

University of Hertfordshire

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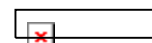
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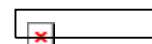
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Basic information about the institution

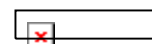


Name of institution:	University of Hertfordshire
Type of institution:	University
Vice chancellor:	Professor R J T Wilson
Address of institution:	College Lane Hatfield Herts AL10 9AB
Telephone number:	01707 284000
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Unique reference number:	133783
Name of reporting inspector:	Harriet Harper HMI
Dates of inspection:	25-29 April 2005

Part A: Summary



Information about the institution

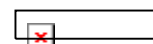


The University of Hertfordshire, formerly Hatfield Polytechnic, was awarded university status in 1992. Since then it has merged with the Hertfordshire College of Art and Design, the Hertfordshire College of Health Care Studies and the Barnet College of Nursing and Midwifery. The university has approximately 15,000 undergraduates, 3,000 postgraduates and 500 further education (FE) students based in the United Kingdom. With a turnover of around £110 million, it offers a wide range of

degrees including art and design, business, computer science, education, engineering, health sciences, humanities, law, life sciences and psychology.

Provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) represents a very small proportion of the university's activities. The FE programmes that fall within the remit of the inspection are a level 3 diploma in foundation studies (art and design) with around 130 students and national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in health and social care with approximately 225 learners. Art and design students study full time, are based at the main campus in Hatfield and are 18 years of age or older. Those on NVQ programmes are work-based adult learners, studying part time. The NVQ programmes are offered on a flexible basis to meet the differing needs of a wide range of local health and social care employers. These include National Health Service (NHS) and primary care trusts as well as independent residential and nursing homes. The university also offers assessor training programmes with about 80 learners enrolled at the time of inspection.

How effective is the institution?



Inspectors judged provision to be good in health and social care and outstanding in art and design.

Key strengths

- clear progression routes from FE courses into HE and employment
- outstanding provision in art and design
- rigorous assessment
- successful partnerships with a wide range of health and social care employers
- a supportive and inclusive environment for students and staff
- excellent resources.

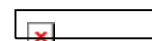
What should be improved

- specialist learning support in the workplace for NVQ learners

- analysis of NVQ learners' performance
- completion rates on NVQ level 2 care courses.

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

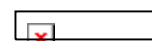
Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



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
Health and social care	Good. Pass rates at NVQ level 3 are high and the teaching of theory and practical skills is good, but completion is slow at level 2. Access to specialist learning support in the workplace is uneven. Assessment is rigorous and progression between levels and on to nurse training is good. Partnerships with employers are positive and productive.
Art and design	Outstanding. Pass rates and standards of work are high and teaching and learning are very good. Students benefit from excellent resources and thorough assessment. The management of tutorials is a particular strength. The curriculum area is very well managed.

How well is the institution led and managed?



Leadership and management of the FE provision are good and are particularly strong in art and design. FE students have the same entitlement as those on higher education (HE) programmes. The rationale for providing FE courses links well with the university's strategic objectives. Course performance is improving, with some high pass rates, and high standards of teaching, learning and assessment. Equality and diversity are well promoted. The university provides good value for money. However, it has not met its FE funding targets over several years. Some aspects of quality assurance are weak on health and social care programmes and management information systems do not allow for a full analysis of students' achievements on NVQ programmes.

To what extent is the institution educationally and socially inclusive?

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The university's response to educational and social inclusion is good. FE students value the supportive and inclusive environment. Most of them make good progress. Well-developed policies and procedures are appropriately informed by legislation related to race relations and disability discrimination. Strategies and plans reflect a clear commitment to equality of opportunity and widening the participation of those under-represented in learning. Some 20% of FE students are from minority ethnic groups and this is well above the proportion in the local population. New staff training in equal opportunities is good. Wider staff development includes disability and cultural awareness updating, and training for supporting students with mental health difficulties. However, curriculum planning in art and design does not include sufficient promotion of ethnicity and diversity. The learning resource centre provides a variety of different study environments to meet individual learning needs. A range of disability support equipment is available, including large-screen monitors, and software designed to assist students with specific learning difficulties. A disability support officer and faculty disability co-ordinators provide additional advice and assistance. Access to university premises for students with restricted mobility, and those with visual impairments, is very good.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?

