



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards
in Education

Plymouth College of Art and Design

CONTENTS

[Basic information about the college](#)

[Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

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

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

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

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

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

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

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

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

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

[Fine art, diagnostic drawing and painting](#)

[Three-dimensional design](#)

[Media and photography](#)

[Design communication](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

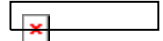
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

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

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

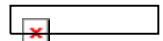
[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

Basic information about the college

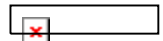


Name of college:	Plymouth College of Art and Design
Type of college:	Specialist College
Principal:	Lynne Staley-Brookes
Address of college:	Tavistock Place Plymouth Devon PL4 8AT
Telephone number:	01752 203434
Fax number:	01752 203444
Chair of governors:	Dr. Michael Gillett
Unique reference number:	130650
Name of reporting inspector:	Peter Nelson HMI
Dates of inspection:	15-19 March 2004

Part A: Summary



Information about the college

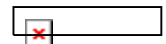


Plymouth College of Art and Design is one of four specialist further education (FE) art colleges in England. The majority of the college's FE students are from the Plymouth area or they travel into the

in the travel-to-work area. The minority ethnic population for the city is 1.67% and the college recruited 2.63% of college students have a minority ethnic heritage. There are 17 local secondary schools, including 3 selective grammar schools and 12 schools with sixth forms, of which 2 schools are designated as arts colleges. There is also Plymouth College of Further Education. FE courses at Plymouth College of Art and Design represents approximately 59% of provision, with the remaining 41% being represented by higher education (HE). Plymouth College of Art and design offers a wide range of specialist courses in media and photography, three-dimensional design, fine art and diagnostic drawing, design communications, and motor vehicle.

In 2003/04, there were 589 full-time students on FE courses, 424 students aged 16 to 18 and 164 adult students. Currently, the college has approximately 1,350 students taking part-time courses, the majority are adults. Some 62% of FE enrolments are at level 3. The completion in September 2002 of a £5m new building project and refurbishment of the main campus has resulted in centralised teaching resources at Tavistock Place with all teaching, apart from motor vehicle provision, taking place on a single site. The college has also invested substantially to upgrade the information technology (IT) infrastructure. The college's mission is 'to be a dynamic institution in the pursuit of excellence that forges strong links in the fields of art, design, crafts and media and serves the aspiring needs of various communities'.

How effective is the college?



Education and training are good in one curriculum area and satisfactory in the other three. Work-based training on design communications courses is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college's key strengths and the areas that should be improved are listed below.

Key strengths

- good specialist vocational skills development

- very good accommodation and resources

- broad range of appropriate specialist provision at level 3

- community and employer links enhancing learning opportunities for students

- good support for students with additional support needs and specific learning difficulties

- effective leadership by the principal

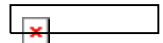
- o high level of commitment to the management of change.

What should be improved

- o attendance and punctuality
- o retention rates of students aged 16 to 18
- o standard of students' observational drawing skills
- o the amount of good practice in teaching
- o the quality and consistency of personal tutorials
- o the setting and monitoring of targets for individual students to secure improvements.

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

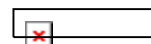


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum 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
Fine art, diagnostic drawing and painting	Satisfactory. Students produce a high standard of work on most courses and have access to good specialist accommodation and resources. There is good internal progression for students and very good additional support available. Retention rates are poor on a few courses and there is undemanding teaching in some lessons, with insufficiently rigorous quality assurance procedures in place to help

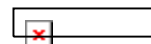
	raise standards.
Three-dimensional design	Good. Teaching is good and students develop a high standard of practical work utilising a very wide range of specialist techniques. There is a broad range of specialised three-dimensional courses, with excellent resources. Retention rates on national diploma courses were unsatisfactory in 2002/03. Assessment on three-dimensional interior design courses is insufficiently regular and personal tutorials are infrequent.
Media and photography	Satisfactory. Students produce work of a high standard on photography courses, making best use of the outstanding resources and accommodation. Good use is made of assessment to develop students' critical skills and strong community links enhance students' learning. There is too much teacher-led discussion, and much unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality. There are also poor retention and pass rates on some courses.
Design communication	Satisfactory. Work-based learning contributory grade: satisfactory. There are high pass rates on many courses, and the standards of students' technical and industrial skills in print and computer-aided design courses are good. Teaching on the national diploma in printing course is creative and effective, enhanced by productive industrial partnerships. There are consistently poor pass rates on the national diploma in multimedia course and individual learning needs are not met in graphic design and multimedia courses. The management of work-based assessment is poor. There is slow progress of work-based assessment for some students.

How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal sets a clear vision for the college, which is shared by governors, senior managers and staff. The college has successfully strengthened its links and raised its profile in the local community. There is good communication within the college and morale is high. The weaknesses identified during the last inspection have been addressed with determination. Retention rates have improved, however, attendance shows only minimal improvement and remains below national averages. Comprehensive, new, quality assurance procedures have been introduced, although the benefits from these improvements have yet to be fully evaluated. The quality of teaching and learning has improved markedly. Management of the curriculum is satisfactory. Governors are well informed and have appropriate oversight of the strategic direction of the college. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

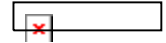
To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



The college's response to education and social inclusion is good. The college has met its duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000; however, targets within the equal opportunities policy are not sufficiently rigorous. There are effective strategies for widening participation. The college has formed productive partnerships within the local community. There are strong links with schools through the Increasing

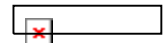
achievement for students not traditionally enrolling in FE, for example, through the 'ethnic minority student achievement grant', and a Learning and Skills Development Agency project aimed at encouraging an improved gender balance on fashion and multimedia programmes. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds enrolled at the college is greater than in the local community. The college has good access for those with restricted mobility. Support for all students is good, particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Guidance and support for students and trainees are good. Students receive detailed advice and guidance before enrolling on courses. Induction programmes are well designed to help students settle into their courses and college life. Arrangements for identifying students' additional learning needs and their levels of literacy and numeracy are good. Well-qualified and experienced learning development tutors work constructively with teachers to provide good support in lessons. Support for students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties are good. Students value the support they receive from their teachers, but formal tutorials are too infrequent. Individual learning plans are underdeveloped and many do not contain specific targets for students. Students have good access to responsive and flexible specialist services such as counselling, welfare and careers guidance. The college gained 'Investors in Careers Accreditation' in March 2004. The college makes available additional funding for student welfare, over and above the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) allocation. The college has a suitable child protection policy and procedures are in place which have been approved by governors.

