East Surrey College

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	East Surrey College
Type of college:	General Further Education
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Address of college:	Claremont Road
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	Surrey
	RH1 2JX
Telephone number:	01737 772611
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Chair of governors:	John Brenchley
Unique reference number:	130824
Name of reporting inspector:	David Martin
Dates of inspection:	19-23 May 2003

Part A: Summary
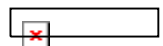
Information about the college
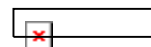
East Surrey College is a medium sized general further education (FE) college in Redhill, serving the local communities of Redhill and Reigate and the wider area of South London and North Sussex. Adult and community learning programmes are offered at around 50 community venues throughout East Surrey. Courses are offered in all of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas of learning, although provision is very small in land-based provision and in customer services, retailing and transportation. The substantial provision in art, design and media is now offered in the purpose-built Reigate School of Art, Design and Media building, used from September 2002. This embraces the Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for digital media. The college contracts directly with the LSC for some work-based learning, which is mainly in construction and engineering. In 2001/02, there were 13,386 college students, most of whom were part time. For the same period, there were 23,531 enrolments for all qualifications. Around 19,500 of these were for students aged 19 and over.

There are high staying-on rates in post-16 education in the area and there is considerable competition with local schools and the many other local colleges to attract students aged 16 to 19. Unemployment in the area is low. For Surrey, it is only 0.9%. There are few large enterprises in the area, although many multi-national companies have established their European head offices locally. Some 15% of the college's students are from a minority ethnic background, which is 10 percentage points higher than in the local population. The college's mission statement is that, `the college exists to empower people to change their lives through the provision of high quality education and training'.

How effective is the college?

Inspectors judged the overall quality of provision to be inadequate. Overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The quality of provision is unsatisfactory in six out of the ten curriculum areas inspected: construction; business; information and communications technology (ICT); hairdressing and beauty therapy; English, English as a foreign language (EFL) and foreign languages; and literacy and numeracy. In these areas, the college provides unsatisf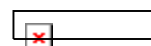actory teaching and learning for many of its students. A significant minority do not achieve appropriate standards of attainment. The provision in art and design is good. It is satisfactory in engineering, health and social care and early years, and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The provision for work-based learning in engineering is also satisfactory. The college's main strengths and areas for improvement are listed below.

Key strengths

- o   the wide and effective range of community partnerships

- o   personal support for students

- o   the provision and facilities for art and design and media.

What should be improved

- the quality of teaching

- students' standards of attainment

- pass rates on many courses

- provision in the six curriculum areas judged to be unsatisfactory

- the initial assessment of students' learning support needs

- key skills provision and outcomes

- the leadership by senior managers and governors

- curriculum leadership and management

- quality assurance

- financial management

- data management

- the range of courses at level 1

- opportunities for progression.

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
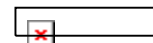
The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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
Construction	**Unsatisfactory.** Many pass and retention rates have improved to high levels. Students often attain good standards in their practical training, but technician students do not achieve expected standards. Much teaching and learning of technician students are less than satisfactory, little teaching overall is better than satisfactory and key skills provision is poor. Work-based assessment for modern apprentices is inadequate and there are shortcomings in practical accommodation and technician support. The area is poorly led and managed.
Engineering	**Satisfactory.** Pass and retention rates are high on many courses, but pass rates are low for foundation modern apprentices and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) work-based learners. Students' practical work is of a high standard. The majority of teaching is satisfactory, but there is no inspired or outstanding teaching and the learning environment and teaching and learning resources need improving. The teaching and management of key and basic skills are poor and there is little sharing of good practice across the area. There are good links with employers.
Business	**Unsatisfactory.** Retention rates are high on most courses, with some high and some low pass rates. Too much teaching is unsatisfactory, although good use is made of students' work experience to support learning. There are unsatisfactory initial assessment and provision of key skills, and support for students is inadequate, with insufficiently robust tutorials. The area is poorly managed.
Information and communications technology	**Unsatisfactory.** There are high retention and pass rates on some courses, but they are low on others and much of the students' attainment in lessons is less than satisfactory. Much teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Tutorial and learning support are insufficient and the provision of key skills is inadequate. Leadership and quality assurance are unsatisfactory.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	**Unsatisfactory.** Pass rates are high and improving on some courses and standards of written work are good. Too much teaching is unsatisfactory, with insufficient opportunities for students to develop their commercial skills. Attendance rates are low. Whilst teachers provide good support for students, some students are on inappropriate courses and there is a lack of progression routes for full-time hairdressing students. The area is poorly managed.
Health and social care and	**Satisfactory.** There are high pass and retention rates on early years

early years	courses, but low pass rates on health and social care courses. Students' attainment is usually satisfactory or better and there are high standards of coursework. Some teaching and learning are good, but the learning environment is poor for health and social care students. Students receive good academic and pastoral care. Key skills provision and quality assurance are weak.
Art and design	**Good**. There is much good teaching, resulting in high pass rates and a generally good standard of students' work. The main centre is an excellent purpose-built resource and is very well equipped with industry-standard equipment. The limited range of provision is symptomatic of a lack of systematic management.
English, English as a foreign language and foreign languages	**Unsatisfactory.** There are high pass rates on some English and languages courses, but low pass rates for many courses across the provision. There are good teaching and learning in advanced level lessons but too much unsatisfactory teaching and learning overall, with insufficient development of oral skills. Management is unsatisfactory, with no systematic initial assessment in English and languages, and there is inadequate recording and monitoring of students' progress.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	**Satisfactory.** Pass and retention rates are satisfactory. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory and the use of practical activities to develop students' skills is good. They receive good personal support, but their individual learning plans are insufficiently detailed. Resources for community provision are insufficient. Staff do not regularly share good practice.
Literacy and numeracy	**Unsatisfactory.** Achievements are unsatisfactory, with poor initial assessment and recording of students' progress. There are high attendance rates. Most teaching and learning are satisfactory or better, with good use of imaginative topic work. Community-based students receive good support. Strategic planning is poor and operational management fails to implement quality systems, train and support teachers, and resource and manage programmes effectively.

How well is the college led and managed?
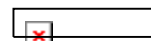
Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Financial management has been weak. Failure to recruit students to the level of college targets for the last three years has resulted in large deficits. A deficit of £1.1m is forecast for 2003. Governors and senior managers have been late in formulating a recovery plan and as yet no action plan has been developed. More effective promotion of the college led to a moderate upturn in student numbers in 2002/03. Management at all levels of the college is ineffective. Failures to respond to clear weaknesses in leadership in a large number of curriculum areas have led to a high volume of unsatisfactory teaching and provision. Management information systems have been weak and data are unreliable. Recently, this has improved. There has been an improvement in students' pass rates, on level 3 courses, to above national averages in 2002. However, quality assurance has not been effective in many aspects of provision. Course reviews and self-assessment are often ineffective. In 2002, the college successfully moved the Reigate School of Art, Design and Media on to its main site.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?
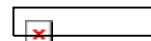
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. Working with economically disadvantaged groups is a priority. Strategies to increase their participation include: joint working with other relevant agencies; greater community involvement; working with local schools; family learning; and collaborative literacy, numeracy and language support projects. The college also provides English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) for a small number of asylum seekers. However, there is little formal monitoring or evaluation of the impact of these strategies. Some 15% of the college's students are from a minority ethnic background, which is well above the percentage for the local population. The number of students with a learning difficulty and/or disability is 5%; just above the national figure. The college has made satisfactory progress in response to Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). Policies and procedures have been updated and governors, managers and teachers have received appropriate training. Since the last inspection, access for students with restricted mobility has considerably improved. Where access is still poor, alternative accommodation or appropriate support is provided. Insufficient progress has been made in fulfilling obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. A satisfactory race equality policy clearly states roles and responsibilities, but its promotion and implementation are slow. The college has started to collect ethnicity data from applications for 2003/04, but has not yet analysed achievement data by ethnic group.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?
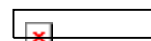
The effectiveness of arrangements for guidance and support vary considerably. The college has sought to provide a more coherent and impartial service across all sites. At the main site, which mainly offers provision for full-time students, guidance and support services are generally satisfactory, but they are less effective for part-time students, especially at community venues. Insufficient specialist subject advice is provided at interview and some students are inappropriately placed on courses. Initial assessment of students' individual learning support needs, in advance of starting their courses, is unsatisfactory. There are delays in the provision of appropriate specialist support. Full-time students have an adequate induction to facilities and services. Progression tutors offer good individual and study support but formal tutorials have low attendance. Information on attendance and progress is not effectively shared between subject teachers and tutors. Tutorial and induction arrangements for part-time students are largely informal and inconsistently successful. Additional learning support tends to be too general and does not address specific basic skills needs. Careers, welfare and counselling services are good. The students' union is active and is well supported by a student liaison officer.

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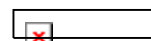
Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below.

What students like about the college

- o good and friendly teachers

- friendly college atmosphere

- good support

- practical classes

- flexibility to change course if it is at the wrong level

- good resources at the main college site

- help with progression

- the library being open on Saturday.

What they feel could be improved

- key skills

- group tutorials

- quality of computers

- communications and information on college facilities

- some boring theory lessons

- clarity of dates for handing in and return of assignments

- o cold classrooms

- o car parking

- o price and choice of food in the canteen.

Other information
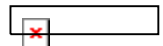
The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC is responsible for ensuring that, where inspectors have judged there to be unsatisfactory or poor provision in a curriculum area or in leadership and management, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post-inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

Part B: The college as a whole
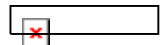
Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	44	35	21
19+ and WBL*	52	40	8
Learning 16-18	35	49	16
19+ and WBL*	55	38	7

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

* work-based learning

Achievement and standards
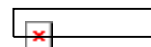
1. The college offers courses at all levels, from entry level to higher education (HE) courses. There is a wide range of full-time and part-time vocational courses, including some unusual specialisms such as aeronautical, aviation and polymer engineering. A large proportion of the students aged 16 to 18 study vocational courses, such as the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE), first and national diplomas and NVQ. There is a reasonable range of General Certificate of Education Advanced level (GCE A-level) and Advanced Subsidiary (AS) courses, including some offered in partnership with a local 11 to 18 secondary school. There are General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses in English, mathematics, Italian and Spanish. Most adults are enrolled on vocationally oriented courses, NVQs and other short and long courses in information technology (IT), work-related skills and recreational subjects.

2. Inspectors analysed college data on students' achievements. Data for the years 1998/99 to 2000/01 show that most retention rates have been broadly in line with national averages for general FE colleges. In most cases, they have consistently improved and in 2000/01 were slightly above average. The data for 2001/02, provided by the college, indicate that this improvement has continued, with the exception of level 1 provision, where retention rates fell to below the national average. Pass rates over the same period were consistently well below national averages, often declining over the three years to 2001. In 2002, overall college data show a marked improvement. But in the majority of curriculum areas, as determined by inspectors, there are courses where pass rates and, in a few cases, retention rates are persistently below average.

3. Key skills pass rates are very poor. Results have been consistently below the national average and are declining. Of the 3,724 enrolments in 2000/01, only 1% of students passed, placing the college in the lower quartile for both students aged 16 to 18 and adults compared with colleges of the same type.

4. Students' attainment was good or better in 40% of the lessons observed, and less than satisfactory in 18%. These figures suggest that fewer than average students have achieved the standard of attainment expected for the stage of their course.

5. The overall attendance rate in lessons observed by inspectors was low, at 71%. It was high in literacy and numeracy and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but particularly low in construction, business, and hairdressing and beauty therapy.

16 to 18 year olds

6. In 2001/02, the largest proportion of enrolments by students aged 16 to 18, 38%, was for level 2 qualifications, with a further 27% for level 1 and 20% for level 3. The largest numbers of enrolments was in engineering, foundation programmes, ICT, and art and design.

7. Retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 fell in 1999/2000, but then improved to just above national averages in 2000/01. In 2001/02, retention rates declined at level 1 from just above to just below the national average. At levels 2 and 3, retention rates continued to improve and were above national averages. Pass rates have been below the national average, particularly in 1999/2000 and 2000/01. However, they improved in 2001/02 and were broadly in line with national averages at level 2, although low, at 66%, and above the national average at level 3. Although pass rates have improved considerably at level 1, they remain well below average.

8. Similar patterns emerge when data is considered by qualification type. On most qualifications, retention rates in 2000/01 were broadly in line with or slightly better than national averages, but pass rates were well below national averages in most cases. The best pass rates were for level 3 General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) courses, where they were approaching the national average. On GCSE courses, the proportion of students achieving grades A* to C was in line with the national average for similar colleges, which is low. On GCE A- level courses, the proportion of students achieving grades A or B was below average. The college is developing a system for measuring the value added to students' achievements, but is not yet able to assess whether these results are better than might be expected given students' prior achievements.

9. Using college data for 2001/02, inspectors found examples of high retention and pass rates on a few courses. Pass rates were good in art and design, and engineering. There were some good pass rates for GCE A-level English, GCSE and GCE AS Spanish, vocational language courses, and hairdressing and beauty therapy. There were good pass and retention rates on early years courses, good retention rates on computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) and GCE AS ICT courses, some good pass rates on computing courses, and good pass rates on AVCE business studies. However, there were poor pass rates for health and social care courses and AVCE IT, and poor retention rates on the intermediate GNVQ IT course. Retention rates were good for many work-based learners in engineering. However, pass rates were poor both for foundation modern apprentices and for NVQs.

10. Students' attainment was good or better in 33% of the lessons observed, and less than satisfactory in 23%. Far fewer than average students achieve the standard of attainment expected for the time in their course. Many students underachieve in their theoretical studies. In construction, much of the work undertaken by technician students is insufficiently advanced. Students' practical skills are generally satisfactory or good. Engineering practical work is of a high standard, and includes the building of a twin-seater aircraft and the maintenance of saloon racing cars. In art and design, students' work is of a good standard, especially in photography, fashion and textiles, and printmaking. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, practical skills are satisfactory to good, and portfolios are well presented. In construction, most students achieve good standards in their practical assignments, often early in their programme. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress towards their overall aims and objectives.

11. Students in some areas progress well through college provision. For example, many engineering students progress from level 1 through to level 3; there are good opportunities for them to transfer from full-time to work-based learning and many progress to HE. In 2002, 126 students progressed to HE from the college as a whole, being 77% of those who applied.

Adult learners

12. In 2001/02, 65% of enrolments by adults were on courses designated as `other'. These include long courses lasting over 24 weeks, and many short courses in IT and work-related skills, as well as literacy and numeracy and recreational studies. In addition, 16% of enrolments were at level 1, 11% at level 2 and 6% at level 3, with a further 1% at HE level. The two areas with the largest numbers of enrolments were health and social care and early years, and art and design, which together had 40% of enrolments. Other curriculum areas with substantial enrolments were humanities, business, ICT and foundation programmes.

13. Retention rates for adults from 1998/99 to 2000/01 show a similar improvement to those for younger students. Pass rates for adults are more consistently poor than those for students aged 16 to 18. Although they improved over the three years to 2001 for levels 1 and 2, they were always well below average. College data show a marked improvement in 2002, to figures well above national averages, particularly at level 3.

14. When data for 2000/01 are considered by qualification type, they show good retention

rates on NVQ courses and average retention rates on higher level courses, short courses and long courses lasting over 24 weeks. Pass rates are well below average for many qualification types.

15. Students' attainment was good or better in 48% of the lessons observed, and less than satisfactory in 12%. Fewer than average students had achieved the standard of attainment expected. The standards achieved by learners in literacy and numeracy lessons for adults are satisfactory. Their achievements have not been accredited or recorded and there has been no achievement of external qualifications since 1999/2000. In English, EFL and foreign languages, students demonstrate good comprehension skills but have insufficient opportunity to develop their oral skills. In business, pass rates are good for personnel practice, but poor on some accounting and book-keeping courses. In ICT, most adult enrolments on the main site are on CLAIT courses, where there are good retention rates and improved pass rates were above average in 2002. In the community, adult students take City and Guilds 7261 courses; pass rates are below average.

Quality of education and training
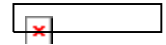
16. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded in 153 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 48% of these, satisfactory in 37% and less than satisfactory in 15%. The respective percentages for learning are 45%, 44% and 12%. Teaching was excellent in 2 lessons and in 19 it was very good. Higher grades are similarly low for learning. Teaching has worsened markedly since the last inspection, undertaken by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), when teaching was considered to be better than satisfactory in 63% of the lessons observed. Teaching and learning are better for adults, although still below national averages. The teaching in 52% of lessons for adults was good or better, compared with 44% in lessons for students aged 16 to 18. For the latter, 21% of the lessons observed had less than satisfactory teaching and 16% of learning was unsatisfactory or worse. Students studying at entry level and levels 1 and 2 receive the smallest amount of less than satisfactory teaching, whilst 21% of the teaching observed for level 3 students was in this category.

17. There are significant variations in the quality of teaching between curriculum areas. The best teaching is in art and design, health and social care and early years, and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In construction, business, ICT, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and English, EFL and foreign languages, the proportions of unsatisfactory teaching are much greater than the national averages.

18. Many lessons are insufficiently planned. Students are not given clear aims and objectives. Teachers talk too much and pay too little attention to matching teaching to the learning needs of students. This is marked in much of the construction teaching, which is dull and uninspiring. Teachers are too often unimaginative in their attempts to gain and maintain the interest of students. In engineering, for example, teaching lacks variety of approach and there is no use of modern and relevant practical examples. There is little use of IT in lessons, both by students and teachers. Teachers do not always apply some of the basic principles of sound teaching. Checking on students' understanding is often inadequate and teachers do not always ask sufficiently challenging questions of students or expect thorough enough answers. Instructions given to students are insufficiently clear and students do not know what is expected of them. Sometimes, lessons end without any clear review or summation of what has been covered or achieved. Practical teaching in hairdressing and beauty therapy demands insufficient attention to commercial practice and speed.

19. The more effective lessons are the product of careful planning. Teachers decide what

they want their students to achieve by the end of the lesson and determine a structure and content to facilitate this. Students are made aware of the objectives. Their interest and involvement is maintained by the sensible use of a range of activities. Teachers give good attention to meeting the learning needs of all students and use strategies to accommodate their different abilities and experiences. There is, for example, particularly good use of topic work and practical activities in literacy and numeracy lessons and in the teaching for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good use is made of students' work placement experiences in health and social care and early years, business, and motor vehicle engineering to help students understand theoretical concepts. Teachers regularly check students' understanding. In construction, practical training in the workshops is good and in engineering, good use is made of practical projects to reinforce teaching and learning.

20. The college's strategy for the implementation of key skills, and its management, is poor. Key skills teaching and assessment are largely separate from students' main programmes. Lessons are often ineffective, the content unrelated to students' main programme; they fail to see the relevance of key skills and attendance is poor. Assignments for students' main programme do not integrate or signpost key skills opportunities. In some lessons, students develop good key skills through their occupational practice but their progress is inadequately recorded. The wider key skill of `improving own learning and performance' is better developed through the students' core programme and tutorials. All full-time students are entitled to an initial assessment of their key skills. Less than half of first-year students have undertaken an initial assessment in 2002/03; when they are assessed, teachers do not receive the results. Students are placed on inappropriate levels of course and are unclear about their key skills entitlement.

21. The college's main site, which comprises the Gatton Point north and south sites, is pleasantly situated in a residential area of Redhill. Accommodation here has been considerably improved in recent years: notably, the purpose-built Reigate School of Art, Design and Media. Most teaching is carried out in modern classrooms and workshops, although some inadequate hutted accommodation remains in use. The quality of accommodation in community venues varies greatly. Good progress has been made in improving access to the main site for people with impaired mobility. A few areas remain inaccessible. A survey to check the college's compliance with disability legislation has recently been commissioned.

22. There are staff shortages in some areas, and a high proportion of part-time and fractional staff. The majority of teachers are appropriately qualified in their subjects, and are experienced and vocationally competent. Staff development has increased the number of qualified teachers, although teachers of literacy and numeracy are not yet qualified in their specialism. Staff development is provided on a number of important themes, but the methods for determining staff development needs are not fully effective. Not all part-time teachers received an induction in 2002/03.

23. Specialist resources are adequate in most curriculum areas. In art and design, there are outstanding facilities and learning resources, including those for the CoVE in media. Motor vehicle workshops are well resourced and there is a good electrical installation workshop. In some areas, there are insufficient or unsuitable resources. Some accommodation is in need of redecoration, refurbishment or improved wall displays, and in some areas, such as engineering, the environment is shabby and untidy. In a minority of areas, such as aeronautical engineering, learning materials are unsuitable and of poor quality. In community venues, there are inadequate learning resources to support literacy and numeracy and courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Technician support is inadequate in some areas of construction. The college's new health and safety officer has made a good start in developing and monitoring good practice but there are some unsafe practices, for example, where painting and decorating skills are practised in a fire escape corridor.

24. Progress has been made towards some of the objectives in the college's information and

learning technology (ILT) strategy. Some community centres have been electronically linked to the main site and students have good access to computers on a `drop-in' basis in two centres. Financial constraints have affected progress. There is not a full complement of learning `champions' in the curriculum areas, and the use of ILT within the curriculum is underdeveloped. Resources for the teaching of computing are poor. There is no managed policy for the replacement of old computers or buying software, and some furniture is unsuitable. All staff have access to computers in staff rooms. These provide access to the intranet and management information. There is a good range of industry-standard software in a number of subject areas.

25. The library and learning resource centre is responsive to the needs of students and staff, despite a considerable reduction in budget. It has drop-in computer facilities, a quiet study area, and an exceptionally good specialist art, design and media library. A large stock of laptop computers is available for loan. There is a good stock of journals, a collection of cuttings and a substantial collection of video recordings and slides. The adaptive technology centre holds a range of equipment designed to support learners with physical and sensory impairments.

26. The quality of assessment practice varies considerably across curriculum areas. Assessment on courses in health and social care and early years, art and design, and work-based motor vehicle engineering is well organised and assessments are set regularly. Teachers provide clear and constructive feedback to students, who know what they have to do to improve. In English, there is no internal moderation of coursework. In ICT and aeronautical engineering, assignments are ineffectively scheduled and teachers provide insufficient feedback to students. There is little initial assessment to identify the skills of students at the start of their courses. A recently introduced system of allocating target minimum grades to students is not widely understood by them or their teachers. It is not effective in monitoring the additional skills and knowledge students gain. Students' progress reports lack detail and too few identify clear actions and targets for improvement.

27. A new internal verification framework clearly identifies responsibilities of internal verifiers. Internal verification is good in construction, work-based motor vehicle engineering and in health and social care and early years. Arrangements are unsatisfactory in some areas. For example, in business, it is too reliant on part-time teachers and in hairdressing and beauty therapy, too few internal verifiers achieve too little verification. The tracking and monitoring of the implementation of action points arising from external verifier visits is effective.

