequent. Quality assurance procedures are not embedded into routine course management but under-performing courses are identified and corrective action is taken improve the situation. Managers have taken action to improve the pass rates of work-based learners. In particular, they will be assessed and sit key skills tests early in the programme.

Health, social care and public services



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

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

Strengths

- high pass rates on most courses
- effective integration of theory and practice in early years lessons
- high quality public services provision
- wide range of part-time programmes for adults.

Weaknesses

- teaching not fully meeting individuals' needs
- slow achievement by work-based learners
- declining retention rates on many courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice across centres
- failure to resolve staffing difficulties.

Scope of provision

118. There is a wide range of provision in health, social care and childcare, from pre-foundation to level 4 and access to HE. Full-time programmes include the BTEC first diplomas in care and early years, and national diplomas in care, early years and health studies. Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) childcare and education programmes are offered at foundation, certificate and diploma levels. There are 196 public services students on BTEC first or national diplomas. These students also achieve a wide range of additional qualifications. A wide range of part-time courses in counselling, social care practice, care management, childminding, first aid and effective parenting are taught at main college centres and in many community venues. There are foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships leading to NVQs in care and early years care and education. The college also offers courses at many community venues. It is a national provider of the national sheltered housing certificate. This is delivered across England through distance learning with tutorial support.

Achievement and standards

119. There is good achievement on many courses for adults. For example, in 2002, on the level 3 developing childminder practice course, there were 100% retention and pass rates. Retention and pass rates on the national sheltered housing certificate course are good, both were above 85% in 2001 and 2002. Pass rates on full-time courses are uneven. The low number of students taking the GNVQ foundation course in health and social care all passed in both 2001 and 2002. The first diploma pass rate of 95% in 2002 is good, but the pass rate on the national diploma in early years fell significantly in 2002, to an unsatisfactory 62%. Pass rates on both public services courses were below the national average in 2002. Overall retention rates are satisfactory but there are significant fluctuations between courses. On many courses, retention rates are declining.

120. The quality of students' displays and craft activities on early years courses is of a very high standard. Their work shows imagination, careful thought and good practical skills. Skills developed in lessons are used on work placements. Public services students develop their discipline and excellent teamwork and leadership skills. Work-based learners are too slow to achieve NVQs in care and in childcare. Only 12 learners have completed their advanced modern apprenticeship frameworks since 2000.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
BTEC first diploma in caring	2	No. of starts	20	77	66
		% retention	60	81	68
		% pass rate	92	78	95
Certificate in counselling	2	No. of starts	26	17	12
		% retention	85	100	75
		% pass rate	100	100	89
BTEC first diploma in public services	2	No. of starts	58	68	57
		% retention	83	81	81
		% pass rate	83	78	70
BTEC national diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	19	30	78
		% retention	95	90	80
		% pass rate	89	85	62
National sheltered housing certificate	3	No. of starts	*	136	206
		% retention	*	99	94
		% pass rate	*	89	83
BTEC national diploma in public services	3	No. of starts	65	59	60
		% retention	48	78	57
		% pass rate	82	83	69

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

* course not running

Quality of education and training

121. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Detailed planning of varied learning activities encourages participation and learning. In these lessons, attainment is good. Students discuss current issues confidently. In one lesson, students researched moral issues effectively and put forward valid arguments. Most work is produced to a high standard using a range of ICT skills. Many students have developed their self-esteem at the college. There are examples of well-presented handouts. Good work packs linked to NVQ units are used for work-based learners in care and childcare. The workbooks for the national sheltered housing certificate are well written and informative. They provide guidance that is clear and relevant to industry. The range of activities in some care and early years lessons is insufficient to meet the needs of individuals. Teachers spend too long talking to the whole class and there is too much emphasis on taking notes. The planning of programmes to meet individual needs is hampered by the very slow processing of the results of initial assessment of students' literacy and numeracy support needs.