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

- personal and academic support

- good working atmosphere

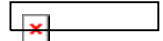
- broad range of, and access to, high-quality resources and accommodation

- respect received from teachers.

What they feel could be improved

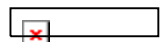
- social area and access to sports facilities
- size of canteen and prices of food
- opportunities to exhibit work at FE level
- the amount of storage for students' work.

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 should send to Ofsted only action plans from colleges that have been judged inadequate or have been awarded a grade 4 or 5 for curriculum provision, work-based learning and/or leadership and management.

Part B: The college as a whole



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

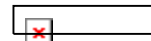


Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	66	28	6
19+ and WBL*	79	14	7
Learning 16-18	62	30	8
19+ and WBL*	71	29	0

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

**work-based learning*

Achievement and standards



1. Data on students' achievements, drawn from the individualised learner records (ILR) for 2001 and 2002 were provided by the LSC. Data provided by the college were used for 2003. Inspectors also used additional data held by the college to help them form their judgements, particularly in relation to in-year retention rates. The separate reports on areas of learning in Part C give more details about achievement and standards on particular courses.

2. Retention rates improved in 2003 for most students. Retention rates of adult students are above the national averages at all levels, when compared with all general FE colleges, and improving at levels 2 and 3. At level 1, adult retention rates have declined slightly from 88% in 2002 to 76% in 2003, but enrolments have increased significantly over the same period, from 26 to 123. For students aged 16 to 18, retention rates have improved at levels 1 and 3 and have remained the same at level 2. However, at all levels, retention rates of students aged 16 to 18 are below the national averages. Pass rates are at their highest for level 3 students where 91% of students aged 16 to 18 and 95% of adult students who complete their studies pass the qualification. Pass rates for students in both age groups, at levels 1 and 2, have remained reasonably stable from 2002 to 2003 at, or around, the national averages. Pass rates for all key skills at all levels have improved from 25% in 2002, to 42% in 2003. Retention rates on key skills programmes also improved slightly in 2003, although 21% of students continued beyond the planned duration of their course.

3. The college does not have a systematic scheme for comparing students' achievement relative to their prior attainment. There is good internal progression from level 2 to level 3 and the proportion of students who progress to FE and HE courses remains high. Many students are successful in gaining places at their first-choice university; many also continue their HE courses at the college. A high proportion of students on the printing courses are successful in gaining employment.

4. The attendance and punctuality of students was identified as a weakness at the last inspection. The college has now improved the system for monitoring students' attendance, however, overall attendance during the week of inspection was below the national average, at 75%; a negligible increase since the last inspection.

5. The work produced by photography students is accomplished and of a high technical standard. Their black and white photographs are particularly good. Media (moving image) students also produce good work which includes short films and animations. Three-dimensional design students make good use of images from a wide variety of sources, including primary source drawings and photographs. The craftsmanship and design work in ceramics is good. Design craft students record their project progress well in their technical journals. Work produced in hot and cold glasswork is of a particularly high standard, and demonstrates students' understanding and confidence with a wide variety of specialised techniques. Design communications students' work shows a good integration of technical and industrial skills, particularly in printing and computer-aided design. Students' final prints on the national diploma in printing course are well executed and highly finished. The printing students have won national prizes and competitions consistently for several consecutive years. The attainment of work-based print trainees is generally satisfactory, and in some cases very good. The standard of fine art students' work is satisfactory. Students on the foundation diploma in art and design achieve high standards of work in video, animation and digital media. National diploma fashion and clothing assignments are researched, organised and presented well.

6. A key area of development for the college remains the standard of students' observational drawing skills. In the three-dimensional design area, sketchbook work by some second-year students is unsophisticated and naive. In some of their design development projects, design communications students show a lack of good drawing skills, and fine art students make insufficient

use of observational drawing to analyse their subjects and develop their ideas. Three-dimensional design students are not always confident in discussing their work. Discussions in class are frequently teacher-dominated and students are too passive. Some students do not understand the technical details behind some of the processes they are using.

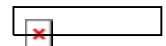
16 to 18 year olds

7. Overall, the retention rates on the national diploma courses are low. For 2002 and 2003, 42% of those who enrolled on to a national diploma course failed to complete their studies. However, there are signs of significant improvement. The in-year retention rates for 2004 are good, with around half of the courses retaining all of those who enrolled in September 2003.

Adult learners

8. Adult students succeed better than students aged 16 to 18 at the college. Retention rates at all levels for adults are improving consistently, and pass rates are at, or above, the national average, particularly at level 3, where 95% of those who complete, pass their qualification. The pass rate for adults on the intermediate certificate in multimedia is high.

Quality of education and training



9. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 64 lessons. Since the previous inspection, the proportion of good or better teaching has increased by 12 % and the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has reduced by 4 %. Teaching is good or better in 69% of lessons, satisfactory in 25% and less than satisfactory in 6%. Learning is good or better in 64% of lessons, satisfactory in 30% and unsatisfactory in 6%. There is a significant variance between the quality of teaching in curriculum areas. Teaching was good or better in 85% of three-dimensional design lessons, with no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was also good in 65% of fine art lessons 60% of lessons in media and photography, and 69% of lessons in design communication.

10. The teaching of a broad range of specialist technical and industrial skills across the college is particularly strong. Teachers demonstrate practical skills well. The best lessons are well planned and underpinned with detailed schemes of work and lesson plans, and supported by well-designed and informative handouts. Teachers choose interesting examples to engage and stimulate students. Students and staff maintain positive and friendly working relationships. There is a strong emphasis on students working independently and experimenting freely. Students are encouraged to discuss their ideas together and evaluate each other's work, with additional constructive criticism from teachers, leading to a high standard of students' work.

11. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not challenge students sufficiently and introductions tend to be too long. There is too much teacher-led activity and insufficient opportunity for students to have practical involvement. There is also insufficient checking of students' learning and progress. Teaching strategies do not adequately address the needs of less-confident students and there are insufficient extension activities for more able students. A few assignment briefs are insufficiently clear and lack adequate detail. The standard of drawing of a significant proportion of technical and craft students is low and their expression of ideas is often underdeveloped in sketchbooks.