28. Most curriculum areas offer an appropriate range of courses, particularly at levels 2 and 3. Often, students are able to progress from level 1 to level 3, and in some cases to HE. There are particularly good progression routes and a wide range of programmes in engineering and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Community provision is extensive, including leisure courses and those leading to formal accreditation. Significant gaps in full-time provision in some areas affect students' progression opportunities. For example, there is no level 1 provision in art and design or in health and social care and early years, no full-time level 2 hairdressing course, and poor progression opportunities for level 2 business administration students. There are good opportunities for students at community centres to progress to higher-level courses. However, there is a limited range of English courses, little evening provision in art and design at the main college and insufficient spread and depth of community literacy and numeracy programmes. Work-based provision is much smaller than was the case at the time of the last inspection by the FEFC, and is now offered in construction, engineering and hairdressing.

29. The college carefully considers the courses it offers and takes account of recruitment trends, students' and employers' needs, and community developments. Partnerships are strong with many community organisations, schools and businesses. Effective collaboration with employers has led to the development of courses in engineering, management and ICT. Many vocational students have work experience, including those in health and social care,

business administration and mechanical engineering. The experience is well structured and accompanied by assessments of progress in the workplace.

30. College staff actively participate in the community- based programme, linking with community organisations to address such issues as improving basic skills. Good links with schools have increased choice for both school and college students, including a wider range of GCE A-level subjects, and reduced inefficient duplication. Vocational taster courses and link courses are provided for pupils from 28 schools. Accredited courses for pupils are provided in construction, engineering and hairdressing as part of the Increased Flexibility for 14 to 16 Year Olds programme.

31. Activities that enhance the curriculum are very underdeveloped and there are few opportunities for students' enrichment. Students in art and design and health and social care and early years have good opportunities, including visits to exhibitions and taking additional qualifications.

32. A wide range of services and activities provide guidance and support for students. They were reorganised in late 2000 to try to eliminate wide variations in practice. Gateway student services provides a comprehensive and impartial admissions service at the main college site and a central progression service provides tutorial and personal support for full-time students. This includes referral for specialist interviews for students with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Services and information at community venues are not so well managed and the quality of guidance and support is more variable.

33. There are some well-produced course publicity materials, and helpful information is posted on the college's Internet web site. A schools liaison officer provides information to partner schools and arranges taster days for pupils. Progression tutors work with the admissions team to interview prospective full-time students but insufficient specialist subject advice is provided. Some students are placed on inappropriate courses and, in a few cases, on courses at the wrong level. A cross-college policy sets out the guidelines for students' induction but the quality of induction is inconsistent across curriculum areas.

34. Arrangements to identify additional support needs are unsatisfactory. Initial assessments are not routinely completed before students start their course. This results in delays in providing support, for example, for students with identified dyslexia. Although individual and study support, when provided, are generally good, literacy and numeracy needs are addressed insufficiently. Training to meet the significant needs of both teachers and other staff in supporting students' literacy and numeracy needs is insufficient.

35. Weekly group tutorials and individual progress reviews for full-time students require development. A recently introduced scheme for the setting of minimum target grades is little understood. Although some targets are set and grades are used in progress review meetings, individual learning plans and progress review records are often poorly completed. Information on students' progress, attendance and punctuality is not systematically shared between progression tutors and subject teachers and tutors rarely attend course team meetings. There is good practice in hairdressing and beauty therapy, art and design, health and social care and early years, and in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Tutors are beginning to work with teachers to support students in achieving the wider key skill `improving own learning and performance'. Attendance at group tutorials is frequently poor.

36. Personal guidance for students is good, and careers, welfare and financial advice and counselling services are available. Progression tutors offer good support to individual students including those identified as being in danger of early withdrawal from their course. The successful students' union is well supported by a student liaison officer. Students value the range of support offered by staff, but monitoring of its impact is underdeveloped.

Leadership and management
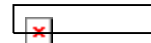
37. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, the college has been in financial difficulty. Failure to recruit students to meet targets has resulted in large financial deficits in all of the last three years. In 2001/02, the college failed to meet its target for recruitment by 30%. Optimistic financial forecasts, based on flawed management information, led to a lack of will in remedying short falls. The college now forecasts a deficit of £1.1m for 2002/03.

38. The college has had three temporary finance directors over the last fifteen months and governors have still not moved to make a permanent appointment. In 2002/03 the college failed to set a formal budget. At curriculum level, financial difficulties have resulted in the employment of large numbers of part-time teachers, some as managers and many for quite short-term contracts. This has contributed to the high levels of unsatisfactory teaching and to the weak curriculum management identified by inspectors. The morale of teachers and many managers is low as a result of the protracted difficulties.

39. While governors and senior managers have worked closely and hard on strategic planning in recent months, they have been slow to act to remedy this situation. A recovery plan was not agreed by the governors until May 2003 and, as yet, no detailed action plan to instigate recovery has been developed. Improvement plans formulated in 2001/02 have resulted in initiatives to change the college's culture to one more focused on students' achievement and staff commitment to continued improvement. Wide consultation with staff has fed into the 2003 recovery plan and now governors give clear and determined support to the plan. Central to this plan is a management restructuring. This, the second restructuring in three years, aims to reduce the number of managers to a level more appropriate to a college of its size, and to focus management objectives more straightforwardly on the quality of teaching and learning. More effective marketing, promotion and admissions procedures led to an upturn in student numbers in September 2002 and the college expects to improve further on this in 2003.

40. Management at course and programme level has many weaknesses. Senior managers have failed to respond to clear weaknesses in leadership in a number of curriculum areas and middle managers and teachers have often had to live with temporary arrangements and delays in decision making. In business, there is little evidence of forward planning, as the vacancies for curriculum and assistant curriculum managers remain unfilled. Hair and beauty therapy has no leadership from a curriculum specialist, or opportunities to share good practice, a lack of formal meetings and persistent problems in staffing. ICT lacks leadership and formal monitoring. In the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, staff have difficulty in communicating across the area. Art and design managers find communication with cross-college senior managers difficult and, in English, EFL and foreign languages, there is an absence of effective management support for subject co-ordinators. Curriculum meetings in a number of areas are informal and minutes are not taken. In other areas, meetings rarely occur.

41. Quality assurance procedures aim to develop self-assessment reports from course review and to involve all staff, using three review days each year. The self-assessment report is produced in the Common Inspection Framework format and in some curriculum areas this is effectively used. In the engineering report, the analysis of teaching and learning is effectively informed by teaching observation. In other reports, analysis is less thorough and weaknesses are not readily identified. The system has not been effectively managed at course level. ICT has weak course reviews. Business lacks a systematic review process, fails to identify the courses' weaknesses, and does not systematically monitor its action plan. Hair and beauty therapy course reviews are inadequate and quality systems are poorly documented. In health and social care and early years, formal course reviews and course

evaluation are unavailable.

42. The annual teaching observation programme is well established, but the profile of grades determined indicates a lack of rigour, with 69% of lessons graded good or better. During the inspection, less than 50% of teaching was awarded good or better grades, with more than 15% considered less than satisfactory. It is clear that teaching observation has not effectively identified the many weaknesses that became evident during inspection. Published pass rates in 2001 are well below national averages. In 2002, they improved, particularly at level 3, where they are now well above national averages. Retention rates were at or above national averages over the three years to 2001/02, although this is based upon often unreliable data in 2000 and 2001. Reliability has improved in 2002.

43. Weak data recording and analysis contributed to the college's financial crisis. Management information for effective quality analysis of pass, retention and attendance rates has also been weak. Firm data have not been available from the centre to enable accurate evaluation of performance at course level. Governors who serve on the learning quality committee identified unreliable pass and retention rates and admission statistics as an obstacle to effective evaluation of college performance. Senior managers have been slow to move to improve the situation, but in the months leading to the inspection more accurate data on the current courses have been developed. The college is also developing a course cost analysis model.

44. The college has successfully moved the Reigate School of Art, Design and Media into new purpose-built premises on its main site. The old site in Reigate has been successfully sold. Relationships with local partner schools are good and the college has developed a partnership with a local 11 to 18 school, increasing the range of GCE AS and A2 courses available to students in both institutions. During the year, some 300 pupils aged 14 to 16 from local schools attend a range of courses as part of their programme. Links with local industry are good, particularly in engineering and on early years courses.

45. The college revised its equality of opportunity policy earlier this year. Within the policy, a statement promoting race equality is evident. The college intends to develop equality of opportunity and racial awareness topics in the tutorial programme and plans to monitor the admission and progress of students by ethnic group in 2003/04. Staff appointments are monitored for ethnic origins, staff development and promotions are not. Governors and managers have been given training in relation to SENDA and all other staff will be trained in July 2003. Admission policies and procedures have been reviewed.

46. The principal has not been appraised for the last three years. He appraises members of the senior management team and all other staff are appraised by their line managers. This is planned to occur annually through the professional development review. Some 75% of staff have been reviewed so far this year, which is an improvement on previous years. Curriculum areas generally produce training plans developed from these reviews, but this year this has not happened. There is no overall delivery plan for staff development and no overall evaluation of how it is contributing to the college's development needs. The governors do not receive an annual report. While teaching observation is used to inform many professional development reviews, it does not systematically contribute to an overt teaching improvement programme.

47. Despite the college' s moderate increase in student numbers in 2002/03, there remain a large number of small teaching groups. This, and the many poorly attended lessons, including for key skills, indicates a measure of inefficient staff deployment. The college continues to run with a large deficit. These factors, together with the extent of unsatisfactory teaching and provision, identify the college as failing to provide value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas
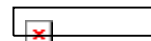
Construction
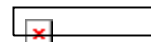
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o   some good and improving pass and retention rates

- o   good practical training in workshops.

Weaknesses

- o   less than satisfactory teaching, learning and attainment in many lessons on technician courses

- o   poor integration and development of key skills

- o   late introduction of work-based assessment for modern apprentices

- o   inadequate aspects of workshops and technician support

- o   poor students' attendance

- o   poor leadership and management.

Scope of provision

48. Construction offers foundation, intermediate and advanced level programmes for craft and technician students. These include City and Guilds and Open College Network (OCN) courses, NVQ programmes and foundation modern apprenticeships for work-based learners. Courses are also offered for GNVQ at foundation level and for Key Stage 4 school

pupils. Current programmes include trowel occupations, carpentry and bench joinery, plumbing, painting and decorating, and electrical installation. National diploma and certificate programmes are offered for building and civil engineering technicians. There are some short courses to satisfy the needs of employers and students. Flexible modes of attendance are offered. At the time of inspection, there were 257 students, of whom, 124 were adults. There were some 40 employed foundation modern apprentices, about half of whom were on the college's own scheme.

Achievement and standards

49. In 2002, pass rates were high on all courses and above national averages, except for levels 2 and 3 in electrical installation and for level 2 in plumbing. They were often low in earlier years. Retention rates on many courses have risen over the three years from 2000. In 2002, retention rates were high and above national averages on many courses, although in the wood occupations they were low. Most students achieve good standards in their practical assignments, often early in their training programme. They have a high awareness of health and safety requirements. Students' progress, relative to their prior attainments, is particularly good in their practical work. In theory lessons, the attainment of national level, technician students and level 3 electrical installation students is often less than satisfactory. The latter had difficulty in making comparisons between DC generators and motors, understanding Fleming's left hand rule and armature reactions and resolving simple equations involving Ohm's Law.

