

## Chichester College

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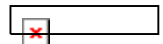
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**Basic information about the college**

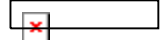


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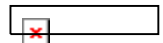
Name of college:	Chichester College
Type of college:	General Further Education College
Principal:	Dr Richard Parker
Address of college:	Westgate Fields Chichester West Sussex PO19 1SB
Telephone number:	01243 786321
Fax number:	01243 539481
Chair of governors:	Barrie Morgans

Unique reference number: 130843  
Name of reporting inspector: Bob Cowdrey ALI  
Dates of inspection: 12-22 January 2004

## Part A: Summary



### Information about the college

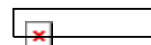


Chichester College is one of the largest general further education (FE) colleges in Sussex. College data for 2002/03 show that there were 15,144 students, of whom 4,373 were full time and 10,771 studied part time. In addition, the college provided for 1,755 adult and community education students. The college offers courses across all 14 areas of learning identified by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). There is significant provision for work-based learning, with about 400 learners on programmes. Using the measure of full-time equivalent students, approximately 46% of LSC-funded students were aged 16 to 18. The college offers courses from pre-entry level to higher national diploma (HND).

In 2002/03, just under 5% of students were of minority ethnic backgrounds compared with 1.6% of the local population. This difference is due to the significant recruitment of international students from over 70 different countries, who come to the college to study both English as a foreign language (EFL) and also FE and higher education (HE) courses. Following its merger with Brinsbury College in August 2002, Chichester College now operates on two main campuses, one in Chichester and the other in its Brinsbury Campus, near Pulborough. The college has several centres in Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Selsey and Boxgrove and also makes provision in a number of smaller community-based centres. The college recruits students from the Chichester area, but also attracts significant numbers of students from East Hampshire and from the Worthing area. The main employment sectors in the area are retail, manufacturing, education and health services. The area also has a much higher proportion of employment in agriculture and horticulture than other parts of Sussex. At 1.2%, unemployment is below that of the rest of Sussex and the South East. Average weekly earnings in and around Chichester are 11% below the Sussex average and 16% below the national average. Some 87% of businesses employ fewer than 10 people. The proportion of deprived wards is below the national average. Even so the proportion of people with no, or low level, qualifications is higher in this area than in the rest of Sussex and the South East but lower than the national average. The percentage of Year 11 students gaining five or more general certificate of secondary education grades A\* to C was 54.7% in 2002 which exceeds the national average. Participation rates of students aged 16 to 19 in full-time education were 81.5% in 2002 with a further 9.2% continuing in work-related training. In the last three years, the main increase in participation has been on full-time FE courses with a growth rate of 19.1%.

The college works closely with partner schools and the West Sussex Learning Partnership to promote 14 to 16 curriculum collaboration. The local planning area has been identified as one of three national test bed areas to pilot 'Success for all'. It has also taken a leading role in a Sussex-wide initiative called 'Colleges for Business', designed specifically to enhance employer engagement and workforce development in the area. The college has been awarded Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status in construction and care in partnership with Crawley College. More recently, the college has gained another CoVE in rural enterprise in partnership with Plumpton College. Chichester College's mission is to be recognised as a world class centre of learning.

## How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the provision to be outstanding in one curriculum area, good in seven others and satisfactory in a further six. The quality of work-based learning was considered to be satisfactory in the four areas inspected. The college's main strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

### ***Key strengths***

- improving enrolments, retention and pass rates
  
- good practical training
  
- effective investment in front of house improvements at Chichester campus
  
- sustained investment programme to raise the quality of accommodation
  
- broad range of courses and enrichment opportunities
  
- effective links with external agencies
  
- the social inclusion agenda
  
- good personal, academic and welfare support
  
- effective advice and guidance
  
- clear sense of direction and strategic purpose

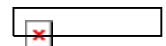
- o good governance and financial management
- o effective merger with Brinsbury college.

**What should be improved**

- o quality of teaching and learning in some curriculum areas
- o student attendance monitoring
- o management and achievement of work-based learners
- o quality of some tutorials
- o accommodation at Brinsbury campus
- o level of constructive self-criticism in the self-assessment process in some curriculum areas.

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

**Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas**



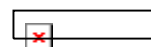
*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).*

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
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Science and mathematics	<b>Good.</b> There are high pass rates in general certificate of education advanced-level (GCE A-level) chemistry and mathematics, and high retention rates in the majority of subjects. Pass rates in advanced subsidiary-level (AS-level) and GCSE human biology are low. There is much good teaching with rigorous assessment of student work and constructive feedback. Academic and pastoral support are strong, but student attendance is unsatisfactory.
Land-based provision	<b>Good.</b> Work-based learning contributory grade: <b>satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates are high on most full-time courses. There are good teaching and practical resources for student learning. Some of the classroom accommodation is poor and in need of refurbishment.
Construction	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning contributory grade: <b>satisfactory.</b> There are high and improving pass rates in electrical installation, but low retention and pass rates for some level 2 craft courses. Teaching in most lessons is satisfactory with many good practical sessions. Students are well supported. Progress monitoring and reviews are weak. Resources are satisfactory, but some workshop accommodation is inadequate.
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning contributory grade: <b>satisfactory.</b> There are high pass rates on level 1 motor vehicle and engineering national certificate and diploma courses, but the progress of some work-based learners is slow. Teaching is good in most lessons with a strong practical content, but in some lessons there is dull and uninspiring teaching. Support for work-based learners is good, although progress reviews for these learners and college students are weak.
Business, administration, management and professional	<b>Good.</b> There are high pass rates on administration and professional programmes, although the pass rates on advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) courses, National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) accounting are generally low. The majority of teaching is good or better and engages and motivates students. There is a wide range of courses available and most programmes are well managed, although there is weak management of work-based learning. Up-to-date flexible learning centres are very well-used by students and enable them to study and research independently.
Information and communications technology	<b>Good.</b> The curriculum area has strong leadership, much good teaching, high pass rates on many courses and good retention rates on most courses. Teachers are well qualified and experienced and an effective and innovative staff development initiative is used with new recruits from industry. Support for individual students is good. Ineffective use is made of classroom assistants.
Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are high retention and pass rates on some sports courses and NVQ catering and hospitality at level 1. There are low pass rates on sport and travel vocational courses and low retention rates on NVQ catering and hospitality courses at levels 2 and 3. There is good one-to-one coaching in practical lessons, but students are insufficiently challenged in level 3 lessons. Resources are good and staff are well qualified with good links to industry.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	<b>Good.</b> There are high pass rates on most beauty and holistic therapy courses. Key skills are a central part of the curriculum. There is much good teaching and learning across a wide range of courses. Students are particularly well supported by college staff and employers. There is good progression and achievement for modern apprentices. Classroom management is weak in some hairdressing lessons.

Health, social care and public services	<b>Good.</b> Work-based learning contributory grade: <b>satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates are high on most courses and the majority of the teaching and learning is good or better. Students make good progress to FE and HE or employment. Guidance and support for students are extensive and there is effective response to sector and community needs. There is slow progress towards modern apprenticeship frameworks for some learners.
General visual arts	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention rates are high on art foundation and GCE A-level media and music studies courses and pass rates are high for AS-level media and drama courses. Pass rates are low for level 2 courses in art and media and for national diploma in performing arts. There is a broad range of appropriate provision. Accommodation is good and fit for purpose. Students demonstrate high standards of practical skills in all subjects although some teaching does not sufficiently extend students.
Humanities	<b>Good.</b> Most pass and retention rates are high, particularly at GCE A level and AS level. There is much good teaching which encourages the development of personal skills as well as subject knowledge. Curriculum management and leadership are strong, with a firm focus on quality improvement. Learning materials used in lessons are good, but the use of information learning technology (ILT) is underdeveloped and offers few opportunities for independent study.
English, language and communication	<b>Outstanding.</b> English contributory grade: <b>good.</b> The wide range of provision in this curriculum area is very well managed. Retention and pass rates are outstanding on the NVQs in EFL and there are high pass rates on many level 3 courses. There is much very good and outstanding teaching. Particular attention is given to meeting individual learning needs. The presence of a large international student cohort impacts positively on the ethos of the area and the college as a whole.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The integration of literacy, numeracy and language support in practical lessons is good and students are well supported. There are strong, productive links with community organisations which serve to encourage widening participation. Theory lessons sometimes lack variety to meet the needs of differing student ability. Learning plans are insufficiently detailed and there are inadequate formal arrangements for the reviews of students' progress.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are high retention and pass rates and good access to information and communications technology (ICT) resources. Teaching and learning in individual literacy and numeracy learning support lessons are good and there is a broad range of provision to widen participation. However, initial assessment is incomplete and learning plans are poorly used. Some reviews of progress are insufficiently evaluative and attendance in some lessons is poor.

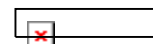
#### How well is the college led and managed?



Leadership and management are good. Governors and senior managers set a clear strategic direction to meet local and national priorities. There is a strong commitment to international work

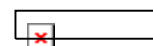
organisations. Retention and pass rates have continued to improve and are high for many courses. Standards of teaching are satisfactory overall, but the proportion of lessons graded good or better are slightly lower than the average for colleges of the same type. Curriculum management is satisfactory or better in all areas. There are, however, weaknesses in aspects of the management of work-based learning. Clear quality assurance systems are in place although judgments are not always objective enough in the self-assessment report. Financial management is very good. The college provides good value for money.

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



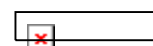
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is good. The broad range of provision, flexible modes of attendance and strong links with schools, employers, and out centres create many opportunities to widen participation. The college offers residential courses to international and other students. The college is fulfilling its duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. It actively promotes inclusion of minority ethnic students. Some 6% of the student population are from minority ethnic backgrounds, in comparison to the regional demography of 1.6%. Support for students with learning difficulties is good, including effective literacy, numeracy and additional learning support, which is available across all curriculum areas. The college is working hard to fulfil its obligations under the Special Educational Needs Disability Act (SENDA). An extensive accessibility survey has been carried out across both campuses, and the college is actively striving to improve accessibility and remove barriers to participation. Good, well used childcare facilities are available at the Chichester campus.

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



Support for students is good. The student executive and student councils ensure that student views are well represented to governors and college managers. Counselling services are effective and good links with external agencies enhance the support offered. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are well integrated with the college community. Careers advice, guidance and admissions services are well managed. Initial assessment of students aged 16 to 18, and a smaller number of adult students are comprehensive, although the information it provides is not always used effectively in planning for learning. Some students have not yet been assigned the specialist support they require. The quality of tutorial lessons is not uniformly good. There is good support for residential students, but Brinsbury's rural location restricts social opportunities for residential students at the campus.

### **Students' views of the college**



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

#### ***What students like about the college***

- helpful and supportive teachers

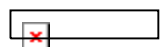


- friendly atmosphere and safe environment
- good library and learning resources centres with helpful staff
- good information technology (IT) facilities
- the college crèche
- careers advice and guidance
- practical lessons.

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

- the amount of seating in the canteen on the Chichester campus
- car parking and better lighting in car parks for students on the Chichester campus
- toilet facilities in some areas of the Chichester campus
- social programme for Brinsbury students in the evenings and at the weekends.

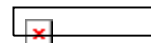
**Other information**



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

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



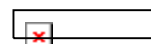
### Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

Aspect and learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	61	35	4
19+ and WBL*	63	35	2
Learning 16-18	60	37	3
19+ and WBL*	63	35	2

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 student records (ISR) for 2000 to 2002 were provided by the LSC. Inspectors also used data for 2002/03 provided by the college and additional data to help them form their judgements, particularly in relation to work-based learning. The separate reports on areas of learning in Part C give more details about achievement and standards on particular courses.

2. The college offers a wide range of courses, which may be followed through full-time or part-time study, at various levels in all 14 areas of learning as defined by the LSC. The inspection sampled provision in 13 curriculum areas. In 2002/03, enrolments grew by 29% compared with 2001/02. In work-based learning programmes, enrolments increased by 20%. Retention rates have improved by 4%, across the whole college. Pass rates have shown a steady upward trend for both age groups with the majority at or above the national average at all levels. Data on value added for students taking GCE A-level courses indicate that the value added by the college has been improving from a low base. In 2001, the value added was well below the average of other providers of similar courses, but in 2003, it was broadly in line with other providers. In 2001, 2002 and 2003, key skills retention rates were 88%, 53% and 94%, respectively, and the pass rates were 66%, 55% and 47%, respectively.

3. Work-based training is currently provided in eight areas, with the largest numbers of learners in construction, engineering, hairdressing and care. The college has approximately 400 work-based learners following foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships and NVQ training. The college was only able to provide pass rate data for cohorts of work-based learners who started in, or after, the 2001/02 academic year. There is satisfactory achievement of frameworks in work-based veterinary and construction programmes. In hair and beauty, work-based learners are making good progress in individual units of their NVQ. There is slow achievement of the modern apprenticeship frameworks in engineering, business, and health and social care, although learners in these areas are generally achieving their associated NVQ qualification.

4. The average attendance rate in the lessons observed was 75%. This is 1% below the average observed rate in 2002/03 for general FE and tertiary colleges. Attendance rates were below the average in 6 out of the 13 areas inspected. Attendance was highest in health, social care and public services, at 88%, and lowest in construction, at 59%. In some lessons, attendance was particularly poor with attendance levels below 50%, such as in hospitality and business administration. Student punctuality was poor in construction.

5. The standard of work of students at all ages is generally satisfactory. In music and performing arts, there is some good practical work. Students studying science subjects demonstrate good investigative skills. In English, students use technical terminology fluently. Students studying German are able to discuss news items with accuracy and fluency. Those studying in engineering make good use of computer modelling software to check the practicality of their designs, but some students have difficulty reading measuring instruments. Students on business courses are able to explore business issues and work to deadlines. Adult students on computing courses develop good skills in using various software packages. Hair and beauty therapy students have good practical skills and there are some very good examples of casualty make-up and competition work. In access to HE courses, students actively participate in lessons. Students in construction work to high standards in the workshops and in the workplace.

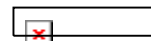
### **16 to 18 year olds**

6. In 2002/03, about 26% of the students were aged 16 to 18, with 77% of the students on full-time courses. The largest numbers of enrolments are on level 3 courses. Retention rates from 2001 to 2003 on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 have varied considerably. Figures for 2002/03 show an upward trend and improvement above national averages in retention rates at levels 1 and 3, while remaining the same as the average at level 2. Key skills retention rates have shown the largest increase from 53% in 2001/02, to 94% in 2002/03. Pass rates on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 have improved from a low figure in 2001 to at, or above, the national averages in 2002/03. Retention rates on NVQ courses at level 2 have fluctuated. In 2002, the retention rates were 11% below the national average, compared to 6% above the average in 2001. Pass rates on NVQ courses at level 2 have varied significantly from 2001 to 2003. In 2002, the pass rate was 4% above the national average, compared to 11% below the average in 2001. Key skills pass rates have declined from 66% in 2000/01, to 47% in 2002/03, but still remain above average.

### **Adult learners**

7. In 2002/03, about 74% students were adults, with 76% of the students on part-time courses. The largest numbers of enrolments are on level 1 and 2 courses with many enrolling on short courses. Retention rates on courses at levels 1, 2 and 3 have improved from 2001 to 2003 and currently are significantly above national averages at all levels, the highest rates being for short courses. Pass rates show a similar picture of upward trend in improvement with the majority above average. At level 3, the figures are more variable over the last three years, but in 2002/03 still reflect rates above national averages for adults.

## **Quality of education and training**



8. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 328 lessons. Teaching was good or better in 61% of these, satisfactory in 35% and less than satisfactory in 4%. It was excellent or very good in 22% of the lessons. The proportion of teaching that was good or better is lower than the average for the sector for colleges of the same type. The highest proportion of good or very good teaching was in science and mathematics, land-based, business administration, health and social care and public services and English, languages and communication courses. For students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, teaching reflected the sector average. There was good practical teaching observed in engineering, construction and land-based courses. Teaching was better at levels 1 and 3 than at level 2 which was slightly lower than the sector average.