12. College staff possess a very wide range of subject knowledge, technical and craft skills, and industrial expertise which they use effectively to support learning. The number of full-time and part-time teachers who are fully qualified or are working towards a qualification has increased since the last inspection from 60% to 80% and is on target for 90% of staff to be teacher qualified by 2006, in line with national guidelines. There is a comprehensive programme of staff development in place which focuses on raising the quality of teaching. A newly introduced procedure to address the

historic weakness of high teacher absenteeism is proving effective in ensuring lessons are appropriately covered. Technician support is good and supports learning.

13. The college has made significant progress since the last inspection to improve its resources and accommodation. The Tavistock building now houses all the art and design resources for full-time and part-time courses and provides a good, purpose-built learning environment. Classrooms and workshops are well equipped and have good natural light. Specialist studios are located suitably close to practical workshops enabling effective teaching and learning. Most technical areas have up-to-date industry-standard equipment. The central media store is very well equipped and managed. The building is accessible to students with restricted mobility. Further work is planned to support students with visual or hearing impairments, improve signage and provide easier wheelchair access to three-dimensional and darkroom facilities. There is overcrowding in a minority of workshops and studios. Timetabling across the college has improved since the last inspection and there is now efficient room utilisation. Facilities are accessible outside lesson times and students are encouraged to use equipment and classroom space to extend their learning. There is limited social space or other facilities for students.

14. The library and learning resource centre is managed effectively and provides a very good resource to support students' learning. Within the centre, there is a well-equipped open-access IT suite with industry-standard software and IT training packages available for both staff and students. There are good spaces available for both independent and group study. The college is successfully developing an innovative online catalogue as an additional research tool for students, linked to local libraries, relevant exhibition information and art-related web sites.

15. There has been a significant investment in information and communications technology (ICT). The number of computers has almost doubled since the last inspection to the current computer-to-student ratio of 4:1. Most computers are accessible, networked and computers based in classrooms are actively used by students. Many teachers have their own laptop computer. Students' work is exhibited liberally around the college and in a ground floor gallery; and is also shown on a plasma screen in reception. Students' work is also displayed on the college intranet gallery.

16. The quality and rigour of assessment varies between different courses. Most course teams use a broad variety of appropriate assessment methods such as self-assessment, peer-assessment and group evaluation to monitor students' progress and track the development of their skills and knowledge. On most courses, students' theory and practical work is carefully assessed and students receive detailed and constructive written feedback. However, on a significant minority of courses, assessment is too infrequent and insufficient to monitor students' progress effectively. On graphics, multimedia and interior design courses, students are not fully aware of their progress and there is an over-reliance on informal feedback. Students generally receive good verbal feedback on their progress in lessons and value the quality of advice they receive. Tutorials are too infrequent, resulting in insufficient formal feedback to a minority of students. Students' individual learning plans are underdeveloped; they do not contain specific targets and are not monitored or updated regularly. A minority of students on fine art courses are unaware of deadlines for submission of projects. The college has a policy to return marked work to students within a three week period, but this is not always achieved. Assessment on work-based learning programmes is not sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of all national vocational qualification (NVQ) learners.

17. Assignment briefs are appropriate and most contain detailed assessment criteria. Students are aware of what is expected of them and what they need to do to succeed. Some assignments on the national diploma in interior design course are too complex and unclear to students. The college's assessment policy is followed by most course teams. Internal verification is effective and external verifiers' reports are monitored by management and any action required is taken promptly.

18. The college provides an appropriate range of general and specialist art and design courses at most levels. There is a broad range of art and design provision at level 3. There has been good progress since the last inspection to increase the breadth of provision at entry level and levels 1 and 2. This includes general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) at foundation and intermediate levels, with twice-yearly entry points to help widen access. An IF programme exists in partnership with local school pupils aged 14 to 16, which incorporates a general certificate of secondary

education (GCSE) double award in applied art and design. There are good opportunities for students to progress between levels and on to HE courses within the college.

19. Very good partnerships have recently been developed with local schools, colleges, voluntary organisations and industry, to widen participation. The college provides a broad range of work-based qualifications for the printing industry throughout the region. The college is part of a well-received national pilot, offering students aged over 25 access to an NVQ and technical certificate qualification. The college offers a broad range of specialist enrichment activities to students including nationally accredited short technical and craft-based courses. A lively 'visiting lecturer' programme also adds value and helps broaden the knowledge and understanding of students.

20. The development of key skills is satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection, the college has worked hard to integrate the three key skills of communications, application of number and IT into the vocational curriculum. Students understand the relevance of the key skills assignments which are designed and delivered within the main course assignments, with support from specialist key skills staff. All assignments are based around the students' arts activities.

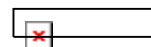
21. The college provides good pre-enrolment advice and guidance. There are monthly events for prospective students and their parents to obtain detailed advice and guidance from college staff. These events are well attended. The college also offers advisory interviews for students who need further guidance before applying for a course. Interviews for courses are arranged promptly. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring students enrol on courses that meet their individual needs. Students receive an induction to college life and their course, and the students union organises several college-wide events as part of the induction week. Some 40 Year 10 pupils from local schools work alongside college students for a week each year. This is effective in providing good experience for school pupils who are considering a college course. The arrangements for enrolling students are clear. The student services team are situated in high-quality accommodation near the front of the college.

22. The arrangements for identifying students' additional learning needs and their levels of literacy and numeracy are very good. Additional learning support following initial assessment is provided by well-qualified and experienced learning development tutors. Teachers and learning development tutors work well together in lessons, to support students with their literacy and numeracy as well as with other aspects of their course. This support is highly valued by students. Good resources have been developed to support study skills and these are particularly beneficial to students who are aiming to progress to HE. Students with dyslexia receive good support and the college is successful in supporting students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities; including hearing and visual impairment, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and Asperger's syndrome. Students with limited physical mobility are also well supported. The amount of additional learning support provided increased significantly in 2003. An analysis of the impact of additional learning support on attendance, retention and pass rates shows that students who received additional learning support in 2003 performed significantly better than those students who did not access support. For example, the attendance of students receiving additional learning support was over 90% in 2003, which was significantly higher than the college average.