50. The standards of students' portfolios range from satisfactory to very good. The few best examples are word-processed, contain brief explanations, are cross-referenced and contain good work-based evidence. The less effective examples have extensive copied text, with few photographs and copies of pages from textbooks. Students' attendance rates are low, at only 62% in the lessons observed during the inspection.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds brickwork	2	No. of starts	13	18	28
		% retention	62	72	71
		% pass rate	63	38	80
City and Guilds wood occupations	2	No. of starts	18	39	39
		% retention	72	90	59
		% pass rate	15	40	91
City and guilds painting and decorating	2	No. of starts	14	17	24
		% retention	79	65	83
		% pass rate	0	27	95
NVQ / City and Guilds electrical installation	2	No. of starts	52	12	57
		% retention	90	92	83
		% pass rate	38	0	47
OCN plumbing	2	No. of starts	19	12	17
		% retention	95	92	86
		% pass rate	11	91	57
National certificate in	3	No. of starts	6	9	11

engineering		% pass rate	67	71	100
GNVQ the built environment (AVCE in 2002)	3	No. of starts	6	5	5
		% retention	83	100	80
		% pass rate	60	80	100
NQV / City and Guilds electrical installation	3	No. of starts	10	*	14
		% retention	80	*	100
		% pass rate	38	*	21

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

* data unavailable

Quality of education and training

51. Only in a minority of lessons are teaching and learning good or better. This is largely in practical workshop lessons, where teaching is well planned and good in all crafts. Students are well motivated and display good technical knowledge. They work without direct supervision, at a pace suiting them. In a first-year electrical installation practical lesson the teacher demonstrated how to strip and terminate an MICC cable. Students were effectively involved and one repeated the demonstration to the class to reinforce the principles. Practical training programmes are well developed and comprehensive, enabling students to work to good industrial standards.

52. Much of the large amount of less than satisfactory teaching and learning is in theory and key skills lessons, often for technician students. In some, there is no variation of activity and students passively listen, with their understanding not systematically checked. In other lessons, many lose interest when teachers talk too much and when presentations are dull and uninspiring. In a very poor environmental science lesson, students spent an hour copying down formulae and written text from the whiteboard concerning the flow of water through pipes. They were not given opportunities to use this simple formulae to resolve problems or to demonstrate their understanding. Some students waste valuable time making copious notes from textbooks and handouts in compiling their portfolios. They become unmotivated. Assignment work for technician students is at levels much lower than would normally be expected. Many assignments in technology are unchallenging and too simple.

53. Key skills lessons are ineffective for most students because teachers do not set the work in a vocational context and students do not understand their relevance. The many teachers of key skills do little to link their activities across the three skills. The experience is much better for plumbing students, where key skills are aligned to work. Many key skills are developed in students' occupational studies but are not recorded or accredited.

54. In some workshops, restricted workspace poses potential health and safety hazards when all students attend. Painting and decorating areas are inadequate. Students sometimes use a main corridor, which is an escape route, for their work. Some teaching rooms are cluttered and in need of decoration, furniture is old and classrooms are not arranged to facilitate effective learning. There is too little technician support in painting and decorating and in the wood occupations area. The electrical installation workshop is well organised and maintained and space is effectively utilised. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and many are trained as teachers.

55. Assessment and verification are often carried out systematically and to awarding body requirements. Assessment is particularly good for electrical installation students. Practical assessments are planned and are available when students feel confident about succeeding. Most know what they have achieved and what they have still to do. The introduction of work-based assessment for modern apprentices has been tardy. Some apprentices find it difficult

to obtain work-based evidence. Staff have only recently been appointed to carry out work-based assessment and this will delay the completion of apprenticeship framework qualifications. Some written assignments on technicians' courses lack detailed comments about how improvements could be made.

56. Students are satisfactorily supported and encouraged to achieve. They have good access to staff outside of lessons and most have regular tutorials to review their progress, although individual learning plans are not used as working documents to track achievements and progress. There is no formal review process to help set short-term targets for students. Full-time students' induction introduces them to their course and emphasises aspects of health and safety. They have a very limited understanding of equal opportunities issues.

Leadership and management

57. Leadership and management are poor. There is little monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and the weaknesses in teaching, learning and attainment are not recognised. Pass and retention data are not effectively used to seek improvement and are not well understood by teachers. Significant weaknesses in the assessment of work-based learners are only recently being addressed. Key skills provision is not managed. Regular programme area meetings are held and minuted, but action points are not identified in all meetings. The self-assessment report is produced from teachers' course review meetings.

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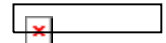
Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- o   high retention and pass rates on many courses

- o   good links with employers

- o   productive work experience for full-time motor vehicle students

- o   high retention rates for advanced modern apprentices

- o   good assessment and internal verification for work-based motor vehicle students

- o   strong work-based learning for aeronautical learners

o   good use of projects to develop practical skills.

Weaknesses

o   lack of activity- based classroom learning

o   poor learning environment and some poor teaching and learning resources

o   low pass rates for foundation modern apprentices and NVQ learners

o   inadequate assessment for aeronautical work-based learning

o   little sharing of good practice between the engineering and motor vehicle sections

o   poor management of literacy and numeracy and key skills.

Scope of provision

58. Programmes are offered in mechanical, production, aviation, electronic and motor vehicle engineering. There are currently 125 full-time and 160 part-time students, following programmes from level 1 to level 3. Additionally, a small group of entry level motor vehicle students is working towards a practical award. Some part-time evening classes are offered, in computer-aided draughting and design and microcomputer installation, for example. There are foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships and NVQ training in motor vehicle, aviation and mechanical engineering, currently with 115 work- based learners. Both engineering and motor vehicle sections have an expanding school links programme and currently contract with 12 schools, enrolling 54 students.

Achievement and standards

59. Many courses have high pass and retention rates. These are above national averages on the City and Guilds aeronautical engineering competences, the NVQ vehicle mechanical and electrical systems, the national diploma and the City and Guilds motor vehicle repair and maintenance courses. They have fallen on the City and Guilds progression award and the first diploma in engineering, but are close to the relatively low national averages. Retention rates for many work-based learners are high. Of the 49 learners who started their advanced modern apprenticeships in 2001/02, 94% are still in learning. Similarly, 60% and 63% of advanced modern apprentices are still in learning after starting in the previous two

years. Pass rates, however, are low for foundation modern apprentices and for NVQ work-based learners. Only 14% and 20% for the former passed in 1999/2000 and 2000/01, respectively.

60. Students' practical work is of a high standard and demonstrates good skills development. Their products are increasingly more complex, requiring a wide range of techniques. Engineering projects of a highly technical nature develop students' skills. In aeronautical engineering, students are building a twin-seated aircraft, requiring the application of all civil aviation regulations for the issue of airworthiness certification. Full-time motor vehicle engineering students work on, and maintain, the college's saloon racing cars. Students also assist at the race circuits. Students show a high level of understanding of engineering principles in their lessons.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds 6956 progression award in motor vehicle servicing	1	No. of starts	*	27	16
		% retention	*	59	60
		% pass rate	*	75	67
City and Guilds 3992 motor vehicle repair and maintenance	1	No. of starts	135	15	129
		% retention	80	93	81
		% pass rate	87	64	80
First diploma in engineering	2	No. of starts	35	32	27
		% retention	80	81	77
		% pass rate	92	64	65
City and Guilds 2590-2 aeronautical engineering competences	2	No. of starts	18	37	38
		% retention	83	94	92
		% pass rate	85	80	80
NVQ vehicle mechanical and electronic systems	3	No. of starts	41	18	32
		% retention	58	100	94
		% pass rate	61	89	86
National diploma in engineering	3	No. of starts	60	59	31
		% retention	80	79	97
		% pass rate	68	92	90

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

61. The majority of teaching is satisfactory, but with no inspired or outstanding teaching. Teachers rely heavily on teaching methods that do not encourage the active participation of students and leave them uninterested. Teachers do not use modern training aids. In one lesson, for example, the teacher explained the theory of flight by using his hand rather than realistic models. In a motor vehicle lesson, students worked in pairs, as customer and service manager, to reinforce the importance of giving and keeping accurate estimates of repair costs. Unfortunately, the impact of learning was lessened as the practice reception area was not used. Some teachers use simplistic whiteboard drawing and diagrammatic

handouts when explaining the layout and operation of highly complex engineering systems and components. Supporting handouts are often direct copies from aviation technical manuals and are too complex for students.

62. Practical lessons are linked well to theory lessons. Lesson plans clearly show teachers' objectives and planned links. Teachers regularly reinforce correct and safe workshop practices. The motor vehicle section has invested in some professionally produced computer-based learning programmes. The graphics and diagrams are of high quality and teachers produce copies, enhancing students' portfolios.

63. Full-time motor vehicle students take part in effective planned work experience. There are no arrangements for full-time aeronautical students. Work-based aeronautical learners participate in a wide variety of engineering practices within their companies, enhancing their skills under the guidance and supervision of qualified and experienced engineering supervisors.

64. Students receive, and value, good personal support from their engineering teachers, although more formal means of support are underdeveloped. Group tutorials, for example, are poorly attended and basic skills and additional learning support needs are insufficiently addressed in teaching. Teachers are experienced and qualified in their areas of expertise. Those without current teaching qualifications are working towards them and are also encouraged to take part in other training.

65. There are many aspects of the learning environment and of teaching and learning resources which present a shabby image of engineering. Housekeeping is poor, with a need to tidy up and in some cases redecorate teaching areas. In some, there are old and poor quality displays. Other classrooms are littered with a range of motor vehicle components, some of which have not been used for some considerable time. Some learning materials used in aeronautical engineering teaching are poorly developed. Many handouts are of poor quality and often text heavy. Practical workshops have an adequate range of industry standard equipment and hand tools, generally well maintained and complying with health and safety requirements.

66. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory for college-based students. In work-based motor vehicle engineering, the comprehensive outcomes of regular planned visits to work placements are thoroughly recorded and stored on computer, to form the basis of learners' portfolios. Employers take a keen interest and often take part in assessments and reviews. In contrast, assessment practice is poor in work-based aeronautical engineering. Assessors visit the workplace infrequently and do not observe any workplace activity by the students. There is no system for monitoring, identifying or planning work-based assessment.

Leadership and management

67. Day-to-day management is largely satisfactory. Managers have reduced the range of courses offered to reflect the needs of employers and the aspirations of young people and adults. Good links with local employers and with some major companies benefit students and have led to an increase in provision. Self-assessment is underdeveloped, although inspectors agreed with some of the judgements in the report. There is little sharing of good practice or joint working between the engineering and motor vehicle sections. Different work-based assessment practices result, with some being ineffective.

68. Literacy and numeracy and key skills are poorly managed. The outcomes of students' initial assessments, the work of learning support tutors and students' attendance and progress at support lessons are unknown to engineering teachers. Key skills are not taught or assessed in the context of engineering and students' do not see their relevance, attending and achieving poorly.

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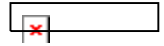
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o high pass rates on AVCE business studies and certificate in personnel practice courses

- o high retention rates on most courses

- o good work experience.

Weaknesses

- o too much unsatisfactory teaching

- o low pass rates for accounting level 2 and book-keeping level 1

- o unsatisfactory initial assessment and provision of key skills

- o inadequately managed and co-ordinated support for students

- o insufficiently robust tutorials

- o poor management

- o low attendance rates.

Scope of provision

69. Courses range from the level 1 `skills in the workplace' and `return to employment' programmes to higher level part-time professional and management courses, such as the certificate in management and Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) programmes. AVCE and GCE A-level programmes are offered, including some community provision for the latter. There are 55 full-time students, aged 16 to 18, and 276 part-time students, who are mainly adults. Additionally, approximately 600 students are enrolled through the `learning library', on distance learning book-keeping courses. Short courses are available, in such areas as computerised accounting.

Achievement and standards

70. Retention rates on most courses are high and often above national averages, especially on the part-time professional courses. Pass rates, however, present a much more mixed picture. They are consistently high for the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) certificate in personnel practice and were well above the national average for the AVCE business in 2002. In contrast, pass rates are very low for the NVQ accounting, level 2, at 20 percentage points below the national average in 2002, and for the stage 1 bookkeeping. No students passed the certificate in marketing in 2001 although, in 2002, the pass rate recovered to near the national average.