9. Many lessons are well planned and students participate well, particularly in small classes. On EFL courses, well qualified and motivated staff provide outstanding teaching. In land-based subjects, there is much good teaching which is maintained at a lively pace. For example, enthusiastic and supportive teachers maintained the attention of students with clear demonstrations using bridles and saddle pats. In practical lessons in engineering, practical training aids are used effectively to promote learning. The majority of students in motor vehicle lessons at the Brinsbury campus engaged in project work building engine test beds and creating working models of cars as part of their key skills development. Teaching for work-based learners is good with effective use of practical resources.

10. In several lessons teachers talk too much and there is insufficient interaction between teacher and student. In many cases, students' work is marked promptly with constructive criticism, but in other lessons little is done to check students' learning. In hospitality, the teaching is dull and uninspiring. However, in tourism, good use is made of the travel shop to create a realistic working environment. The overall quality of learning materials is good, although insufficient use is made of ILT in some curriculum areas. Lessons are sometimes poorly planned and a few lessons are taught in rooms that are too small and unsuitable for effective learning.

11. Practical teaching for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and basic skills are well integrated. Some theory lessons are less effective. For example, there was insufficient planning of the learning activities and few opportunities taken to develop and record students' skills and abilities.

12. Classroom management is good in most areas and satisfactory in others. In areas such as the computer workshops, some classes shared a room for lessons and this had an adverse effect on both teaching and learning.

13. Key skills are a central part of hairdressing programmes and work-based learners progress well with their learning. In construction, there is satisfactory progress towards achieving modern apprenticeship frameworks and links between college staff and employers are good. These links are less effective in other areas, such as business administration, where visits to learners in the workplace are often insufficient. The management of work-based learning has improved significantly in the last 18 months. However, a computerised database of learners' progress has yet to be fully implemented in all areas.

14. The quality of accommodation at the Chichester campus is mostly good. There is a suite of modern and attractive front-of-house areas including reception, refectory, advice and guidance centres, student and staff common rooms, a cyber café, and a shop. These facilities are used extensively by the students, and provide a strong focal point for the campus. There is a broad selection of goods and food available to students. The quality of teaching accommodation and resources at the campus is varied. A recent refurbishment programme has created some good science and engineering accommodation.

15. Resources in ICT are also good, with well-equipped open access and classroom areas containing ample networked computers and up-to-date software packages. There is a broad range of high-quality sports facilities available, including a large all-weather pitch, tennis courts, fitness

suites and a large sports hall nearing completion. There is also an extensive range of very well-equipped performing arts facilities, including a studio theatre, dance and drama studios, music practice rooms, recording studios and disc-jockey workshop. Some accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory, and do not encourage effective teaching and learning. In particular, construction facilities are too small with only limited access to ageing equipment which does not create a realistic working environment. Some of the caring and humanities accommodation is also small for the sizes of classes using it. There is a large nursery and popular crèche facility at Chichester that provides a good service for both staff and students.

16. At the Brinsbury campus, there is a broad range of resources for land-based provision, including extensive glass houses, stables, farm buildings, livestock, engineering and construction workshops and a small animal centre. Some of the general classroom teaching facilities and small animal centre are too small and in a poor decorative state. Construction and engineering provision has recently been introduced at the campus, but some of the construction accommodation and resources in these areas are unsatisfactory, and do not create an environment conducive to learning. The college has invested extensively over the past few years in developing and refurbishing accommodation and resources at both Chichester and Brinsbury. There are attractive residential blocks at both campuses, with resident wardens. The college has a well-conceived draft five-year accommodation development plan that accurately identifies resource weaknesses, and acknowledges and prioritises the development needs. There are appropriate policies and procedures in place to monitor and review health and safety issues.

17. Academic staff display a high level of subject knowledge and expertise. Although only 64% currently have teaching qualifications, the college has a teacher training programme in place to raise this figure, in line with government guidelines. In vocational areas, staff have good industrial and commercial experience which enhance the quality and relevance of the vocational provision. The college has appointed 23 advanced practitioners who work with academic staff on projects to raise the quality of teaching and learning. The college invests heavily in staff development. Some £450,000 has been spent over the past 12 months on identified developmental priorities at corporate programme area and individual course levels.

18. Assessment practice is satisfactory in most areas and good in science and mathematics, IT humanities and EFL lessons. Assignments are usually well designed, with clear assessment criteria reflecting awarding body requirements. Teachers return marked work regularly, annotated with comments to help students improve. There is particularly constructive feedback to students in humanities and in science and mathematics. In contrast, feedback to students on land-based courses is less helpful. On stage management courses, some work is too generously marked. On some professional programmes in business, teachers are slow to return marked work. In health and social care, students do not always know at which point across the year assignments are to be set and this makes it difficult for them to manage their time. In construction, recording of students' progress is weak and teachers do not keep their own records of students' achievement.

19. Most subject teachers complete six-weekly reviews on students aged 16 to 18. These are shared with personal tutors, but learning targets set are often too broad to enable students' progress to be measured. Learning plans do not always take sufficient account of the initial assessment undertaken at the start of students' courses. Student reviews in literacy and numeracy and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not adequately record the improvements students make. Employers are not routinely involved sufficiently in progress reviews for some work-based learners in business and engineering.

20. A recently appointed advanced practitioner is co-ordinating and supporting the development of assessment and verification of vocational courses. Internal verification policy and procedures are well-documented and external verifier reports are typically good. The implementation of action points for improvement is carefully monitored by college managers.

21. The college provides an extensive range of full-time and part-time vocational, academic and professional provision ranging from entry level to HND in most areas of learning. In particular, the college offers an extensive selection of 37 GCE A levels including sciences, humanities and languages, some of which are taught in conjunction with local schools as a result of a strong

partnership approach. These strong school links also enable a broad programme of college-based provision for over 400 school pupils aged 14 to 16 in many vocational areas, including construction, engineering, catering, care and land-based studies. There is a high level of internal progression in most areas, and on to further and higher level study at different institutions.

22. The college has strong links with local businesses and employers. This enables the college to respond well to local employer needs and skills shortages. It also creates good work experience and work placement opportunities for students. Links with employers engaged in work-based learning are generally good in most areas.

23. The college has a strongly inclusive ethos, and actively promotes the full integration of all students into the community of the college. It is also active in widening participation through an extensive range of short courses at many local community venues. Following the recent merger with Brinsbury, the college has identified new opportunities for integration, and curriculum development across its campuses. The college has an effective curriculum development programme and responds promptly to increases and decreases in demands in various subject areas. In addition, it accurately identifies new market opportunities, and provides flexible provision both on campus, and in the workplace, where required. For example, the college has recently established an integrated programme of basic skills and commercial horticulture, operating out of the Brinsbury campus, in response to an identified need amongst local growers.

24. Key skills teaching across the college is satisfactory in most areas. Where appropriate, each course concentrates particularly on making at least one key skill a central part of the course. A key skills support team works across the college to help identify opportunities for key skills teaching and assessment on courses. The team also provides support in the process of moderating and internally verifying key skills.

25. The college offers a wide range of enrichment activities. It has many sports teams that compete in local and regional sports leagues and competitions. A student activities co-ordinator arranges regular extra-curricular trips, visits and activities such as dance, drama, music, yoga and language lessons which are well attended by students. The student council is active across the college and helps create a strong voice on student-related issues.

26. Personal, academic, welfare and study support for students are good. The college offers a welcoming and friendly environment for a diverse community and provides a wide range of well-used services, including residential accommodation, careers and progression advice, counselling, learning support, personal tutoring and financial support. In 2002/03, around 300 students were supported by college counselling services and 96% of these were retained on college courses.

27. Support staff have good links with external agencies to enhance the level of service they provide. Links include Connexions, the education business partnership, West Sussex autism society and the society for the deaf. Arrangements are co-ordinated within the directorates of student support and curriculum development. Facilities are located in areas that are easily accessible to students. A team of advisers offer careers education and guidance, on both college sites, in the well-equipped careers advice and training service unit. Admissions to college courses are well managed. Good progress has been made in developing the coherence, co-ordination and quality of these services. The college has achieved external recognition for the quality of the advice and guidance it offers. Taster sessions and information events are provided for local schools. Significant numbers of pupils aged 14 to 16 enrol on college courses and many of them progress to related study post-16.

28. Arrangements for the initial assessment of students aged 16 to 18 are comprehensive. A common induction programme for full-time students includes an assessment of individual learning styles and key skills. Information is shared with subject teachers, although this is not always used effectively in planning for learning with individuals or groups of students. Personal tutor practice in completing the cross-college documentation, linked to the wider key skill 'improving own learning and performance', is not uniformly good and does not concentrate sufficiently on the development of learning skills.

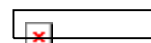
29. Most students speak highly of the informal and one-to-one support they receive. Some tutorials are purposeful and effective in supporting and monitoring students' progress. However, not all tutorials are effective. A recently introduced common scheme of work and staff development programme provided for personal tutors by the tutorial curriculum team manager aims to improve overall quality and standards. Tutorial arrangements for part-time students are less well developed, although these students are entitled to initial assessment and learning support through self-referral. Work-based learners generally receive good support from their employers in the workplace.

30. The increasingly rigorous approach to initial assessment has accelerated the demand for learning support. In January 2004, some 39 students, yet to complete a specialist programme of assessment for dyslexia, were still waiting to be assigned a support tutor. Learning assistants provide good personal support, but generally lack specialist training in addressing students' wider learning needs.

31. There is good support for the significant numbers of young people in college halls, host families, and other student accommodation. Residential supervisors and family members over the age of 16, in private homes acting as hosts, are required to sign a college declaration confirming that they do not have any criminal convictions, although, at the time of inspection, formal police checks were incomplete. The college had a successful national care standards commission inspection in January 2003. Since then, refurbishment of existing halls for students aged 16 to 18 and a new residence, for adult students, on the Chichester campus, have further improved the overall standard of accommodation. Social facilities for these students are generally good, although for the 24 students, resident on the Brinsbury campus in January 2004, the rural location, and under-utilised accommodation, restricts opportunities for social interaction.

32. Attendance in a number of lessons, in particular construction, science and mathematics and hospitality, was low. The lateness to lessons of some students caused disruption. The college is beginning to address the development of procedures for reporting and following up on student absence. Assistant tutors support personal tutors by contacting full-time students who do not attend their lessons. However, college-wide systems for monitoring the impact of these and other support strategies, on retention and pass rates, are not yet in place.

## Leadership and management



33. Leadership and management are good. Governors and senior managers give strong direction and leadership to the college. They share a clear sense of purpose and common values. This is enshrined in the strategic plan, which is developed in consultation with the corporation and with staff. The college's mission and its strategic objectives are widely known. The management structure supports the effective integration of academic and business support functions, and ensures that all senior managers have responsibility for one or more areas of the curriculum. Senior managers regularly review their own effectiveness, and a recent review of their responsibilities has allowed them to distinguish more clearly between strategic and operational matters. The merger with Brinsbury college has been well managed, resulting in significant improvements in the quality of provision and a clear vision of the potential of the additional resources the college now has at its disposal.

34. There is a common purpose directed at achieving targets for recruitment, retention and pass rates, and for widening participation. Retention rates were identified as a weakness in the previous inspection in a number of curriculum areas, and a retention rate working party was set up, chaired by the principal. Retention rates have fluctuated over the last three years for students aged 16 to 18, but have shown an overall improvement, and are at, or above, the national average for all students. Pass rates improved significantly between 2000/01 and 2001/02, particularly for those aged 19+. Managers have responded to the needs of the local community by expanding the curriculum in a number of areas, and enrolments have increased significantly over the last three years.

35. The college has established a comprehensive network of strategic partnerships with schools, community groups, local companies and other key partners involved in planning education and training. It has a strong community presence and works closely with over 40 schools on a range of successful 14 to 16 education initiatives, involving almost 500 school pupils. The increased flexibility programme (IFP) is particularly effective. Employers value the college's professional approach to its business partnerships, and the up-to-date training courses and resources. The college has CoVE status for construction, care and rural enterprise in partnership with one general FE college and one specialist college.

36. Communication within the college is good. Staff see managers as open, honest and receptive to new ideas. A major staff survey is carried out every two years, and staff praise the ways in which the results are openly published and issues are effectively resolved by the staff council. Good use is made of electronic communications to keep staff up-to-date with information and new developments, and use of the college intranet is expanding. Staff at the Brinsbury campus feel involved in all aspects of the college.

37. The programme planning process realistically evaluates the need for the introduction of new courses. The effectiveness of curriculum management varies across the college. In the best curriculum areas, there is a strong team sense, course teams meet regularly, and managers and staff deal effectively with course issues. Where curriculum management is satisfactory, there is a lack of consistency in management practice, for example in the monitoring of attendance. The college has identified poor management of work-based learning in some curriculum areas, and has introduced a number of improvements to the way in which its work-based learning is organised.

38. The college has an effective management information system, which is regularly available to staff, and provides an extensive range of data, including good access to data on students. Managers at all levels have reliable information to inform their decisions, and the systems used enable them to evaluate the cost effectiveness of their courses and compare the financial performance of programmes against the targets set. A process improvement group set up to evaluate the effectiveness of systems throughout the college, has made useful recommendations for the planned introduction of a new college information system.

39. The quality assurance framework is well established and is supported by a wide range of detailed policies and procedures. All policies are reviewed and updated annually, and are easily available to staff on the college intranet. Most curriculum teams have well-organised course files and carry out course reviews at the end of each academic year. However, the action plans to resolve the issues identified in the reviews are not always sufficiently detailed. Students' views are collected and analysed, and staff are able to give examples of improvements that have arisen as a result of this feedback. Advanced practitioners successfully share good practice in some areas of the curriculum, but the college's teaching observation scheme places insufficient emphasis on the quality of learning and standards of students' attainment. Programme quality reports produced annually by each curriculum area are insufficiently analytical, and in some cases, omit key strengths and weaknesses. The college's self-assessment report erred on the side of generosity in its grading of 6 of the 14 curriculum areas.

40. Senior managers demonstrate a strong commitment towards staff training and development, and the management of the college's human resources is given a clear strategic priority. The annual training and development plan contains an appropriate range of planned in-house staff development, which reflects the strategic objectives of the college. The plan also takes account of the need to offer training throughout the year in response to new initiatives as they occur. Staff development days are used to explore specific themes in teaching and learning. Most full-time staff have an annual appraisal, but there have been delays in carrying out appraisals, and updating staff records, in some areas of the college. New staff are inducted well into the organisation, and an effective and well-planned mentoring system ensures they receive appropriate remission to carry out teacher training. The training needs of governors are identified and met.

41. The college is committed to widening participation and inclusive learning. The college has a broad definition of equality and diversity, and has extensive provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, women returnees and asylum seekers. It is actively involved in a large

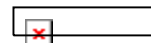


number of productive partnerships with external organisations to meet the needs of under-represented groups from the local community. Students value the multicultural atmosphere of the college, and their awareness of equal opportunities is raised through disability awareness days organised by the college. Equality of opportunity is promoted through the equality and diversity group, which meets regularly to update the equality and diversity plan. A detailed audit has been carried out to analyse the accessibility of the college's accommodation for students with restricted mobility. However, insufficient monitoring is carried out of the educational achievement of different age groups, or types of students, to inform improvements in participation, student support, teaching and learning strategies, retention and pass rates.

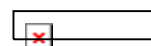
42. Governors are conscientious in fulfilling their duties. They attend annual meetings to validate the self-assessment process and approve the final report. The corporation receives detailed reports from each of its sub-committees and the standard of clerking is high. Governors' awareness of the strengths of the college and areas for improvement is good, and they can relate these clearly to their impact on students. The governors are regularly briefed on curriculum issues and developments affecting education and training at national level, and most have good links with staff and students in individual curriculum areas throughout the college.

