

# City College Coventry

## Inspection Report 14 – 18 May 2007

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## Background information

## Inspection judgements

### Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 – outstanding*
- *grade 2 – good*
- *grade 3 – satisfactory*
- *grade 4 – inadequate*

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the organisation and its capacity to improve further
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management
- specialist provision in: health, public services and care; engineering and manufacturing technologies; construction, planning and the built environment; information and communication technology (ICT); art, media and publishing; and preparation for life and work.

## Description of the provider

1. City College Coventry is a large general further education college (GFE). In February 2002, Tile Hill College merged with Coventry Technical College to form City College Coventry. The college's mission is "To respond to the diverse educational needs of our learners, to raise continuously the standard of our education and training services, and to take education further into our business and social communities".
2. The college has three main sites. These are located at the Tile Hill Centre, three miles to the west of the city centre, the Butts Centre and the Maxwell Centre, just beside the city centre. The college also offers provision at community sites around Coventry and in work places across the United Kingdom.
3. Just under 90% of the college's learners are from Coventry. The remainder are from adjoining counties in the West and East Midlands, Solihull and Birmingham. The college also recruits work-based learners from across the United Kingdom. Coventry has two GFE colleges including City College Coventry. In 2005/06, the college had 12,991 learners. Of these, 71% were adult learners, 57% were men, 54% were part-time and 28% were from minority ethnic groups. In October 2006, the college had 589 work-based learners and 380 learners aged 14-16.
4. The college offers courses in all sector subject areas (SSA). The highest number of learners are in: preparation for life and work; health, public services and social care; information and communication technology; art, media and publishing; engineering and manufacturing technologies; construction, planning and the built environment; business, administration and law; sport, leisure and tourism; and science and mathematics. The college provides education and training for work-based learners.
5. Coventry's population is 300,848 of which 16% are from minority ethnic groups. Coventry has a ranking of 64 out of 354 local authorities for the highest levels of deprivation in England. The unemployment rate in Coventry is well over twice the national average. The percentage of pupils gaining five GCSEs at A\* - C in Coventry in 2006 was 47.0% compared to a national average of 59.2%.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Capacity to improve	Good: grade 2
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: grade 3
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Good: contributory grade 2</i>

## Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: grade 3
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Good: grade 2
Construction, planning and the built environment	Satisfactory: grade 3
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
Art, media and publishing	Satisfactory: grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: grade 3

## Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. Effectiveness of provision is satisfactory. Success rates have increased significantly since the last inspection, mostly to around the national average, and above for work-based learning. Success rates in 2005/06 at level 3 were below the national average and key skills success rates were low. Learners' occupational skills are of high standard.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. Teachers and employers develop learners' work related skills to a high standard. The use of the outcomes from teaching and learning observations to improve practice is mixed. Additional learning support is good.
8. Responsiveness to the needs and interests of learners, employers and the local community is good. The college's wide range of full-time and part-time provision includes a substantial programme of work-based learning. Links with employers, schools and higher education are strong. Educational and social inclusion are good. Enrichment is satisfactory.
9. Learners receive good advice and guidance. Pre-enrolment procedures and induction are thorough. Guidance to help learners progress is effective. Services to support learners are good. Tutorial support is mixed. Learning targets are insufficiently clear. Learners speak highly of the support they receive from staff.
10. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strategic management is very strong. Quality assurance leads to improvements for learners. There is not enough sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. Overall management of sector subject areas is satisfactory but variable. The management information system (MIS) is effective. Equality of opportunity is good. Thorough financial management provides learners with satisfactory accommodation and good specialist resources.

Capacity to improve

Good: grade 2

11. The capacity to improve is good. In the past three years, success rates have improved at twice the national rate for comparable colleges. Managers have now resolved the major long running issues with one of the constituent colleges, which included substantial weaknesses in the quality of provision and finance. Teaching and learning are improving and no

provision is unsatisfactory. Support and guidance for learners are good. Financial management is thorough and effective. The college meets its targets and is particularly responsive to local and regional needs. In September 2007, the college moves to new, higher standard accommodation with better resources. However, managers have been less effective at resolving the variable curriculum management and making effective use of outcomes from teaching and learning observations within the sector subject areas.