71. Most students' work, in lessons and in their written work, is of a satisfactory standard or higher, although first-year AVCE students only just achieve pass standard in their assignments. Some of the work of the professional studies students is of very good quality. Students' attendance is often poor and many registers show long-term non-attendance for modules, although students have not been withdrawn. During the week of the inspection, attendance in lessons observed was only 63%. Both full-time and part-time students have many opportunities to move from level 1 to level 2 programmes and to combine qualifications within their programmes. However, the level 2 certificate in administration students have no opportunity to progress to a level 3 administration course.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Book-keeping	1	No. of starts	8	8	8
		% retention	13	88	100
		% pass rate	10	43	12
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	43	33	22
		% retention	58	52	73
		% pass rate	0	88	50
GCE AS business studies	3	No. of starts	*	13	21
		% retention	*	77	81
		% pass rate	*	80	76
CIM certificate in marketing	3	No. of starts	12	9	9
		% retention	50	78	89
		% pass rate	83	0	38
CIPD certificate in personnel practice	3	No. of starts	23	32	32
		% retention	91	100	97

		% pass rate	90	94	97
GNVQ advanced business (course changed to AVCE business in 2002)	3	No. of starts	31	22	17
		% retention	68	91	77
		% pass rate	75	50	92

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

72. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers pay too little attention to students' individual learning needs and provide too few opportunities for students' involvement. Some lessons are inadequately planned and structured, with poor use of time and coverage of topics. In a business administration lesson, intended to cover new aspects of theory, the teacher allowed the emphasis to shift to examination preparation. As this was unplanned, neither revision nor the new topic was effectively covered. Often, teachers do not provide feedback to students on their work before moving to another task. Within revision lessons, little imagination is used to make them interesting and interactive. No use is made of ILT. Poor management of some lessons results in too little attention being paid to health and safety. Some rooms are untidy, with trailing cables, and students use their computer keyboards on their laps. In better lessons, there are good links to business practice and use of appropriate terminology and examples.

73. Good use is made of work experience for NVQ assessment and evidence towards students' main qualification. The certificate in management studies and certificate in personnel practice students use aspects of a weekend residential as evidence for their personal development journal.

74. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory. Assignment briefs are detailed and there is a comprehensive system of moderation on the professional courses. Teachers design appropriate and relevant materials to support learners, such as handouts and practice assignments, using the implications of the congestion charge and the issues surrounding the Euro as topics.

75. There is no systematic initial assessment to inform teachers about students' literacy, numeracy and key skills needs. Some initial assessment results for current students had only just been given to teachers in May and some tests had only recently been conducted. The provision of key skills is inadequate. There are only two full-time students learning key skills and AVCE students with full exemptions at level 2 are unable to undertake key skills at level 3 in the first year of the course.

76. The monitoring of students' progress is largely informal and target setting for improvement is underdeveloped. However, students are generally aware of how well they are doing. They receive constructive and critical verbal and written feedback. Within the level 1 programme, students are encouraged to monitor their own progress and have designed innovative charts and graphs, which are displayed within their base room. Most course teams have developed their own detailed tracking systems for monitoring students' progress.

77. Whilst students receive good personal support from teachers, formal support is poorly managed and unco-ordinated. All students have a weekly group tutorial, but do not receive their entitlement for individual tutorials. Although the college-wide tutorial programme for level 1 students is relevant and comprehensive, it is unsuccessful for other business students and has to be supplemented by impromptu arrangements from teachers. The learning library's distance learning students receive full information about the college's

services and facilities and, if they attend the college for assessment, use them.

78. There is a good range of professional expertise within course teams. The majority of teachers have teaching qualifications. At the time of inspection, two new teachers were yet to start their training. Classrooms are large and well equipped with computers. Both in-house and bought-in learning resources are available to students. Although many purchase their own reference books, there is a wide selection available in the library.

Leadership and management

79. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is only one full-time teacher and there has been no permanent management for five months. The interim manager's role is unclear, as there is no job description. The temporary curriculum area manager was due to leave on the last day of the inspection. This lack of permanence and substance to leadership impacts on curriculum management. Teachers' meetings are infrequent and there is little sharing of experiences and of good practice. The distance learning provision has no clear management. The lack of management and analysis of this programme is replicated throughout the curriculum, with little evaluation of the experience of students and little quality assurance of learning, including the inadequate use of student data to inform improvement. Self-assessment is unsatisfactory. The action plan is not followed and progress is not monitored. Course reviews are unsystematic and are not completed against set standards or criteria. Observation of teaching and learning are not linked to staff development and appraisal and staff are not fully supported to attend professional training events.

Information and communications technology
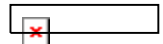
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o high retention rates on the CLAIT and GCE AS ICT courses

- o high pass rates on some courses in 2000 and 2002

- o well-equipped community venues with good technical support.

Weaknesses

- o low retention rate on the GNVQ intermediate IT course

- o low pass rates for some years on City and Guilds and AVCE ICT courses

- o   less than satisfactory teaching and attainment in many lessons

- o   inadequate provision of key skills

- o   poor computer resources on the main college site

- o   insufficient tutorial and learning support for students

- o   unsatisfactory leadership and quality systems.

Scope of provision

80. The full-time provision, for some 65 students, includes GNVQ IT at foundation and intermediate levels, AVCE ICT and GCE AS ICT. There are progression opportunities from level 1 to level 3. At the time of inspection, for the academic year 2002/03, there have been 1,940 enrolments on part-time courses. These are offered at the main college sites and at a variety of community venues. Courses include introductory programmes in CLAIT. City and Guilds courses include start IT, ICT basics, e-quals and the national certificate for IT practitioners. Adults can start learning at entry level and progress to the level 3 national certificate for IT practitioners.

Achievement and standards

81. In 2000, the pass rates on CLAIT, City and Guilds 4242, and the GNVQ foundation and intermediate programmes in IT were high and well above national averages. Although they all dropped to below national averages in 2001, pass rates on these courses are improving and are now again above national averages. Pass rates on the City and Guilds 7261 are below average overall, although the students based at the main site all passed. AVCE pass rates are unsatisfactory in two of the last three years. Retention rates are consistently high on the City and Guilds 4242 and CLAIT courses, but low on the GNVQ intermediate IT course for the last three years. For those students who complete the course, the pass rate is high.

82. Students' attainment is satisfactory or above in most lessons, but unsatisfactory in a substantial minority. In a second-year AVCE computing lesson, students used an inappropriate, simple software package as a tool for graphic design and did not acquire any new skills. Both full-time and part-time students progress satisfactorily. Some 58% of full-time students progressed from level 1 to level 2 in 2002, 46% to level 3 and 40% to HE. Attendance is less than the national average and students arrive late at too many lessons.

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 4242 basic competence in IT (short)	1	No. of starts	175	81	132
		% retention	93	100	94
		% pass rate	78	68	89
City and Guilds ICT certificate in computer applications	1	No. of starts	139	55	224
		% retention	75	100	52
		% pass rate	100	55	60
CLAIT	1	No. of starts	418	54	61
		% retention	86	87	95
		% pass rate	80	51	78
GNVQ intermediate	2	No. of starts	29	26	26
		% retention	59	73	69
		% pass rate	88	26	83
GNVQ advanced IT (AVCE ICT in 2002)	3	No. of starts	40	39	31
		% retention	68	59	67
		% pass rate	58	74	68

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

Quality of education and training

83. Too much teaching is less than satisfactory, with too little teaching that is good or better. Weaker lessons are poorly planned and executed. Teachers pay inadequate attention to meeting the needs of all students, including providing adequate stimulus to the more able. In one lesson, where attendance was very low, the teacher was unfamiliar with some of the software packages being used and students were bored and uninterested. In another weak lesson, there was no lesson plan or record of students' progress. Students were trying to collate and complete three assignments that had been done over the year but not yet handed in.

84. In the better lessons, plans are clear, teachers are aware of individual students' needs and appropriate strategies are used to introduce new topics. In a lesson for adults, students used a spreadsheet for the very first time. The teacher had very good communication skills and presented new information clearly, using good analogies. The humour and positive reinforcement from the teacher ensured students' confidence and progress. In another good lesson, dealing with the Internet, the teacher motivated new adult students by getting them to determine the number of different toothpastes available from a national chain of chemists. Students were surprised to find 94 different types available and were motivated to use the Internet further.

85. Key skills are not taught in the context of students' vocational programmes. Lessons are very poorly attended and students do not understand the relevance of developing these skills. Students' key skills needs are diagnosed at the start of the year but timetabling often inhibits attendance at appropriate lessons. Intermediate students have little opportunity for key skills experience. Some vocational assignments list the key skills criteria that could be assessed, but assessment does not always take place. Students on the AVCE course have two weeks of work experience, but the key skills diary they produce is not used.

86. Assignment programmes are insufficiently planned and are unevenly spread, resulting in bunching towards the end of the course. Many assignment feedback forms are incomplete

and lack supportive comments. Some feedback also lacks challenging and time constrained attainment targets. Students are clear about the criteria for grading. Students' progress is satisfactorily monitored, with some good use of progress reports to monitor attainment. Some good supportive feedback comments are given to students from the internal verification process. Good action plans are produced based on external verifiers' reports, and are available to teachers, but there is no recorded evidence of actions being completed.

87. Many aspects of learning support are insufficiently effective. Whilst most students receive good initial guidance, their induction is often unsatisfactory. It is too short and does little to familiarise them with the college, their programme or their peer group. Induction at the Horley and Caterham Valley centres is effective, identifying students' needs and abilities. Much learning support offered is too late and sometimes it is not offered or provided. In many cases, teachers are unaware of what has been planned for their students. Tutorials do not provide a consistent level of support. Whilst some outcomes of tutorials are well documented and include time-constrained action points, one tutorial was conducted without reference to any record of the student's progress, attendance or punctuality. It was the student's first tutorial, even though it was eight months after the start of the course.

88. Computer resources at the main college are poor and much of the hardware is out of date. The regular replacement of computers has been halted owing to financial constraints. As software is upgraded haphazardly, students frequently encounter problems transferring files between different product versions of the same software. There are no colour printing facilities in computer rooms. An electronic whiteboard and data projector are available to teachers but are seldom used. Some computer furniture is inappropriate and computers are sometimes too close together. Staff are aware of the adaptive devices available for students with physical disabilities and one computer room has specialist computer work desks for wheelchair users. There are good, industry standard, computer resources at the some of the community venues but one centre has no access for wheelchair users and another has a cramped working environment and poor ventilation. Teachers are well qualified and over 90% have a teaching qualification.

Leadership and management

89. There is unsatisfactory leadership as there is no manager for the area. There is no strategy for curriculum and staff development or resource allocation. The self-assessment report and course reviews are insufficiently rigorous to lead to improvement. Management of courses and the community venues is satisfactory. Course teams make great efforts to support their students, but poor communication leads to insufficient attention to many aspects of student support. Students attend some course team meetings and their views are discussed and some actions taken. Lesson observation grades from the college's own scheme of observation are aggregated for the whole business curriculum area and cannot be separately identified for IT teaching. The area has drafted a procedures manual which gives good guidance to new and part-time staff. New staff are also allocated a mentor. The level of staff development has been low and often relies on the use of books, journals and self-study by teachers.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy
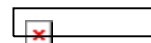
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o   high and improving pass rates on some courses

- o good standard of written work

- o good support for students.

Weaknesses

- o low attendance rates

- o too much unsatisfactory teaching

- o insufficient opportunities for the development of commercial skills

- o inappropriate placement of students on programmes

- o lack of progression routes for full-time hairdressing students

- o poor management.