23. The quality and frequency of tutorials varies across the college. In media and photography courses, tutorials are held frequently and the outcomes are well documented, but in design communications and interior design courses, students lack information about their progress and are unaware of the standards they are achieving. Students have individual learning plans, but these are underdeveloped and many do not contain specific targets for students' learning.

24. Students have good access to specialist support services such as counselling, welfare and careers, and these are valued by staff and students who have confidence that referrals will be dealt with promptly and sensitively. There is also financial support available for childcare. The college commits additional funding over and above its LSC allocation to the financial support of students. Following a successful pilot for students on printing courses, the college now offers a qualification in employment skills to most level 3 students across the college. This complements careers education well and helped the college to gain Investors in Careers accreditation in March 2004. The college has productive links with external partners involved in guidance and specialist support services.

Leadership and management



25. Leadership and management at the college are satisfactory. The principal has set a clear vision and mission for the college which are owned by governors, shared and understood by staff and actively promoted by senior and middle managers. The senior management team work well together and are well regarded by other college staff. Staff morale is high.

26. Many weaknesses identified during the last inspection have been addressed with determination. The introduction of the new organisation structure has placed teaching and learning at the core of college activity. The course-leader role has been strengthened and has contributed to increased rigour in the monitoring of attendance and retention rates. Retention rates have improved and are now around national averages. There is increased scrutiny by governors of the academic performance of the college. There has also been significant investment in the development of a range of quality assurance procedures aimed at improving teaching and learning and students' experiences. These include the development of a satisfaction survey for students, parents and employers, as well as new internal verification and assessment guidelines. The college has introduced new strategies in an attempt to address unsatisfactory attendance identified at the last inspection. During the inspection week, however, attendance was below the national average.

27. Governors and senior managers set a clear direction for the college and are well supported by the clerk. There is strong leadership by the principal. The membership of the governing body has changed considerably since the last inspection. There has been a refocusing and revitalisation of governing body committees. Governors are now well informed about the college through representation on college committees, formal and informal visits to the college and through regular and informative presentations made to governors by staff. Governors are active in challenging the principal and other members of staff at the college in order to promote improvements. Staff appreciate the open communication within the college.

28. The strategic planning framework is based on a thorough needs analysis. Operational plans have clear links to strategic objectives. Target dates for completion of objectives are realistic. Progress against operational plans is reviewed termly. However, the operational plans for the different curriculum areas are similar and do not reflect the diversity of planning needs within the curriculum areas.

29. Management at course level is mostly satisfactory in all curriculum areas. Strengths in curriculum management include good communications between courses leaders and subject managers, improved monitoring of attendance, retention and pass rates. Weaknesses in curriculum management include poor course management in music technology, three-dimensional interior design and on print work-based learning. On three-dimensional interior design courses, issues raised by students regarding course management remain unresolved. Team meetings in all curriculum areas are infrequent with cursory minutes which do not contain sufficiently record outcomes and planned actions. Target setting and monitoring lack sufficient detail in all aspects of curriculum planning and management. The college self-assessment report acknowledges that there is some unsatisfactory course co-ordination and management of the curriculum.

30. The implementation of new and revised quality assurance procedures has successfully raised standards since the last inspection. However, these procedures are in the early stages of implementation and the continuing impact is yet to be fully evaluated. Staff are actively involved in the annual self-assessment and development planning process. Programme and service reviews form the basis of the self-assessment report. When completed, the reports are thoroughly scrutinised by a series of groups at college and governor levels. In all curriculum areas, the self-assessment report was judged to be insufficiently analytical with underdeveloped use of specific targets to bring about improvements in teaching and the promotion of learning.

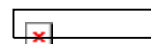
31. A well-designed and newly introduced appraisal system has been received positively by the 60% of staff who have been reviewed so far. The process is anticipated to be fully implemented by July 2004. The review contributes to the identification of individual staff development needs. Staff development activities are valued by staff. The college's internal programme of classroom observations has provided insufficient coverage and critical rigour.

32. The college has good external partnerships and a strong commitment to widening participation within the local community. The principal makes a positive contribution to local and regional educational strategy. Duties under the SENDA and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 have been fulfilled by the college. The equal opportunities committee is actively involved in updating and monitoring procedures relating to equality and diversity; however, there is insufficiently rigorous target setting within the equal opportunities policy.

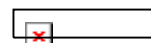
33. Management information is mostly good and produces accurate, timely and reliable information to assist managers and teachers in monitoring enrolment, attendance, retention rates and pass rates in most areas. The one key area where information has not been consistently reliable is work-based learning, where the college does not have an up-to-date overview of the status and progress of its trainees.

34. There has been significant recent financial investment in the well-conceived and successfully implemented accommodation strategy. This has contributed positively to the students learning experience; however, it has also contributed to the college remaining in financial category C. The new director of finance is working productively with subject managers to develop their understanding of finance and budgeting, and increase budget delegation. The college provides satisfactory value for money given that courses are viable, that resources are efficiently allocated and that the average class size is slightly higher than national averages.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Fine art, diagnostic drawing and painting



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

Strengths

- high standards of students' work in electronic media and three-dimensional design pre-degree foundation diploma courses

- good specialist accommodation and resources

- good internal progression from level 1 to level 4

- o very good additional support for students.

Weaknesses

- o poor retention rates on GNVQ and national diploma courses
- o too little demanding teaching
- o insufficiently rigorous quality assurance.

Scope of provision

35. The college offers a range of full-time courses including GNVQs in art and design at levels 1 and 2, advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) in art and design, national diplomas in textiles, fine art and fashion and clothing, level 3 foundation diploma in art and design, and an access to HE course for adults. There are also part-time courses in life drawing and illustration. The college provides a GCSE course in applied arts for students aged 14 to 16 as part of the district's IF programme. There are currently 271 full-time students; of whom 196 are aged 16 to 18 and 75 are adults. There are also 540 part-time students; of whom 214 are aged 16 to 18 and 326 are adults. Around half of the full-time enrolments are on the foundation diploma course.