12. Self-assessment covers all parts of college operations but lacks rigour. The self-assessment report is informative, evaluative and contains evidence to support judgements. A number of strengths are accurate, some overstated and some are no more than normal practice. Inspectors found further areas for improvement not recorded in the report.

The effectiveness of the steps taken by the college to promote improvement since the last inspection

13. The college has made good progress since the last inspection. It has maintained and further developed strengths and successfully remedied most weaknesses identified at the last inspection, including significant issues concerning success rates and teaching and learning. Success rates were low and some provision was unsatisfactory. Since then, success rates have increased markedly, no provision is less than satisfactory and some is good, particularly work-based learning. However, the sharing of good practice remains an area for improvement for the college.

#### Key strengths

- significantly improving success rates
- good success rates for work-based learners
- high standard of occupational skills of learners
- effective teaching of work related skills
- responsive range of provision to meet learner, community and employer needs
- good partnerships with schools, employers and community groups
- good support for learners
- good information, advice and guidance service
- strong strategic direction and vision.

## Areas for improvement

*The college should address:*

- low success rates for learners at level 3
- low key skills success rates for college based learners
- ineffective use of the outcomes from the observation of teaching and learning
- not enough sharing of good practice in teaching and learning
- weak target setting in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- insufficient rigour in self-assessment
- ineffective curriculum management in some areas.



## Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Work-based learning*

*Good: grade 2*

14. Achievement and standards are satisfactory; a judgement recorded in the self-assessment report. At the last inspection, long course success rates were low. Since then, rates have increased at a pace significantly better than for comparable colleges. For learners aged 16-18 on long courses in 2005/06 at levels 1 and 2, the success rates were around and just above the national average respectively but at level 3 the rate was well below. For adult learners at level 1 in 2005/06, the long course success rate was just above the national average and just below at level 2. At level 3, the adult success rate for long courses in 2005/06, was below the national average. Data from the college indicates that, for 2006/07, retention rates for level 3 programmes have increased markedly.
15. In 2005/06, the overall success rate for those from minority ethnic groups was similar to that of the college as a whole. Success rates for male and female learners aged 16-18 in 2005/06 were comparable, but the rate for adult female learners was slightly lower than that for adult male learners.
16. Work-based learning framework success rates overall, between 2003/04 and 2005/06, increased significantly to well above the national average. The key skills success rate between 2003/04 and 2005/06 increased but was still substantially below the national average.
17. Most learners work hard and enjoy their studies. Learners' occupational skills are of a high standard, particularly those on work-based learning programmes. Health, care and public services learners' awareness of the needs of clients from their sector is good. In engineering, learners make careful use of drawings when turning products on lathes. Plumbing learners have good pipe work skills. Learners on ICT user courses make effective use of desktop publishing software. Media learners' radio programmes are of a professional standard. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learners contribute well in discussions. Learners regularly enter local, regional and national competitions and do well.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Work-based learning*

*Good: grade 2*

18. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and have improved overall since the last inspection but standards in different sector subject areas vary. Teaching by full-time teachers is better than that of part-time colleagues. Some teachers use information learning technology (ILT) successfully but others do not. In the better lessons and most work-based learning, teachers and employers relate activities to learners' individual needs and use a range of lively approaches to interest, challenge and develop their skills. Teachers and employers develop learners' occupational skills well, including the expected standards of behaviour in the workplace. The less successful teaching is slow, fails to motivate learners and questioning does not check understanding. Key skills teaching varies significantly but it is better in health, public service and care, and work-based learning. Feedback from learners on teaching and learning is positive.
19. The outcomes from the college's lesson observation arrangements are based on the findings of external consultants and further work from advanced practitioners and senior managers. Observations include only some part-time teachers. The college aims to use the results from the observations to improve provision through individual action plans and staff development days. However, the success of these arrangements differs between and within sector subject areas.
20. Additional learning support is good, a strength noted in the self-assessment report. Initial assessment is effective. During lessons and tutorials, staff further check if any other learners require additional support. The college provides an effective range of timely additional support in lessons, individually and in groups. The take-up of additional support is high. Learners value the support they receive.
21. Assessment is accurate and fair and the monitoring of progress is satisfactory overall. Assessment meets awarding bodies' requirements. Most learners receive timely written feedback. Learners value the detailed and constructive comments from many teachers to help them improve but some feedback is too brief and general.