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Guidance and support for the university's FE students are good. Initial advice and guidance are comprehensive. Work-based learners, on NVQ programmes in care, attend induction with their assessors. Well-considered induction procedures enable art and design students to sample the different pathways available to them. Student services on campus are very good. A 'one-stop' student centre advises on admissions, registration, financial matters and accommodation. The newly built multi-faith centre houses the university chaplaincy and offers space for prayer and reflection. An extensive range of well-promoted academic, personal and specialist support services is available across the university, including individual help with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. By contrast, in the workplace, some NVQ trainees have access to additional learning support set up by their employers while others do not. Most tutorials are well managed and productive. Guidance on progression to further study and employment is good. The university has made satisfactory arrangements to ensure that, where appropriate, child protection procedures and associated staff training are in place.

Students' views of the institution

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

What students like about the institution

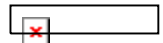
- approachable, helpful teachers

- good feedback on progress
- studying in a HE environment
- very good specialist resources and space to work in art and design areas
- the learning resource centre
- clubs, societies and other social activities
- the friendly, mature atmosphere

What they feel could be improved

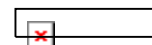
- car parking
- the cost of some materials in art and design
- more workshops for NVQ health and social care students.

Other information



The institution inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the institution. Once published, the institution has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local LSC. The institution's action plan must show what action the institution 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 institutions 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 institution as a whole



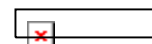
Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

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	100	0	0
19+ and WBL*			
Learning 16-18	100	0	0
19+ and WBL*			

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

*work-based learning

Achievement and standards

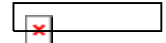


1. Overall, pass and retention rates are high. For those NVQ level 3 learners who started in 2001/02, around 66% achieved the full award within the academic year 2003/04. The pace of completion at this level is improving. However, at level 2, the percentage of learners completing the award within a two-year period has been significantly lower than at level 3. Retention rates at level 2 are now improving, but were low during the period 2001/02 to 2003/04, with many learners withdrawing before completing the full award. In art and design, the pass rates for the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) have risen steadily over a three-year period to 99% in 2003/04. Retention rates on this course have also improved.

2. The standard of students' work is high. NVQ students demonstrate appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding of theory and they are able to link this very effectively to practice in their workplace. Art and design students produce work of a very high standard, using a wide range of traditional and contemporary techniques. Their work is professionally presented and displayed around the campus.

3. FE courses at the university provide good progression opportunities for students. Almost 90% of students on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design) undertake degree courses, a third of whom remain at the University of Hertfordshire. A significant number of NVQ learners progress between levels and around 30% of the level 3 students subsequently undertake HE qualifications.

Quality of education and training



4. Inspectors judged all teaching and learning sessions they observed to be good or better. In both health and social care and art and design, teachers plan sessions carefully and manage them skilfully. Teachers and assessors have established good working relationships with students and are able to provide clear guidance and, where appropriate, constructive criticism.

5. In the best sessions, teachers meet individual students' needs very effectively. In art and design, tutorials are particularly well managed. These sessions are structured to promote good learning and to develop students' self-evaluation skills. In one excellent group tutorial, for example, students were successfully guided towards giving both positive and constructively critical messages about the quality of their colleagues' work. In most health and social care sessions there is a good balance of teaching input and activities. In the less successful sessions, learners find it difficult to absorb the amount of information they are given by tutors.

6. Students benefit from excellent resources. Teaching and support staff, technicians and assessors are well qualified and have appropriate experience in the health and social care sector or in the creative and cultural industry. Learners trained in the workplace use the full range of specialist resources and equipment, supported by high-quality training materials. Art and design students use up-to-date specialist resources and have ample individual studio space. The well-resourced and attractively designed learning resource centre on the campus provides very good information technology (IT) facilities, an extensive collection of books and journals and social and study areas for groups and individuals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. StudyNet, the university's online learning environment, is increasingly being used by FE students.