Achievement and standards

36. Retention rates are unsatisfactory for the majority of courses in this area of learning. In particular, retention rates on the GNVQ intermediate course have remained consistently well below the national average. In 2003, the retention rates of students on the national diploma in fashion and clothing course fell to 41% and on the national diploma in fine art course it fell to 31%, both well below the national average. In most cases, pass rates were above the national average. Current in-year retention rate data indicate a marked improvement in retention rates, with all courses close to national averages. Punctuality is generally good, though attendance during the week of inspection was below the national average. There is good internal progression from level 2 to level 3 and the majority of level 3 students progress to HE.

37. The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Students are encouraged to explore a range of materials and creative processes. Students on the foundation diploma in art and design course achieve high standards of work in video, animation and digital media. Students on the national diploma fashion and clothing course research and present assignment work to a high standard. In particular, many adult students produce good work in bold and adventurous mixed media. There is plenty of expressive and experimental drawing in most portfolios, but there is little evidence of systematic teaching of analytical drawing from first-hand sources. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the investigation and development of ideas.

A sample of retention and pass rates in fine art, diagnostic drawing and painting, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
---------------	-------	------------------	------	------	------

AVCE in art and design	3	No. of starts	41	43	32
		% retention	68	67	84
		% pass rate	93	86	85
National diploma in fashion and clothing	3	No. of starts	14	15	22
		% retention	64	67	41
		% pass rate	89	100	100
National diploma in fine art	3	No. of starts	*	11	26
		% retention	*	55	31
		% pass rate	*	83	75
Diploma in foundation studies in art and design	3	No. of starts	101	116	102
		% retention	84	78	90
		% pass rate	99	98	96

* course not running

Quality of education and training

38. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Teachers have good knowledge of their subject. Lesson plans and schemes of work are well designed with clear objectives and lessons are generally well managed. All lessons observed were characterised by a positive and friendly rapport between staff and students. Teachers show sensitivity to the needs of a wide range of abilities and much emphasis is placed on encouraging and building the confidence of students who are less able. Students are very attentive and enjoy the learning experience. In one lesson, a group of school pupils aged 14 to 16, were totally absorbed in the practicalities of ceramics. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not sufficiently test and challenge students' knowledge through discussion and careful questioning. Insufficient use is made of additional visual stimuli to stretch students' imagination, extend their knowledge and engage them fully.

39. Resources are good. Provision has recently been relocated to one site. This has helped to create a lively atmosphere in which students' work is easily seen and exhibited, and good practice is shared more readily. Students benefit from good access to specialist resources, which include printmaking, ceramics, three-dimensional workshops and photographic darkrooms. There is a broad range of library and learning resource material. Computer suites are appropriately equipped with industry-standard software. There is a good gallery space, which is used to enhance learning opportunities. Studios and workshops are maintained well and there are stimulating displays of students' work in all public spaces. Staff are well qualified and there is an appropriate range of expertise to cover all of the major creative disciplines. The majority of teachers have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. All staff benefit from a broad range of professional development opportunities and many continue to work as creative practitioners, which enhances the learning experience for the students.

40. Assessment procedures are generally satisfactory. Most students are sufficiently informed of their progress and given helpful advice on how to improve their work. Most students also have a good understanding of assessment methods and grading criteria, but are sometimes less clear about assignment deadlines. The quality of written feedback is not consistently satisfactory and for some students, progress reviews are too infrequent. Procedures for internal verification are in place, although there is insufficient sharing of good assessment practice.

41. Most provision in this curriculum area is diagnostic in nature, with the exception of the more vocationally focused national diploma courses in textiles, fashion and clothing. There is a broad range of full-time opportunities from level 1 to level 4 and clear progression routes, both within the college and into HE. Prospective GNVQ students can enrol at any time between September and

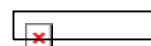
January, and those who start late are given additional time and support to catch up on missed coursework. Part-time adult provision is limited. The foundation diploma in art and design course has recently been broadened to include a specialist option for students who wish to develop their video skills and their creative use of digital media. All students benefit from additional craft qualifications which enhance their potential for progression. The delivery of key skills is made vocationally relevant to the main area of learning and students recognise the value of their key skills programmes.

42. Guidance and support for students are very good. Students are given sufficient information and advice to make informed choices about courses and career opportunities. Interviews are friendly and helpful and a well-constructed induction helps students settle quickly into college life. All students receive an effective initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. Support for those with physical difficulties and/or disabilities and those in need of additional learning support is very good. A socially inclusive environment is well established and there is considerable understanding of disability issues. Learning development tutors work closely and sensitively with teachers. In one GNVQ lesson, two overseas students were supported by an interpreter. In a national diploma lesson, a wheelchair user with restricted mobility was provided with an experienced helper.

Leadership and management

43. Leadership and management of the area are satisfactory. Lessons are well organised and resources are generally well deployed. Staff feel they can contribute to the strategic development of the college and have confidence in the senior management team. Much effort is being made to raise standards through improved quality assurance procedures. The range and quality of management information has been improved greatly, but it is not yet being used effectively at course level. Minutes of team meetings, show little evidence of discussion about performance targets and key issues, and do not sufficiently document subsequent proposed actions or the progress towards their resolution. The subject area self-assessment report accurately identifies most issues of concern, but is not sufficiently detailed. New staff benefit from effective induction programmes. Students feel they can contribute to course development, and there is a strong ethos of equal opportunity and inclusiveness throughout the area.

Three-dimensional design



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

Strengths

- high standard of students' practical three-dimensional work

- students developing very wide range of specialist techniques

- effectively integrated IT key skills

- good teaching

- excellent resources

- broad range of highly specialist three-dimensional courses.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory retention rates on national diploma courses in 2002/03

- insufficient regular assessment of students' progress on the national diploma three-dimensional interior design course

- insufficient personal tutorials

- low standard of drawing in sketchbooks.

Scope of provision

44. The college offers full-time national diploma courses in three-dimensional design, interior design, design crafts, access to HE in three-dimensional art and design, and a City and Guilds certificate in design crafts and interior decorative techniques. Three-dimensional design is an integral part of other full-time courses, including pre-degree art foundation diploma, GNVQ intermediate art and design, GCSE art, AVCE art and design, and fine art national diploma. A full-time and part-time pre-degree art foundation diploma course is delivered at Estover community college in partnership with the college. There is a broad range of part-time courses including ceramics, jewellery, interior decorative effects, hot glass, hot metal and stained glass. A number of part-time courses are held on Saturday mornings. At the time of inspection, there were 36 students aged 16-18 and 32 adults enrolled on full-time courses. There were 44 students aged 16-18 and 178 adults enrolled on part-time courses.