22. Responsiveness to the needs and interests of learners, employers and the priorities of regional and sub-regional funding bodies is good. The wide range of full-time and part-time provision incorporates a substantial programme for work-based learning, specialist full cost training for employers and provision for learners aged 14-16, which includes the disaffected, and gifted and talented. Progression opportunities are good. Strong links with employers include very good partnerships with motor manufacturers and the bus industry. The close links with schools effectively promote further education. These links include partnerships and federations with local schools and the development of the new specialist diplomas. The college has worked closely with the city council, higher education, local schools and communities to develop an area in the centre of the city devoted to education and training. A new college site opens in September 2007 at this location, as part of a major regeneration project in an area of Coventry where participation in education and training is low and skills levels are poor.
23. Enrichment is satisfactory. In art, media and publishing, and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enrichment is good. Recreational activities are limited. Work placement opportunities are good on health and childcare courses but insufficient on full-time courses in ICT and particularly construction.
24. Educational and social inclusion are good. Effective partnerships have improved the participation of learners under-represented in education and training. The expansion of Skills for Life and ESOL provision at college centres, community venues and in the workplace, has been significant. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The number of learners from minority ethnic groups at the college is higher than the local population and there are no significant differences between the performances of different groups of learners.
25. Learners receive good advice and guidance. Arrangements for information, advice and guidance help learners make informed choices about what to study. Induction is effective. Learners receive clear information about course requirements, assessment, equality and diversity and thorough guidance on health and safety. Advice and guidance to help learners progress to further training and education opportunities, higher education and employment are good. The range of services for learners includes counselling, childcare and financial guidance. Links with specialist external support agencies are effective. Learners receive tutorial support but its impact is mixed and it lacks a clear focus. Staff often use tutorials to provide additional coverage of course subjects rather than improving learners' personal and social development. Much target setting in individual

learning plans and progress reviews is insufficiently clear and precise. However, it is better in work-based learning. Learners speak highly of the help they receive from staff.

26. Learners feel safe in college. Links with local police are good. Closed circuit television covers key areas of the college and work placement risk assessment is good.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Work-based learning*

*Good: grade 2*

*Equality of opportunity*

*Good: grade 2*

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal, senior managers and governors provide very strong strategic management for the college. The wide range of effective partnerships with employers, schools, universities, community groups and other colleges, the college's direction and range of provision and the substantial contribution to establishing Coventry's new education and learning location, provides a strategic focus which is particularly responsive to local and regional needs.
28. Quality assurance arrangements lead to improvements for learners. Since the last inspection, managers have been very effective at improving success rates overall to the national average and, for work-based learners, to above the average. Managers have made good progress in resolving areas for improvement, including weak provision in some sector subject areas. Overall management of sector subject areas is satisfactory but there is variability. The college recognises it needs to improve quality and curriculum management in sector subject areas and more closely monitor the performance of staff within the college. Inspectors found the outcomes from the arrangements to observe teaching and learning did not lead to consistent or effective plans for improvement. Management information provides accessible, reliable and comprehensive data on learners' performance.
29. Well informed governors closely monitor the college's performance. Governors adequately reflect the profile of the local community and bring a useful range of skills and experience.
30. Equality of opportunity is good. Policies and procedures to promote equality of opportunity are effective. Managers regularly monitor the college's approach to equality and diversity and take effective action when needed.