43. The college's financial management is strong. The college has category A financial status, and has exceeded its funding unit target every year since 1994. Financial expenditure is carefully monitored, and the college has consistently registered an income surplus. Governors receive and review the monthly management accounts, and regular reports ensure that income and expenditure are closely monitored throughout the college. The college is particularly effective in securing funding from a wide range of sources; 40% of its income currently comes from non-LSC funding. Overall, the college offers good value for money.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Science and mathematics



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

#### **Strengths**

- high pass rates and good student progress relative to prior attainment in advanced level chemistry and mathematics
  
- high retention rates on most courses
  
- much good teaching

- o rigorous assessment and constructive feedback on students' work.

### **Weaknesses**

- o low pass rates on AS-level and GCSE human biology courses
- o narrow range of provision
- o unsatisfactory attendance.

### **Scope of provision**

44. Science and mathematics provision caters for 219 full-time students studying GCE A-level biology, human biology, chemistry, physics, science and mathematics and the medical/health foundation programme. GCSE science is available during the day. GCSE mathematics is offered both during the day and evening. The college also offers an intensive GCSE mathematics option, with certification in November or June. GCE A-level mathematics and AS-level mathematics are offered with pure, mechanics and statistics options.

### **Achievement and standards**

45. There are good pass rates in advanced level chemistry and mathematics, consistently above national averages over the last three years. The proportion of students achieving high grades is significantly above the national average. Students studying these subjects show good progress relative to their prior attainment. Pass rates in AS-level and GCSE human biology in 2003 were poor. Retention rates in the majority of subjects are above the national average. However, there is low progression from AS level to the second year of the advanced level courses. During inspection, the average attendance rate was low, at only 65%. Students' attainment in lessons is good. For example, in GCSE mathematics, students demonstrated confident use of graphical work and application of percentages. In GCSE science, students acquired good practical and analytical skills. In GCE A-level chemistry, students showed a high level of competence in investigating organic compounds. In human biology students competently investigated lung capacity and interpretation of graphical data. GCE A-level mathematics students developed confidence in testing hypotheses through practical experimentation.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2001 to 2003**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
GCSE mathematics 1 year (A* to C)	2	No. of starts	117	111	102
		% retention	85	88	86
		% pass rate	54	48	32
AS-level biology	3	No. of starts	25	44	42
		% retention	80	70	76

		% pass rate	80	65	50
AS-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	28	38	53
		% retention	89	84	85
		% pass rate	84	53	78
AS-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	67	99	128
		% retention	88	95	88
		% pass rate	64	54	63
AS-level physics	3	No. of starts	*	32	36
		% retention	*	94	86
		% pass rate	*	63	52
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts	33	**	19
		% retention	76	**	89
		% pass rate	84	**	76
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	39	16	17
		% retention	82	100	82
		% pass rate	81	88	100

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

46. There is much good teaching. Of the lessons observed during inspection, 80% were good or better and no teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and give positive encouragement and strong support in lessons. Teachers maintain high expectations of students' analytical and reasoning skills. Schemes of work are thorough and lessons include a wide range of activities to challenge students. In a particularly effective GCSE mathematics lesson, the teacher made good use of students' experience of council tax and gift aid to raise student confidence in problem solving. In the sciences, practical work and the differentiation of tasks to take account of the differing abilities of students are used effectively to develop learning. For example, in a well-planned, AS-level human biology lesson, students showed real enthusiasm and skill in investigating lung tidal volume at rest and after exercise. Other students in the same lesson were using their time effectively to look at lung tissue under a microscope and evaluate a written article on the effect of smoke on the lungs. In a GCSE science lesson, students used electronic light gates effectively to improve their understanding of the relation between speed and acceleration. A small minority of lessons were uninspiring as a result of a lack of variety in the methods used by teachers. Teachers make regular use of ILT facilities in the learning centre to enhance science and mathematics lessons. They also write and provide effective science and mathematics resource materials and course information for students on the virtual learning environment. However, little use is made of IT in laboratories and classrooms.

47. Staff are well qualified and experienced and have good access to a broad range of professional development opportunities. Recent refurbishment of the biology laboratory and construction of a well-equipped lecture theatre has provided much needed accommodation. There is a lack of storage space for students' coats and bags in the science area, which creates a hazard when doing practical work. In addition, there is a lack of laboratory coats for use during chemistry practical work. Science subjects have good technician support. Mathematics classrooms are dull, with no displays of students' work and no working access to IT. The main college learning centre has an appropriate range of resources which students are able to access both directly and on the college intranet. The

science and mathematics building has a well-used drop-in learning support centre with good IT facilities that also caters for additional support needs.

48. Students' work completed both in lessons and as homework is assessed rigorously. Constructive verbal and written feedback give clear guidance for improvement. Student progress is monitored thoroughly in all areas, with staff keeping exemplary records, often online, making use of a structured personal tutorial programme. Personal tutors carry out six-weekly student progress reviews, where individual learning plans are discussed and agreed. These plans often overemphasise long-term aims rather than identifying short-term action points.

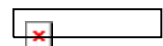
49. There is a broad range of GCE A-level science and mathematics courses. There is, however, no vocational science option and a lack of provision at foundation level in science. A number of students join one-year GCSE mathematics with inadequate numeracy skills to cope with the intensive nature of the programme. There is no alternative to GCSE mathematics at level 2. Students aiming for a medical-based career have the opportunity to study short courses in medicine, complementary medicine, healthy lifestyle and medical ethics, in addition to GCE A levels. The college also arranges valuable work experience in a medical/paramedical environment. Opportunities to assess key skills are shown in most schemes of work, but they are not actively developed or assessed throughout the science provision.

50. The tutorial programme is well planned, and effective and students receive good careers support and guidance. An effective induction week ensures that students are clear about course expectations and requirements. The learning centre provides effective literacy and numeracy support by referral from tutor and student. Where required, students have ready access to additional support for speakers of other languages, alongside the GCE A-level programme. To improve pass rates in GCE A-level human biology, an additional support workshop is available in the second year.

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

51. Leadership and management are good. There are clearly understood lines of responsibility and effective co-ordination within the curriculum area. Support for biological sciences has been strengthened by the recent appointment of a new teacher. Staff have recently benefited from several different staff development activities, including workshops on differentiation, and the setting of smart targets in student progress reviews. Staff have also received valuable support on these topics from advanced practitioners. Teams meet regularly and appropriate course reviews are in place. The 2003 self-assessment report adequately identifies weaknesses, but actions are not always completed against the specified timescale. There is little monitoring of performance by age, gender and ethnicity.

### **Land-based provision**



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on most full-time courses
  
- good retention and pass rates of veterinary nurses on work-based learning programmes

- much good teaching and learning with no unsatisfactory lessons
- good use of practical facilities good training in the workplace for apprentices.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor classroom accommodation for floristry courses
- poor assessment of learners of amenity horticulture.

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

52. Land-based courses are primarily offered at the Brinsbury campus which also has residential accommodation for students. There is a range of full-time and part-time courses from foundation level to level 3. There are 1,339 students enrolled, of whom 449 are full time. There are 50 work-based learners. Vocational areas include agriculture, animal care, countryside, equine, floristry, horticulture and veterinary nursing. Courses are offered at entry, foundation, first and national diploma, national and advanced national certificate levels. NVQs are offered at levels 1, 2 and 3; full-time students are aged 16 to 18 and 68% are female students studying key skills. Work-based learners also study key skills and other appropriate qualifications as part of their apprenticeship framework. There is a range of short courses in a number of the vocational areas; 296 of students are aged 16 to 18 and 68% are female.

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

53. There are high retention and pass rates on most full-time courses and many are above the national averages. Pass rates were very poor on the national diploma in agriculture. However, enrolments have fallen significantly in recent years and the course is no longer offered. Retention and pass rates on part-time courses, including foundation floristry and NVQ level 2 in floristry, are also high. In work-based learning, retention and pass rates of veterinary nurses programmes are high. Retention rates on amenity horticulture are low and students make slow progress. Retention and pass rates on equine apprenticeships are low. Progress is slow on most of the remaining work-based learning courses. This is partly as a result of changes in awarding body requirements to assess learners in the workplace instead of at the college. The college has made significant efforts to address this so that achievements can be accredited. Assessment for some trainees on foundation modern apprenticeships is slow. For example, at one workplace, no assessments had been carried out for two learners since enrolment in September 2003.

54. Many students achieve a high standard of work. In one lesson, students were able to undertake health checks competently, record their findings and share the results. Practical work is also of a high standard with good attention is paid to health and safety and animal welfare. Students have also been successful in events outside the college. A silver medal was won at the Chelsea flower show educational section, equine students won first place in a national equestrian competition and agricultural students won top prize at a regional show for a trade stand.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in land-based provision, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
Foundation floristry (part time)	1	No. of starts	*	17	39
		% retention	*	94	97
		% pass rate	*	69	87
British Horse Society stage 1 horse knowledge and care	1	No. of starts	21	28	23
		% retention	90	82	87
		% pass rate	95	91	90
NVQ level 2 floristry (part time)	2	No. of starts	23	26	19
		% retention	83	62	63
		% pass rate	89	94	92
First diploma in animal care	2	No. of starts	23	26	18
		% retention	87	85	94
		% pass rate	90	86	76
First diploma in countryside	2	No. of starts	15	*	18
		% retention	93	*	89
		% pass rate	79	*	75

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

55. Much of the teaching is good. Inspectors observed no unsatisfactory lessons. Lessons are well planned and contain a good variety of activities which motivate and encourage students to learn. In most lessons, students are confident, attentive, and responsive. Classroom management is good and teachers are enthusiastic. Students benefit from the vast expertise that teaching staff bring from the industry. Teachers make good use of their own industrial knowledge and experience to enhance their teaching. Students are highly motivated and enjoy the wide range of facilities at the Brinsbury campus. In many lessons, teachers use group work to help students learn from each other and to set tasks which take account of students' differing abilities. In one lesson, students worked together very well in helping each other apply the theory of identifying types of woodlands from maps. In the best lessons, teachers used a wide range of directed questions to check students' prior learning and reinforce knowledge. In a few lessons, students were insufficiently challenged and teachers did not make full use of resources such as overhead projectors, handouts, and powerpoint presentations. In one lesson, some technical anatomical terms could not be read properly due to poor photocopying. Teaching on work-based learning programmes is satisfactory and learners are given clear and effective guidance and support during the off-the-job sessions. Although ICT facilities are satisfactory, their use by students in vocational lessons is not well established. Teachers make good use of practical facilities to help students learn. Resources for equine courses are satisfactory. There is a broad range of farm livestock and small animals. Within the past year, a new management plan for the college estate has been implemented which has already significantly improved and extended the practical facilities. There is good access to the library, which contains an extensive range of journals and learning resources, and students value these and use them to good effect. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities attend theory and practical lessons in horticulture, during which staff provide support and students gain good practical, social and basic skills in an interesting and motivating learning environment.

56. Teachers have good technical knowledge and a wide range of experience. There is a good range of high-quality work placements for work-based learning, but there are few qualified work-based assessors which necessitates the use of college staff as assessors. However, the college is working hard to encourage work-based supervisors to become appropriately trained. Nearly all of the

full-time teaching staff and over 70% of part-time teachers have a teaching qualification or are working towards one. There is some poor classroom accommodation. Classrooms, for example, the floristry classrooms, are old, too small and in need of minor repairs and refurbishment. Many classrooms lack displays and other information on walls to encourage and promote learning. Plans to improve the teaching and meeting facilities located at the college farm are being developed as a consequence of the recent award of CoVE status for rural business management in conjunction with a land-based college in East Sussex.

57. Assessment of students' work is good. All students receive an assessment schedule at the start of their course. Assessments are used effectively to check learning during practical activities and some theory lessons. All students receive detailed feedback on their assignments. However, this is often descriptive rather than evaluative and does not always indicate clearly how they can improve their work. Internal verification arrangements are good and in one instance were identified by an external verifier as being a model of good practice. In most vocational areas of work-based learning, reports of learner progress for providers are good. All learners are regularly visited by a member of college staff to check their progress and employers are involved in the process. Work-place evidence and assessment is used extensively to help students towards achievement of their learning goals, although in a few cases assessment is slow. In some cases, the role and use of individual learning plans are not fully understood by employers and learners.

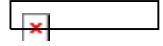
58. There are entry level courses in equine and gardening for students studying basic skills. In most vocational areas, there are progression opportunities from foundation level to level 3. An arrangement exists with a neighbouring land-based college to identify gaps in provision and provide additional learning opportunities to meet employer requirements. Since the merger, foundation courses in gardening and floristry have been established on the main college campus. Flexible learning arrangements are offered in the workplace to meet the needs of employers and learners. Work providers offer realistic and commercial opportunities for learners to gain their vocational experience. The college has responded to the 14 to 16 age group initiative and offers appropriate courses in equine, animal care and amenity horticulture. There are good opportunities for school pupils to join courses.

59. Induction arrangements are good and valued by the students. There is a strong emphasis on health and safety. Students are assessed at the commencement of the course and additional learning support is arranged where the need is identified. Other support is provided. For example, a mature student with family responsibilities was allowed flexibility in the times she attended college and staff provided additional help to ensure that work missed was covered. Tutorials are good and students' progress is monitored effectively. Students receive good advice about further learning opportunities and career progression. Work-based learning providers are very committed to helping learners succeed and greatly value the help they receive from the college. At a horticultural workplace for disaffected students, teachers visited the workplace to teach supporting knowledge and key skills.

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

60. Leadership and management are good. New leadership and management introduced, following the recent merger, have brought about significant changes that have been welcomed by staff and students. Appraisals are rigorous, but supportive and the lesson observation system is much valued by staff and helps them to improve their teaching. Opportunities for staff development have been improved since the merger. Regular team meetings are held during a 'Monday morning hour' to discuss course and curriculum issues and action is recorded. However, deadlines are not always set and evidence of follow-up sessions is not always available. Teachers value the opportunity to be involved with strategic planning and are involved in setting challenging targets for retention and pass rates. Curriculum managers are clear about the mechanism for curriculum review and development. There is a very thorough programme of health and safety visits to work providers and, in order to improve communication, a series of work provider meetings has commenced to discuss training and other topical issues.

## Construction



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- high and improving pass rates on electrical installation
  
- good standard of students' practical work
  
- high-quality employment for work-based learners
  
- good support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention and pass rates for some level 2 craft courses
  
- poor attendance and lack of punctuality
  
- poor monitoring of progress of work-based learners
  
- unsatisfactory workshop accommodation for carpentry and plumbing courses.

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

61. Construction offers full-time and part-time courses at foundation and intermediate levels as well as advanced and foundation modern apprenticeship for work-based learners. There is a small number of built environment and craft courses at level 3. There are 1,661 students enrolled on construction programmes. This includes 475 full-time learners, 1,153 part-time and evening only learners, with 33 currently on short course provision. There are 63 work-based-learners, of whom 33 are advanced modern apprentices, 23 foundation modern apprentices and 7 are on NVQ



programmes. In addition, there are 94 Year 10 and 11 pupils from local secondary schools who attend one day a week. The construction area received CoVE status in September 2003, jointly with Crawley College. This is known as the Sussex Construction CoVE.

### **Achievement and standards**

62. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. There has been an improvement in pass rates in electrical installation and achievements currently stand at 8% above the national average. There are also high retention rates on plumbing courses. There are low retention and pass rates on level 2 carpentry and joinery and brickwork, which in the case of carpentry and joinery have fallen consistently over the past three years. Few work-based learners have achieved the full framework of qualifications, but high numbers of those who started training in the last three years remain in learning and continue to make good progress.