Achievement and standards

45. Retention and pass rates are high on the access to HE three-dimensional design course and part-time short courses. Pass rates are also high on both national diploma three-dimensional courses, but retention rates on these courses are unsatisfactory and were below national averages in 2002. At the time of inspection, the in-year retention rates had improved over the previous academic year. Retention rates of adults are higher than those of students aged 16 to 18.

46. Students produce a high standard of practical three-dimensional work. Part-time adult students studying hot glass techniques underpin their practical work with thoughtful designs. For example, one student produced a series of imaginative blown spheres incorporating a broad variety of textures within the glass, based on organic forms. Another student created an innovative combination of glass and metal forms, based on a lily design. Students in ceramics confidently use a broad variety

of techniques, including slip casting and press moulding. Craftsmanship is good and work is finished well. Part-time students show particularly imaginative use of surface pattern decoration using coloured slips including masking and crackling. There is effective integration of key skills IT. Assignments are appropriate and relevant to three-dimensional students. For example, a 'Design to Sell' project gave students the opportunity to design and produce posters, business cards and compliments slips and use spreadsheets to record their sales and expenses.

A sample of retention and pass rates in three-dimensional design, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
City and Guilds 7922 interior decorative techniques*	1	No. of starts	14	11	18
		% retention	86	55	89
		% pass rate	58	50	81
Introductory ceramics	2	No. of starts	12	10	13
		% retention	75	70	92
		% pass rate	100	100	67
National diploma three-dimensional design**	3	No. of starts	32	16	15
		% retention	50	69	47
		% pass rate	94	100	100

**Formerly City & Guilds 7900*

*** Formerly national diploma interior design*

Quality of education and training

47. The quality of teaching is good. Many staff are experienced practitioners and bring extensive expertise into the classroom. Staff address health and safety issues comprehensively with students. All students using the hot metals workshop have a thorough induction and are able to use equipment safely and independently. Practical demonstrations are effective and supporting handouts are useful in reminding students of the techniques demonstrated. Students use drawing in sketchbooks as a practical tool to explain ideas and as part of the design process however, the standard of drawings is low and the expression of ideas naive. Action has been taken to address this with formal drawing lessons, however, drawing lacks conviction and substance. Students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussion through the friendly, industrious and supportive atmosphere in lessons. The teaching of technical skills is good on interior design courses. Students use a broad range of appropriate specialist software to present ideas. Not all students discuss the development of their work and ideas with a suitable degree of confidence. Discussion is frequently too dominated by the teacher and students are passive. Teachers' expectations are sometimes too low and they do not demand a sufficiently high level of students' intellectual engagement and response in lessons.

48. Resources are excellent. The large metals workshop has a broad range of welding and forming equipment and two forges. Equipment in ceramics and jewellery workshops is good; however, there are some cluttered areas in the ceramics workshop. Technical support is good and workshops run smoothly. Attention is paid to health and safety.

49. The IT resources are good. The three-dimensional interior design classroom has its own computer suite, which is used extensively by students. There is a useful rolling programme of IT skills training that is available to staff and students to update their skills.

50. Assessment is thorough on the design crafts national diploma and access to three-dimensional courses, and there is good oral and written feedback to students, which clearly indicates to them how they can improve and develop their skills. On the three-dimensional interior design national

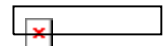
diploma course, the language used in project briefs is over complicated and the meaning is not clear to students. Assessment is infrequent and insufficient on this course. Some students received no feedback from projects completed early in the year and are unaware of their progress. Action planning on other courses is timely and valuable to the students'.

51. Support for students is mostly good. There are prompt referrals for most students requiring additional learning support. There is good support for those students requiring assistance with childcare costs. There is a good level of awareness by staff of the needs of dyslexic students and suitable help is provided.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory and demonstrate continuous improvements since the last inspection. Key managers and staff are aware of corporate priorities and supportive of recent changes. The newly appointed curriculum manager is aware of significant weaknesses within the department and is steadily addressing them. Students have reported a number of issues to senior management and actions have been taken, but some issues have yet to be addressed fully. Communications across the curriculum area are good and joint briefings regularly take place for staff on common issues, such as assessment and external verification. Recently introduced systems to address poor punctuality and attendance are not yet fully embedded. External consultants conduct lesson observations which help raise the quality of teaching and learning. A college lesson observation scheme has recently been introduced, but has not yet been fully implemented across the curriculum area. Formal team meetings are infrequent. A comprehensive annual programme review process is in place which feeds in to the corporate self-assessment process.

Media and photography



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

Strengths

- high standard of students' work in photography
- excellent resources, equipment and accommodation
- good use of peer-assessment and self-assessment to develop students' critical skills
- effective collaborative community projects in media enhancing students' learning.

Weaknesses

- too much didactic teaching

- unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality

- poor pass rates on music technology course

- low retention rates on the national diploma photography course.

Scope of provision

53. The college offers full-time national diploma courses in media (moving image) and photography, and part-time courses in photography, video production and music technology. The part-time photography provision includes an introductory course which is available for both beginners and intermediate students, and a general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A-level) and advanced subsidiary (AS-level) course. There is no full-time level 2 provision specific to media and photography, however, there is a general intermediate art and design course from which students can progress on to more specialised media-related level 3 courses. There are currently 101 full-time students; 68 are aged 16 to 18 and 33 are adults. There are 173 part-time students, the majority of whom are adults.

Achievement and standards

54. Pass rates on the national diploma in photography and the City and Guilds photography courses are around the national average. The retention rate for the national diploma in photography course was below the national average in 2002 and 2003. However, at the time of inspection, the in-year retention rates on this course were high, with 26 out of 29 students still on the course. There has also been a significant increase in the retention rates of national diploma media (moving image) students, with no early leavers this academic year from a group of 35 students. Very few music technology students achieve their qualification. Of the 79 students who have started the music technology or sound recording course since 2001, only 10 have achieved. Retention rates are declining on this course and the majority of students who started the course in September 2003 have now left. Attendance over the whole of this area of learning during the week of inspection was low and of the two thirds of students who did attend, too many were late for their lessons.