There are no significant variations in success rates between different groups of learners. Learners and staff do not face discrimination. The college complies with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 (SENDA). The college has appropriate arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults, including a central register of the checks undertaken on staff.

31. Accommodation is satisfactory and specialist resources are good. Staff are well qualified. Financial management is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Given its success rates, quality of teaching and learning, responsiveness and support for learners, the college provides satisfactory value for money.

## Sector subject areas

Health, care and public services

Satisfactory: grade 3

## Context

32. The college offers full- and part-time provision from levels 1 to 3 in health and social care, early years, health and safety, public services and work-based learning. Learners can work towards National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), BTEC national certificates and diplomas, apprenticeship frameworks and other vocational awards. Of the 1,682 learners, 1,375 are adults, 1,373 are part-time, 925 are men, 265 are from minority ethnic groups, 62 are aged 14-16 and 14 are work-based learners.

## Strengths

- high key skills success rates
- extensive range of courses for learners aged 16-18
- effective community links
- good support for learners.

## Areas for improvement

- low success rates on level 3 courses
- poor punctuality
- substantial differences in the quality of courses
- inaccurate self-assessment.

## Achievement and standards

33. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Long course success rates overall have increased significantly since the last inspection but only to around the national average in 2005/06. Overall success rates for level 3 courses in 2005/06 were low. However, those for key skills were high. Success rates for work-based learners in 2005/06 were also low, but improved compared to the previous year. College figures for 2006/07 indicate retention is improving.
34. The work of many learners is of high standard. They develop good vocational skills through their experiences in a broad range of well chosen community work placements. When working with community groups, learners have a strong awareness of the wide variety of different needs of clients. They are good at reflecting on and improving their own

performance. Attendance is good, but too many learners are late to lessons.

### Quality of provision

35. Quality of provision is satisfactory. The self-assessment report indicates teaching and learning are good but inspectors found it satisfactory. Well qualified full-time teachers use their experience to provide a broad range of learning activities that take account of learners' different needs. Less experienced teachers are not as effective. They spend too much time in exposition rather than helping learners to consolidate their understanding through follow up activities. The teaching of key skills is good. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory. Most teachers provide useful comments on marked work, which learners report is helpful.
36. The range of provision for learners aged 16-18 is extensive and provides clear progression routes from level 1 to level 3, and in some instances to higher level courses. The appropriate range of provision for adults includes good links with local communities to provide provision to individuals from some of the most deprived areas of Coventry. The range of enrichment activities is wide.
37. Support for learners is good. Initial assessment is effective. Additional learning and tutorial support is strong. Teachers give freely of their time to support learners outside of lessons. Tutors monitor learners' progress carefully.

### Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers provide effective leadership but frequent changes in personnel, particularly amongst curriculum co-ordinators, has led to marked differences in the quality of provision. The self-assessment report does not provide an accurate description of the strengths and areas for improvement. Managers monitor carefully the progress towards course targets for success, attendance and learners' satisfaction. They identify underperforming courses and take effective action to resolve issues. Managers and staff promote and check equality and diversity well.

## Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Good: grade 2

### Context

39. Full- and part-time courses are available from level 1 to level 4 in electrical, electronic, manufacturing, mechanical and motor engineering, and welding and fabrication. Learners can work towards NVQ, BTEC first and national diplomas, and other vocational qualifications. Of the 910 learners, 692 are part-time, 483 are adults, 38 are women, 142 are from minority ethnic groups and 41 are aged 14-16. There are 348 work-based learners.

### Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- good work-based learning success rates
- good learner occupational skills
- highly effective responsiveness to employers' needs
- good resources.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rates on electrical and electronic engineering courses.

### Achievement and standards

40. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates have increased markedly since the last inspection. Long course success rates overall in 2005/06 were high. However, they were low on the BTEC first diploma in electronic engineering and the BTEC national diploma in electrical and electronic engineering. Work-based learning success rates in 2005/06, as the self-assessment report recognises, were well above the national average.
41. Learners have good occupational skills, particularly those on work-based learning programmes. Learners work purposefully in workshop activities. Their attention to health and safety is good. Learners are good at converting computer three-dimensional images into working models. Written work is of a high standard. Attendance is good.