63. Practical skills development is good in construction with learners both in workshops and the workplace working to high standards. For example, three learners on electrical installation and plumbing courses are working on a large historic building of national interest. These learners work in the main building, domestic dwellings within the grounds, as well as providing temporary heat, light and power for events on a car race track and horse racing course. This provides them with a good breadth of experience which enables them to develop many skills and to gather good evidence for their NVQ. Two bricklaying learners involved in renovation work gain good experience working on heritage buildings using both traditional and modern building techniques.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2001 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
GNVQ foundation construction built environment	1	No. of starts	49	46	146
		% retention	78	76	86
		% pass rate	50	83	50
City and Guilds 2360 electrical installation theory	1	No. of starts	52	52	73
		% retention	87	58	59
		% pass rate	49	58	79
City and Guilds and 6988 certificate in plumbing	1	No. of starts	*	26	59
		% retention	*	58	81
		% pass rate	*	60	54
NVQ in mechanical engineering services (plumbing)	2	No. of starts	37	59	72
		% retention	65	51	64
		% pass rate	63	100	73
NVQ in wood occupations	2	No. of starts	42	68	58
		% retention	69	47	40
		% pass rate	72	66	45
NVQ in bricklaying	2	No. of starts	36	34	25
		% retention	66	35	36
		% pass rate	17	67	34

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

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

64. The quality of teaching in theory sessions is mostly satisfactory with good teaching in many practical lessons. Tutors give effective support to students during practical activities and use class demonstrations well to teach specific skills. There is frequent checking of learning by questioning during practical activities and students are encouraged to ask questions and seek advice. Students are effectively guided through practical projects by means of well-produced study packs which allow them to work at their own pace. Students in practical sessions are well motivated and keep their own training and assessment progress records. Tutors, however, do not always keep class progress records and in some cases are unclear about students intended qualification outcomes. Teaching in theory lessons is sometimes unimaginative and fails to involve all students in the work.

65. Attendance at lessons is poor and students are often late. During the week of inspection, only 59% of those students on the register arrived for their lessons. In many instances, students arrived well after the start of the lesson disrupting demonstrations or teachers' presentations. Lateness is rarely questioned by staff.

66. Most staff are well qualified vocationally and have appropriate industrial experience, although many new staff do not yet have appropriate teaching qualifications or assessor awards. In some cases, the provision of resources has not kept pace with the increase in student numbers. Some accommodation is poor, with workshops too small for the size of classes. Plumbing workshops do not contain sufficient apparatus to enable learners to work in a realistic environment and there are examples of poor house-keeping practices in many areas. The plumbing and carpentry workshops at one site are unsatisfactory and do not provide a suitable learning environment.

67. Recording of students' progress is weak. Records are kept by students in their portfolios, but many teachers do not systematically record achievement. This makes performance difficult to quantify and relies on students updating their own records as the sole evidence of achievement. This has caused some repetition of work when students have lost records or failed to keep them up to date. Progress reviews for work-based learners do not focus sufficiently on framework achievement and concentrate largely on pastoral issues. Several learners nearing the end of their time on the programme are unsure of what they need to do to complete the award and in some cases there has been a lack of attention to aspects of the framework other than the main NVQ. Visits to the workplace by occupationally competent members of staff are infrequent and some learners well into their programmes have yet to be visited by someone who can assess their competence or validate evidence generated in the workplace.

68. There is a good range of courses designed to meet the needs of learners of differing abilities and employment status. The college has devised flexible programmes to develop the skills of learners at foundation level. Students on full-time courses can alter attendance patterns and qualification outcomes if they become employed during their course. There are examples where flexible attendance patterns have been arranged for single parents or others who have difficulty attending regularly. Useful projects in the community have been arranged to help develop the skills of students on painting and decorating courses. Year 10 and 11 students from local secondary schools attend one day a week following foundation level courses. School pupils on the brickwork course enjoy college and see the programme as an opportunity to develop a career in construction. The recruitment of construction students in the current year has increased in all craft areas.

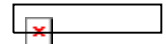
69. Support for students is good. Prospective students are tested to assess their aptitude for their chosen occupation as well to diagnose their additional learning needs. There is good support for those identified as needing it. For example, students can discuss their theory work at additional support sessions with a support tutor. Support for those with hearing impairments is good.

70. Support for students with additional learning and social needs is good. Time is set aside for part-time students to receive support matched to their specific needs. Effective support is also given to adults who have difficulties reading and working with numbers. Additional support needs are identified through a process of assessment and interviews and support is sensitively given. The placement of students who have been excluded from school or who have personal difficulties is done with the nature of the work and the availability of support in the workplace in mind. Pastoral support is also effective with workplace reviewers liaising well with employers to ensure all parties are aware of any difficulties students may be experiencing.

## **Leadership and management**

71. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Lines of communication across the curriculum area are clear and communications within the department and across the college are good. Reviews and evaluations at course level are good and take account of students' views. They are rigorously evaluated, but are not yet effectively used to inform self-assessment. The self-assessment was conducted for the entire technology faculty and was not sufficiently evaluative of the construction provision. Several key weaknesses were not identified. There has been an increase in enrolment numbers in construction and while strategies have been developed to deal with this increase, there has been slow progress to address accommodation issues.

## **Engineering, technology and manufacturing**



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

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

### **Strengths**

- good teaching in most practical lessons
  
- high pass rates on level 1 motor vehicle and engineering national certificate and diploma courses
  
- good progression opportunities on motor vehicle course
  
- good support for work-based learners
  
- good workplace learning opportunities.

### **Weaknesses**

- poor attendance
  
- dull and uninspiring teaching in some lessons

- weak progress reviews
  
- slow progress by some work-based learners.

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

72. Engineering provision covers mechanical engineering, electrical/electronic engineering, motor vehicle and motor cycle servicing, and welding. Some 298 students aged 16 to 18 and 168 students aged 19 or over are enrolled on engineering courses. Approximately 50 work-based learners are following advanced and foundation apprenticeships in motor vehicle, mechanical, welding and electronic engineering of whom 43 are on motor vehicle apprenticeships. Some 390 enrolments are on full-time courses and 145 enrolments are on part-time courses. Full-time craft courses at levels 1 and 2 are provided in motor vehicle and motor cycle engineering and full-time technician courses at levels 2 and 3 in mechanical and electrical/electronic engineering. Part-time courses at level 2 are provided in motor vehicle engineering and part-time courses at level 3 in mechanical and electrical/electronic engineering. A range of short certificated modules at levels 1 to 3, covering different types of welding are offered. A small amount of engineering maintenance NVQ training is provided on company premises.

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

73. Retention rates on college-based courses are close to national averages. Some retention rates have improved, for example, on the City and Guilds 3992 motor vehicle repair and maintenance, the retention rate has improved from 71% in 2000/01 and 2001/02 to 83% in 2002/03. The retention rates have fluctuated on some courses, for example, the retention rate on the national diploma has fluctuated from 78%, to 38%, to 57% over the last three years. Pass rates have been consistently high on level 1 motor vehicle and engineering national certificate courses. The pass rates on the City and Guilds 3992 level 1 motor vehicle course have been 100% over the last two years, and at least 90% over at least the last two years on the engineering national certificate and national diploma courses. Pass rates on other courses are close to national averages.

74. There has been slow progress by some work-based learners in achieving their framework qualification. Of the 44 learners who should have completed their framework qualification prior to the inspection, 12 have still to complete their programme. However, at least 3 of the 50 learners who are due to complete their programmes after the inspection are likely to achieve their framework qualification ahead of their planned completion dates. The attendance of students on college courses is poor. The overall attendance during the inspection was 69% compared to the average of 78% for students on engineering courses nationally. In some lessons, attendance during the inspection was less than 65%. Teachers did not always know how many students should be attending and registers did not always record current class lists.

75. The standard of student work is satisfactory. There was good use by students of the computer-aided drawing software to develop and test ideas as part of their design project. Most students made good use of the solid modelling software to check the validity of their designs. One student, designing a rear bicycle bracket, used the animation aspects of the software effectively to test the practicality of his design. In the workshops, students were generally developing their hand skills and the use of tools in a satisfactory manner. However, a number had difficulty reading measuring equipment such as micrometers and vernier callipers. Overall, the standard of written work was satisfactory. Work produced by work-based learners in the workplace is satisfactory and in some cases it is good. For example, one learner was involved in developing turbine balancing self-test software and another was involved in the machining of an advanced composite material. The standard of NVQ evidence in work-based learners' portfolios is satisfactory. Though the evidence collected meets the requirements of the awarding body, the presentation often lacks individuality and

does not make good use of a variety of media, such as digital photographs and video records of projects undertaken.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, technology and manufacturing, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
City and Guilds 3992 motor vehicle repair and maintenance (full time) 1 year	1	No. of starts	58	56	70
		% retention	71	71	83
		% pass rate	80	100	100
Welding short courses	1	No. of starts	*	62	100
		% retention	*	95	93
		% pass rate	*	100	95
City and Guilds 435-01 computer-aided draughting and design	3	No. of starts	17	22	24
		% retention	88	82	79
		% pass rate	93	100	74
National certificate in engineering (part time) 2 year	3	No. of starts	24	43	18
		% retention	83	58	56
		% pass rate	90	92	90
National diploma in engineering (full time) 2 year	3	No. of starts	32	32	37
		% retention	78	41	53
		% pass rate	84	92	100

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

76. Teaching is generally satisfactory or good, but the percentage of teaching judged to be good or better was below the national average for engineering. The percentage judged to be unsatisfactory was lower than the national average for engineering. Detailed schemes of work have been developed for most courses. They are comprehensive and include references to the type of teaching methods and assessment activities to be used. The better teaching is in lessons which have a high practical content such as those held in the motor cycle and motor vehicle workshops and in the computer-aided drawing work areas. In these areas, teachers are able to present work which motivates student learning. For example, after a brief introduction by the teacher, students worked carefully to check the wear in motor cycle clutches. They enthusiastically stripped down the clutches and checked the plates for wear visually and by measurement. Comparison data was obtained from workshop manuals or from a computer database depending upon the motor cycle make. They readily reported on the condition of the components and then reassembled the clutch. Some theory lessons are uninspiring and students are not motivated by the dull presentation of the topic material. The layout of the computer-aided drawing suite does not support good learning. There is too much noise and distraction when more than one class is in the suite and the position of some computers makes it difficult for the teacher to monitor students' work and progress.

77. Staff are suitably qualified. A number of staff have been appointed in the last two years with relevant engineering and assessor skills and mostly from engineering companies. Some staff also review and assess work-based learners in their places of work. Overall, the quality and quantity of equipment is satisfactory. The accommodation has been adapted recently to provide for the expansion of the motor vehicle and motor cycle work on the Chichester site and on the Brinsbury

site. It has improved the teaching facilities for motor vehicle, motor cycle, computer-aided engineering and welding subjects. The improvements have also included the purchase of some new equipment and additional modern motor vehicles so that students are able to work in pairs or individually during practical lessons. Modern computer-aided drawing and modelling software is easily accessible to students. Computers sited in motor vehicle and motor cycle workshops provide good access to essential engineering information, for example, on engine data.

78. Work-based learners have good opportunities to work on modern manufacturing and motor vehicle equipment. Learners also benefit from attending a range of company courses provided by employers and the manufacturers of equipment. Welding and fabrication companies provide good resources for learners to develop a range of welding techniques and to work with a range of materials such as mild steel, aluminium, and stainless steel. For example, one small company fabricates Victorian architectural structures, such as balconies and bandstands, out of aluminium.

79. Progress reviews for students and work-based learners are weak. Progress reviews for work-based learners occur every six weeks and take place alternatively in the college and in the learner's place of work. The college reviews do not include the employer, although employers are informed of the outcome of the review. This arrangement does not always allow the employer to make best use of the training opportunities to enable learners to make progress. Action plans resulting from the reviews generally lack clear short-term targets including references to the achievement of key skills. Progress reviews for college-based students also occur every six weeks. The liaison between teaching and support staff is not always effective. Engineering staff are not always aware of the outcomes of student reviews undertaken by support staff. Actions identified in the plans are often very general and usually lack precise targets.

80. The assessment of work-based learners is satisfactory. It takes place at frequent intervals and is available when the learner requests it. The assessment of students in the college is satisfactory. Where students undertake written assessments, the work is assessed carefully and teachers annotate the work with helpful comments to help students improve future assessments. Recorded comments on the assessment of practical work are often minimal. There are effective internal verification processes in place.

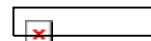
81. Motor vehicle courses provide good progression opportunities for college students. Students can enter on level 1 foundation courses in motor vehicle and progress on to courses at levels 2 and 3 on the Chichester campus. Similar opportunities are being developed on the Brinsbury campus. Students also have the opportunity to obtain apprenticeships with local employers and a significant percentage of students have obtained apprenticeships in this way. Similar progression opportunities are being developed for students on motor cycle courses.

82. Students benefit from good support provided by college staff and employers. Tutorials are held in the college every 12 weeks and there are pastoral visits to the workplace where learner problems can be discussed. Some workplace supervisors are experienced practitioners and they act as learner mentors.

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

83. The management of engineering is satisfactory. The engineering provision has been reduced and the motor vehicle provision expanded to meet increased local demand. Changes to the accommodation on the Chichester and Brinsbury sites have been planned carefully and generally implemented effectively. Staffing structures provide good support for learning. Communications with staff and students are good. Course self-assessment reports are generally thorough and provide a realistic view of the course. The self-assessment report for construction and engineering grading was accurate, but presented an over-optimistic view of the quality of the engineering provision.

### **Business, administration, management and professional**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention rates on AS-level business management and NVQ 3 accounting
- high pass rates in computerised accounts and AS-level business management
- much good teaching and learning
- high standard of work by many students
- wide range of courses with good internal progression routes to widen participation.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on NVQ accounting and AVCE business courses
- low attendance on some full-time courses
- weak management of work-based learning.

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

84. The college provides a broad range of full-time and part-time courses in this curriculum area, from foundation level to advanced and higher levels. There are full-time courses in business, administration, accounting and legal executive studies. Specialist part-time courses include marketing, personnel, finance, accounting and management. There are day-release, part-time day and evening, and flexible learning courses, so that students are able to progress from foundation to advanced levels using a wide range of modes of study. At the time of the inspection, there were 164 full-time and 453 part-time students enrolled in the area. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18 and the majority of part-time students are adults. There are an additional 53 students on work-based programmes of whom 47 are modern apprentices in accounting, administration or residential estate agency.

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

85. Retention rates are generally high; they have been consistently above the national average for AS-level business management and NVQ level 3 accounting. However, it is declining on NVQ accounting and AVCE business courses, and there are low retention rates on some part-time courses. There are high pass rates on AS-level business management computerised accounts. However, pass rates are well below the national average in AVCE intermediate business courses. There is slow achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks. Student attendance and punctuality on full-time courses are poor, particularly in the first lesson of the day. During the inspection, the average attendance at some GNVQ and AVCE lessons was very low, at 25%. The level of attainment in most lessons is good for many students. Students are able to explore business issues and work to deadlines. They can apply business theory to practice and are knowledgeable about topical business issues. Much written work produced is of a very high standard, particularly on professional and management courses. The portfolios of students on NVQ programmes are well organised and contain much relevant work-based evidence. Students' work demonstrates their good command of computing and research skills. There is good progression to higher level courses in accounting, administration and computerised accounting, text processing and professional courses. Many students from vocational courses progress to HE.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in business, administration, management and professional, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ in accounting	2	No. of starts	43	48	42
		% retention	91	71	76
		% pass rate	67	76	57
NVQ in administration	2	No. of starts	17	15	30
		% retention	82	87	60
		% pass rate	50	38	89
Computerised accounts	2	No. of starts	24	33	42
		% retention	100	94	88
		% pass rate	83	77	70
AS-level business / management / office studies	3	No. of starts	43	63	61
		% retention	93	84	93
		% pass rate	70	57	74
AVCE business double award 1 year	3	No. of starts	*	55	72
		% retention	*	82	88
		% pass rate	*	60	48

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

86. Most teaching and learning are of a very high standard. During the inspection, 83% of teaching and 77% of learning was judged to be good or better, with no unsatisfactory teaching. In the best lessons, teachers draw on their own and students' experience and use up-to-date, relevant business examples. For example, students in a conveyancing lesson achieved a high level of learning through a lively discussion on land law, underleases, security of tenure and the meaning of various clauses in property conveyances using examples from their workplaces. Teachers adapt their approach well to meet the needs of the different student groups. In the most effective lessons, teaching resources are well used. AVCE and GNVQ students develop analytical and research skills through challenging assignments in which they use the Internet very effectively to research business practice. Schemes



of work and lesson plans are good, ensuring students explore a wide variety of interesting and relevant activities. Most lessons have clear aims that are fully explained to the students at the start of each lesson. Learning is tested regularly. Supporting handouts and visual aids are informative and clear and key skills are well-integrated and assessed on full-time courses and comprehensively signposted in assignments.