55. Photography students produce accomplished work of a high, technical standard, with particularly high-quality black and white photography. The standard of work produced by media (moving image) students is also good. For example, students produced some lively and well-crafted animation work for the plasma screen in the college's reception, and second-year students' final project work shows thorough research and innovative ideas. Full-time students benefit from a range of collaborative projects with several local community groups. In one project, for example, students worked closely with children and their mothers to produce four short films on the theme of family issues, promoting students' development of a high standard of artistic and communication skills..

A sample of retention and pass rates in Media and photography , 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Northern Council for	2	No. of starts	*	9	16

in music technology**		% pass rate	*	60	19
City and Guilds 6923 photography	2	No. of starts	*	*	17
		% retention	*	*	65
		% pass rate	*	*	41
National diploma photography	3	No. of starts	16	13	28
		% retention	75	15	43
		% pass rate	92	50	83

**course did not run*

*** formerly NCFE intermediate certificate in sound recording*

Quality of education and training

56. The standard of teaching is satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers plan well and encourage students' collaborative and independent learning skills. For example, in one lesson students were presenting their work to their peers and explaining the derivation of their ideas with clarity and confidence. In another lesson, students demonstrated a high level of computer-based video editing skills with clearly assigned project responsibilities amongst the production team for the sound and the visuals tasks. In the best lessons, teachers use well-chosen and appealing material to stimulate students' interest and ideas. In one lesson, a well known local animator's work was used effectively to inspire students' own creative ideas for their animation projects. There are also many good examples of teachers coaching adult evening class students effectively on the development of their design ideas. However, in weaker lessons, there is too much didactic teaching. In these lessons, introductions to are too long and there is not enough student involvement in activities; teachers do not check students' understanding effectively and students are given little opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt.

57. Media and photography equipment and accommodation are excellent. Students benefit from a broad range of well-appointed video editing suites with industry-standard software. Photography darkrooms are also well equipped. Students have access to a very good college intranet and there is an effective system for storing and booking out a wide range of up-to-date media equipment. Staff are well qualified and several have up-to-date experience in the creative industries. Three quarters of staff either have or are working towards formal teaching qualifications. This whole area of learning benefits from good technician support.

58. Written feedback to students on their assignment briefs is comprehensive. Teachers make good use of group-assessment, peer-assessment and self-assessment. Photography evening class teachers use individual tutorials and students' information sheets well to monitor students' progress. However, there is insufficiently frequent monitoring of the progress of full-time students. Some staff use performance tracking sheets, but this practice is not consistent throughout the area of learning. Students' work is not always marked and returned on time. An internal verification system is in place and is used to verify assessment decisions. However, it has not been used sufficiently to spread good practice throughout the area of learning.

59. There is a satisfactory range of full-time level 3 media and photography provision with clear progression routes to suitable HE courses within the college. The college promotes the courses well. Enrolments rose significantly in September 2003. A GCE A-level photography course includes pupils from the local school sixth forms. Staff teach key skills to ensure that they are directly relevant to the students' vocational work. Student feedback on this shows improved levels of satisfaction.

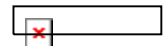
60. Students enjoy their college induction and feel it helps them to settle into their course quickly and easily. They receive an appropriate initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills, and good support is given where additional learning support needs are identified. Dyslexic students receive effective assistance from learning support tutors and volunteer peer mentors. Appropriate

arrangements are made to ensure that dyslexic students are not disadvantaged by wholly written assessments. Communication with parents of students at risk of leaving their course early is good. Pastoral support is readily available to students and is well documented, and a college counselling service is available to students on request.

Leadership and management

Management of the media and photography provision is satisfactory. The recently appointed course leaders are providing effective operational management for the national diplomas. Management of the City and Guilds photography course has improved, and students' success rates have risen. The frequency of student tutorials has increased and staff are prioritising work well with students who they feel are most at risk of leaving their course early. However, the strategies to improve attendance and punctuality have yet to take effect. Equal opportunities are effectively promoted within this area of learning. Course files show that communication within the course team is generally good, though there is insufficient minuting of the discussions and proposed actions to resolve key areas of concern. There is also insufficient attention paid to improving the quality of teaching which is unsatisfactory in some areas. The quality assurance system has enabled managers at all levels to contribute to the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. However, this process is not yet sufficiently rigorous.

Design communication



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

Work-based learning is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- high pass rates on national diploma printing, graphic design and intermediate multimedia courses

- high standard of students' technical and industrial skills on printing and computer-aided design courses

- creative and effective teaching on national diploma printing courses

- productive partnerships with employers to support students

- extensive industrial links on printing courses.

Weaknesses

- consistently poor retention and pass rates on the national diploma multimedia course
- insufficient assessment and tracking of students' progress
- individual learning needs not met on graphic design and multimedia courses
- slow progress towards qualifications in work-based learning.

Scope of provision

61. There is a broad range of level 3 courses in design communications. This includes 3 national diploma courses in graphic design, printmaking and multimedia with 116 full-time students and 308 part-time students, of which 25 are work-based learners. At level 2, there is part-time provision in a series of NVQs, intermediate multimedia classes and evening classes in image manipulation, desk-top publishing and web design.

Achievement and standards

62. Pass rates are high and above the national averages on most courses. Pass rates on national diploma courses in printing and graphic design have exceeded the national averages for three consecutive years. There are high pass rates on the intermediate certificate in multimedia for adults. Retention rates are poor on the national diploma in multimedia course and have been significantly below the national averages for three consecutive years. In work-based learning, retention rates are satisfactory on modern apprenticeships and NVQ qualifications. Retention rates on the national diploma in graphic design course have steadily improved. Progression to university and employment is high. In 2003, 81% of students successfully progressed from national diploma in graphics, 60% progressed from the national diploma in media course and 90% progressed from the national diploma in printing course.

63. Students' work shows good integration of technical and industrial skills, particularly in printing and computer-aided design. Students' final prints on the national diploma in printing course are well executed and finished to a high standard. On the national diploma in printing course, students have consistently won national prizes, trophies and competitions. Information learning technology (ILT) is well embedded in national diploma graphic design and multimedia courses. There are strong links between research, design development and production on computer courses. There is also good use of design development skills in computer-aided design, however, there is a lack of high-quality drawing and material manipulation skills in some design projects.

