



City College, Brighton & Hove



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Inspection report

Audience Post-Sixteen	Published July 2007	Provider reference 130663
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	City College Brighton & Hove
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Mrs Ann Smith
Address of college:	Pelham Street, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 4FA
Telephone number:	01273 667788
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Chair of governors:	Mr Martin Perry
Unique reference number:	130663
Name of lead inspector:	Ela Piotrowska
Dates of inspection:	5 – 9 February 2007

Background of the organisation

1. City College is a large further education (FE) college. It is located in three main centres in the city of Brighton and Hove. The college provides full and part-time courses from entry level to foundation degrees with over 650 vocational, academic, leisure and workforce development courses and qualifications. Provision is offered in 13 of the 15 sector subject areas. The college participates in six Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and is the lead for digital media and heritage engineering.
2. City College has a formal Accord with the two local sixth form colleges and holds a direct contract for adult and community learning and work-based learning. It has a collaborative agreement with a private training provider. The college works with a range of community organisations and employers and manages a franchise provision with two local providers: Brighton Institute of Modern Music and Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club study support centre. Provision also includes international projects.
3. In 2004 in Brighton and Hove, the proportion of school leavers who achieved five GCSEs at grade C and above was 49.5%, which was below the national average of 53.7%. Employment in the area is mainly in professional and administrative occupations. In 2005, the unemployment rate in the college's catchment area was 2.9% compared with the regional average of 1.4%. Approximately 5.7% of the population are from minority ethnic groups.
4. In 2005/06, there were a total of 11,569 learners of which 2,774 were full-time learners and 8,795 were part-time. Nineteen per cent of learners were aged 16-18, mainly enrolled on full-time courses. There were 936 full-time adult learners. Most adults enrol on part time provision. The proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups in 2005/06 was 10% and 58% of learners were female. The college mission is to 'work with partners to maximise local and wider community engagement in educational achievement and the development of skills for today's and tomorrow's workforce'.

Scope of the inspection

5. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further

- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management
- specialist provision in: engineering; construction; hair and beauty; travel and tourism; art, media and performing arts; skills for life, excluding provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; adult & community learning and work based learning.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory : grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory : grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory : grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory : grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory : grade 3

Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Curriculum areas

Engineering	Satisfactory : grade 3
Construction	Satisfactory : grade 3
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Satisfactory : grade 3
Travel & tourism	Satisfactory : grade 3
Arts, media and performing arts	Good : grade 2
Skills for life	Inadequate : grade 4

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

6. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates improved in 2005/06 and were at least satisfactory for many learners on long courses. Success rates for learners aged 16-18 following level 1 and 2 courses have improved significantly. Success rates for adults have also improved, but at levels 1 and 2 they are just below national averages. Success rates are consistently very low for key skills. Framework completion rates by work-based learners have been very low but improved significantly in 2005/06. Standards of learners' work and learners' progress are satisfactory in most areas. The attainment of skills in adult and community learning is good.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The proportion of good or better teaching is much the same as at the last inspection. Some teachers make good use of their specialist expertise and plan relevant and stimulating learning. A significant minority of lessons are not sufficiently challenging. The assessment and monitoring of learners' work is satisfactory. However, in some classes there is insufficient attention to the needs of individual learners.
8. The college's approach to meeting the needs of learners and employers is satisfactory. It provides an appropriate range of courses including work-based and adult and community learning. The range of provision in some areas is narrow and limits progression. The college's response to offering a vocationally relevant curriculum is good.
9. The approach to social and educational inclusion is satisfactory. There are strong and effective partnerships and the college provides an inclusive community. Provision for 14-16 year olds and work to ease transition from school to college is good. Key skills and skills for life are not sufficiently integrated with the teaching of vocational subjects. The range of literacy, numeracy and English for speaker of other languages (ESOL) courses is narrow.
10. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. A wide range of support helps learners to participate and provides a supportive learning environment. Tutorial support for full-time learners is comprehensive but target setting is often weak. There is insufficient learning support available cross-college to meet the identified literacy, language and numeracy needs of learners.
11. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The restructuring of the college is informed by a good understanding of local and national priorities facing further education. The college has achieved Action for Business College accreditation, increased employer engagement, community partnerships and collaborative and overseas work. There are, however, inconsistencies in curriculum management and there is insufficient rigor applied to quality improvement and self-assessment. Governance and financial management are good.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: grade 3