87. Learning resources are good. Teachers are appropriately qualified and a high proportion of staff has recent commercial experience. Staff receive regular professional updating through links with industry and professional bodies. Most rooms are bright and airy and adequately equipped, with easy access to audio visual aids. Some rooms have a flexible layout to accommodate fluctuating numbers. There are effective open access computing facilities and students make significant use of the Internet. Library staff are helpful, but business and management resources are limited.

88. Assessment of students' work is good. Teachers' feedback to students on assignments is constructive and work is usually returned promptly. Part-time students on professional courses make valuable use of their work experience in projects and examination questions. Internal verification is rigorous across all courses. Parents and employers of sponsored students are regularly informed of students' progress. The internal verification process is good on all programmes.

89. Full-time students take advantage of good opportunities for extra courses such as additional AS levels, GCE A levels and secretarial skills. There are good partnerships with schools which enable school pupils to have taster days in business studies. The college promotes the inclusion of students from a wide range of cultural and economic backgrounds, and there is good integration of people with learning disabilities into mainstream courses. Although there is a good acceptance and recognition of the diversity of students, opportunities are sometimes lost to reinforce equality and diversity in subjects such as human resources and consumer protection.

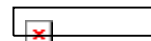
90. Students receive a good induction programme, including an initial assessment that accurately identifies needs for support in key skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and additional learning needs. On full-time courses, the results of initial assessment are used for the students' individual learning plans. Learning support meets students' needs, but not all those requiring it take advantage of the service. Tutors and students agree learning goals at their first tutorial and progress is monitored regularly throughout the year. The tutorial system includes procedures for monitoring attendance, punctuality and poor performance and taking appropriate action where necessary. To date, this has not yet had a significant impact on attendance and punctuality. Students who are at risk of failing are quickly identified and extra support is organised for them. Reviews of progress are satisfactory, but target setting is weak on NVQ courses.

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

91. Leadership and management of most programmes are good. College-based course teams are cohesive and communication systems are effective. Meetings are held regularly and actions agreed that are implemented promptly. Annual course reviews are effective and result in improvements being made. The department has a high regard for diversity. It makes good use of external links with employers and schools to widen participation. New staff are supported and undertake teacher training courses, where necessary. These courses are also available to part-time staff. Teachers share good practice effectively. This ensures teaching standards are improved and maintained.

92. Management of work-based training is weak. Assessors allocate insufficient time for work-based assessment on NVQ programmes and there are insufficient assessors in administration for meeting the increasing size of the programme. Reviews of apprentice progress often lack employer involvement and there is inadequate guidance for employers on the management of the programme. The department has recognised the shortcomings in the work-based training and is taking steps to improve the provision.

### **Information and communication technology**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention rates on most courses
  
- high pass rates on many courses
  
- much good teaching and learning
  
- good leadership of the curriculum area
  
- innovative and effective staff development programme for new teachers.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low and declining pass rates on two part-time courses
  
- ineffective use of learning support staff in some lessons
  
- insufficient use of ILT for teaching and learning.

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

93. Full-time provision for adults and young people is based at the main Chichester campus. Provision for key skills in IT is integrated within the full-time programmes. A wide range of part-time courses for adults are available at community venues in Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Selsey and Boxgrove. There are 2,212 enrolments on part-time courses ranging from City and Guilds start IT and level 1 computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), to level 3 e-quals advanced diploma courses. There are 461 students aged 16 to 18 enrolled on full-time courses including AS-level and GCE A-level courses, GNVQ foundation programmes, Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) national certificate/diploma and the new BTEC first diploma in ICT.

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

94. On most courses, retention and pass rates are above the national average and standards continue to improve. There are high pass rates on the BTEC first diploma in IT, City and Guilds certificate in computer applications, AS-level IT and GCE A-level computing. In contrast, CLAIT/New CLAIT and the City and Guilds diploma in computer applications have had low and declining pass rates for three years, falling to significantly below the national average in 2003. The retention rates for most courses have been consistently high for several years. Only the European computer driving licence (ECDL) course has had a retention rate significantly below the national average over the past three years. Students are punctual, but their attendance is poor. Average attendance on full-time courses is only 75%. Procedures are in place to contact students who are absent without permission, but teachers do not always apply them with sufficient vigour. Most students keep their course files in good order, show a good understanding of the basic concepts of computing and use software packages competently and confidently. They are able to work effectively on their own. Adult students in the community centres, develop good skills in the use of office software, computer graphics, website development, e-mail and the Internet.

***A sample of retention and pass rates information and communications technology, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
City and Guilds 7261 IT certificate (1 year)	1	No. of starts	133	130	116
		% retention	62	75	65
		% pass rate	93	70	75
BTEC first diploma in IT	2	No. of starts	36	36	30
		% retention	69	64	80
		% pass rate	56	74	79
City and Guilds 7261 diploma in computer applications (2 year)	2	No. of starts	71	58	42
		% retention	63	64	76
		% pass rate	42	57	47
BTEC national diploma in computing (2 year)	3	No. of starts	57	86	85
		% retention	65	78	68
		% pass rate	95	87	79
AS-level IT	3	No. of starts	47	31	62
		% retention	83	94	84
		% pass rate	72	66	77
GCE A-level computing	3	No. of starts	20	*	16
		% retention	95	*	94
		% pass rate	89	*	80

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

95. Most teaching is good, well planned and responsive to the needs of individual students. Students' learning is good. Students are interested, enthusiastic and confident; they work well together and make useful contributions during lessons. However, there are a few occasions when students are not sufficiently challenged. Lesson plans regularly incorporate plans for students' different learning needs. Teachers manage students well. Any difficult student behaviour is met with firmness and good humour, ensuring that students remain productively engaged. Teachers do not

always take full advantage of the range of teaching aids available. For example, the data projectors in rooms and the virtual learning environment on the network are not used effectively.

96. Accommodation is good and promotes effective learning. Full-time students work in modern, spacious, well-equipped computer rooms. One area, until recently open plan, has been divided up into four rooms using screens and curtains. As a temporary measure this successfully removes visual distractions, but noise from adjacent rooms is still distracting. The community venues are well resourced and each has a mobile data projector for use when required. Students have easy access to modern computing equipment connected to a stable network. There is sufficient technical IT support. The library contains a good stock of relevant and up-to-date books. A well-used 70-workstation open access computer centre is located nearby for students' independent study. Teachers have a broad range of technical skills and a good knowledge of their subjects. The most recent recruits to the teaching staff also have up-to-date industrial and commercial experience.

97. There is a wide range of computing courses from foundation level to higher national level for both part-time and full-time students. Many students take advantage of the internal progression opportunities on offer. The college has made significant efforts to extend the provision of ICT into the community and also offers a broad range of extracurricular enrichment opportunities. Students enjoy activities such as problem solving, rock climbing, abseiling, bowling and regular trips and visits. Work experience opportunities have recently increased as a result of strong industrial links. These provide a valuable opportunity for vocational computing students to broaden their experience in a commercial setting.

98. Although there are considerably more male students than female, and there are very few students from minority ethnic backgrounds, teachers use materials and teaching methods that are sensitive to issues of equal opportunity. The department has good wheelchair access and employs support workers to cater for the special needs of students with a wide range of disabilities. Students with special learning needs benefit from the presence of learning support staff. However, these staff are not always used effectively in lessons, and often have little to do.

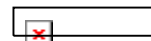
99. Assessment practices are good. All assessments are accurately marked and internally validated. Suitable oral or written feedback is given to students to help them improve the quality of their coursework. Students' work is monitored on full-time courses. The monitoring of part-time students' progress in the centres in the community is generally good.

100. Effective induction arrangements are in place, which allow students to verify that they are on the course best suited to their needs. Initial assessment is thorough and students receive appropriate guidance based on their predicted GCSE results in combination with an aptitude test taken at interview. There is good access to careers advice and guidance for students aged 16 to 18. The tutorial system provides further good support and the content of personal tutorial lessons is good. Part-time students are offered full access to the subject support, counselling and careers guidance where required.

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

101. Leadership of the programme area is good, and the management of courses is satisfactory. Course team leaders keep course files up to date and the annual course reviews have appropriate action plans for improvement with target dates for completion. However, quality assurance and management decisions are rarely based on a full analysis of the available data. Due to difficulties in recruiting computing lecturers, an innovative and effective staff development programme for new teachers has been developed. Technically experienced computer professionals are invited to shadow experienced teachers to see if they would like to change careers. Some of the best new teachers are offered teaching positions linked to standard teacher training opportunities.

### **Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates in AS-level sport, games and recreation
  
- very good resources
  
- extensive links with external organisations
  
- good support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on sport and travel vocational courses
  
- low achievement of modern apprenticeship framework in hospitality
  
- insufficiently demanding lessons for level 3 students.

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

102. The college offers a broad range of full-time and part-time courses in hospitality, sport, leisure, travel and tourism at levels 1 to 3. At the time of the inspection, there were 706 full-time and 516 part-time students in this area of learning. Recruitment trends, particularly in sport, are increasing. There were a further 21 learners on modern apprenticeships in hospitality. The college also offers provision in hospitality and sport for a cohort of school pupils aged 14 to 16, in partnership with local schools. Within this area of learning, 9% of the students are from other countries.

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

103. There are fluctuating retention and pass rates across the curriculum area with no clear trend. Retention rates are high on AS-level sports and games, but significantly below the national average on GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism. Pass rates are high on NVQ level 1 catering and hospitality, but low on GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism, AVCE travel and tourism and national diploma in sports. Framework achievement for modern apprenticeships is low, although completion of the main NVQ qualification is satisfactory. Learners often make slow progress and little work has been assessed in the portfolio. Little work-based assessment has been carried out to date and

insufficient use made of competently qualified assessors in the placements. During the inspection, attendance was low, at only 76%. In some sports lessons, attendance is particularly poor, at only 50%. Overall, the standards of students work in this area of learning are satisfactory.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
NVQ catering and hospitality	1	No. of starts	36	23	16
		% retention	97	61	75
		% pass rate	86	100	92
NVQ food drink and service	2	No. of starts	29	**	31
		% retention	93	**	79
		% pass rate	70	**	71
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	25	18	22
		% retention	80	83	68
		% pass rate	100	53	40
National licensees' certificate examination	3	No. of starts	85	79	92
		% retention	100	84	100
		% pass rate	79	74	83
AS-level sport games and recreation	3	No. of starts	16	25	24
		% retention	94	84	100
		% pass rate	87	71	83
AVCE (double award) travel and tourism	3	No. of starts	*	26	33
		% retention	*	77	58
		% pass rate	*	60	58
National diploma sports	3	No. of starts	33	**	15
		% retention	85	**	60
		% pass rate	18	**	67

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course did not run

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

104. Most teaching and learning is satisfactory or better. The best teaching is well designed to develop students' abilities in critical evaluation, research and analysis. Students are well informed of their progress. In practical hospitality lessons, good individual coaching enables students to monitor their progress and identify the most appropriate improvement strategies. In catering, there is good development of problem-solving, review and evaluation skills. Effective links are made between theory and practical activities and students have a good use of technical language. In the best lessons, student experiences are used effectively and built upon. However, in some weaker lessons, teachers do not use suitably varied teaching methods. For example, in some lessons, teachers failed to give sufficient explanation of learning activities and depended too much on the use of overhead transparencies or the whiteboard. Students were not encouraged to evaluate their own work or think critically. Some teaching on advanced level sport and hospitality courses is insufficiently challenging.

105. Within the area, there are very good resources that promote learning and skills acquisition. Sports students have access to a broad range of facilities such as all weather pitches, rugby pitch, assault course, tennis courts and fitness suites. The college is in the process of completing a new sports hall. Travel and tourism students have access to realistic working environments such as a mock-up air cabin. There is a good commercial travel shop complete with an up-to-date booking system. Hospitality students have access to good facilities and a realistic working environment for food production, food service, front office and reception. The food service outlets are well appointed and decorated and include a computerised food ordering system at the point of sale. The kitchens are well maintained and functional, but in need of updating to provide standards that reflect current industrial standards. All academic staff are teacher qualified or working towards a recognised teaching qualification. The majority have relevant industrial experience which has a positive impact on learning. Students really value the industrial knowledge of the staff. There is good access to ILT for all learners and staff. The learning resources centre has a wide range of appropriate books, journals and periodicals.

106. Assessment processes and practices are satisfactory across the range of qualifications and meet awarding body requirements. The quality of feedback to students varies. While tutors give extensive oral feedback to individual students, written feedback does not always provide sufficient information. For example, comments simply refer students back to assessment criteria with no further information provided. The travel and tourism section have been awarded a national award from City and Guilds for best centre performance. In hospitality, food is prepared and presented to high standards, with students demonstrating good customer and social skills.

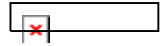
107. There are extensive links with external organisations that help widen participation and promote social inclusion. In hospitality, there are strong links with 17 local schools and an industry-sponsored young chefs club for pupils aged 12 to 14. College culinary competitions are commercially sponsored, for example, by a chain of hotels. A business breakfast is held once a month that is hosted by the principal and served by hospitality staff and students. Students regularly enter external competitions sponsored and hosted by regional businesses. In sports, there is an extensive range of competitive team and individual events, with students competing at local and regional level. For example, there is a ladies' and men's football academy in conjunction with local football league clubs. Across the area of learning, students have access to good work placements. Students in travel and tourism attend the college's travel shop prior to work experience to gain confidence and skills. Students also have the opportunity to work towards additional qualifications that are recognised in the industry such as national pool life guard, exercise to music, resort representative and food hygiene.

108. There is good support for full-time students. Specialist courses are available for the high proportion of overseas students to help them with the English language. Students receive good learning support, where required. For example, a visually impaired student received specially adapted handouts and class notes, and a student with a hearing impairment was given support from a signer during lessons. Initial assessment and support for literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. However, in some lessons, they are not used effectively by the teacher.

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

109. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Regular team and course meetings take place and actions to minutes are followed up promptly. Communication within the curriculum area is good, but it is less effective between the college and employers with whom the college has work-based learners in hospitality. This was identified in the self-assessment process and action plans have already been addressed. It is too early to measure the impact of these actions. Challenging targets are set for retention and pass rates. Monitoring of performance by senior staff and governors occurs through the college quality assurance processes and include observation of teaching and learning, departmental review, self-assessment and action planning. Some aspects of the self-assessment report are not sufficiently self-critical. All staff have attended training to improve their awareness of the SENDA and staff involved with international students have attended cultural awareness workshops.

## Hairdressing and beauty therapy



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

### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most beauty and holistic courses
  
- much good teaching and learning
  
- good integration of key skills
  
- good progression on work-based learning programmes
  
- comprehensive range of courses
  
- highly effective support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- weak room management in some hairdressing lessons
  
- insufficient attention to housekeeping matters in some practical areas.

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

110. There are currently 261 students aged 16 to 18 and 105 adult students on full-time courses. Courses include beauty and holistic therapies levels 2 and 3, and national diploma and hairdressing NVQ levels 1 and 2. On part-time courses, there are currently 18 students aged 16 to 18 and 176 adult students. The college offers part-time courses at both Chichester and Brinsbury sites. These include beauty therapy level 2, diploma in holistic therapies, reflexology, Swedish massage, aromatherapy, Indian head massage, advanced facial techniques, fashion and photographic make up, depilation, manicure and pedicure, hairdressing levels 2 and 3. There are 49 foundation modern apprentices and five students following NVQ work-based learning programmes in hairdressing.



There are nine schools participating in the 14 to 16 school links forming five hairdressing and three beauty therapy classes working towards NVQ level 1 or equivalent. Some evening and weekend courses are offered at the Chichester site.