122. There is effective integration of theory and practice in most early years lessons. Consequently, level 3 students are able to relate the ideas of early years educators such as Montessori, Froebel and Margaret Macmillan to current childcare practice. Work experience and educational visits add to students' understanding of current practice. During the inspection, students from Saltash visited a multicultural area in Gloucester to extend their understanding of working with children and families from a range of minority ethnic communities. Students on public services courses work with local school children on a variety of indoor and outdoor activities in order to develop team building and leadership skills. They are well prepared for their chosen careers. On public services, care and childcare courses, tutors regularly set and mark work. Assessment tasks are vocationally relevant and of an appropriate standard. Marking is accurate and feedback to students is comprehensive and

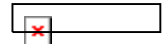
helpful. Attendance is good.

123. Students on public services courses have access to good facilities at the different sites and at external venues, including RAF Portreath. Some accommodation is inadequate to meet the teaching and learning needs of staff and students on early years courses. Health, social care and childcare staff are well qualified, but their occupational experience is dated. Most of the teaching staff on public services courses are ex-servicemen who continue to maintain good links with the armed forces and other public services.

Leadership and management

124. Courses are generally well managed with detailed schemes of work, lesson plans and assessment plans. There is good communication within teams but insufficient sharing of good practice across centres. Most staff teams on care, childcare and public services courses make accurate self-assessment judgements about their provision and produce appropriate action plans that lead to improvements. On a few courses, for example, on the foundation GNVQ health and social care course, failure to resolve staffing difficulties has adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning. On another course, a new teacher was not made aware of the specific learning needs of the students.

Humanities



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

Strengths

- high pass rates and improved retention rates on many GCE A-level courses
- good use of learning centres
- effective target-setting and monitoring of students' progress
- very good support for individual students.

Weaknesses

- low pass and retention rates on many courses for adults and distance learners
- much undemanding teaching which fails to provide for the differing needs of students

- ineffective arrangements for the assessment of key skills
- lack of strategic co-ordination of the humanities curriculum.

Scope of provision

125. The college provides a broad range of GCSE and GCE AS and A-level courses. Several access to HE courses include humanities subjects. Most humanities students are aged 16 to 18 studying GCE AS and A-level courses at St Austell or CPR. The college meets the needs of its part-time adult students by offering courses at some college sites, in the local community and through distance learning. Enrolments for the six GCSE courses are almost entirely adult students. Access courses are offered in several venues apart from the main college sites.

Achievement and standards

126. High pass rates have been maintained on most two-year GCE A-level courses, but psychology and general studies pass rates are average. Sociology students consistently do better than would be expected on the basis of their GCSE results. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 have improved. In 2001, they at least matched national averages. In contrast, pass and retention rates for adults on one-year GCE A-level courses declined from 2000 to 2001, when they were low. GCE AS adult students are less likely to complete their courses than students aged 16 to 18 and pass rates are often unsatisfactory. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 on GCE AS courses are at national averages. Adult students on distance learning courses have low retention rates, but adults studying GCSE courses in local community venues have achieved consistently good pass and retention rates that are comparable with the national average.

127. Standards of attainment are good. They are generally higher for GCE A level than for GCE AS. Most students fulfil their potential but, at St Austell, able psychology students are underachieving. GCE A-level students can discuss complex ideas, often in a confident and articulate manner. Access students are well motivated. The quality of their presentations is high. Students generally work hard in lessons but, in a few GCE AS lessons, some male students are easily distracted. History students develop the ability to interpret and compare primary sources of evidence. Sociology and psychology students demonstrate good research skills in their coursework. The standard of fieldwork projects in geography is high. The projects provide evidence of careful interpretation of data and good use of graphical and statistical techniques, but the map-reading skills of some geography students are poorly developed.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE psychology	2	No. of starts	103	109	120
		% retention	58	58	58
		% pass rate	71	70	64
GCSE law	2	No. of starts	71	53	47
		% retention	79	62	85
		% pass rate	40	64	73
GCE A-level	3	No. of starts	103	107	72

psychology *		% retention	53	66	82
		% pass rate	90	71	78
GCE A-level sociology *	3	No. of starts	65	49	39
		% retention	62	71	100
		% pass rate	87	88	100
GCE A-level law *	3	No. of starts	57	54	49
		% retention	53	76	100
		% pass rate	87	93	94
GCE AS psychology	3	No. of starts	**	***	169
		% retention	**	***	74
		% pass rate	**	***	63
GCE AS sociology	3	No. of starts	**	***	124
		% retention	**	***	76
		% pass rate	**	***	76