12. The college's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Resources are carefully managed. There are a growing number of effective initiatives to improve provision and raise standards. Success rates have improved in 2005/06 and changes in management roles have improved accountability. Data is now reliable and accurate although yet to be used consistently to monitor quality improvement. Quality improvement arrangements are sound though the pace of improvement is slow. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and analysis from the college's teaching and learning observation scheme is starting to initiate staff development in this aspect.
13. The self-assessment process is satisfactory although the evidence base for assessment is narrow and some areas of the report are insufficiently self-critical. Curriculum development plans lack sufficiently precise targets to measure, inform and sustain continuous improvement.

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

14. Overall the college has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection, but some aspects judged as weaknesses at the last inspection have not yet been fully resolved. Improvements have been made in learners' success rates in 2005/06, the management of work based learning, the development of a more focused vocational agenda, and re-structuring management and greater attention is being paid to areas for improvement. The quality of teaching and learning has not improved markedly since the last inspection. The college's internal teaching observation scheme is not yet contributing sufficiently to raising standards. There is progress on monitoring the performance of different groups of learners but analysis of this information is not always used to support improvement. The college has made slow progress in the integration of Skills for Life and key skills to support the raising of achievement and standards for all learners.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- good strategic leadership to re-position the college to meet future needs
- initiatives to improve success rates
- productive partnership work
- effective employer engagement to support learners' vocational needs
- good provision for 14-16 year old learners
- strong arts, media and performing arts and adult and community learning provision.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- success rates that are below national averages
- the slow progress made to markedly improve the quality of teaching and learning
- the integration of key skills into learners' main programmes of study
- the embedding of the Skills for Life policy across the college
- the lack of provision for learning support
- the rigour and consistent management of quality improvement
- inconsistencies in curriculum management
- the slow response to weaknesses identified in the last inspection.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: grade 3

Contributory grades:

Adult and community learning

Good: grade 2

Work-based learning

Unsatisfactory: grade 4

15. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. During the three year period 2003/04 to 2005/06, the overall success rate for all college learners enrolled on long courses has risen from 59% to 63% and in 2005/06 is one per cent above the 2004/05 national average of 62%. In 2005/06, overall success rates for learners aged 16-18 on long courses at levels 1 and 2 improved significantly above 2004/05 national averages at 4% and 12% respectively. Improvements at level 3 were modest and success rates in 2005/06 remained 2% below the national average for 2004/05.
16. In 2005/06, overall success rates for adult learners on long courses improved to just below 2004/05 national averages. Pass rates for adults at levels 1 and 2 were below 2004/05 national averages. Overall success rates at level 3 remain at around 2004/05 national averages. Overall success rates for key skills are consistently low. Success rates are declining on short courses for learners of all ages but remain at around the 2004/05 national average. Success rates for work based learning frameworks between 2004 and 2006 have improved in construction and engineering to above 2004/05 national averages, but remain low in other areas.
17. Good improvements were made to the success rates of minority ethnic learners in 2005/06. Most learners achieved well compared to national averages. Success rates for male learners are generally much lower than for female learners at all levels and ages. Success rates for 14-16 year old learners are at least satisfactory and sometimes good, and the majority of learners progress onto college courses after leaving school. The college is currently unable to make rigorous judgements about achievement rates in adult and community learning. Learner progression between levels and onto higher level courses is satisfactory.
18. The standard of learners' practical and theory work and their progress is satisfactory in most curriculum areas. It is excellent in art and design where students develop high level skills. Adult and community learners attain good skills. Overall attendance of learners is satisfactory and most learners enjoy learning. Learners generally use safe work practices in workshops and in the workplace.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