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

111. Retention and pass rates for beauty and holistic therapies are high and above the national average for the majority of courses. In particular, they are significantly above the national average for the diploma in holistic therapies. There has been significant growth in recruitment in NVQ level 2 beauty therapy and a decline in recruitment for the national diploma in beauty therapy. The retention rate on the NVQ level 2 in hairdressing has improved in 2003, but the pass rates are below the national average. Students on work-based learning programmes are progressing quickly. There are good foundation modern apprenticeship retention rates, with 78% of the 2002/03 starters still in learning and 100% in the current year. Modern apprentices are making good progress through the NVQ and key skills and there are some early framework completions. Most students demonstrate good practical skills. In one NVQ level 1 hairdressing lesson, students effectively analysed face shape and hair growth patterns. The pupils aged 14 to 16 confidently demonstrated practical manicure skills which included nail art. Wig-making students produce outstanding postiche using high fashion colours. Attendance is above the national average and students who obtain 100% attendance are rewarded with a voucher for product purchases. Hair and beauty and holistic therapy students have been successful in regional and national competitions. Local employers have been involved with the judging of college competitions and the college participated in the Hairdresser of the Year competition hosted by the local newspaper.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
City and Guilds GNVQ hairdressing (1 year)	1	No. of starts	*	44	55
		% retention	*	84	84
		% pass rate	*	100	100
Indian head massage (short course)	2	No. of starts	182	180	185
		% retention	98	68	98
		% pass rate	90	93	89
City and Guilds GNVQ beauty therapy (1 year)	2	No. of starts	42	75	109
		% retention	71	79	84
		% pass rate	90	100	98
City and Guilds GNVQ hairdressing (2 years)	2	No. of starts	78	85	45
		% retention	37	39	69
		% pass rate	66	91	63
GNVQ beauty therapy (1 year)	3	No. of starts	18	20	33
		% retention	83	80	88
		% pass rate	93	100	93
Diploma in reflexology (1 year)	3	No. of starts	53	42	39
		% retention	74	83	87
		% pass rate	100	97	97
Edexcel national diploma in beauty therapy (2 years)	3	No. of starts	36	25	21
		% retention	72	64	81
		% pass rate	85	100	100

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

112. Most of the teaching is good or better. In the best lessons, students are highly motivated and work to a professional standard. For example, reflexology students gave excellent presentations on acts relating to the maintenance of employment standards within the industry. The attainment of good practical skills is demonstrated by most students in practical lessons. In one outstanding wig-making lesson, students were inspired by the expertise and enthusiasm of the lecturer for the craft, whilst measuring for beard and moustache postiche. There were very good examples of diamond mesh and two-stem switches in creative colour combinations. In weaker practical lessons, teachers' demonstrations were of a poor standard. There is insufficient management in some hairdressing lessons to fully engage students. This results in non-completion of tasks and a lack of professional behaviour. In some lessons, there were examples of poor professional practices. Some students in hairdressing fail to present the professional appearance that would be expected in the industry.

113. Accommodation for this curriculum area is extensive with a good range of modern equipment. However, there is overcrowding in some lessons. Insufficient storage results in cramped, untidy salons. The location of the dispensary disrupts lessons as staff and students pass through salons to get to it. Staff are highly qualified with relevant industrial experience. Staff undertake regular continuous professional development to ensure that they meet training and industrial requirements. The section has good technical support, including receptionist and a salon supervisor who assists lecturers in practical lessons.

114. The quality and regularity of assessment of students is good. Internal verification is thorough across both hairdressing and beauty therapy. Systems for recording and monitoring students' progress are thorough and well documented. Students receive constructive and comprehensive assessor feedback.

115. The college offers a comprehensive range of courses that meet the needs of the community. Students have good enrichment opportunities. The college works with the local hospital to provide theatrical make-up for their trauma course for doctors. Students gain valuable experience working with local theatre productions. Strong links with employers provide good work experience opportunities for all full-time students. Key skills have been further developed through collaboration between cross-college and section staff and they are a central part of NVQ teaching. Key skills are clearly explained at induction and to students and employers involved in work-based learning. All students appreciate the relevance and value of this qualification. Students demonstrated high levels of IT skills in vocationally relevant key skills lessons.

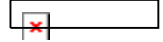
116. There is particularly effective support for students. The initial assessment and support for literacy and numeracy is applied well to full-time and part-time students. There are good pastoral and vocational support, and the students value the support they receive. The tutorial system has impacted positively on achievement, which is monitored regularly. All students, including late enrolments, receive a thorough induction.

### **Leadership and management**

117. The curriculum area is well managed and there are high retention and pass rates on most courses. There is good internal communication. New staff entering the section are allocated a mentor for support and curriculum development. Observations and appraisals accurately identify development needs to improve teaching and learning. A high percentage of staff hold initial teacher training qualifications. Equal opportunities are addressed briefly at induction and tutorials. However, students do not appear to have a clear understanding of equal opportunity issues. Staff are involved with the formulation of the self-assessment report and target setting during the course review and evaluation process. There is insufficient attention to housekeeping matters in practical areas, which detract from the high industrial standards required within industry. The ordering of some

consumables is not addressed early enough to meet the demand of the student intake.

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



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates on many courses in 2003
- good internal and external progression
- good attendance
- much good teaching and learning
- effective response to sector and community needs
- extensive support and guidance for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- slow progress towards NVQ by some work-based learners
- insufficient checking of individual learning in some lessons
- inadequate teaching accommodation for ICT courses.

### **Scope of provision**

118. The college provides a range of full-time and part-time courses from foundation level to level 4. There are 1,208 students, 326 of whom are full time and 882 part time. Full-time courses, mainly for students aged 16 to 18, include the introductory certificate and diploma in health and social care, the certificate and diploma in childcare and education, NVQ level 2 in early years care and education, first diploma in care and AVCE in health and social care. Part-time health and social care courses include the certificate in childminding practice, NVQ level 2 for teaching assistants, NVQ levels 2 and 3 in early years care and education and in care, NVQ level 3 in oral healthcare and in caring for children and young people, and NVQ level 4 in care and the registered managers' award. Also provided are introductory and certificate courses in counselling. There are 41 students on work-based learning provision in care and childcare, 12 on the advanced modern apprenticeship programme, 18 on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme and 11 on NVQ levels 2 and 3 only. All work-based learners attend college one day a week.

### **Achievement and standards**

119. There are high retention and pass rates on many courses. On the first diploma in public services and caring for young children courses, retention and pass rates are well above the national averages. Counselling courses also consistently achieve retention and pass rates above high national averages. Nearly 80% of students on the certificate in childcare and education gained high awards in 2003. The AVCE in health and social care and NVQ level 3 in care have high pass rates, but retention rates are below the national average. The reverse is the case with the NVQ level 2 in early years care and education. Some work-based learners make slow progress towards completion of NVQ units and few learners have achieved the full framework, although many are still in learning. Students make good progress, many progressing from level 2 to level 3 courses. A significant minority begin at foundation level and successfully complete level 3 courses. At the end of their courses, students' progression to FE, HE and employment is good.

120. Students gain a wide range of additional qualifications such as first-aid and sports leaders awards and key skills. Key skills are beginning to be more effectively integrated into the vocational content of courses including work-based learning programmes. Students also achieve the wider key skills of improving own learning and performance, problem solving and working with others. The majority of students' written work is good and some is of a very high standard. Work-based learners' portfolios are well organised and presented with clear cross referencing of evidence.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in health, social care and public services, 2001 to 2003**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
First diploma in caring	2	No. of starts	16	*	19
		% retention	69	*	79
		% pass rate	82	*	93
First diploma in public services	2	No. of starts	26	36	28
		% retention	65	86	93
		% pass rate	100	100	100
NVQ early years care and education	2	No. of starts	*	24	23
		% retention	*	50	65
		% pass rate	*	42	65
Certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	21	30	37
		% retention	48	87	78
		% pass rate	70	81	100

National diploma in public services	3	No. of starts	53	56	54
		% retention	79	61	75
		% pass rate	43	97	80
Diploma in nursery nursing	3	No. of starts	30	32	34
		% retention	80	66	62
		% pass rate	63	100	96

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

121. Most teaching and learning is good, with many lessons very good. Lessons have clearly defined objectives which are shared with students. This ensures that learners are fully involved in the learning process. Good use is made of work experience and practical activities to relate theory to practice and staff use a good variety of learning methods to maintain students' concentration. Students are motivated to learn and contribute willingly in lessons. They work confidently in groups demonstrating good listening and communication skills. They assess each other's work and give and receive constructive feedback on their performance. Public services students engaged in two challenging tasks with tight time limits to illustrate the criteria of effective leadership. The two groups provided contrasting examples of effective leadership. The teacher handled the debriefing skilfully and sensitively and students clearly demonstrated the ability to give and receive constructive feedback on personal performance. The impact on students was immediate and their contributions indicated a very good level of understanding of the basic theory.

122. Students on an early years course confidently prepared powerpoint presentations using a range of techniques to produce a dynamic and interesting presentation. They drew on wide research selecting key points of information for a prescribed number of slides. The teacher moved round the group encouraging them to draw on their work to provide evidence for a number of key skills. In less effective lessons, teachers failed to adequately check individual students' understanding. They asked open questions of the group rather than direct them to individuals. In some lessons, overhead transparencies contained spelling errors which students dutifully copied. The pace of the work in a few lessons was sometimes slow as teachers waited for the slowest note taker.

123. Staff are well qualified and experienced. All teachers have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. Staff take advantage of a good range of staff development opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skill and some are undertaking higher degrees. Advanced practitioners support effectively all new and part-time staff, and help the team with new curriculum initiatives. Recently appointed work placement co-ordinators arrange and monitor work experience efficiently and effectively. Resources to promote learning are good and include good outdoor sports facilities. A wide range of suitable equipment includes boy and ethnic dolls, and a hospital bed and hoist. And there is a comprehensive and informative range of journals, videos and CD-ROMS in the library. Students make good use of the intranet where staff post schemes of work, handouts, practice tests and assignments. Some teaching rooms are too small for the size of class and this limits the range of learning activities. Others are poorly soundproofed. The noise from adjoining groups distracted learners and made it difficult for the teacher and students making presentations to be heard.

124. Assessment is effective on all programmes. Early diagnostic tests are used well to identify individual basic or key skills needs and assignment briefs provide clear and comprehensive guidance on structure and grading criteria, although key skills opportunities are not always clearly identified. Assessment is good and the internal verification system is very effective. Teachers' comments on students' work are constructive and clearly indicate to students how to improve their work. The approach to planning assignments for the year varies among courses. Those with a detailed year planner enable students to manage their time more effectively.

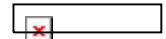
125. The college offers a good range of provision to meet sector and community needs. Plans are well advanced to offer a foundation degree in early years with a local university. NVQ level 4 was recently introduced following a growth in NVQ provision to meet sector needs. These include NVQs in oral healthcare and for teaching assistants. NVQ and modern apprenticeship provision is being developed in partnership with the local hospital to match the qualification needs of the National Health Service trust. Theory training is provided in the hospital to ensure easier access. Links with local schools are productive, with good provision in place for pupils aged 14 to 16.

126. Support and guidance for students are extensive and well developed. Pre-course information and guidance are thorough, ensuring that students enrol on the most appropriate course for their ability and career aspirations. Diagnostic testing during induction identifies individual support needs and response is swift. Additional support is provided in the workplace when learners find it difficult to attend college. Tutorials are used effectively to set and monitor the achievement of individual targets. Work-based learners are visited regularly by their assessors and well supported by them and their employers. Reviews of progress are carried out every six weeks and keep learners aware of their progress towards their qualifications. Individual action plans are specific about the work to be achieved by the next visit.

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

127. Leadership and management are good. Work to improve attendance has shown a marked improvement in recent months. Strategies to widen participation and promote social inclusion have resulted in acceptance of students with minimal qualifications. A range of formal and informal support is available to enable students to achieve and progress, for example, circle time during group tutorials for raising and resolving issues and timetabled additional support sessions for assignment and unit work. Staff are working to address gender imbalance in a programme area where just over one third of students on public services courses is female.

### **General visual arts**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- wide and inclusive provision
  
- high standard of practical work
  
- high pass rates on AS-level media, drama and music
  
- good access to high standard accommodation.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- low retention rates on music, media and drama studies
  
- low pass rates on level 2 art and media courses and national diploma in performing arts
  
- failure of some teaching to meet the needs of all students.

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

128. The college offers a broad range of provision in art, design, media, performance and music. There are good internal progression routes from level 1 to level 4. Art and design and media courses include GNVQ intermediate and first diplomas, national diplomas in fine art, graphic design with multimedia, three-dimensional design and media, and a diploma in art foundation studies. In performing arts, there are national diploma courses in dance, drama, music technology, music practice, theatre design and theatre technology. There is a broad range of professional development units for adult students of music, drama and musical theatre. There are also AS-level and GCE A levels offered in art, media, film studies, photography, drama and dance. Most students study at the college full time and many take an additional qualification such as life drawing or work towards a range of key skills awards. There are some adult students attending short courses which include jewellery, interior design, embroidery and upholstery. The college also offers Open College Network (OCN) accredited courses in jazz both full time and part time. The majority of courses are at Chichester. In total there are 1,013 students of which 82 study part-time.

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

129. Pass rates vary significantly across the area, but are consistently above the national average for AS-level media studies, and were 100% for AS-level drama in two of the last three years. Students enjoy above average success in City and Guilds life drawing. Pass rates for level 2 courses in art and media and many national diplomas including performing arts are below the national average. Most students are successful in their course in AS-level music, media studies, drama and the diploma in foundation studies, but overall too many students fail to complete their courses. However, the college has recently implemented strategies which are already indicating significant improvements to retention rates on many courses. Student attendance during the week of inspection was at 75% and there were many instances when students were late to lessons.

130. Students on many courses produce some good work and, overall, the standard of practical work is high. A creative use of materials and techniques is encouraged on all visual arts courses. Students on the access course enthusiastically embrace a wide range of processes including dyeing, constructing textiles and papermaking. Printmaking is widely used by students at each level to explore texture, colour, contrast and symbol. The best work effectively connects skilful use of technique with content and original thinking, however, some students demonstrate insufficient discretion in the use of materials and the scale and extent of some work lacks creative ambition. Some sketchbooks do not adequately record the systematic development of ideas. There are regular lunchtime music sessions where music students perform their own work individually, in duos or bands. All of this work is recorded, as are pieces produced in the college's recording studio. Music students produced an attractively packaged CD which contained a number of tracks of music written and performed by them. Media students make films displaying a strong sense of narrative which, although well crafted with a high standard of production, sometimes lack critical context. Performing arts students demonstrated competent acting, design, and technical theatre skills in a dress rehearsal of *Alice in Wonderland*.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in general visual arts, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
City and Guilds certificate in life drawing	2	No. of starts	80	40	46
		% retention	96	98	98
		% pass rate	61	100	93
First diploma in performing arts	2	No. of starts	25	39	58
		% retention	76	69	53
		% pass rate	89	85	71
AS-level media studies	3	No. of starts	42	52	55
		% retention	88	77	85
		% pass rate	97	93	98
AS-level drama	3	No. of starts	23	18	23
		% retention	96	72	96
		% pass rate	100	92	100
National diploma in performing arts	3	No. of starts	25	33	29
		% retention	88	76	83
		% pass rate	73	92	79
National diploma in media	3	No. of starts	33	44	56
		% retention	76	52	61
		% pass rate	60	87	82
Diploma in foundation studies in art and design	3	No. of starts	32	33	40
		% retention	91	94	95
		% pass rate	93	81	71

*Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)*

***Quality of education and training***

131. Of the lessons observed during the inspection, many were satisfactory or better, although no outstanding teaching was seen. Some teaching was unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers plan and structure the work well and ensure all students are involved. Teachers regularly refer to their professional knowledge and subject experience in teaching. In some lessons, particularly with large classes, teachers do not fully check learning or maintain a pace of work which adequately challenges all students. This results in some students becoming at times inattentive. In music and performing arts theory lessons, teachers concentrate on giving information and do not encourage students to think for themselves. In a very good physical theatre lesson for acting students, the teacher skilfully drew on the students' prior knowledge about the choreographer Lloyd Newsome. The students performed very effectively their own movement work to demonstrate their understanding of Newsome's particular style.