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

* pass rates for 2000 and 2001 are based on two-year GCE A-level courses; pass rates for 2002 and the number of students enrolled in 2002 are based on one-year GCE A-level courses

* course not running

*** unreliable data

Quality of education and training

128. Teaching at CPR is consistently satisfactory or good. At St Austell, teaching varies from outstanding to unsatisfactory. In the less effective lessons, students spend too long listening or copying notes. Some students are not drawn into discussions. The range of activities is not varied enough to suit students' different ways of learning. Some teachers have low expectations of students' capacity for critical analysis.

129. In the better lessons, students enjoy learning. Politics students learned about cabinet government by role playing the parts of members of the cabinet. Students are encouraged to reflect on their knowledge and understanding through discussion, presentations and creative activities. In a sociology lesson about youth culture, students produced posters of a typical juvenile delinquent. This stimulated good discussion about images, stereotypes and group conformity. Some teachers extend students' thinking by skilful questioning, which stimulates students to ask questions, raise comments or refer to earlier learning. Adult students make good progress in learning by making links to their own experience.

130. Staff are appropriately qualified. Humanities staff at CPR and St Austell are beginning to share effective practice. Specialist classrooms are well equipped but some cramped accommodation at CPR limits opportunities for group work. Access to computers on the main sites is generally good. The libraries are well stocked and used.

131. Assessment is effective. Written work is accurately marked and students receive detailed feedback. In several subjects, students receive mark schemes, model answers and commentaries produced by examiners. The progress of full-time students is carefully monitored. At half-termly intervals, each student undertakes, with their personal tutor, a wide-ranging review covering academic performance, study methods and career plans. Careful records maintained by subject teachers chart students' performance against their target grades. Students also keep a record of outcomes and actions in a document called a personal planner. This helps them to evaluate their

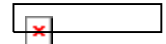
own performance.

132. There is good guidance and support for students. The admissions process includes good opportunities for advice on subjects. Initial assessment for students on access courses taught in the community is inadequate. The tutorial provision for students aged 16 to 18 is very effective and teachers are approachable, caring and supportive. Students of all abilities use a wide range of effective additional learning support. It includes literacy, time management and revision skills, as well as support for dyslexia and other learning difficulties and disabilities.

Leadership and management

133. There is good management of provision on individual sites, but the lack of strategic curriculum co-ordination leads to duplication of effort and limited opportunities to share resources and effective practice. The full-time provision for students aged 16 to 18 is effectively co-ordinated through the sixth form centres, where strong emphasis is placed on support for students. Helpful curriculum links between the two sixth form centres are underway, but teachers of adult provision have not been included. Managers have been successful in addressing poor retention, access to resources and staffing difficulties, but they have not yet developed appropriate arrangements for the assessment of key skills.

English and languages



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

Strengths

- good achievement on GCE A-level and GCSE courses
- much good teaching
- effective assessment
- wide range of provision.

Weaknesses

- poor learning experiences for students in lessons with few students
- poor accommodation and underdeveloped use of ICT in English lessons at St Austell.

Scope of provision

134. The college offers a broad range of provision in English and modern foreign languages. English provision includes GCE AS and A-level English language and literature, English language, and English literature. GCSE English is available to a wide range of students, but there is inadequate provision for students for whom GCSE is not appropriate. The languages programme includes French, Spanish, Italian, German, Greek, Japanese, and English as a foreign language. Courses range from entry level to level 4 and lead to both academic and vocational qualifications. Over 50 students are enrolled on distance learning programmes in English and languages. English and languages courses are also delivered in partnerships with Plymouth Adult Continuing Education, the Eden Project and a number of local companies.

Achievement and standards

135. Achievement on GCE A-level English and languages courses is good. Pass rates are consistently above national averages on the three GCE A-level English courses. Pass rates for GCE AS English literature have been good for the last two years. In 2002, GCE AS English language and literature and GCE AS English language results were satisfactory. Pass and retention rates on GCSE French and Spanish courses are generally good. GCSE English results have been above national averages in each of the last three years. At St Austell, the pass rate for GCSE English is below the national average and the attainment of students in some groups is unsatisfactory. Pass rates are good on the one-year French and Spanish vocational language courses. Retention rates on most English course are close to or above national averages.