Contributory grades:

Work-based learning

Satisfactory: grade 3

Adult and community learning

Good: grade 2

19. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Inspectors agree with the college's overall assessment of teaching and learning. However, the college's lesson observation system is not as yet impacting significantly on raising the standard of teaching and learning.
20. In better lessons, there is effective planning which builds on learners' knowledge and interests and the pace of lessons is good. Teachers make good use of their specialist expertise and design a range of participative and stimulating activities. Learners are involved, work hard and enjoy their learning. They develop a good understanding of employer requirements and the quality of training for work based learners has improved significantly. In adult and community learning, teachers are skilful and learners develop effective learning strategies. Weaker lessons often fail to engage learners and activities are not sufficiently challenging. Punctuality is poor in some areas and interrupts learning. There is insufficient use of a range of resources. In particular, there is very little use of effective information learning technology (ILT) in most areas, to enhance learning. Insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language and key skills in lessons limits opportunities for learners to practice essential skills in relevant vocational contexts.
21. The assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. Generally, feedback on learners' work is thorough, constructive and helps them to improve. The assessment of learners' practical skills is satisfactory and target setting and assessment for work-based learners has improved, particularly in engineering and construction.
22. At the start of a course, all full-time learners complete a detailed initial and diagnostic assessment. Overall, this is satisfactory, but it does not inform teaching and learning consistently. Learning targets are often insufficiently specific and there is inconsistent use of individual learning plans. There is insufficient learning support to adequately meet the identified literacy, language and numeracy needs of learners.
23. The college offers an appropriate range of programmes in most areas. It works well in partnership with schools, other colleges and agencies to provide a coherent curriculum across Brighton. It makes very good use of labour market information to plan a vocationally relevant curriculum. The college's response to local employers' needs is good. Courses in some curriculum areas are increasingly matched to employer needs. The college works very closely with a

wide range of companies and has achieved 'Action for Business' college status. Some employers highlight a need for improved communication with the college. Provision for 14-16 year olds has shown steady and significant improvements in learners' success.

24. The college programme of enrichment is satisfactory but learners' participation rates are often low. There are satisfactory opportunities for learners to make a positive contribution to the community through learner forums, action groups and volunteering. The large majority of learners feel safe at the college and the college effectively promotes the health of its learners through events and tutorials. The college's approach to social inclusion is satisfactory. It has established a centre in a more deprived area of the city, where an innovative construction project encourages people into training and onto employment. Educational and social inclusion in adult and community learning is strong, including good community development work. Provision for Skills for Life is not effectively integrated into vocational areas.
25. The college provides effective guidance, advice and information for learners before they start their courses. School visits, open evenings, taster sessions and interviews help learners understand the demands and appropriateness of their chosen course. A well structured induction programme, new learner drop-in sessions and useful handbooks help learners settle into college. There is an appropriate range of well used guidance services to support learners during their time at college and beyond. There is good provision for the personal, financial, health and careers needs of learners. The college has successfully raised the awareness of part-time learners of the services available to them.
26. Tutorial sessions are valued by learners but target setting and individual planning of learning are often weak. Tutorials include study skills, awareness of equal opportunities, citizenship, health and responsible financial management. An explicit college disciplinary process is not yet fully successful in improving punctuality and raising attendance to above satisfactory levels. There is a well publicised and understood code of conduct relating to bullying, harassment and discrimination. There is satisfactory provision to promote the health of learners, such as a 'health week', smoking cessation programme and sexual health drop in sessions. The college makes satisfactory provision for the promotion of economic well being through extensive employer links, careers fairs and advice, financial planning and world of work units in tutorials.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