132. Accommodation for most of visual and performing arts is of a high standard. Many studios are new and well appointed. Access for disabled students is good. Computers to support creative learning are plentiful with an extensive range of software located on machines in studios, open access workrooms and a number of workstations in the library. Printmaking is effectively used on the broad range of visual arts courses, but the studio is poorly equipped and inadequately soundproofed. Students find some of the background noise distracting when trying to concentrate in



large studios. In visual arts, the students use a wide range of specialist techniques and equipment to good effect. Photography darkrooms are too small. Following high recruitment to media, there are insufficient facilities such as video editing suites. Music students have good access to rehearsal and practice rooms for individual or group work. The theatre has an adequate range of lighting and sound equipment. Most staff are well qualified and have relevant professional expertise which informs their teaching. The library is welcoming and adequately stocked with appropriate resources.

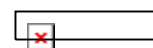
133. Assessment and grading are accurate and confirmed by awarding bodies. Throughout the curriculum area, work is marked carefully and promptly. Assessment feedback is helpful to students. Some project briefs do not always refer clearly to the assessment criteria or opportunities to secure key skill evidence. There is an extensive and organised internal verification procedure. Students are encouraged to make critical analysis of their own work through tutorial advice and guidance. In visual arts, there was insufficient class discussion to evaluate students' work and ideas.

134. Support for students is generally good. Diagnostic screening for learning support and learning styles is conducted at induction, although this information is not systematically used in teaching. Initial guidance is satisfactory, although some students begin to study on a course at too high a level and subsequently fail to succeed. Students are alert to the range of support, guidance and counselling available and make much use of it, particularly in art and design. A high number of students receive learning support and the majority of those who avail themselves of it are successful in their course. In media, national diploma students find the initial induction to each pathway option at the start of their course helpful in making decisions about study options later in the term. Level 3 students are well supported in making applications to HE. In a voice lesson for adult students of acting, good guidance and advice was given for forthcoming auditions to accredited drama schools. There is good progression from level 2 to level 3 within the area, reflecting the wide range of provision and the inclusive mission of the college.

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

135. The curriculum area is organised effectively and well run. Communications within the curriculum area are effective and staff feel valued and informed about major issues. In the year of inspection, recruitment in the curriculum area had increased by 19%. Previously identified low retention rates are being addressed and have improved by 8% on the previous year. There are effective arrangements for covering lessons when staff are absent to ensure learning is not disrupted. The work of advanced practitioners is helping to improve assessment, mentoring of staff and retention rates. Inspectors agreed with most of the key strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report, but considered that it was significantly overgenerous when grading the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

## **Humanities**



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

### ***Strengths***

- high and improving retention rates
  
- high pass rates on many AS-level and GCE A-level subjects

- good development of students' analytical skills
  
- strong curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates in AS-level geography
  
- poor use of group work in some lessons
  
- insufficient use of ILT in teaching and learning.

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

136. The college offers a large AS-level and GCE A-level programme for full-time and part-time students. At the time of the inspection the full-time day programme included 37 subjects. Most students on this programme are aged 16 to 18, but there are a small number of adult students attending part time. Seven subjects are offered, two at AS level and five at AS level and GCE A level. At the time of the inspection, 256 students were taking full-time AS-level humanities subjects and 96 were taking GCE A-level subjects. In some subjects, a significantly high proportion of students do not continue on to GCE A level from AS level. No humanities GCSEs are offered for full-time or part-time students. A large access to HE programme runs in the college. In humanities, there are two access routes; humanities and social sciences and human sciences. There are 91 students enrolled on these courses. Access courses are available with different modes of attendance combining day and evening attendance to meet students' needs.

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

137. Retention rates on most courses are above national averages, and in some cases they are significantly higher. Rates have continued to improve between 2001 and 2003. In AS-level history, however, the retention rate dropped well below the national average in 2003.

138. The pass rates on AS-level and GCE A-level subjects are mostly above national averages. For example, in AS-level law, GCE A-level history and sociology, and AS-level and GCE A-level psychology, pass rates in 2003 were all more than 10% above national averages. However, pass rates for AS-level geography have been consistently below national averages for the past three years. On many AS-level and GCE A-level subjects, students achieve significantly more high-grade passes than national averages. Students generally achieve at, or near to, the grade predicted by their GCSE scores on entry to the college. However AS-level and GCE A-level psychology students achieve significantly higher grades than predicted, based on their GCSE scores. The pass rates for access to HE courses are at, or just below, national averages. Most students produce high standards of work. In AS-level and GCE A-level lessons, students are encouraged to develop skills of analysis and evaluation and to contribute actively to lessons. In many lessons, AS-level and GCE A-level students made individual or group presentations, in which they demonstrated ability, maturity of thought and confidence.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
AS-level history	3	No. of starts	22	21	23
		% retention	95	86	74
		% pass rate	52	83	88
AS-level geography	3	No. of starts	19	17	20
		% retention	95	76	90
		% pass rate	39	77	72
AS-level psychology	3	No. of starts	53	64	123
		% retention	79	78	79
		% pass rate	93	80	89
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	**	31	27
		% retention	**	100	100
		% pass rate	**	97	100
AS-level sociology	3	No. of starts	47	50	60
		% retention	77	76	82
		% pass rate	83	84	78
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	*35	22	**
		% retention	*69	95	**
		% pass rate	*46	95	**
Access to HE (1 year)	3	No. of starts	79	73	68
		% retention	67	74	76
		% pass rate	77	81	79

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* data for GCE A-level subjects for 2000/01 are for the two-year legacy GCE A levels

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

139. Most teaching is well planned and teachers' preparation is thorough. Lesson plans and schemes of work are well structured, detailed and clearly identify lesson objectives. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of students and encourage them to be actively involved in lesson activities. Staff use group presentations effectively to encourage students to share knowledge and understanding, and develop communication skills and confidence. Lesson plans clearly indicate how teachers will differentiate work to take account of students' varying needs and abilities. Staff actively seek to address students' differing learning styles. For example, in a psychology lesson, students summarised the topic of schizophrenia comprehensively through the use of mind maps - diagrammatic representations of topics - to meet the needs of visual students. In some lessons, group work is poorly managed by teachers. Group tasks lack a clear focus and students are unsure of what is expected of them. While high-quality learning materials are used in some lessons, ILT is significantly underdeveloped. Little curriculum material is available on the college's virtual learning environment to help teaching and learning and independent study.

140. Accommodation is generally good. Some lessons take place in rooms that are too small for the size of some large classes and this restricts teaching and learning activities. The range of learning

materials in the library for this programme is appropriate, but there are only a few copies of some key texts. Access to computers is good in the college. There are no computers in classrooms, but there are well-equipped learning centres in each main teaching block. Staff are well qualified. Effective arrangements are in place to cover lessons if staff are absent.

141. Staff use varied and appropriate assessment methods. Course teams maintain detailed assessment records which they share with personal tutors who undertake six weekly individual progress reviews with students. In most AS-levels and GCE A-level subjects, tutors provide extensive feedback to students on their assessed work. In a small number of subjects, students are given insufficient feedback which fails to indicate clearly the assessment criteria for awarding grades. In psychology, students are given regular weekly formative assessments. These include quizzes, multiple-choice questions, short answer tests and word-fill exercises. On the access to HE course, there is a standard format for assignments and feedback sheets. Assignments are well designed and interesting, and feedback on assignments is detailed.

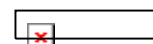
142. The access to HE programmes are flexible, offering varying modes of attendance and course length. There is a significant programme of enrichment activities. These include theatre, museum and exhibition visits, attendance at GCE A-level conferences, and visits to the World War 1 battlefields and New York.

143. All full-time students and part-time access students have personal tutors and a well-structured tutorial programme. Students have a high regard for the support provided by personal tutors. Personal tutors follow tutorial schemes of work which include ample opportunity for one-to-one meetings. AS-level and GCE A-level students are set meaningful targets for personal development. Personal tutors are aware of predicted GCE A-level grades, but GCE A-level grade targets are not set. Students causing concern because of poor attendance, a lack of punctuality, or failure to submit work have specific targets set by programme managers related to the area of concern. Full-time GCE A-level and access students have detailed induction programmes. For GCE A-level students, these include a diagnostic assessment to identify additional support needs and a learning styles questionnaire.

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

144. Curriculum leadership and management are strong. Course reviews are thorough, with a wide range of evidence used as a basis for judgments. Annual course targets for enrolments and pass and retention rates are set. Strengths and weaknesses are identified by all courses. Action points relating to these strengths and weaknesses are produced by course teams and confirmed by the programme manager. Where weaknesses are identified, detailed action points are set and their achievement monitored closely. Few weaknesses or action points relate to teaching and learning. The self-assessment report for the area draws on the evidence of all course reviews, however, many weaknesses identified at a course level are not reflected in this report. The impact of newly introduced procedures can be seen with improved punctuality and attendance. The teaching excellence programme provides valuable support to new and existing staff and helps raise the quality of teaching. New staff have mentors, regular reviews, and reduced teaching hours for their first year. All staff are observed and appraised annually so that staff development needs are accurately identified.

### **English, language and communication**



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

Contributory grade for English is **good (grade 2)**

### **Strengths**

- outstanding retention and pass rates on NVQ English as a foreign language (EFL) programmes
  
- high pass rates on GCSE French, AS-level English language and literature, AS-level French, AS-level German, GCE A2 Spanish, GCE A2 English literature and the certificate of proficiency in English
  
- much very good teaching
  
- very broad range of provision
  
- well-differentiated approaches to meet individual learning needs
  
- strong contribution of the international programme to the college ethos.

### **Weaknesses**

- low pass rates on GCSE English.

### **Scope of provision**

145. There is a very broad range of programmes for both full-time and part-time students. Adult students account for approximately two thirds of the total of 630 students enrolled. Full-time EFL students all follow a programme leading to an NVQ qualification in English offered at levels 1 to 3. This programme has a range of different start dates to suit the needs of different students. Courses are offered in GCSE English, and AS-level and GCE A-level English language, English literature and English language and literature. Modern foreign languages are offered at beginner level and are available in many languages including French, Spanish, Italian, German, Greek, Russian and Japanese. GCSEs in French, Italian and Spanish are offered as a fast track option in the lunchtime period to enable students on other courses in the college to attend. AS level and GCE A levels are also available in French, German and Spanish.

### **Achievement and standards**

146. There are very high retention and pass rates for full-time students on EFL NVQ programmes. Pass rates have been good and rising over the last three years, and now stand at over 90% at all three levels. Pass rates on certificate for proficiency in English have risen over the past three years to a current 97%, significantly above the national average. AS-level English language and literature, AS-level French, AS-level German, English for students aged 16 to 18 have been significantly below

the national average for three years. Many students make only limited progress in this subject, and the qualification does not always represent the best learning goal for them. Standards in many lessons are very good. For example, in an AS-level German evening lesson, students sustained good discussion in German about news items from *Die Zeit* in the target language, with accuracy and fluency. Attendance in most lessons was good. Effective systems are in place to monitor attendance and punctuality.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in English, language and communication, 2001 to 2003***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2001	2002	2003
NVQ English language units	1	No. of starts	254	195	198
		% retention	54	65	95
		% pass rate	53	80	92
GCSE English (A* to C)	2	No. of starts	49	65	83
		% retention	82	60	81
		% pass rate	43	5	25
NVQ English language units	2	No. of starts	186	295	285
		% retention	77	96	99
		% pass rate	100	92	97
AS-level Spanish	3	No. of starts	**	16	29
		% retention	**	81	89
		% pass rate	**	62	87
GCE A-level English literature	3	No. of starts	*	24	10
		% retention	*	100	100
		% pass rate	*	96	90
NVQ English language units	3	No. of starts	*	35	81
		% retention	*	100	99
		% pass rate	*	99	98

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

\*\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

147. The quality of most teaching and learning is consistently good, with much very good and outstanding teaching. Lesson plans show careful and thoughtful attention to individual learning needs. Teachers select stimulating and imaginative teaching methods and resources which meet the needs of students effectively. In modern foreign language and EFL, teachers have high expectations of students' spoken skills and encourage them to sustain their discussion in the language they are learning. In an AS-level Spanish lesson, students talked fluently about television advertising without lapsing into English and showed good accuracy in their use of vocabulary and grammatical structures. They were stimulated by well-selected television advertisements and a follow-up exercise where they were encouraged to guess what products certain slogans were promoting. In a GCE A-level English language lesson, students played a board game designed to test their knowledge of the history of the English language and key linguistic features. This encouraged a degree of healthy, but light-hearted, competition. On occasions, homework tasks are not always completed, leaving students under prepared for the lesson.

148. Most teaching areas are good, but a few classrooms are too small for the class size which limits on occasions the effective use of group work. Some rooms have inadequate soundproofing making them less suitable for language learning. ILT is underutilised in the area with the college intranet and the virtual learning environment not yet fully established.

149. Assessment practice in this area is particularly good especially on EFL courses. Students on NVQ courses have a test on entry to the college to ensure that they are placed on the appropriate level. Internal verification systems are thorough. On modern foreign language courses, students are given helpful and comprehensive guidance to explain the way teachers annotate assessed work and give students feedback on their performance. On a few English courses, assessment practice does not always make clear references to assessment objectives. There are instances of overgenerous marking and some teacher feedback comments do not always provide clear guidance about what a student needs to do to improve.

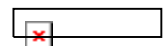
150. Enrichment activities in this area are many and varied, and add significantly to the learning experience of students. EFL students are offered a wide and inspired range of social activities. Visits are arranged to places of local interest as well as to cities such as London, Liverpool and Manchester. In modern foreign languages, students have the valuable opportunity to go on exchange visits. There are excellent links with Chichester's twin town of Chartres in France, and during the exchange visit, students have the opportunity to spend a day in Paris. The English team organises regular writing competitions and trips to the theatre locally and elsewhere. EFL students find valuable work experience in a wide range of establishments including hotels, restaurants and local companies. There are strong links with local schools. Language assistants from all over Sussex study EFL at the college. GCSE language revision clubs are run in the summer term in college to provide additional support for students in local schools.

151. Support for students is excellent and extremely effective, and students value the support they receive. Subject teachers provide particularly strong support to students when required. There is also good support for students who take up the offer of additional support following initial assessment or self-referral.

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

152. Leadership and management are excellent. Internal communication is particularly effective. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring the quality of provision including the course review and evaluation procedure, student feedback systems and the college lesson observation scheme. Course reviews show good attention to target setting and action planning, and a strong focus on raising the quality of teaching and learning. Action plans are monitored through regular meetings. There are excellent opportunities for staff development both internal and external and these are available to all part-time as well as full-time staff. The substantial number of international and languages students at the college contributes extremely well to the international ethos of the college and promotes positive attitudes to equality and diversity.

### **Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good integration of literacy, numeracy and language support in practical lessons

- good individual learning and personal support for students
  
- effective community links widening participation
  
- wide variety of programmes and levels enabling progression.

### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient variety of teaching methods in theory lessons insufficient planning of individual learning programmes
  
- inadequate formal arrangements for reviewing students' progress
  
- inappropriate accommodation arrangements for retail theory lessons.

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

153. Courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are offered on a full-time and part-time basis at the Chichester and Brinsbury campuses and at a number of community venues. Courses are available from pre-entry level to level 1. There are a variety of options including literacy, numeracy, IT, art, pottery, cookery and music. There are 509 students attending courses; 56 students are aged 16 to 18. The schools link programme offers students the opportunity to attend specific options to prepare them for the transition to college. Work experience is provided to students attending the work enterprise and independent living courses. The Pathways programme caters for a range of abilities and also offers special options including sensory pathways for students with sight impairment and the third age pathway for mature students whom previously have been in long-term residential care. The pre-vocational course consists of core modules of literacy, numeracy and IT and a vocational module designed to prepare students for moving into mainstream provision. Most programmes offer college certificates of achievement and the pre-vocational programme offers external accreditation.