136. The standard of students' written work is good and most students have attained at least a satisfactory standard for the stage of the course. In some cases, for example, in one GCE AS English literature group, students have attained a standard well above what might be expected for the stage of their course. Language students are confident in their use of the relevant language.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	247	297	288
		% retention	72	73	68
		% pass rate	70	77	56
GCSE French	2	No. of starts	41	61	34
		% retention	71	56	71
		% pass rate	83	79	96
GCSE Spanish	2	No. of starts	51	45	68
		% retention	57	73	63
		% pass rate	79	48	67
GCE A-level English language *	3	No. of starts	35	34	21
		% retention	60	76	86
		% pass rate	71	92	100
GCE A-level English language and literature *	3	No. of starts	84	85	46
		% retention	71	76	96
		% pass rate	87	88	91

GCE A-level English literature *	3	No. of starts	55	49	36
		% retention	71	76	97
		% pass rate	97	82	93
GCE A-level languages (French, German, Spanish) *	3	No. of starts	31	28	20
		% retention	65	79	75
		% pass rate	100	82	93
GCE AS English language and literature	3	No. of starts	**	65	97
		% retention	**	85	80
		% pass rate	**	76	83

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

* pass rates for 2000 and 2001 are based on two-year GCE A-level courses; pass rates for 2002 and the number of students enrolled in 2002 are based on one-year GCE A2 courses

* course not running

Quality of education and training

137. Teaching overall is good. Lessons in English and languages are mostly well planned, with clear learning and assessment objectives. Good links are made with previous learning. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of subject skills and preparation for examinations. Many lessons have a range of activities that provide good opportunities for students to learn. In a GCSE English lesson, students' time was divided between whole group teaching, working individually on computers and small group tutorials. Students enjoyed the variety and their attention and interest were maintained throughout.

138. Teachers and students use the foreign language extensively in many language lessons and pair work helps students to develop their spoken skills and confidence. The best lessons are stimulating and innovative. In a lesson on grammar, students using colourful and visually effective materials, such as cards, charts and pictures, staged their own presentation of grammar rules. Teachers then drew out students' contributions by careful questioning. Great efforts are made to encourage students and to build their confidence. Most students are highly motivated, involved in their lessons and active in learning outside the classroom. Adult language students consolidate their knowledge and skills between lessons and are keen to answer questions and try out ideas in lessons.

139. Many lessons have few students. Some of these lessons are poorly planned. In others, the low numbers restrict opportunities for communication. Some lessons are dominated by teachers, with too few opportunities for students to contribute their ideas or demonstrate their achievement. ICT is well used in languages across the college and in English at CPR. Language students support their classroom learning by using carefully selected foreign Internet sites providing up to date materials, such as newspapers and journals. At St Austell, the use of ICT is underdeveloped in the teaching of English.

140. Assessment of students' work and monitoring of their progress are effective. There are clear guidelines on the frequency of assessed work and students are aware of what is expected of them. On GCE A-level and GCSE courses, well-marked work is returned promptly and students appreciate the feedback they receive. Effective use is made of target grades and regular progress reviews with students at the sixth form centres. Students are clear about their current level of achievement, but less clear about what they need to do to improve.

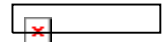
141. The quality of teaching accommodation varies. At CPR, classrooms are of a suitable size and well equipped. At St Austell, some classrooms are too small. This restricts the range of learning activities. On both sites, there are relevant and attractive displays. There are well-stocked libraries

and learning resource centres on the major sites.

Leadership and management

142. English and languages are well managed. Part-time teachers are well supported by their curriculum managers, but the organisation of subject meetings is difficult due to the large number of hourly paid staff. Good training and staff development opportunities are available. Part-time language teachers regularly participate in training days. Lesson observation is effective in identifying weaknesses and improving the quality of teaching. Course review is thorough and self-critical. Actions are taken in the light of unsatisfactory results and improvements achieved. In languages, there is insufficient strategic planning to ensure the long-term viability of the programme and to identify and respond to the changing trends in market demand.