7. Overall, assessment and monitoring of students' progress are good. Clear and well-documented university-wide assessment principles are shared with staff and students. In art and design, an informative assessment handbook offers effective guidance on good practice. An informal study skills audit enables students to plan for improvement. Throughout the course, students are encouraged to reflect on, and evaluate, their own performance. This is supported by good feedback from their tutors. Assignment briefs are clear with well-paced target dates for completion. Moderation of assessed work is thorough. In NVQ care, assessment is rigorous at all levels. However, the initial assessment of learners' basic skills needs at the start of their course is implemented inconsistently. In the workplace, assessors offer regular feedback to learners on how to improve their performance. NVQ co-ordinators provide good support for assessors. Internal verification ensures that assessment procedures are compliant with awarding body requirements. Verifiers undertake a thorough cross-checking and moderation of assessment decisions. External verifier and examiner reports are scrutinised by senior managers. Key action points are noted and monitored through standardised quality assurance systems.

8. FE courses offered by the university are designed well in response to community and employers' needs and to meet external requirements. Partnership arrangements with employers in the health and social care sector are particularly effective. NVQ courses are structured differently to meet the specific needs of each employer. A successful joint bid was made with an NHS trust to a funding agency to employ three additional assessors to support those already in place. Although NVQ learners work in a wide range of health and social care settings, university tutors and workplace assessors work well together to provide a coherent programme of learning that matches students' needs and interests.

9. In art and design, the curriculum is structured to enable students to progress on to undergraduate programmes nationally. The university provides a range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in, for example, graphic design, digital modelling, fine art, model design and special effects, digital animation, and digital lens and media. There are summer workshops and evening courses and, although there is no part-time route for the diploma in foundation studies (art and design), more

flexible study arrangements can be negotiated with individual students.

10. Guidance and support for the university's FE students are good. Initial advice and guidance are comprehensive. Programme details are clear and readily available in the attractive prospectus and on the website. In art and design, prospective students and their parents are invited to university open days and exhibitions. Work-based learners, on NVQ programmes in health and social care, attend induction with their assessors. This helps them to establish good working relationships. Well-considered and recently revised induction procedures enable art and design students to settle into their courses quickly.

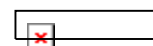
11. Students on FE courses benefit from their membership of the wider university community. Facilities include the Student Centre which provides a one-stop centralised admissions service and offers advice on financial matters and accommodation. A day nursery provides childcare facilities on the main campus. Free buses transport students between university sites. A newly built multi-faith centre houses the university chaplaincy and offers space for prayer and reflection. The Sports Village offers good sports facilities and gym membership at reduced rates.

12. An extensive range of academic, personal and specialist support is available across the university. This includes individual help with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and Asperger's syndrome. The specialist services are very well promoted. Student guides provide helpful information on support available, equal opportunities and the student charter. Students are encouraged to agree any specialist support requirements with their faculty support co-ordinator before, or as soon as possible after starting, their course. In art and design, the support co-ordinator offers a weekly drop-in session for students needing dyslexia support. A peer mentor scheme is available to those students who might benefit. By contrast, arrangements for the formal assessment of additional support needs, and the provision of specialist learning support, for NVQ learners in the workplace is more variable. Some learners have access to additional learning support set up by their employers, while others do not. However, the university has recently initiated a proposal to work in partnership with a local college in a pilot scheme aimed at improving initial assessment, and follow-up support, across FE provision.

13. StudyNet, the university's online learning environment, provides students with direct access to tutor support and learning materials through an Internet connection. Students describe their tutors as helpful and accessible. Attendance monitoring is rigorous and effective. Procedures are carefully documented. Work-based learners typically receive good personal and vocational support from their employers and assessors. Both trainees and assessors appreciate the support provided in the monthly workshop sessions held at the university. Students' views are well represented at all levels through student evaluation, course representatives and the students' union.