64. The standard of students' work on work-based learning is generally satisfactory and in some cases very good. In one instance, a learner working with an employer successfully undertook the challenging task of printing large, full colour images on a single colour press.

A sample of retention and pass rates in design communication, 2001 to 2003

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Intermediate certificate	2	No. of starts	6	34	27

in multimedia		% retention	83	82	100
		% pass rate	100	64	100
National diploma in graphic design	3	No. of starts	59	21	41
		% retention	68	57	68
		% pass rate	98	100	93
National diploma in multimedia	3	No. of starts	16	26	26
		% retention	56	42	50
		% pass rate	78	82	77
National diploma in printing	3	No. of starts	26	16	12
		% retention	69	56	75
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Quality of education and training

65. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned well with detailed schemes of work. In a majority of lessons, students are given clear and well-presented handouts to underpin theory and practical work. There is good teaching of technical and industrial skills. For example, in a printing lesson, the tutor used an interactive whiteboard innovatively to teach methods of industrial paper folding. In another multimedia lesson on print journalism, students, in small teams, were encouraged to explore layout, text, colour and target group when designing a centre spread for a teenage magazine. However, in graphic design and some multimedia lessons, there is insufficient attention to students' needs. Few extension tasks are given to more able students and lessons do not ensure that weaker students receive additional assistance if they find the work hard. In work-based learning, training within the college is good. Employers are supportive of day release to the college and there are work placements throughout the south west of England.

66. Most staff are well qualified and many have good industrial experience. Access to specialist staff development is good. The studios and workshops in all areas are good. They are light and airy with adequate storage facilities. Most equipment is industry standard and there is up-to-date software. Students have good access to computers. The printing workshop is well equipped and well maintained with good technical support available in the printing workshops. Pre-press and press equipment is of a good commercial standard. A computer based 'virtual printing press' provides a good training aid on which students are taught techniques for solving technical faults. There is a wide range of equipment in the workplace from single colour presses to 'state of the art' high volume production facilities. There is a lack of basic print finishing equipment and most library books cover historical print processes rather than up-to-date advances in technology.

67. Assessment practices are fair and thorough and carefully conducted on most courses. Tracking of students' achievements is good; however, students' understanding of their progress and attainment is poor. There are insufficient tutorials for setting goals for students and monitoring their performance, and targets are not regularly updated. Internal verification is satisfactory. There is slow progress towards qualifications in work-based learning. Assessment opportunities for work-based learners on modern apprenticeships are limited and some learners express frustration at the lengthy period between assessments.

68. Programmes adequately meet the needs and interests of students. There are satisfactory additional activities throughout the department designed to develop students' understanding of their vocational area. For example, students regularly visit multimedia and printing companies, and trips are organised to galleries and museums. Students also benefit from a short course in employment skills to enable smoother progression to employment. The national diploma printing course has extensive industrial links that are used for valuable student placements, employment and NVQ qualifications. Since January 2004, the college has been delivering the national 'print pilot' programme, aimed at providing funded access to modern apprenticeship learners who are aged

over 25. The scheme is receiving enthusiastic support from local employers who have difficulty in recruiting traditional modern apprenticeship learners.

69. Guidance and support for students are satisfactory. There is a good initial assessment system that helps identify students with additional learning needs. This is underpinned by good additional support, particularly on the national diploma in graphics course. Students have good access to counselling and advice on financial issues. There is insufficient tutorial support. Students receive only four formal tutorials a year. Students on the national diploma in multimedia and graphic design course, lack information about their progress and are unaware of the standards they are achieving. Support for work-based learning is satisfactory. Site visits are regular and responsive to learners needs. A minority of learners receive inadequate support with portfolio development in the early stages of their programme, which hinders their learning.

Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are satisfactory. New systems are in place to address issues of retention rates, target setting, staff appraisals and students' feedback. Self-assessment at course level is good, but lacks detailed analysis at department level. There are recent initiatives to address retention rates on national diploma in multimedia courses, but it is too early to evaluate their full success. Curriculum management on the national diploma in multimedia course is good. Course teams work well together and there has been internal staff training for curriculum managers. There is some ineffective management of assessment in work-based learning.

Part D: College data

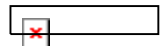
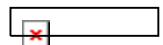


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	27	60
2	53	26
3	20	10
4/5	0	3
Other	0	1
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the college in Spring 2004

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age



Curriculum area	16-18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments (%)

Science and mathematics	141	35	6
Land-based provision	0	0	0
Construction	9	20	1
Engineering, technology and manufacture	26	60	3
Business administration, management and professional	0	0	0
Information and communication technology	228	70	11
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	0	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	28	572	21
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	0	0	0
Health, social care and public services	0	0	0
Visual and performing arts and media	327	241	20
Humanities	1	1	0
English, languages and communication	132	36	6
Foundation programmes	92	39	5
Unknown area of learning	485	293	27
Total	984	1,074	100

Source: provided by the college in Spring 2004

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
1	Starters excluding transfers	65	45	28	110	81	26
	Retention rate %	72	64	50	76	72	88
	National average %	83	84	81	74	80	70
	Pass rate %	49	76	79	38	79	78
	National average %	65	69	76	65	66	77
2	Starters excluding transfers	94	13	30	58	23	67
	Retention rate %	74	77	70	86	78	67

	National average %	77	77	77	69	71	71
	Pass rate %	46	90	67	40	100	76
	National average %	74	73	76	69	69	74
3	Starters excluding transfers	215	315	259	126	164	152
	Retention rate %	62	67	62	66	72	61
	National average %	71	71	75	62	69	64
	Pass rate %	89	95	94	89	92	90
	National average %	79	80	82	63	67	68
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	0	0	0	76	0	48
	Retention rate %	0	0	0	84	0	94
	National average %	0	0	0	54	0	67
	Pass rate %	0	0	0	83	0	84
	National average %	0	0	0	76	0	56

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 2000 to 2002: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2003.

2. College rates for 1999/2000 to 2001/02: College ISR.

* numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	69	27	4	55
Level 2 (intermediate)	62	13	25	8
Level 1 (foundation)	100	0	0	1
Other sessions	0	0	0	0
Totals	69	25	6	64

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2004. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

Office for
Standards
in Education