Foundation programmes



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

Strengths

- good retention rates and achievements
- good teaching on practical programmes and on programmes for students aged 16 to 18
- productive external links
- wide range of provision.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory teaching on some programmes for adults
- a few unsuitable teaching and ICT areas
- unsatisfactory monitoring of some students' progress

- weak aspects of management.

Scope of provision

143. The college offers discrete programmes for students with moderate and severe learning difficulties, people experiencing mental health difficulties and people on the autistic spectrum. Good links with external agencies, for example, local charities, social services and social firms, enable the college to teach many students in community venues. Students with moderate learning difficulties follow entry level vocational preparation programmes designed to prepare them gradually for employment. Students with severe learning difficulties follow courses designed to develop independence and competence in daily living and in work-related skills. A range of suitable accreditation is offered including the vocational access certificate and achievement tests. There are learning opportunities in business administration, small animal care, retailing, horticulture and manufacturing processes. There are also good opportunities for enrichment activities.

Achievement and standards

144. Students with moderate learning difficulties make good progress. Retention and pass rates are improving and are good on the City and Guilds profile of achievement. Students achieve appropriate entry level and NVQ level 1 qualifications. They progress to further training and sheltered or other forms of employment. Both adults and students aged 16 to 18 are helped to overcome their personal barriers to learning. For one adult, this involved using a recording studio to create her own music as part of a group project. In the college retail outlets, students learn appropriate social, communication and work skills in realistic environments. Students aged 16 to 18 following integrated work and life skills programmes such as 'the Barrow' respond and achieve well. The achievements of students with severe learning difficulties are generally satisfactory, but the progress of some adult students is unsatisfactory, because the activities and targets set for them are not challenging enough.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
National skills profile (one year)	1	No. of starts	102	217	201
		% retention	94	83	83
		% pass rate	94	75	53
Vocational access	1	No. of starts	20	15	*
		% retention	85	100	*
		% pass rate	100	100	*
City and Guilds profile of achievement	1	No. of starts	52	78	60
		% retention	76	81	87
		% pass rate	64	78	90
National Open College Network (NOCN) credit achievement	1	No. of starts	17	8	39
		% retention	94	100	82
		% pass rate	**	100	75

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

* course not running

** data unreliable

Quality of education and training

145. Teaching on programmes for students aged 16 to 18 is generally good. It supports the development of the skills needed for employment. Most teaching is well planned. Students have clear individual short-term targets that build on carefully structured learning. Students develop confidence, literacy, numeracy, ICT skills and transferable work skills, such as teamwork. Students with moderate learning difficulties participate in well-planned work projects and appropriate work placements that prepare them for progression to employment or further training. Work placements are carefully chosen to match students' skills and maturity levels.

146. Productive links with social services, community health agencies, probation and voluntary organisations increase learning opportunities for disadvantaged and disengaged groups. For example, the Airwaves Project, run in partnership with the county youth service, provides a unique opportunity for students to develop skills in media and art. It culminates in licensed broadcasting to the local community. Courses in locations away from the college meet the needs of vulnerable and at risk groups, improving their opportunities for further study and employment.

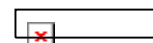
147. Teaching of students with severe learning difficulties is generally satisfactory but a few lessons are unsatisfactory. In these lessons explanations and instructions are sometimes unclear. Activities are either too difficult or inappropriate for the age group, so students become bored and inattentive. Activities and learning materials are unsuited to the goals set out in individual learning plans. Insufficient use is made of ICT and video to enhance learning. There is too little recognition of individuals' different learning needs. There is an inadequate overview of the students' progress. Some courses for students with severe learning difficulties lack coherence. They consist of a string of activities, which are not adequately linked together or monitored.

148. Most staff are able and enthusiastic, although some lack the necessary specialist training for teaching students with severe learning difficulties. There is a high level of support for students in lessons. Support assistants take part in lessons and help students where appropriate. Students speak highly of this support. Working relationships between teachers and students are friendly. A specialist careers adviser provides valuable support and guidance. Accommodation is generally satisfactory; some is good, but the area used to teach theory to students at a café in Helston is unsuitable. Customers wishing to use the toilets have to pass through the teaching area, disrupting teaching. Access to some off-site venues is unsatisfactory for people with mobility problems, for example, the ICT workshop at Gwelhean. ICT resources at CPR are not well used or well managed. Specialist software is locked away and staff are either unaware of its availability or of its potential to enhance learning. Adaptations have been made to facilitate wheelchair access in the ICT suite, but this adaptation is poorly thought out and will not meet the needs of many wheelchair users.