Scope of provision

90. Full-time courses include beauty therapy at levels 2 and 3 and hairdressing at level 1. There are currently 49 students aged 16 to 18 and 17 adults following full-time courses. Some 85 adults and 23 students aged 16 to 18 are enrolled on part-time courses. These include hairdressing NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3, beauty therapy NVQ level 2, aromatherapy, reflexology, Indian head massage, body massage, fashion and photographic make-up, theatrical and media make-up courses. There are 10 college work-based learning students. Other courses include two schools link courses for hairdressing for students aged 14 to 16, with progression opportunities to hairdressing NVQ level 1 and a weekend course in beauty therapy. Students have the option to gain additional qualifications and skills in related areas.

Achievement and standards

91. Some pass rates, such as for level 1 hairdressing, are now high and well above national averages, having considerably improved since 2001. Other pass rates are improving, although they are still below national averages, including those for NVQ beauty therapy levels 2 and 3, and reflexology. Retention rates are usually satisfactory, although they were

low for the level 1 hairdressing course in 2002. In- year retention rates for 2002/03 have improved for the full-time NVQ hairdressing level 1 and beauty therapy level 3 courses, but the rate for NVQ beauty therapy level 2 is low.

92. Many lessons are poorly attended. Overall attendance in lessons inspected was only 62%, which is well below the national average. Many students do not attend key skill lessons and this has not been addressed by the college. Students' attainment in lessons is largely satisfactory and their standard of practical work is satisfactory to good. However, as all prospective hairdressing students are enrolled on level 1 programmes, regardless of their prior attainments and education, many are not achieving the standards they are capable of. Students on the hairdressing level 1 course demonstrate skills of a much higher technical level in colouring and cutting. Portfolios have a range of evidence and are well presented and referenced. Students have demonstrated creativity in the production of assignments and there is some good use of IT. Students enter college and regional competitions. Whilst many students look smart in appearance, a professional dress code is not always enforced, both for students and teachers.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ hairdressing	1	No. of starts	*	17	40
		% retention	*	88	53
		% pass rate	*	**	100
NVQ hairdressing	2	No. of starts	68	43	
		% retention	50	74	83
		% pass rate	34	**	80
Indian head massage	2	No. of starts	13	22	12
		% retention	100	90	92
		% pass rate	**	**	91
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	12	31	10
		% retention	92	97	100
		% pass rate	82	**	70
Certificate in body massage	3	No. of starts	33	8	16
		% retention	79	75	75
		% pass rate	92	**	100
Reflexology	3	No. of starts	15	12	13
		% retention	93	75	100
		% pass rate	79	11	92

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

* course did not run
** data unreliable

Quality of education and training

93. A significant proportion of teaching is unsatisfactory and too little is better than satisfactory. In the weaker lessons, students are not given clear aims and objectives, or an

overview of the lesson, and teachers lack basic class management skills. In beauty therapy lessons, there is a lack of commercial pace, with the unproductive use of time, especially when client numbers are low. In one beauty therapy lesson, the teacher arrived late, provided no introduction to the lesson and spent most of the lesson seated at a desk. In most practical lessons, feedback is regularly given to individuals but is not used for the consolidation of the lessons. Health and safety issues are not always identified in lesson plans. Some theory lessons lack the range of teaching methods to accommodate different students' learning styles and provide little stimulation to improve learning.

94. In the better lessons, teachers demonstrate a sense of purpose and enthusiasm, manage the class well and use methods to engage students in productive activity for the whole lesson. In some beauty therapy lessons, students with clients work confidently and professionally.

95. Resources are adequate, but there are insufficient opportunities for the development of commercial skills, owing to the lack of clients in some practical lessons. The reception area is not fully operational and students miss opportunities to add to their experiences and skills. The area is large and unwelcoming, with poor décor and insufficient retail display and samples for students to develop retail sales skills. Two hairdressing salons and one beauty salon are situated on the ground floor, with good access for people with restricted mobility. The salons are modern, but in need of decorating. The equipment is good, although there are no nail stations. Students lack storage space for equipment. Up-to-date textbooks and videos are held within the area. Staff are well qualified and attend updating on curriculum development and technical skills. Some work within the industry.

96. Students are sometimes placed on inappropriate courses and at the wrong level. Prospective students' initial interviews do not involve subject specialist teachers and they do not always receive accurate course information. Initial assessment of students' skills and development needs does not always take place. Some students capable of level 2 hairdressing work are placed on level 1 programmes.

97. The college prospectus describes progression opportunities for full-time hairdressing students, but these are not available. There is no full-time level 2 programme and level 1 students can only progress to a higher level by attending the part-time level 2 programmes.

98. Students are well supported for their study and personal needs. Students find staff friendly, helpful and supportive. The learning support assistant is a vocational specialist. Students receive curriculum support from their course tutor in the `improving your own learning' sessions. Students usually have three individual meetings a year with a pastoral tutor. They can take additional vocationally related courses, but there are few enrichment opportunities. Work experience is not systematically provided for all full-time students.

99. Assessments and students' progress are well documented, using a tracking system displayed on the salon walls and the completion of assessment books. Students have regular reviews at which targets are set and guidance is offered. Teachers regularly discuss students' progress with them. There are some weak assessment practices and internal verification has been inadequately planned to be effective from the start of the course.

Leadership and management

100. The management of the area is unsatisfactory. Staff are motivated and have worked hard to develop the area, but they are inadequately supported in teaching their courses. The area does not have a curriculum specialist team leader and there is a staffing shortage with only one full-time teacher in post. There is insufficient planned training and guidance for new staff. Staff meetings are informal. There is a lack of administrative support for the production of course materials and minutes. Quality assurance for course and students' reviews lacks rigour. Students' key skills are not effectively developed within their main courses. Low attendance by students in key skills lessons is not tackled. The self-assessment report fails

to identify many weaknesses.**Health and social care and early years**

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

Strengths

- o   high pass and retention rates on early years programmes

- o   good teaching and learning

- o   good academic and pastoral care

- o   high standards of coursework.

Weaknesses

- o   low pass rates on health and social care courses

- o   poor learning environment for health and social care students

- o   inadequate management of key skills

- o   weak aspects of quality assurance.

Scope of provision

101. The college offers courses in health and social care and early years from entry to diploma level. There are currently 96 full-time students on childcare courses following the Council for Awards in Childcare and Education (CACHE) diploma in early years care and education at level 3, and at levels 1 and 2, the CACHE foundation and certificate programme. All current students are female. There is an increasing part-time NVQ provision, which has 25 students. A repeating six-week introductory programme in child minding practice is also offered and is a popular course. There are 32 full-time care students on the GNVQ intermediate or the AVCE health and social care courses and 22 are enrolled on the foundation and intermediate counselling courses. There are currently four male students on programmes. There is no provision at foundation level, for NVQs or for part-time courses in health and social care. The full-time students are predominantly aged 16 to 18 and the part-time students are mostly adults.

Achievement and standards

102. Retention rates on early years programmes are high. For the full-time programmes they are consistently above national averages. Pass rates are also high, with all students consistently passing, on both of the CACHE programmes. In contrast, pass rates for health and social care courses are low. The AVCE and GNVQ intermediate health and social care pass rates are well below national averages. A number of the students enrolled on these programmes have additional learning support needs which have impeded full achievement. Some students have been enrolled inappropriately on intermediate programmes because there is no provision at foundation level. Some courses recruit students who have previously been excluded from school or have underachieved. Where full qualifications have not been gained, some students have benefited from the wider curriculum of their programme and have achieved unit accreditation. Retention rates for health and social care progammes are well above the national averages and reflect the additional personal support and guidance provided by course teachers. The introduction to child minding practice course has high retention and pass rates.

103. The standard of the students' oral, written and creative work in lessons is good. Their coursework files are very well organised and their class notes well ordered. Portfolios provide good evidence of achievements and of students' appropriate progress. Many students are able to work independently from their own materials. AVCE students' attainment is satisfactory. Students' attendance and punctuality are poor on some courses although, at the time of the inspection, many courses provided revision lessons where attendance was not compulsory.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Foundation in counselling	2	No. of starts	15	18	12
		% retention	87	83	67
		% pass rate	0	100	100
Introduction to child minding practice	2	No. of starts	*	13	32
		% retention	*	100	100
		% pass rate	*	100	97
CACHE certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	11	7	14
		% retention	100	100	71
		% pass rate	100	100	100
GNVQ advanced health and social care (AVCE in 2002)	3	No. of starts	12	13	12
		% retention	83	85	91
		% pass rate	60	18	60
CACHE diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	22	21	16
		% retention	100	100	94
		% pass rate	60	100	100

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

104. The teaching and learning in the majority of lessons are good or better. Only one lesson was judged to be less than satisfactory. Lessons are often carefully planned and use a wide range of teaching methods to meet the learning needs of individual students. During lessons, teachers regularly check students' knowledge and understanding. Reviews of work experience are used to develop theoretical understanding. There is active participation of students in most lessons. In a revision lesson on equality of opportunity, the teacher used real work scenarios creatively to generate discussion and debate. In one lesson, where individuals rights and responsibilities were being explored, a student shared personal experiences of having a medical condition and the impact of this on work and choice of career. In the weaker lessons, students are less engaged, learning objectives are unclear and understanding is not checked.

105. Good work placement opportunities enhance the learning of students. There is appropriate use of real work activities as evidence in NVQ portfolios.

106. Support for students is good. Students speak highly of the academic and pastoral support they receive. All full-time students have weekly, well-structured, tutorials with progression tutors. Most courses follow a carefully prepared and well-documented tutorial programme, which works particularly well for the advanced health and social care students, as their tutor is also their course teacher. Students' progress is carefully monitored using detailed procedures, with helpful and focused feedback from teachers to students. Clear targets are set and monitored. Peripatetic assessors are employed to support the assessment of part-time students on the early years childcare and education NVQ programmes. Improving your own learning lessons are delivered by course tutors and attendance and achievements are good.

107. Health and social care students have a poor physical environment in which to learn. They have no base classroom. Many of the general rooms they use are bare and uninspiring, with no relevant work or information displayed. They are often general teaching rooms, which makes it difficult for any relevant vocational focus to be made. In some lessons, inspectors noted the negative impact this has on the students' learning. There is a satisfactory learning environment for early years students, who have the use of three designated classrooms. This allows them to display their own work and create themed friezes and displays.

108. Teachers are appropriately qualified with varying work experiences. Opportunities for occupational updating for teachers are limited. There is a heavy reliance on part-time teachers in both aspects of the area's work, with only one full-time teacher for early years education and none for health and social care.

Leadership and management

109. Curriculum management overall is satisfactory, but rather disjointed. Whilst there is effective co-ordination of early years courses, that of the advanced health and social care programmes is hampered by the lack of a full-time co-ordinator and full-time teachers. The high incidence of fractional and part-time appointments produces operational management and communication difficulties. There are regular team meetings which address operational issues. Aspects of quality assurance are weak. Staff contribute to, and participate in the writing of, the self-assessment report. The report sometimes lacks detail and rigour. The monitoring of development plans is patchy. Whilst some course reviews take place in the form of class or team discussions, there is no formalised process. The development of students' key skills is inadequately managed. Attendance at key skills lessons is very poor and the skills are not effectively developed in the vocational context.

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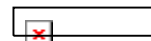
Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- o good achievements by students

- o much good teaching

- o high standard of students' work

- o excellent resources in new purpose-built accommodation.

Weaknesses

- o limited range of provision

- o lack of systematic management processes.

Scope of provision

110. The Reigate School of Art, Design and Media offers a range of full-time courses at levels 2, 3 and 4. This includes the intermediate level courses in mixed media art, national diplomas in art and design (fine art, photography, fashion and clothing and graphic design), the diploma in foundation studies in art and design, and higher national diplomas and certificates which cover the same subjects as the national diplomas, with the addition of calligraphy. There is also a range of part-time courses, both accredited and non-accredited, which includes City and Guilds in photography, home interiors and creative studies part 1 and 2. These run during the day and some run in the evening. In September 2002, a Saturday morning junior art class was started and it is proposed to provide an adult class at the same time next year. There are currently 149 full-time and 243 part-time students enrolled on all courses. All full-time and some part-time courses are located at the main college site, with many of the part-time courses offered in the community. There are falling enrolments on the national diploma in art and design.