Adult and community learning

Good: grade 2

Work-based learning

Satisfactory: grade 3

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal and governors provide good direction and the college's strategic plan contains some ambitious targets. Since the last inspection, the college has strategically positioned itself in readiness for future needs and expectations. It has achieved Action for Business college accreditation, increased employer engagement, community partnerships and collaborative and overseas work. Good partnership arrangements have been key improvements in the leadership and management of work based learning. The college has effectively managed a reduction in adult provision, significantly increased the proportion of 16-18 learners in vocational provision and it has well advanced plans to build a new college. The overall collection and accuracy of management information is now much improved.
28. However, the college has made insufficient progress in relation to some weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The proportion of good or better teaching has not improved significantly although teaching remains broadly satisfactory. Success rates in 2005/06 are mostly around 2004/05 national averages, but some achievement rates are low. The standard of curriculum management remains variable. Of the areas inspected, the management of construction and work-based learning is much improved. The management of adult and community learning and arts, media and performing arts are good but the management of key skills and the Skills for Life provision, other than that for learners with difficulties and/or disabilities, is inadequate.
29. The college has developed a good set of quality procedures which the new quality manager is implementing systematically. The speed of change and impact on raising quality and standards is variable. Recent changes to management roles have improved communication and accountability but not all managers are fully effective and a few are yet to use data effectively. The college self-assessment report takes account of learner and employers' views, but does not sufficiently reflect important judgements contained in course team reviews. It is insufficiently evaluative.
30. Resources are generally satisfactory. The college has significantly updated and improved teaching areas, but some of the older buildings are difficult to adapt. Some specialist equipment is good. Teachers are well qualified with over 90% of full time teachers holding a teaching qualification. The college's training plan is good and takes into account the outcomes of a well established appraisal system, strategic priorities and analysis arising from the college's teaching and learning observation scheme. Attendance at staff training is variable. The college acknowledges that it needs to make faster progress in embedding ILT and virtual learning environment (VLE) strategies.

31. Equality of opportunity is satisfactorily promoted and the college is adequately inclusive. Action plans identify priorities for further development and report on progress. The college meets the basic statutory requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002. There is some progress in monitoring the performance of different groups of learners but the analysis is insufficiently detailed to meet full requirements. Most college buildings are now fully accessible for learners. Arrangements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are comprehensive and compliant with the latest regulations. Staff are vetted carefully for their suitability and are required to undertake child protection training. Bullying and harassment policies are appropriately implemented. The college satisfactorily addresses learners' health and safety needs.
32. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to the college and a clear understanding of the college's strategic challenges. Financial management is good. The college overall provides satisfactory value for money.

Curriculum area inspections

Engineering

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

33. The college has recently restructured engineering provision and now offers predominately full-time courses for 16–18 year olds and significant provision for full-time international learners. There are 50 learners on first and national diploma courses in engineering. Of these, 7 are adult learners. There are 64 learners on City and Guilds progression awards in motor vehicle engineering, of which 5 are adult learners. There are 23 work-based learners in motor vehicle engineering of whom 15 are apprentices and 8 are advanced apprentices. There are also 27 pupils from local schools studying either for a GCSE in manufacturing engineering or a diploma in motor vehicle studies.

Strengths

- high retention rates on most courses
- high success rates on performing engineering operations National Vocational Qualifications NVQ
- highly effective engagement of 14-16 learners.

Areas for improvement

- poor management of learning in a few lessons
- poor punctuality
- insufficiently thorough quality improvement.

Achievement and standards

34. Retention on most programmes is good and are consistently well above national averages. However, retention rates on the BTEC first diploma engineering are below national averages. Success rates on the performing engineering operations NVQ are high, have risen for three years and are significantly above national averages. The achievement of work-based learners has significantly improved and is now in line with national averages. Learners aged 14-16 have high achievement on externally accredited awards. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Most learners are confident in practical work and produce well ordered portfolios of their work. Learners in computer aided design (CAD) classes produce high quality 3D graphical models and are enthusiastic about their achievements. Attendance rates are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

35. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, there are clearly defined plans, a range of participative activities and effective use of ILT. In

weaker lessons, there is poor management of learning and teachers fail to interest learners sufficiently. Punctuality in many sessions is poor and interrupts teaching and learning.

36. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Assessors provide sufficient feedback and guidance for learners to improve their work. Internal verification is thorough and in line with awarding body requirements. Initial assessment informs lesson plans and learning plans are updated regularly. However learning targets are often insufficiently detailed and tend to relate to assignment deadlines. Target setting for work-based learners is detailed and supports the improving completion of frameworks.
37. Programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners and productive partnerships support CoVE activities. There is a particularly effective programme with local schools to engage 14-16 year olds in engineering. Young learners gain self-confidence and for many, the programme provides a valuable opportunity to gain certification.
38. Learner support is satisfactory and highly valued by learners. Learning support is effective in motor vehicle sessions but overall there is insufficient use of the skills of learning support assistants.

Leadership and management

39. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Internal communications are effective and staff appreciate the professional development programme. Curriculum development includes adjustments in the course offer to complement and make best use of the strengths within the international portfolio of courses, and to provide progression from levels 1 to 4.
40. Some teaching accommodation provides an inappropriate learning environment. It is often cramped, untidy and does not portray a positive image. Some lighting levels are low.
41. Quality improvement is insufficiently thorough and some weaknesses identified at the last inspection still exist. There are insufficient links between self-assessment and quality improvement. Self-assessment is insufficiently analytical and does not make use of performance data or the outcomes of teaching and learning observations.

Construction

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

42. Courses are offered in brickwork, wood trades, electrical installation and plumbing. There are currently 655 learners. Of these 204 are aged 16-18 and 450 are adult learners. There are 270 learners on electrical courses, 84 on plumbing, 53 on brick and 238 on wood trades. There are 139 work-based learners of whom 5 are advanced apprentices. There are 73 learners aged 14-16 on level 1 and 2 programmes from 11 local schools. There is a construction pre-employment project 'Constructing Futures'. This programme provides basic construction training in a variety of trades for disengaged young people and adults who face barriers to employment. There are currently 55 learners on this programme.

Strengths

- good success rates on level 1 programmes
- very good and improving work-based learning framework achievement rates
- innovative programme to widen participation.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on level 2 and level 3 programmes
- insufficient use of ILT in teaching and learning
- poor resources for plumbing courses.

Achievement and standards

43. Success rates are improving. In 2005/06, success rates for learners aged 16-18 on level 1 courses were good and well above the national average. Retention rates are very high. Success rates on level 2 and level 3 programmes have risen but are still below national averages. Overall success rates for adult learners have risen but are still poor. Key skills achievements are good. Work-based learning framework achievement rates have risen significantly for each of the past three years and are well above national averages. Learners' work is mostly satisfactory. Learners make good progress in lessons and on their courses overall. In bricklaying some learners are producing practical work of a high standard. The standards achieved are higher than required for the qualification being undertaken. There are good examples of students' portfolio work in all trades. There are good standards of health and safety. Attendance in lessons is good.

Quality of provision

44. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better lessons, learners are engaged effectively and develop good practical skills. Overall, there is insufficient use of ILT to enhance learning. Very few rooms have information and communication

technology (ICT) equipment and learners have insufficient access to web based resources. Assessment is thorough and supports learners' progress.

45. The college provides level 1 to level 3 courses in electrical installation, carpentry and joinery. There is no level 3 plumbing or bricklaying provision to meet the needs of learners. There is a very good 'Constructing Futures' programme providing a 12 week, multi-skill pre-employment programme for disadvantaged young people and adults. Learners enjoy the programme and make good progress. One hundred and eighty learners have completed this programme and 46 have moved onto apprentice programmes or have become employed.
46. Learning support is good. Key skills teaching is relevant and support tutors have good knowledge of construction. Support is not always available for evening provision.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The department has been re-structured and there is a clear focus and successful strategy to raise standards and improve success rates. Physical resources for all trades are good, apart from plumbing which is in a poor learning environment. Self-assessment is satisfactory. Most weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been addressed successfully.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

48. The college provides courses in hairdressing, beauty therapy and holistic therapies. There are 151 full-time and 323 part-time learners with 17 learners on hairdressing programme led pathways. National vocational qualifications (NVQs) are provided at levels 1 to 3 in hairdressing and at levels 2 and 3 in beauty therapy. A full-time pre-entry course is provided in beauty and level 1 hairdressing is taken by 14 to 16-year-old school pupils. Most full-time learners are aged 16-18 and most part-time learners are adults.