### Quality of provision

42. Quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning in practical lessons and the work place are good. Teachers develop learners' occupational skills to a high standard. They employ ILT well, including an automotive engineering



learning package, which makes good use of simulations and videos. Questioning to check and extend learners' knowledge and understanding is good. Some theory teaching is less effective and occasionally lesson plans lack detail.

43. Accurate and fair assessment contains constructive feedback for learners. Teachers monitor learners' progress regularly and give appropriate guidance on how to improve their work. Monitoring of work-based learners' progress is effective but occasionally late.
44. The wide range of provision meets employers' needs particularly well and provides learners with good progression routes. The college has particularly strong links with the UK's major bus companies and multi-national motor manufacturers. These organisations have donated substantial equipment to support learning. College staff work effectively with employers to recruit learners to work-based learning programmes. The college is responsive to the needs of local companies in providing specialist provision to meet their individual requirements. Relationships with local schools are effective. Curriculum enrichment is good and has included visits to a theme park and an activity centre where learners studied the engineering principles of the rides and, in turn, improved their team working skills.
45. Learner support is good. Initial assessment is effective. Learners receive good, prompt additional support, including useful individual help to improve their understanding of science and mathematics. Learners speak highly of the assistance they receive from staff.

#### Leadership and management

46. Leadership and management are good. Managers have improved provision and success rates since the last inspection. Quality assurance is thorough but the systematic sharing of good practice is weak. The self-assessment report is accurate. Workshops are particularly well equipped with a high standard of specialist resources. Communications, although effective, place an over reliance on informal channels without clear written records.

## Construction, planning and the built environment

Satisfactory: grade 3

### Context

47. The college offers full- and part-time courses from level 1 to level 3 in building crafts and services, and technical and professional studies. Qualifications available include NVQ, BTEC first and national diplomas, and other vocational qualifications. Of the 710 learners, 524 are part-time, 362 are adults, 17 are women, 105 are from minority ethnic groups and 81 are aged 14-16. The number of work-based learners is 129.

### Strengths

- high success rates on most level 1 courses and for work-based learning in plumbing
- good development of learners' practical skills
- wide range of provision
- productive links with employers of work-based learners
- good support for learners.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rates on level 2 construction award courses and work-based learning in brickwork, carpentry and joinery
- not enough sharing of good practice to improve teaching and learning
- insufficient work experience for full-time learners
- ineffective management in some areas.

### Achievement and standards

48. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on most level 1 courses were high in 2005/06 and increased significantly since the last inspection. However, success rates on level 2 construction award courses were low and declined substantially from the previous year. In 2005/06, work-based learning success rates for plumbing were high but for brickwork, carpentry and joinery were low.
49. Most learners' practical work is of a high standard. Plumbing learners install bathroom suites particularly proficiently, and plastering learners skilfully apply plaster to walls and ceilings. Learners use tools competently. Portfolios contain a variety of useful evidence. Plumbing learners perform well in competitions. Attendance is good.

## Quality of provision

50. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Standards of teaching are satisfactory but vary between the different parts of the sector subject area. Most teaching of practical subjects, particularly in the work place, develops learners' vocational skills to a high standard. However, theory teaching is uninspiring and lacks variety to stimulate learners' interest. In these lessons, teachers take insufficient note of individual learners' needs.
51. The wide range of provision effectively meets the needs and interests of learners and employers. Progression opportunities are good. Links with employers of work-based learners are productive. They provide a good range of on-site experiences to cover the requirements of the different qualifications and develop learners' occupational skills. However, the college has no systematic formal arrangements to provide work experience for full-time learners.
52. Support for learners is good. The monitoring of learners' progress is good and tutors keep learners well informed about the standard and quality of their work. Tutors provide useful individual support and additional learning support is good. At progress reviews, there is insufficient use of short term learning targets to help learners' progress. Occasionally, in work-based learning, learners' progress reviews are late.