Leadership and management

149. The curriculum area has new managers who are committed to developing first-class learning opportunities for students. Changes are being made to address weak areas and improve learning opportunities. Steps have been taken to identify training needs and to provide access to development opportunities for staff. However, systems to monitor individual students' progress lack rigour. Managers do not adequately collate or analyse data to improve their planning of programmes and resources. There is no system in place to ensure that actions agreed at meetings are carried out.

Literacy and numeracy



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

Strengths

- good teaching in community-based literacy lessons
- effective support for students with dyslexia
- good facilities for teaching and supporting those with literacy and numeracy needs at CPR and Rosewarne.

Weaknesses

- much unsatisfactory teaching
- lack of staff with specialist skills
- poor target setting and planning with individuals not well established
- ineffective additional support
- ineffective management.

Scope of provision

150. Full-time students aged 16 to 18 are taught literacy and numeracy in basic skills lessons, and in communication and application of number key skills lessons within academic and vocational courses. Over 800 students receive this tuition. In addition, 123 full-time students and 11 part-time students on foundation courses have discrete literacy and numeracy lessons built into their programmes. Additional support in literacy and numeracy is provided for 876 full-time and 291 part-time students through the college's additional support service. There are over 100 adults on part-time courses in Plymouth where the college works in partnership with others to deliver these courses. By arrangement with Cornwall local education authority's Link into Learning service, the college does not offer adult literacy and numeracy courses in the community in Cornwall.

Achievement and standards

151. Retention rates on literacy and numeracy courses were below national averages in 2002. For example, on the short basic literacy course, the retention rate was 86%, compared with the national average of 92%. However, the pass rate of 91% was above the average. In the few lessons where

there are effective individual learning plans, students make good progress. Many students on full-time courses have their literacy and numeracy assessed through the qualifications of key skills communications and application of number. Pass rates on these level 1 courses were low in 2002, ranging from 5% to 33%. The college has introduced new cross-college policies and staffing structures. Most students attend regularly and are punctual.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Basic tests in English language skills	1	No. of starts	32	34	36
		% retention	84	68	89
		% pass rate	11	73	34
City and Guilds wordpower	1	No. of starts	66	37	8
		% retention	83	78	50
		% pass rate	60	38	100
City and Guilds numberpower	1	No. of starts	69	11	9
		% retention	86	90	56
		% pass rate	64	56	100
Basic literacy (short course)	1	No. of starts	*	204	150
		% retention	*	92	86
		% pass rate	*	97	91
Key skills application of number	1	No. of starts	36	346	327
		% retention	86	81	79
		% pass rate	39	10	33
Key skills communication	1	No. of starts	15	269	289
		% retention	93	81	80
		% pass rate	0	10	26

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

152. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching. Around a quarter of lessons observed by inspectors were unsatisfactory. Lesson plans and schemes of work are often superficial and do not take sufficient account of the different literacy and numeracy needs of individuals. Planning does not draw on information from initial assessment. There is no college-wide system for using individual learning plans for numeracy and literacy teaching or support. Many lessons lack structure and proceed too slowly. Teaching is dull and relies on students working through assignments or worksheets. For example, in one lesson, modern apprentices were given uninspiring worksheets of arithmetic calculations unrelated to their vocational study.

153. Where teaching is good or better, students are enthusiastic about their studies. In good numeracy lessons, students calculate answers and discuss solutions with colleagues. Teachers give clear explanations and use carefully chosen language and step-by-step illustrations that help students to understand topics. However, tutors often miss opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of more complex concepts. The teaching of students with dyslexia is good. Students speak positively of the coping strategies they have learned. Tutors keep detailed records of these

students' learning goals and the progress they make. The teaching of literacy within the community is good. Appropriate use is made of the core curriculum for adult literacy and numeracy. Lessons are well planned and individual learning plans are used effectively to set targets and record progress.