14. Guidance on progression to further study and employment is good. The university has made satisfactory arrangements to ensure that, where appropriate, child protection procedures are in place and relevant staff have received child protection training.

Leadership and management



15. Leadership and management are good. Although FE provision forms only a small part of the work of the university it links well with the institution's strategic objectives. The diploma in foundation studies (art and design) and NVQ programmes both help to widen participation, meet employers' needs and provide routes into HE.

16. Leadership and management are very good in art and design and good in health and social care. Dynamic leadership and management in art and design have raised standards significantly.

17. The management structure for FE programmes is clear and fits well into the university's department and faculty structure. There is a designated manager or tutor responsible for each programme, reporting to a head of department, and associate deans undertake faculty-wide quality review and enhancement responsibilities. Communication is good with regular and frequent team meetings to brief staff and share and review practice. For example, the NVQ quality board meets monthly to discuss and review progress and issues. There is productive communication with diploma in foundation studies (art and design) team members to identify actions for improvement, and to plan and agree strategies and solutions. Teams benefit from high levels of administrative support. The university's LSC programmes group takes a strategic lead on FE provision.

18. FE students have the same entitlement to use university facilities and support services as HE students. Consequently, they benefit from very good facilities and learning resources and well-qualified and experienced staff who also teach on HE courses. Staff working on FE courses have the same employment terms and conditions as HE staff.

19. The approaches to quality review and enhancement for HE programmes are likewise applied to FE courses. Each programme team produces an annual monitoring and evaluation report (AMER) with an action plan to address issues and improve standards. The AMER is reviewed and approved at faculty level. Issues are incorporated into a faculty report which is discussed at the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee. Managers of FE provision have sought to adapt AMERs to reflect themes in the Common Inspection Framework and have compared course performance with national average success rates for FE colleges. However, the AMER for health and social care is not sufficiently evaluative. It sometimes describes procedures rather than judging their impact or effectiveness. Good use is made of students' feedback in AMERs to identify good practice and issues of concern.

20. Action planning based on the AMER is effective in promoting improvements on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design). For example, additional studio space has been made available for students as a consequence of issues identified. There is excellent analysis of students' and teachers' performance at module level on this programme. Attendance monitoring procedures are also highly effective. Actions to meet some issues raised by the external verifier on NVQ programmes have taken time to embed. Target success rates set for NVQ levels 2 and 3 for 2004/05 and 2005/06 are constant and do not reflect the quest for quality improvement demonstrated in action plans.

21. The standard of teaching and learning is high. New full-time, part-time and hourly paid lecturers receive introductory training on teaching and learning, and additional staff development is provided by the university's Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching. Observation of teaching by a trained observer is arranged for each lecturer every year. The outcomes of observation are discussed in the annual staff appraisal. Actions are agreed and are monitored after six months. Staff development issues from appraisals are synthesised into staff development plans, which also reflect strategic objectives. The university provides extensive development opportunities for staff. The impact of this is reviewed thoroughly.

22. The university has made positive progress to embed and promote equality and diversity. Such training is a key feature of new staff induction and figures strongly in ongoing staff development. The university has made appropriate responses to meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) and the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. Accessibility and signage are good for people with restricted mobility. A very thorough race equality plan has been produced. Students' performance by ethnic background is analysed in aggregate for the whole student body. Staff in the Equality Unit are carefully considering the appropriateness of analysis at programme level to ensure that results can be interpreted in a meaningful way. However, student data about applications and entry are already analysed by ethnic background for each programme. The Equality Unit staff have also produced a thorough report on the staff profile of the university by gender, ethnicity and disability.