## Leadership and management

53. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Significant improvements have taken place since the last inspection when provision was unsatisfactory. However, the quality of provision varies within the sector subject area. The use of planning to improve provision, the standard of teaching and success rates are variable. An area for improvement the self-assessment report does not recognise, relates to the insufficient sharing of good practice to improve teaching and learning. Recent management changes have started to resolve these issues.

## Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

### Context

54. The college offers full- and part-time courses from entry level to level 4. Learners work towards a range of awards including NVQ, GCSE, GCE AS and A level, BTEC introductory and first diplomas, computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), and other practitioner and user qualifications. Of 1,050 learners, 906 are adults, 537 are men, 943 are part-time and 267 are from minority ethnic groups. Eight learners are aged 14-16.

### Strengths

- high success rates on first and national diploma courses
- much good teaching on ICT for users' courses
- good range of provision
- well managed outreach provision.

### Areas for improvement

- poor punctuality on ICT for practitioners' courses
- ineffective target setting for full-time learners
- insufficient quality assurance of tutorials.

### Achievement and standards

55. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. In 2005/06, success rates on the BTEC first and national diplomas for IT practitioners were high. On courses for ICT users, success rates in 2005/06 were similar to the national average. The practical skills of learners are satisfactory. ICT user learners capably produce spreadsheets and desktop publishing documents. Learners on courses for practitioners write effective software programmes. Learners' punctuality is poor on practitioner courses disrupting learning for those that are punctual. Attendance is satisfactory.

### Quality of provision

56. Quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers provide learners on ICT user courses with well managed workshops, and good individual coaching. On full-time courses, teachers make effective use of group work and questioning to challenge learners and test their understanding. However, teachers are less effective at taking account of individual learning needs. Learning targets do not contain

sufficiently precise information on how learners are to improve their performance. Assessment and internal verification are fair, accurate and effective.

57. The response to the needs of learners, employers and the community is good. The college offers a wide and particularly useful range of courses at its main sites and at convenient community venues, a strength recognised in the self-assessment report. Progression routes are good and the college offers a useful range of full cost specialist courses to employers. The college's involvement in partnerships to widen participation is strong.
58. Support and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Initial assessment and additional support arrangements are effective. Individual support from teachers in lessons is good. However, tutors often do not use group tutorials effectively. They use them to cover ICT subject work rather than to cover learners' personal and social development needs. The monitoring of learner's progress on part-time courses is effective. However, it is less so on full-time courses.

#### Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management of outreach provision is good with clear strategies to improve performance and effective team working and communications. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The arrangements to check that learners receive effective tutorials are weak. Managers have no systematic strategy to improve poor punctuality on ICT courses for practitioners. Self-assessment is generally accurate. Resources are adequate with some community sites being particularly welcoming and convenient for non-traditional learners. Some college teaching rooms are too warm with little ventilation.

## Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: grade 3

### Context

60. Full- and part-time course are available from level 1 to level 4. Learners can work towards NVQ, GCE AS and A level, BTEC national diplomas and certificates, foundation diplomas and certificates and other qualifications. Of the 699 learners, 451 are aged 16-18, 352 are women, 492 are full-time and 129 are from minority ethnic groups. Twenty-nine learners are aged 14-16.

### Strengths

- high success rates on BTEC first and national diplomas in media
- high standards of practical work in fashion, art and design, media and performing arts
- good vocational enrichment activities
- good additional support for students
- good specialist resources.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rates on the BTEC first and national diplomas in performing arts
- insufficient development of independent learning skills
- unsatisfactory setting of learning targets
- insufficiently effective strategies to improve success rates on some courses.