Achievement and standards

111. Students' achievements are good. There are high retention rates on City and Guilds creative studies part 2 and photography, national diploma in art and design, and the diploma in foundation studies. Most pass rates are high for 2000 and 2002, with a fall in 2001. Pass rates are often below national averages on some of the City and Guilds courses, as a result of students joining the class for the experience or only completing one unit in a given year.

112. Students' progression rates are good from both the foundation and national diploma courses to HE and from intermediate level courses to the foundation and national diplomas. School pupils progress from the new junior art class to full-time courses. Adults also progress from part 1 to part 2 on City and Guilds courses and from these to appropriate higher national certificate and diploma courses.

113. There are good enrichment opportunities. These include end-of-year exhibitions of the work of students, a fashion show by media students, a permanent exhibition space, visits to London exhibitions and the Chelsea flower show, commissions for work in the local town hall and various college events.

114. Students' work in progress is of a good standard, as are finished pieces. Notably, there is good quality work in photography, fashion and textiles, and printmaking. Students are confident in their work and able to discuss it with ease and knowledge and are happy to work independently, often discussing and sharing with their peers. Students' drawing skills are poor in a few intermediate classes, hindering clear communication of ideas and solutions.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds introduction to home interiors	1	No. of starts	19	16	19
		% retention	68	63	74
		% pass rate	77	40	86
City and Guilds 7900 part 2 creative studies	2	No. of starts	19	*	33
		% retention	100	*	88
		% pass rate	14	*	66
National diploma in art and design (fine art, graphics and photography)	3	No. of starts	81	68	35
		% retention	74	66	94
		% pass rate	88	73	94
Diploma in foundation studies in art and design	3	No. of starts	51	63	50
		% retention	90	85	96
		% pass rate	85	98	92

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

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

115. There is much good teaching. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In the best lessons, students are given challenging and stimulating projects. For example, in a drawing class, students made small sketchbooks and were given a map of the college grounds with a route around it which they had to sketch and then sketch over with new images. From this they had to develop a range of drawings and develop these as multi-media paintings. Students responded with enthusiasm and commitment, producing a prolific range of good work. In the less successful lessons, group sizes are small. These are often workshops, where there is little teaching and the students are not purposefully engaged. Strategies for dealing with students' differing abilities or rates of progress are not always effective, particularly on the intermediate course.

116. The development of key skills is ineffective. There is no liaison between key skills teachers and school staff. The content of key skills lessons is not vocationally relevant and students simply do not attend. The school runs its own literacy support service to help those students who need support with contextual studies and other written work.

117. In September 2002 a new building was opened, with well-equipped studios and workshops for three-dimensional design, photography, media, computing and print making, and a versatile theatre. A CoVE award has further enhanced this excellent resource, allowing the purchase of the most modern computers, sound and radio studios, and photographic and video editing suites. The upper floors of two community venues and temporary classrooms are difficult to access for students with restricted mobility but offer comfortable learning spaces. There is a good library stock and library staff liaise with curriculum staff on new book purchases. The teacher in charge of the contextual studies programme holds a good slide and video selection, which is used in the lecture programmes, classes and by students as source and reference material. The teacher makes many of his own slides, particularly of very recent works not yet in publication.

118. Staff are well motivated and qualified, with some part- time staff making a good contribution to the course team and the work of their students beyond their contracted hours. All teachers have gained or are training for some form of teacher qualification. Many part-time staff are practising in their own fields.

119. There are some gaps in course provision, with mainly full-time level 2 and 3 courses on the main site and part-time level 1 and 2 courses in the community. There is currently no full-time level 1 course and little evening provision. The school understands that a level 1 course is necessary to address the issues of failing intermediate students. There are currently no GCE AS and A2 courses.

120. Assessments are fair and reflect proper standards. Students appreciate the honesty and regularity of assessments and they understand the aims and objectives and the requirements on themselves to meet these. There is both verbal and written feedback to them. External verifier reports confirm assessment outcomes.

121. Academic and pastoral support for students are good. Students find initial advice and guidance to be helpful and prompt. All full-time students have a thorough interview and receive a one-day induction. There is good on- course support from course tutors, progression tutors and central students' services. Students with learning support needs are identified through initial assessment, but this information can be slow to reach teachers. In several lessons observed, teachers had a list of such students and the action taken or needed.

Leadership and management

122. Many aspects of the day-to-day management of the area are satisfactory, but there is a lack of systematic management. There are incomplete student data, which does not support planning. Communication between course managers and college senior management is unsatisfactory so, for example, equality of opportunity matters are not addressed, such as access problems in community centres. Course leader teams and teaching teams meet on a regular basis and the formal meetings are minuted. However, these often do not inform the curriculum and the sharing of good practice. There is little standardisation of the recording of students' progress or of assignment presentation and little sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. Teachers are very supportive of lesson observations and their value, although they do not inform staff development activities.

123. The CoVE in digital media has made good progress. Additional courses have been started, there is increased flexibility of provision and local and national partnerships are being established.

English, English as a foreign language and foreign languages
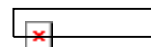
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o some high pass rates on GCE A-level English, GCE AS and GCSE Spanish and vocational language courses

- o good opportunities for progression on EFL and most language courses.

Weaknesses

- o low pass rates for many courses

- o too much unsatisfactory teaching and learning

- o insufficient development of oral skills in many lessons

- o unsystematic initial assessment of students' needs in English and foreign languages

- o inadequate recording and monitoring of students' progress

- o unsatisfactory management.

Scope of provision

124. The college offers a wide range of courses. Most students on English, EFL and foreign language courses are adults and some travel a considerable distance to attend the college. All EFL and foreign languages courses, and some English GCE AS and GCSE courses, are managed within the college's community learning provision. EFL and foreign language courses are available at seven of the college's larger centres and at a number of small local venues. At the time of inspection, 69 students had enrolled for English courses, 112 for EFL

and over 700 for modern languages. The latter are currently studying from eight languages, including Greek, Japanese and Russian.

Achievement and standards

125. Patterns of retention and pass rates vary throughout the provision. Many pass rates for courses in English, EFL and foreign languages are very low, and well below national averages. Some worsened considerably between 2000 and 2002 and in a few instances all students have failed their examinations. Retention rates are high for GCE A2 English and the pass rate in 2002 was 100%. Both the GCE AS and GCSE Spanish courses have high pass rates, but the retention rate for the former fell significantly in 2002. In 2002, according to college data, there were approximately 760 entries for OCN vocational language examinations. Both retention and pass rates were high, as were pass rates in the various London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) EFL examinations, taken by 50 students.

126. Students' attainment in some lessons is unsatisfactory. Whilst most students have good comprehension skills and have gained in confidence, they have insufficiently developed oral skills and poor pronunciation hinders communication. There are good internal progression opportunities for students in EFL and in most modern languages but there is a limited range of English courses.

A sample of retention and pass rates in English, English as a foreign language and foreign languages, 2000 to 2002

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Preliminary English test (short)	1	No. of starts	213	142	140
		% retention	83	92	93
		% pass rate	21	1	15
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	169	69	40
		% retention	77	81	80
		% pass rate	34	25	38
First certificate in English (short)	2	No. of starts	238	108	146
		% retention	82	96	93
		% pass rate	28	19	25
OCN French	2	No. of starts	**	**	113
		% retention	**	**	88
		% pass rate	**	**	88
GCSE Spanish	2	No. of starts	28	10	11
		% retention	57	80	82
		% pass rate	25	100	89
GCE AS English language and literature	3	No. of starts	*	13	29
		% retention	*	92	69
		% pass rate	*	67	65
GCE AS Spanish	3	No. of starts	*	23	14
		% retention	*	96	71
		% pass rate	*	59	78

Certificate in advanced English (short)	3	No. of starts	86	81	53
		% retention	76	85	94
		% pass rate	20	9	24

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

* course did not run
** data unavailable

Quality of education and training

127. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Few lessons are good or better. Teachers are enthusiastic and have a good rapport with students, supporting them well in lessons. Explanations of vocabulary, language structures and concepts are generally clear and humour is used to interest and stimulate students. Extensive use of the foreign language by teachers provides students with good role models. Students are mostly well motivated and industrious, working well together in class or in groups.

128. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching on English and foreign languages courses, with poor learning and attainment, although there is some good teaching on advanced level courses. In unsatisfactory lessons, there is often a lack of inspirational or imaginative teaching, with too great a reliance on textbook materials and mechanistic, teacher dominated tasks, which prevent the development of individual language skills. In such lessons, the needs of all students are not met. In one lesson, although the students were perfectly happy, their detailed coverage of theoretical concepts of the language and of the literature had done little to help them speak the language, which was the main object of the course. Although courses and lessons for EFL and foreign languages are mostly well planned, planning for English courses is poor.

129. Where teaching is better, teachers employ a range of planned strategies to promote active learning, often using authentic materials. In one GCE A-level English lesson, students were given the task of preparing a plan for tackling an examination question on a set text. They took responsibility for reporting and recording their findings on a comprehensive chart, with minor intervention from the teacher.

130. Almost all teachers have appropriate qualifications and subject knowledge and language teachers are fluent in the language they are teaching. Accommodation and basic teaching resources at centres are adequate. However, some sound equipment is of poor quality and hearing loops are not easily available for the hard of hearing. IT resources are not often used to support teaching and learning and there is poor access to these facilities away from the main site.

131. No systematic initial assessment of students' learning needs is in place for English and modern languages. Teachers are unable to match their teaching to students' individual needs and prior attainments in a planned way. In contrast, there is effective initial assessment and diagnostic testing for EFL students.

132. The recording and monitoring of students' progress is inadequate and individual learning plans are not used. Initial and ongoing assessment are not used to inform the planning of courses, lessons or individual students' needs. Most students' work is marked carefully with comments on how to improve. Vocational language coursework is moderated internally but there is no internal moderation of GCSE English coursework.

133. Students value the support they receive in their lessons and the confidence they gain. The college takes the trouble to find out why students may not be attending lessons

regularly and there is sufficient flexibility to allow them to change courses if wrongly placed. A student induction process has recently been introduced for the community provision. Enrichment opportunities are available to EFL students. Language teachers have active links with France and Germany. There are no enrichment opportunities for students on English courses.

Leadership and management

134. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is no effective senior management support for the two new part-time curriculum co-ordinators who manage the community-based provision. They work hard to co-ordinate over 70 part-time teachers on many sites. They are in contact with all teachers and provide support when possible. There is no effective college-wide management of English courses. Communication between centres is sometimes difficult and there is inadequate sharing of good practice. The curriculum co-ordinators hold meetings regularly but attendance is often poor. The take up of staff development is low. Self-assessment is underdeveloped. There are no formal course reviews and there is inadequate use of data for analysing, monitoring and reviewing performance. Student data, even student enrolments, are difficult to obtain and are often unreliable. Some steps have already been taken to introduce course reviews and customised individual learning plans for students and to upgrade resources.

Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

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

Strengths

- o good use of practical activities to develop students' skills

- o wide range of programme options and progression opportunities

- o good personal support for students.

Weaknesses

- o insufficiently detailed individual learning plans

- o insufficient teaching resources for community provision

- o inadequate sharing of good practice.