23. Management information systems are geared appropriately to the collection of data required for HE funding purposes. However, they do not readily provide performance data to match the conventions used by FE colleges. This has particularly limited evaluation of performance of NVQ

24. Governors' expertise appropriately reflects business and community sectors and broad educational fields. Some governors, for example, have substantial experience in the health and care sector. Significant performance issues on FE programmes are identified to governors through faculty quality reports. Governors can expound a clear rationale for FE provision within the university's curriculum offer.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas

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Strengths

- high pass rates at NVQ level 3 in care
- good teaching of theory and practical skills
- good progression to higher level courses
- rigorous assessment and verification

- highly effective partnerships with employers.

Weaknesses

- slow completion of NVQ level 2
- uneven access to specialist learning support in the workplace.

Scope of provision

26. The university offers NVQ level 2 and level 3 courses in health and social care. There are currently 153 learners following these programmes: 65 at NVQ level 2 in care and 71 at NVQ level 3 in care. There are eight learners on the NVQ in promoting independence, four on the NVQ in diagnostic and therapeutic support and five on the NVQ in dialysis support. Some 57 learners are from East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, 72 from the independent care sector, 11 from the Enfield Primary Care Trust and 13 from Life Opportunities Trust, an organisation for people with learning difficulties.

Achievement and standards

27. Pass rates on NVQ level 3 programmes are high. In the academic year 2001/02, of the 71 learners who started their NVQ level 3 programme, 66% achieved the full award in the academic year 2003/04. Some 65% of learners who started their NVQ level 3 in care and dialysis support in the academic year 2002/03 completed by March 2005. However, only 38% of those on NVQ level 3 promoting independence successfully completed by March 2005. At the time of the inspection, 44% of the NVQ level 3 care learners who started in 2003/04 had successfully achieved the award within 18 months. This indicates an improving trend in terms of rate of completion.

28. Achievement has been slow on the NVQ level 2 in care. Within the two-year period from the academic year 2001/02, only 53% achieved the award. Of those starting in the academic year 2002/03, only 44% achieved the award by March 2005 and of those starting in 2003/04 only 21% had achieved by March 2005. Over this period, between 27% and 50% of level 2 learners had withdrawn from the NVQ programme for change in employment, or personal or health reasons. The comparable figures for level 3 are lower at between 20% and 35%. Learners who leave early are accredited with units they achieve.

29. Standards of work in learners' portfolios are high. They demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding at level 2 and level 3. Witness statements, assessors' records and written feedback show that learners are effective practitioners in the workplace and can link theory with workplace practices.

30. Most learners are highly motivated and many progress from level 2 to level 3. Around half of the level 2 learners in one trust regularly progress to level 3. Some learners use their level 3 qualification as a means to access nurse or other professional training. In the three years from 2001 to 2004, some 53 of the 170 learners who achieved level 3 progressed on to the diploma in HE and registered nurse programme.

Quality of education and training

31. The university and employers together provide high-quality training. All sessions graded by inspectors were judged to be good or better. Teaching in group sessions and on a one-to-one basis is good. Tutors and assessors plan sessions well, share learning objectives with participants and identify strategies to help learners who require support. In the most effective sessions, activities are varied and actively involve learners. Assessors use question and answer technique effectively to assess and extend learners' knowledge. In one particular session, after assessors had examined and standardised completed units of learners' work, students competently discussed and evaluated the new assessment documentation. Sessions containing lengthy input by the tutor, with limited time for reflection, are less effective.

32. Learners are confident and competent. As they become more experienced and familiar with a process, they depend less on tutors and assessors and begin to link theory more firmly with workplace practices. One level 3 learner, close to achievement of the NVQ award, explained how she had become more confident in her ability to meet the needs of the clients. Another explained how her improved language skills enable her to communicate more effectively with colleagues and patients.

33. All university staff are occupationally qualified and hold assessor and verifier awards. One member of staff is working towards accreditation as an external verifier. Work-based assessors are employed by partner organisations and are working in the health and social care sector. All either hold, or are working towards, an assessor award. They are well qualified professionally and ably supervise learners. They ensure that learners are competent in the workplace and acquire the appropriate underpinning knowledge. University co-ordinators competently assure the quality of the NVQ assessment and verification process.