### Achievement and standards

61. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Long course success rates have increased only slightly since the last inspection to around the national average in 2005/06. Success rates in 2005/06 were high on the BTEC first and national diplomas in media but low for BTEC first and national diplomas in performing arts.
62. Learners' practical work in fashion, art and design, media and performing arts is good. Learners in media run the college radio station to professional standards and those in performing arts use performance techniques particularly well. Sketchbooks in art and design are beautifully illustrated, and fashion learners make good use of experiential work to improve their designs. Attendance is mostly good.

## Quality of provision

63. Quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers take note of individual learning needs and, for example, use music and powerful media images to stimulate learners' interest. In the weaker lessons, teachers do not develop learners' skills to work independently. The self-assessment report did not record this area for improvement. Teachers' questioning skills are not always effective and schemes of work lack clear outcomes to use to review learners' progress. Internal verification and assessment are satisfactory but the planning of the timing of assessment is weak.
64. The courses offered meet the needs of learners well. Vocational enrichment is good. Many learners strengthen their experience at college by exhibiting work, working on collaborative or commissioned projects and working with professional performers, designers and artists. Learners can progress from level 1 to level 3 and to 4 in some subject areas.
65. Guidance and support for learners are good. Recruitment and initial assessment are effective. Learners value highly the good additional learning support they receive from staff. Most learning targets to improve learners' performance are insufficiently clear and measurable and do not have a completion date.

## Leadership and management

66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The college provides learners with good specialist resources to improve learning. Staff have good specialist expertise. Managers use data effectively to monitor learners' performance and have remedied most weaknesses from the last inspection. However, their approach to improving success rates on some courses is insufficiently rigorous. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. Arrangements to cover staff absences are weak. Self-assessment is generally accurate but lacks rigorous analysis of the quality of learners' work and teaching and learning. Progress on some actions to improve provision is slow.

## Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: grade 3

### Context

67. Courses available include ESOL, literacy and numeracy, supported learning, pre-vocational education, and key skills. The college provides courses at all its main sites, in the workplace and at community venues. Most provision is from pre-entry to level 2. Of the 2,063 learners, 1,585 are adults, 1,098 are men, 1,577 are part-time, 1,184 are from minority ethnic groups and 68 are aged 14-16.

### Strengths

- high success rates on short ESOL courses in 2005/06
- good responsiveness to community and employers' needs
- good support for learners.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rates on long ESOL courses in 2005/06
- insufficient imaginative teaching
- insufficient planning to meet individual learning needs.

### Achievement and standards

68. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Overall success rates have increased since the last inspection to the national average in 2005/06. In 2005/06, success rates on short ESOL courses were very high but low for long courses. Success rates on literacy and numeracy and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were similar to the national average. The achievement of learning objectives is good for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners' work in lessons is satisfactory and in some instances good. When good, learners quickly understand how to multiply decimals and use newly acquired skills in English to contribute to discussions and express opinions.

### Quality of provision

69. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. When good, teachers use a variety of stimulating activities. In the better ESOL lessons, teachers make good use of workplace experience and stimulating texts to develop learners' reading skills. Lessons for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, where appropriate, are effective including, for example, the promotion of sexual health. However, too much



teaching and learning is unimaginative, an issue not recognised in the self-assessment report. Teachers employ too narrow a range of teaching and learning methods and rely too heavily on exposition and paper-based learning materials.

70. Planning to meet individual needs is insufficient. Teachers do not organise individual learning activities to take adequate account of learners' different needs. In literacy and numeracy, the monitoring of learners' progress towards the qualification aim is insufficient. Teachers do not always identify outcomes when planning learning or write them so learners can understand their meaning. Some learning targets are too general and do not have clear completion dates.
71. The response to community and employer needs is good. The college makes effective use of local community centres to provide non-traditional learners with education and training. The range of provision for offenders as part of their rehabilitation programme is good. Enrichment for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is strong. The college works closely with employers to provide workplace ESOL and Skills for Life training at the most appropriate time.
72. Support and guidance for learners are good. Initial assessment and additional learning support are good. Pre-course and progression guidance are effective. Many learners progress to further education and training at the college or to other providers and to employment.