Scope of provision

135. The college provides discrete programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on a full-time and part-time basis. Programmes are delivered at the main college site and from five main community centres within Surrey. The full-time life skills and skills for working life programmes are delivered at the college's main site. The life skills programme offers modules in literacy, numeracy, IT, independent living skills, cooking and hygiene, safety in the home, and shopping and is certificated at levels 1 and 2. The skills for working life programme offers literacy, numeracy, IT, health and safety, and two or three vocational units from such areas as art and design, hairdressing and beauty therapy, business and retail, and practical skills including woodwork, brickwork and motor vehicle. The programme is offered at levels 2 and 3, and is also a progression route for life skills students. The community-based programmes offer a range of modules to develop progress towards independent living, including, travel and transport, cooking and hygiene, and shopping. A variety of practical activities are provided to develop students' behavioural and communication skills, including art and craft, pottery, sewing and drama. These programmes are offered on a part-time basis but many students attend more than one module. There are currently 438 students overall. Most students are aged over 19 years; 13 students are aged 16 to 18. Some 26 students attend on a full-time basis.

Achievement and standards

136. Students' achievements are satisfactory. They make appropriate progress towards their learning goals and their portfolios of evidence contain a wide range of work at suitable levels. In lessons, students demonstrate satisfactory attainment of skills. Retention rates are satisfactory, at 84% on college-based courses and 92% for community provision, and are comparable to national averages. Many students on community programmes are provided with transport to lessons and this increases retention and attendance rates.

137. Individual learning plans are insufficiently detailed. They have overall aims and objectives but these are related to the tasks that students undertake and not the individual learning aims of the students. The plans are not informed by the initial assessment of students' learning needs. Teachers attempt to meet the individual needs of students but these are not formally recorded in lesson plans. Some students know which targets they are working towards but many do not. These aspects for improvement are recognised by the college and staff training on the use of individual learning plans is planned for July 2003.

138. A wide range of programme options at different levels meets the needs of individual students. Many students progress from the life skills to the skills for working life course and some progress to level 1 provision within vocational areas. Students attend courses on average for between one and three years, and some may stay longer dependent on their needs.

Quality of education and training

139. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory or better. In the best lessons, there is good use of practical activities to develop students' skills. For example, cookery and shopping activities are used effectively to develop their confidence and communication, literacy and numeracy skills. In one lesson, students measured quantities for recipes. Many students have significant behavioural problems and sessions such as art and craft develop good communication and behavioural skills, whilst developing skills towards independent living. In the better lessons, teachers reinforce students' personal objectives and give praise when students make progress.

140. Teaching resources for community provision, ranging from basic teaching and learning aids to specialist computer software, are insufficient. Those available are used to good effect but often teachers have to make do or supply their own. Access to computers is limited and there are inadequate resources to support students who are unable to read and write. Where possible, in some venues, local education authority resources are used, including computer-based packages that use symbols and words for those with poor literacy skills. Resources at the college's main site are satisfactory and the symbols are used frequently

within lessons. The adapted IT available is of a good standard and includes large visual display screens that magnify text, a roller ball mouse and joystick, and a Braille translator. Some students using wheelchairs cannot effectively access workstations, as the desks are not at an appropriate height.

141. Initial assessment comprises a satisfactory pre-entry literacy, numeracy and personal effectiveness assessment. More able students also complete a literacy and numeracy diagnostic assessment. Students' understanding of key induction topics is satisfactory, such as health and safety, how to complain, and course content. Assessment of students' work is conducted regularly and written and verbal comments are provided to students on their progress.

142. Personal support for students is good. Effective one-to-one support in lessons is provided on personal issues that arise from time to time. Strong links exist with specialist agencies and the local council to provide an overall approach to students' welfare. One student who had multiple and complex learning difficulties and disabilities was enrolled after a case conference. This involved specialists making arrangements for the assessment and care of the individual and effectively sharing information to determine an appropriate learning programme. Carers and specialist support service staff often support students in lessons, in addition to learning support assistants. Teachers often provide progress reports that contribute to overall care planning and review.

Leadership and management

143. Leadership and management of the area are satisfactory overall. Communication at centre level is often good, with some centres holding formal staff meetings at least monthly; others meet termly or informally. There are no systematic processes to enable managers and operational staff to meet and share good practice and the two main strands of provision, college-based and community provision, each operate independently. All sites offer literacy and numeracy as an integral part of their programme and some sites offer the same vocational options, yet most resources are developed independently. The findings from observations of teaching and learning are aggregated into one document and shared with curriculum leaders and managers, but not with teachers. Each curriculum leader made contributions to the self-assessment report, together with teachers at the main site, but the contribution of community staff was less effective. The self-assessment report identified some of the strengths and weaknesses determined by inspectors, but not always clearly.

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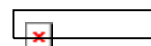
Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- o   imaginative topic work in teaching

- o   good support in the community

- o   good attendance.

Weaknesses

- o unsatisfactory achievement

- o inadequate resources

- o poor assessment and recording of students' progress

- o insufficient spread and depth of programmes

- o poor strategic and operational management.

Scope of provision

144. The college provides part-time courses for adults in community centres throughout east Surrey. Provision at the main site includes: additional support in lessons by support assistants; one- to- one support in English and mathematics for a group of 15 students; literacy and numeracy taught as part of a vocational course with 6 students; the underpinning knowledge element of key skills, levels 1 and 2, in communication and application of number for some students aged 16 to 18 and adults. The college is developing workplace literacy and numeracy provision and one course is taught on an employer's premises. Other off-site courses include a family literacy programme and a project in a local neighbourhood centre. There were 481 enrolments at the time of the inspection, 216 of which were ESOL, which was not inspected. Students are enrolled on short 20-hour programmes and the majority re-enrol each term.

Achievement and standards

145. There has been no achievement of external qualifications for literacy and numeracy students in the last two years. More broadly, the recording of achievement against students' individual learning plans is poor, and little achievement is shown. Pass rates in key skills are very low. For example, in 2002, the level 1 pass rate for communications and application of number were 7% and 11%, respectively. Some students make good progress and develop confidence but in over one-third of the lessons observed students' attainment was unsatisfactory and progress was not evident. Students' attendance is good. During the week of the inspection in the lessons observed it was nearly 85%.

Quality of education and training

146. Most teaching and learning are satisfactory or good. There is little unsatisfactory teaching. Most lessons are well managed, with good integration of support workers and volunteers, including in community-based lessons. In the best lessons, teachers are knowledgeable about the learning needs of their students and design individual or group

activities and cover imaginative topics that capture students' interest and increase their skills. In one lesson, students worked on an Egyptian theme. They were enthusiastic about their work on hieroglyphics and had good recall from previous lessons on the pyramids and the sphinx. In a mathematics lesson for adults, the teacher introduced the topic of handling data with some excellent examples of probability. A lively discussion was followed by practical exercises to introduce the students to experimental probability. However, in a key skills communication class, spelling rules were covered quickly, despite students expressing a continued lack of understanding.

147. Support arrangements in community lessons are particularly good. Support workers and volunteers assist the teachers in literacy and numeracy lessons on the basis of plans that have been agreed in advance. Teachers and support workers work well together, with the former getting the best from the additional resource. In lessons for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there is valuable work from paid support assistants.

148. The monitoring, recording and assessing of students' progress are often poor. Where skills to be learned have been identified, individual learning plans are ineffectively used to record these to form part of a planned learning programme. Initial assessment sessions are at fixed times in the term and do not always meet students' needs. These assessments are not routinely followed by a detailed diagnostic assessment, except where teachers have devised their own. The quality of diagnostic assessment is varied and often poor, with no training for teachers or common assessment tool. There is no comprehensive screening of full-time students' learning needs. Students who are referred for one-to-one support in the assistive learning centre receive thorough assessment of their learning needs and their progress is well recorded.

149. Teachers are either not trained or are not applying their training in national standards and the new national curriculum for literacy and numeracy. No member of staff has a qualification in basic skills other than the initial certificate. Some teachers have no teaching qualification. There is no systematic staff development activity to update staff or disseminate new materials on literacy and numeracy.

150. Accommodation and resources are often inadequate. Most community learning takes place in old school buildings, furniture is shabby and some inappropriate accommodation is used. An English class for adults took place in a kitchen with tables and chairs at the wrong height for studying. There was no fixed whiteboard in the kitchen and the teacher wrote on a small board and held it up for the students to read. Teaching materials in community lessons are limited and often there is no access to IT or the Internet to assist with assignments. Supplementary teaching materials, reading books, dictionaries, English or mathematics texts are lacking. In lessons across the provision, teaching materials are almost entirely teacher generated, although generally of a good standard. Resources in the assistive learning centre contain basic reading, comprehension, vocabulary and spelling worksheets that are not age appropriate, being designed for children.

151. Course provision is underdeveloped. The majority of community programmes are short, lasting for around 20 hours. Students tend to automatically re-enrol at the end of each term, with little consideration of how best their goals can be achieved. Entry level courses exclusively recruit students with learning difficulties. Maths for the terrified and brush up your skills, while aimed at level 1 students, also recruit adults with a very mixed range of needs, from entry level to level 2. There is no workshop provision for full-time or part-time students, either in the community or at the college main site, to allow them to visit when they want and work at their own pace. Neither is there the opportunity within the part-time course offer to match programme hours to students' learning needs.

Leadership and management

152. Strategic and operational management are poor. The college's strategic plan contains the basic skills action plan, but there are no actions taking place to address the objectives of

the plan and curriculum managers do not consider it to be a current or valid working document. Operational management is disjointed, with no clear focus for the management of the area. There has been no systematic implementation of national standards, the national curriculum, or effective diagnostic assessment. In key skills, lessons are often unattended and there is no remedial action, resulting in hourly paid teachers sitting in empty classrooms. Programme design is poor, and courses are poorly resourced with under-trained staff. Quality assurance is weak and poor systems are in place for assessing students, monitoring their progress and recognising achievement. The self-assessment report addresses only some aspects of the provision.
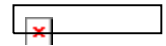
Part D: College data

Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age
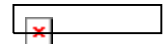
Level	16-18	19+
1	27	16
2	39	11
3	20	7
4/5	1	1
Other	13	65
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the college in 2003

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments % *
Science and mathematics	77	848	4
Land-based provision	15	179	1
Construction	192	337	2
Engineering, technology and manufacture	754	323	5
Business administration, management and professional	304	1,295	7
Information and communications technology	565	1,957	11
Retailing, customer service and	47	61	0

transportation			
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	340	661	4
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	155	187	1
Health, social care and public services	118	4,689	20
Visual and performing arts and media	426	4,330	20
Humanities	268	2,585	12
English, languages and communication	133	254	2
Foundation programmes	656	1,775	10
Total	**4,050**	**19,481**	**100**

Source: provided by the college in 2003

* figures have been rounded and may 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	833	718	527	2,046	1,632	1,074
	Retention rate (%)	79	76	83	73	72	83
	National average (%)	80	80	79	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	49	63	42	19	31	51
	National average (%)	59	65	68	60	66	68
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,151	1,331	994	1,574	1,324	926
	Retention rate (%)	73	74	79	69	74	81
	National average (%)	76	76	76	79	79	78
	Pass rate (%)	51	38	47	35	34	52
	National average (%)	65	66	69	62	65	69
3	Starters excluding transfers	737	771	739	763	929	831
	Retention rate (%)	74	75	82	76	76	80
	National average (%)	75	76	77	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	75	68	65	54	55	49
	National average (%)	72	74	76	62	66	69

4/5	Starters excluding transfers	*	*	*	171	136	75
	Retention rate (%)	*	*	*	76	68	89
	National average (%)	*	*	*	84	81	84
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	*	45	28	47
	National average (%)	*	*	*	56	56	53

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

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

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

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

* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

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)	39	43	18	56
Level 2 (intermediate)	45	33	22	42
Level 1 (foundation)	55	32	13	31
Other sessions	63	37	0	24
Totals	**48**	**37**	**15**	**153**