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

154. Students make satisfactory progress towards their learning goals. There are high retention and pass rates on the pre-vocational courses where students gain OCN qualifications for unit achievement. Students are well integrated with the college and its courses and there are often good retention rates. Students are awarded a college-devised certificate to recognise their achievement s. Students progressively develop communication and literacy and numeracy skills using practical subjects including cookery and horticulture. For example, in one gardening lesson students were able to count the number of pots needed for the activity and in another lesson students worked in pairs and practised measuring by working out their clothing sizes and presenting the information in a simple graph. This helped to provide a context and make the learning more relevant. Students also



improved their confidence by being successful at the activity and feedback from their tutors and learning support assistants reassured them that they had done well. Most students produce a high standard of work and regular feedback is provided to them on their progress, although individual learning plans are insufficiently detailed. Short-term goals are set every six weeks by each tutor, but many students achieve skills that are recognised in the classroom, but are not reflected on their individual learning plan and this makes measuring progress over a period of time more difficult. Some students achieve their short-term goals quickly and no further ones are planned until the six-week review date.

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

155. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. The best teaching was in practical lessons that provided students with the opportunity to apply practical skills while further developing literacy and numeracy and language skills. In a cookery session, students with different skills and capabilities were all learning to be more independent. They were encouraged to read the recipe, measure ingredients, describe their contribution to the meal preparation to the rest of the group and calculate the cost of the meal. In a gardening session, students prepared a heat and light experiment on growing seeds. As part of the session, students learnt about telling the time and researched when sunset and sunrise would occur. Where teaching is less effective, a narrow range of teaching methods are used that do not take sufficient account of the wide range of student needs and abilities in classes. This is particularly the case in theory lessons where staff rely heavily on handouts and worksheets. In one lesson, good use was made of a virtual view of the local high street to identify the location of key buildings and retail outlets, but the independent work by the students to reinforce their skills reverted to a basic handout against which to identify locations. In another lesson, that included measuring clothes, the size chart was too complex for many of the students to understand.

156. Initial assessment is comprehensive and comprises a range of activities to help identify the needs of pre-entry students. Background information from school, care homes and care plans are included in the process providing a fuller picture of students' complex needs. Initial assessment is not always used effectively to plan the overall learning programme for individual students on courses. However, individual learning plans state an overall aim, which is negotiated with the student, and there are insufficient long-term or medium-term goals that would provide a coherent view of the students' programme against which progress can be measured. Students' progress is reviewed every six weeks, but information recorded is brief and insufficiently evaluative. A comment is recorded on each individual learning plan summarising progress against the short-term objectives. The review process does not summarise progress with sufficient precision to accurately plan the future learning priorities for each student. Assessment of students' work is satisfactory and when a student achieves a goal in their learning plan the tutor assesses the work against the core curriculum. Internal verification is satisfactory. When a tutor assesses work for internal and external accreditation as meeting the performance criteria, the assessment documentation and student work is then passed to the internal verifier and is appropriately verified, after which a college certificate is issued. The same procedure is in place for external certification on the pre-vocational course.

157. Community links are effective and have assisted the widening of participation to meet a wide range of student needs. Close liaison with care workers in up to 15 care homes and an extensive range of community organisations ensures full knowledge, particularly of the needs of students with complex support needs. Courses are provided for students within care homes, effectively extending provision into the community. There are good links with special needs schools. A school link programme involves 62 students who follow a wide range of vocational courses and taster programmes at the college preparing them for the transition to college life. The college has a positive approach to people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities actively seeking to ensure that they are constructively and actively engaged in the college community.

158. Students are well supported by their teachers and learning support assistants. Induction is effective and provides information to support students' familiarity with the college including where they can get guidance and support. All full-time and part-time students participate in individual tutorials that appropriately review their personal, social and learning priorities. Learning support assistants provide effective support to students, supporting the development of their learning and personal confidence. Staff are keen to ensure that students are not experiencing any problems and

are good at addressing issues that may arise from time to time. A number of learning support assistants gain teaching qualifications and some progress to become teachers.

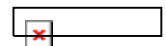
159. There is a wide range of programmes and levels that enables progression. There are progression routes within levels. For example, the sensory pathway programme is for sight-impaired students. As these students become more independent they can move on to Pathways. Pathways consists a range of theoretical and practical modules such as literacy and numeracy and cookery. Pathways, a college-devised programme, is designed to meet the needs of students with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Many students can move on to higher-level programmes including independent living and work enterprise programmes that also include work experience as an option. Some students move on to pre-vocational programmes preparing them for transition onto main college programmes. There is a wide range of modules available on many of the programmes including art, horticulture, cookery, retail, literacy and numeracy. All programmes concentrate on the development of skills in relation to the core curriculum.

160. Teaching staff are well qualified and experienced. There is some good accommodation particularly at the Chichester campus. However, there are some inappropriate accommodation arrangements that inhibit student learning. At the Brinsbury campus, access to a toilet through a classroom disrupted learning and some general classrooms and a kitchen for cookery sessions are cramped. A retail theory lesson at the Chichester campus took place in a carpentry and joinery room that was not conducive to learning and some classes were affected by adjacent music sessions. Some good resources are provided, particularly for practical sessions including a pottery kiln, access to high-quality IT, a talking microwave and weighing scales for cookery. However, specialist and ICT resources are insufficiently used to support teaching and learning.

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

161. Leadership and management of the curriculum area are satisfactory. A programme manager who is newly appointed and a curriculum team leader manage the area. Communication is effective and a range of team meetings take place that are accessed by full-time and part-time staff. All meetings are recorded and actions identified and effectively followed up. Staff development is available to staff on a regular basis. Recent training has included a session on SENDA, adult protection and syndromes and disabilities. There is a one-week training programme in July and a day of training a term. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. A course review and evaluation takes place annually and this feeds into the self-assessment report. The self-assessment report identified many strengths that were normal practice and failed to identify some of the weaknesses.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high retention and pass rates for qualifications in literacy and numeracy
  
- good teaching and learning in individual literacy and numeracy learning support sessions

- good range of provision to widen participation
  
- good access to ICT resources for learning.

### ***Weaknesses***

- incomplete initial assessment
  
- poor use of individual learning plans in discrete programmes
  
- insufficiently evaluative reviews of progress for some learners
  
- poor attendance on vocational course and individual learning support sessions.

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

162. Courses for adults in literacy and numeracy are offered in the college, in community venues and on an employer's premises. There is also individual, small group and in-class literacy and numeracy support for students on other college programmes. There are 323 adults and 8 students aged 16 to 18 on literacy or numeracy courses. All students have the opportunity to work towards accreditation from entry level 1 to level 2. There are 455 students receiving individual or small group support and 110 students have in-class support for literacy or numeracy. The day-to-day management of basic skills and additional learning support is delegated to two curriculum team managers. There are 9 full-time lecturers, 4 permanent fractional lecturers and 39 sessional lecturers. There are two signers, three administrators and a large number of learning support assistants. Five of the teaching staff have specialist qualifications to support dyslexic students, with two qualified to assess their learning needs.

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

163. There are high retention and pass rates on literacy and numeracy programmes. In addition, 91% of students who received basic skills support in 2002/03 successfully completed their courses. However, there is poor attendance in lessons, in individual learning support sessions and on vocational courses where support is provided. Students on literacy and numeracy courses work towards nationally accredited qualifications. Some students who are receiving learning support work towards key skill qualifications in communication and application of number at level 1. Pass rates in these key skills are well above the national average. Students receiving individual support for literacy or numeracy make good progress in the development of basic skills. Many students, who have previously underachieved in literacy or numeracy, recognise the progress they make as a result of the support they receive. Students' progress in literacy and numeracy and in the development of personal and social skills is satisfactory. Some adult students who have had no experience of computers make good progress in acquiring basic computer skills, particularly word-processing.

During the inspection, many students commented very favourably on the way in which the training had helped them to overcome their fear of computers and computing.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in literacy and numeracy, 2001 to 2003***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
OCN - literacy and numeracy units	entry	No. of starts	844	541	1,294
		% retention	91	92	98
		% pass rate	75	84	94
Key skills application of number (1-year course)	1	No. of starts	60	24	16
		% retention	98	100	94
		% pass rate	98	100	94
Key skills communication (1-year course)	1	No. of starts	67	15	26
		% retention	99	100	96
		% pass rate	99	100	96
OCN - literacy and numeracy	1	No. of starts	374	274	504
		% retention	89	93	99
		% pass rate	62	85	91
OCN - literacy and numeracy	2	No. of starts	*	204	134
		% retention	*	95	100
		% pass rate	*	83	97

Source: ISR (2001 and 2002), college (2003)

\* course not running

***Quality of education and training***

164. There is good teaching and learning in individual literacy and numeracy support lessons, with good contextual teaching closely related to students' vocational programmes. In these lessons, there is a good focus on the development of skills, not just on helping students to complete assignments. For example, in a numeracy support lesson, an engineering student gained a good understanding of how to transpose and use formulae. In another lesson, an access student learned how to simplify expressions of number involving indices to help with formulae in chemistry. In a literacy lesson, one student developed good skills in highlighting key information from a section of vocationally related text while another student developed good skills in breaking words down into syllables to aid reading. Working relationships between teachers and students throughout the literacy and numeracy provision are good.

165. There is poor use of individual learning plans. Students are not sufficiently familiar with the contents of the plans and how they should be used to develop their knowledge and skills. Most learning plans are compiled for a six-week period and they are not sufficiently modified to reflect students' progress. In some lessons, the work does not take sufficient account of students' differing needs and abilities. For example, in a literacy lesson, the same punctuation exercise was given to students who were working at entry levels 1 and 2. The exercise was too difficult for both groups of students. In some ICT lessons, there is insufficient emphasis on literacy and numeracy and ICT is not used sufficiently as a tool for improving students' literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills. Some staff are insufficiently informed about the awards for which students are preparing. Students, when questioned, were vague about the awards and what they had to do to complete them successfully. Many of the lessons began with a word-related exercise, such as a word search, that was not always appropriate to the individual needs of all students.

166. Assessment of students is satisfactory. Students on literacy and numeracy courses take a nationally recognised screening test. A diagnostic period of six weeks follows in which teachers use a variety of different methods and materials to identify students' skills and needs. Targets are then set for students' personal learning plans and progress against these is reviewed every six weeks. The system is new and its effectiveness has yet to be proved. Some ESOL students joining programmes later in the year are not assessed on entry. Full-time students on vocational courses undergo screening followed by a vocationally relevant literacy and numeracy assessment. The results are conveyed in a well-designed report addressed to the student. This identifies which of the student's skills are 'fine for the course' and which need the student's particular care. Skills that the student needs support to develop are noted and the report is copied to the learning support unit. However, staff in some curriculum areas do not prioritise the marking of literacy and numeracy assessments. Students with literacy and numeracy needs in these areas are not referred early enough for learning support.

167. There is a good range of provision to widen participation. Enrolment has increased in the last three years from 150 students in 2000/01, to 250 students in 2001/02, to 450 in 2002/03. Courses in the community are based in a primary school, daycare centres, and college premises in town centres and they provide good access to classes near to students' homes. Many students are attracted by the opportunity to acquire and develop ICT skills at the same time as improving their literacy and numeracy competences. Some customised programmes for workers are taught on an employer's premises. There are too few planned progression opportunities for students. Although students can take a range of nationally recognised units, inadequate attention is given to moving students on to other more advanced programmes.

168. Access to ICT resources in the college and in centres in the community is good. Students have good opportunities to develop ICT competences as an integral part of their basic skills programme and to produce their written work by using word processing. There is insufficient specialist software to help students to improve their literacy and numeracy through the use of computer-based programs. The staff/student ratios are high. In one lesson, there were two tutors and two learning support assistants working with eight students. However, some support and teaching staff are inexperienced and have insufficient expertise in literacy and numeracy. Overall, teaching and resources are satisfactory, but in some lessons, the teaching lacks imagination and creativity and resources to excite students to learn. Photocopied handouts and worksheets are used too much and have little appeal to students. There is good accommodation throughout the college and in many community centres. Some centres, however, are on the first or second floors of shared buildings. They have no lift access which makes access difficult for students with restricted mobility.

169. Initial assessment is incomplete. All full-time students are initially screened using a key skills assessment and all part-time students are offered the opportunity to take literacy and numeracy assessments. Information is also gained from students' application forms and from the information they provide when they are interviewed. However, students on literacy and numeracy courses are not diagnostically assessed. The outcomes from initial assessment are not sufficiently used when students' first learning plans are compiled. For some students, there is a late assessment of their learning needs and work-based learning students are not assessed for literacy or numeracy. There is a very comprehensive diagnostic assessment for dyslexic students. However, for some students who may be dyslexic, the assessment of their needs has been slow to be completed as there are too few qualified staff to meet the demand. Some 64 students have been assessed as dyslexic and are receiving additional support and 39 students are currently undergoing assessment, but are not yet being supported.

170. Some reviews of learning are insufficiently evaluative. Too often, however, reviews and records are descriptive and insufficiently evaluative to be effective in monitoring and measuring the small steps of progress students make. Students do not have clear and systematic records of what they have achieved. Some records of learning in lessons are not completed.

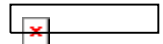
171. Support for students is satisfactory. In individual learning support sessions for literacy, numeracy, and dyslexia, students receive good support from skilled tutors. Some recently appointed and inexperienced staff have not been effectively inducted, systematically mentored, or trained to teach the core curricula. There is inadequate planning by vocational tutors for the use of learning

support assistants in some lessons. Learning support assistants provide good support to keep students on task or to manage their behaviour, but they are not sufficiently skilled in supporting students' literacy and numeracy development.

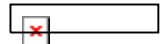
**Leadership and management**

172. Management of the curriculum is satisfactory. Communication between managers, tutors and support staff, through formal and informal meetings, e-mails, and telephone conversations is satisfactory. There is good promotion of equality of opportunity. Tutors treat students with respect and encourage them to treat each other respectfully and fairly. There has been successful management action to widen participation through literacy and numeracy courses taught in centres in the community and on employers' premises. There is a satisfactory system of observations of teaching and learning that identify staff development needs. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, some action is taken to improve practitioners' competence through additional training. However, not all members of staff have received core curriculum training and sufficient training in the OCN curriculum. Training for support staff is inadequately structured. The self-assessment report is insufficiently critical. Some features of the provision that are identified as strengths are satisfactory and some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors have not been acknowledged by the college.

**Part D: College data**



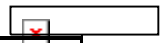
**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age**



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	30	40
2	34	31
3	31	15
4/5	0	1
Other	5	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

*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	519	143	3
Land-based provision	449	890	5

Construction	497	758	5
Engineering, technology and manufacture	359	301	3
Business administration, management and professional	301	1,994	9
Information and communication technology	585	3,476	16
Retailing, customer service and transportation	17	84	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	778	812	6
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	487	532	4
Health, social care and public services	679	1,456	9
Visual and performing arts and media	985	858	7
Humanities	357	271	3
English, languages and communication	944	1,558	10
Foundation programmes	1,310	3,488	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,267</b>	<b>16,621</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2003

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	514	500	517	1,960	2,189	1,292
	Retention rate %	78	73	62	67	75	68
	National average %	76	75	76	73	69	70
	Pass rate %	64	61	82	74	72	76
	National average %	65	69	71	66	68	71
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1,938	1,538	1,328	2,919	2,173	2,037
	Retention rate %	73	79	69	67	66	68
	National average %	72	70	72	70	68	68
	Pass rate %	70	58	74	74	62	76
	National average %	67	69	71	64	68	72

<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	2,291	2,528	2,220	1,676	1,608	1,520
	Retention rate %	54	79	79	71	76	73
	National average %	67	71	77	69	68	70
	Pass rate %	68	65	79	73	69	81
	National average %	75	77	79	66	69	72
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	17	*	*	376	231	268
	Retention rate %	41	*	*	57	82	81
	National average %	66	73	71	67	67	67
	Pass rate %	57	*	*	70	66	82
	National average %	65	54	53	58	55	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 1999 to 2001: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.*

*2. College rates for 1999 to 2002: College ISR.*

*\* fewer than 15 students 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)	63	30	7	44
Level 2 (intermediate)	57	39	4	77
Level 1 (foundation)	65	31	4	156
Other sessions	50	45	5	51
<b>Totals</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>328</b>