#### Leadership and management

73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication is effective. Managers use the wide variety of staff development activities to improve teaching and learning. The self-assessment report identified some strengths but not sufficient areas for improvement. Promotion of equality of opportunity is effective.

## Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	03/04	1,016	59	60	-1	2,681	49	59	-10
	04/05	834	68	64	4	2,103	55	62	-7
	05/06	1,334	69	*		1,993	67	*	
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	9	100	65	35	6	67	52	15
	04/05	6	83	68	15	2	100	58	42
	05/06	0	0	*		0	0	*	
NVQs	03/04	38	55	61	-6	61	31	62	-31
	04/05	48	73	67	6	37	54	67	-13
	05/06	19	3	*		26	38	67	
Other	03/04	969	58	60	-2	2,614	49	59	-10
	04/05	780	67	64	3	2,064	55	61	-6
	05/06	1,315	69	*		1,967	67	*	

\* Not available

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	03/04	898	47	56	-9	1,218	50	54	-4
	04/05	807	60	61	-1	1,106	55	60	-5
	05/06	804	69	*		1,028	61	*	
GCSE	03/04	328	47	61	-14	117	48	59	-11
	04/05	362	61	64	-3	88	49	62	-13
	05/06	309	78	*		92	82	*	
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	109	76	63	13	13	69	57	12
	04/05	30	70	67	3	2	0	70	-70
	05/06	11	100	*		3	100	*	
NVQs	03/04	71	55	52	3	230	31	54	-23
	04/05	67	39	57	-18	203	57	60	-3
	05/06	90	58	*		205	61	60	
Other	03/04	390	38	54	-16	858	55	52	3
	04/05	348	62	60	2	813	55	59	-4
	05/06	394	64	*		728	58	*	

\* Not available

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age 2004 to 2006, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	03/04	1,254	45	64	-19	1,113	43	54	-11
	04/05	1,115	54	68	-14	1,022	49	57	-8
	05/06	1,108	59	*		1,047	53	*	
A/A2 Levels	03/04	176	61	84	-23	112	56	66	-10
	04/05	138	65	86	-21	71	63	69	-6
	05/06	170	65	*		72	71	*	
AS Levels	03/04	176	61	84	-23	106	30	50	-20
	04/05	138	65	85	-20	153	42	52	-10
	05/06	305	60	*		103	55	*	
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	234	48	52	-4	49	33	44	-11
	04/05	38	37	60	-23	6	33	53	-20
	05/06	21	33	*		9	44	*	
NVQs	03/04	26	39	54	-15	196	39	47	-8
	04/05	30	60	62	-2	153	45	54	-9
	05/06	38	50	*		170	51	*	
Other	03/04	448	42	56	-14	650	44	55	-11
	04/05	514	51	60	-9	639	50	58	-8
	05/06	574	57	*		693	51	*	

\* Not available

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college end year 2004 to 2006.

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	73	21%	32%	60%	47%
	Advanced	137	36%	31%	47%	48%
	NVQ only	80	0%	***	33%	46%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	137	36%	38%	55%	50%
	Advanced	131	37%	34%	53%	48%
	NVQ only	29	0%	***	24%	56%
2005/06	Apprenticeship	142	61%	53%	66%	53%
	Advanced	155	52%	44%	63%	58%
	NVQ only	0	***	***	***	61%

- \* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned
- \*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- \*\*\* Not applicable

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	91	5%	16%	12%	24%
	Advanced	127	31%	19%	47%	30%
	NVQ only	68	0%	***	18%	33%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	120	8%	22%	11%	29%
	Advanced	128	30%	21%	36%	31%
	NVQ only	25	0%	***	16%	39%
2005/06	Apprenticeship	123	30%	32%	36%	36%
	Advanced	152	20%	26%	27%	33%
	NVQ only	8	0%	***	13%	41%

- \* The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year
- \*\* College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- \*\*\* Not applicable