154. Students at CPR and Rosewarne enjoy pleasant, well-equipped classrooms and learning centres. At Saltash and St Austell, the accommodation ranges from satisfactory to unsatisfactory, with some shabby and cramped classrooms. In the community, the accommodation is satisfactory. The college learning centres are well equipped with computers. Learning materials provided in lessons are well presented and materials for young students are often relevant to their vocational study and to their age group. However, these materials do not take sufficient account of the students' different abilities.

155. Many staff who teach or support students with literacy and numeracy needs have not received specialist training and lack the necessary specialist skills. The college is committed to providing training, but it is awaiting the introduction of new professional qualifications. This delay has been detrimental to the quality of teaching.

156. Most full-time students receive tuition in literacy and numeracy through key skills lessons. On some vocational programmes, assignments within the main subject are used as the vehicle for assessing literacy and numeracy. However, not all areas have completed the mapping necessary for this approach. The quality of assessment and feedback on students' work is variable. Some comment and correction is provided. However, there are instances where the assessment is too infrequent and superficial.

157. Initial assessment of full-time students determines their key skills level and additional support needs. Further assessment of students' needs is not systematic. Some students who are not succeeding on their main programmes have insufficient additional support. This is either due to delay in setting up the support, or because the students do not perceive it as necessary and therefore do not attend the support sessions offered to them. Students receive regular tutorials to review progress within their vocational area but these reviews do not consider progress in literacy and numeracy.

Leadership and management

158. The management of literacy and numeracy across the college is unsatisfactory. The cross-college policy on essential skills sets out operational guidelines. There is no effective strategy to improve the quality of teaching and learning. For example, it does not provide for a common approach to target setting or individual learning plans for adult literacy and numeracy. The new staffing structure for managing essential skills may lead to better sharing of good practice and improving the students' experience, but it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

Part D: College data

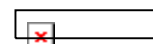
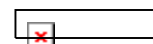


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age 2001/02

Level	16-18	19+
1	22	42
2	42	24



3	33	14
4/5	0	1
Other	3	19
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the college in spring 2002

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

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments % *
Science and mathematics	1,531	748	3
Land-based provision	853	2,079	4
Construction	218	1,361	2
Engineering, technology and manufacture	774	1,657	4
Business administration, management and professional	1,218	5,863	11
Information and communication technology	1,628	11,041	19
Retailing, customer service and transportation	78	654	1
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	1,512	4,723	9
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	304	524	1
Health, social care and public services	1,902	13,404	23
Visual and performing arts and media	1,224	3,214	7
Humanities	1,682	1,816	5
English, languages and communication	1,818	1,057	4
Foundation programmes	1,418	2,789	6
Total	16,160	50,930	100

Source: provided by the college in spring 2002

* these figures have been rounded and do not add up to 100%

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
1	Starters excluding transfers	1,524	1,487	1,270	2,307	4,297	3,397
	Retention rate	80	79	78	77	76	70
	National average	80	79	*	78	78	*
	Pass rate	72	60	66	70	67	73
	National average	65	68	*	66	68	*
2	Starters excluding transfers	2,891	3,065	2,627	4,483	5,087	3,853
	Retention rate	77	79	76	80	80	76
	National average	76	76	*	79	78	*
	Pass rate	73	67	74	79	72	75
	National average	66	69	*	65	68	*
3	Starters excluding transfers	3,219	5,010	4,289	3,620	4,432	3,721
	Retention rate	70	79	86	79	82	80
	National average	76	77	*	78	78	*
	Pass rate	78	80	80	71	75	73
	National average	74	76	*	66	69	*
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	19	27	20	482	425	421
	Retention rate	84	70	95	80	85	90
	National average	79	82	*	81	84	*
	Pass rate	44	44	58	69	70	70
	National average	66	55	*	56	53	*

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

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1998/99 to 2000/01: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.

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

3. College rates for 2000/01: provided by the college in spring 2001.

** data unavailable*

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)	62	31	7	161
Level 2 (intermediate)	57	36	7	99
Level 1 (foundation)	54	30	16	50
Other sessions	64	25	11	55
Totals	60	31	9	365

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