34. There are high-quality training materials. Learners are trained in the workplace using the full range of specialist resources and equipment available in the sector. They are aware of their responsibilities for their own health and safety and that of others. All those on NVQ and assessor award programmes have an entitlement to the full range of university facilities and services. Only a few, however, make good use of these facilities as they rarely spend time at the university campus.

35. Assessment is rigorous at all levels. Highly effective procedures and practices ensure compliance with NVQ requirements. Documentation is clear and precise. Comments are evaluative and give a clear indication of standards achieved. Learners' progress and achievements are carefully tracked and recorded. Assessors provide learners with good feedback which enables them to improve the standard of their work. Rigorous standardisation ensures that all assessors are working to the national standards. Internal and external verification systems are strong. However, initial assessment of learners' basic skills needs is not well established and there is uneven access in the workplace to specialist support in literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Some issues raised in external verifier reports have been acknowledged, but it is taking too long to deal with them fully.

36. Provision is responsive to the needs of the health and social care sector in the region. Partnership arrangements with employers are highly effective and there is a clear sense of purpose shared between university staff and staff providing on-the-job training. Arrangements for training assessors and learners are flexible and are agreed in consultation with employers. Not all taught sessions take place at the university. Some employers provide sessions in the work environment as part of their overall training strategy.

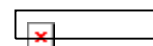
37. Support and guidance for assessors and learners are good. Progress is effectively monitored and tracked by NVQ co-ordinators. Reasons for underperformance are identified. Strategies are swiftly put in place to support learners at risk. There are sound mechanisms to follow up poor attendance at workshop sessions. Since they started in early 2005, peripatetic assessors at an acute hospital trust have made a positive contribution to learners' success.

Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management are good. Strategic direction is clear and priorities are identified

and addressed through effective long-term and short-term planning. Roles and responsibilities within the curriculum area are clearly defined. There is a good awareness of equal opportunity issues across the provision. However, some aspects of quality assurance arrangements are weak. The AMER for the curriculum area is more descriptive than evaluative. Analysis of data failed to reveal that rates of retention and full award achievement at level 2 are lower than at level 3.

Art and design



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

Strengths

- high pass rates on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design)
- very high standards of students' work
- well-managed and highly effective tutorials
- excellent resources
- thorough assessment of learning
- very good leadership and management.

Scope of provision

39. The university offers a diploma in foundation studies (art and design) located at the Hatfield campus. The pathways available to students are fine art, graphic design, textiles and fashion, lens and digital media, and three-dimensional design. There are currently 123 students enrolled. The course is taught by three full-time, six fractional and four part-time teachers.

Achievement and standards

40. Pass rates have been high and have improved from 93% in 2001/02 to 95% in 2002/03 and 99% in 2003/04. Retention rates are satisfactory and have been around national averages for the last three years. Strategies to improve retention rates and attendance have been successful and, at the time of the inspection, attendance was 90%. Progression to HE is good with almost 90% of students

going on to degree level studies.

41. Students' work is of a high standard. Sketchbooks demonstrate effective skills development. Critical and cultural studies essays show good critical thinking and literacy skills. Students' responses to themes such as the dramatic effects of war on various artists during the 20th century demonstrate effective research skills. Work across all practical areas involves imaginative use of colour, experimentation, pattern, form and design, as well as good critical written evaluations. Students develop very good drawing and conceptual thinking skills enabling them to effectively devise, incorporate and manipulate images into their work. One textiles project, for example, demonstrated excellent visual and pictorial references, thoughtful motifs and a vibrant and attractive use of design and colour. Lens and digital media projects show technically proficient work. Fine art students prepare thoroughly for final pieces. Graphics and three-dimensional work demonstrate a clear understanding of shape, concept, precision and presentation. One student, for example, produced a beautifully drawn and very well researched series of sketches based on human fears. Inspired by a relative, another student produced a wonderful project on Aboriginal art.

A sample of retention and pass rates in art and design, 2002 to 2004

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2002	2003	2004
Diploma in foundation studies (art and design)	3	No. of starts	135	116	155
		% retention	94	81	87
		% pass rate	93	95	99

Source: institution (2005)

Quality of education and training

42. Inspectors judged all teaching and learning sessions to be good or better. The graded sessions were all tutorials. These final project tutorial sessions are planned well to make the best use of time and to ensure that each individual's development needs are met. The attendance monitoring system is used effectively. Most students attend the registration session to discuss the plan for the day and, those who cannot, provide reasons for non-attendance. Students' are very well organised and well prepared for discussions. Teachers ensure the effective development of students' critical and analytical skills. Teachers and students have built trusting relationships. Agreed targets are recorded for the following week. Different rooms are used well to conduct smaller group tutorials away from the main studio space. Extremely good guidance is provided to determine students' specialist area of study and work in portfolios indicates that students have chosen the pathway most appropriate for them. Most students are able to articulate concepts and ideas well. However, a few lack confidence. Some students in small group tutorials are not involved sufficiently when another student's work is being discussed.

43. Resources are excellent. Very good technical support is available to students during, and out of, teaching sessions. Good industrial machinery is available for project work and technicians provide regular inductions to ensure safe operation. Equipment is well maintained. Students have good individual studio space in all disciplines. Good spaces are available for students to display their work and all areas are well maintained and utilised effectively. Students use excellent IT hardware and software on campus. Teaching and technical staff are very well qualified in their subjects and have considerable expertise and knowledge of the creative and cultural industry.

44. Assessment is rigorous. Teachers spend much time reflecting on work in partnership with students both individually and in groups. Verbal and written feedback in academic tutorials and on assessment briefs is good. Students provide additional, constructively critical self-reflective comments on the assessment sheets. Clear targets for completion of assignments are included in assignment briefs. A booklet produced by staff that gives advice on how to prepare for assignments is valued by students. Internal moderation of students' work is thorough.

45. The curriculum is designed to enable progression on to undergraduate programmes nationally. The university offers a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and short courses, aimed at meeting national and local needs. However, there is no part-time mode on the diploma in foundation studies (art and design). Students have a range of appropriate enrichment opportunities and these include visits to art galleries and exhibitions.

46. Some students produce work with themes around cultural diversity. However, curriculum planning does not include sufficient promotion of ethnicity and diversity. Assignment briefs, for example, contain very few non-western cultural references. Suggested areas of interest contain important places to visit with no reference to their cultural relevance. Critical and cultural studies programme documentation contains little on non-western themes.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are very good. The AMER for the curriculum area is clear and appropriately analytical. The art and design team has thought carefully about key issues and devised strategies to improve provision. Clear information is provided on outcomes and progression, and data are used well to inform planning. A succinct action plan has been implemented effectively. There are well-considered strategies for resources, space utilisation, departmental growth and meeting the future needs of the creative and cultural industry. Systems for monitoring and recording students' progress and attendance are understood and used by all staff. Staff work together well and show mutual respect for each other. Full-time, part-time and hourly paid staff benefit from extensive staff development opportunities. Lecturers' judgements in observations of each other's teaching sessions were similar to those of the inspection team.

Part D: Institution data

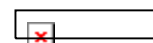
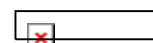


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
2	0	40
3	100	60
Total	100	100

Source: provided by the institution in summer 2005

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age



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

Art and design	103	28	46
Total	103	181	100

Source: provided by the institution in summer 2005

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year		
		16-18 and 19+		
		2002	2003	2004
3	Starters excluding transfers**	135	116	155
	Retention rate %	94	81	87
	National average %	83	83	*
	Pass rate %	93	95	99
	National average %	83	84	*

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

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 2000 to 2002: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Institutions in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2003.

2. Institution rates for 2000 to 2003: Institution ISR.

*data unavailable

** includes only art and design students. Care NVQ programmes are on a roll-on, roll-off basis

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)	100	0	0	14
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