Strengths

- good pass rates on many courses
- consistently high success rates on NVQ level 3 beauty therapy and the diploma in holistic therapy
- good development of practical skills on NVQ level 1 hairdressing, level 3 beauty therapy and the diploma in holistic therapy.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient progression opportunities
- certification of achievement for all learners
- poor physical resources for learning
- insufficient action to improve the quality of provision.

Achievement and standards

49. Success rates have been consistently high over the last three years on NVQ level 3 beauty therapy and the diploma in holistic therapy. Pass rates are above the 2004/05 national average on all qualifications since 2003/04 and retention rates are satisfactory or better. Success rates for 14 to 16-year-old learners are satisfactory.
50. Learners' practical skills are well developed on NVQ level 3 beauty therapy and on the holistic therapy diploma. They are well developed on the NVQ level 1 hairdressing course where learners develop skills at level 2, but their progress towards completing the level 1 qualification is slow. There are too few clients to provide sufficient opportunities for learners to develop appropriate expertise in client care, retailing and appropriate commercial practice.

Quality of provision

51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers monitor learners' progress attentively in practical lessons and provide effective support for learning in most theory lessons. In some theory lessons, there is insufficient checking of learning and some lessons are insufficiently challenging. There is little use of information learning technology in lessons. Learning support is not provided adequately to meet learners' literacy and numeracy needs. Assessments are completed slowly. Appropriate health and safety practices are not always promoted effectively.
52. There are limited progression opportunities for learners. The college self-assessment report identifies that there are insufficient places at level 3 to allow progression for level 2 learners.
53. Some learners fail to achieve appropriate certification. All learners aged 16-18 must complete level 1 hairdressing, irrespective of their ability, before taking level 2. Although many of these level 1 learners develop skills at level 2, those who do not progress onto level 2 receive no formal recognition of their level 2 skills through unit certification.

Leadership and management

54. Management of provision is weak. Hairdressing and beauty therapy resources are poor. Salons are unattractive, in poor condition and not sufficiently clean. The beauty environment is particularly poor. Accommodation does not provide a suitable realistic work environment in which learners can develop their professional practice skills.
55. Whilst some learners succeed well, insufficient action has been taken to improve the quality of provision over time. Many weaknesses identified at the last inspection are still to be addressed and are not identified in the college's self-assessment report.

Travel and tourism

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

56. There are currently 154 learners, of whom 96 are aged 16-18 and 56 are adults. Of these, 134 are on full-time courses. Courses include levels 2, 3 and a foundation degree. Level 1 courses are available as additional learning. There is a travel agency desk operating in the college to provide learners with realistic work experience. The college is involved in a CoVE for tourism industries in partnership with four other colleges in the south east.

Strengths

- very high success rates on the intermediate diploma in overseas resort operations, certificate in preparation for air cabin crew service and the national certificate in travel and tourism
- successful strategies to involve learners in travel and tourism lessons
- excellent links with industry to enhance learning.

Areas for improvement

- poor progression rates to further learning
- strategies to improve the range and quality of provision.

Achievement and standards

57. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Success rates are very high on some key courses. Retention has improved significantly and is now very good on most courses. In 2005-06, retention rates were low for the small number of level 3 learners. Pass rates have declined on lower level additional learning courses over the last three years. The standard of learners' work in class is satisfactory. Learners enjoy the vocational focus in lessons and make good progress. Learners are motivated and work hard.

Quality of provision

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better lessons, good teaching strategies include well paced and stimulating learning activities. Learners are involved in their learning, enjoy lessons and work hard. In the weaker lessons, there is insufficient planning of learning and teachers do not effectively involve all learners and attendance is poor. The standard of assessment is satisfactory. Assignment briefs are well designed and detailed feedback helps learners to improve their grades.
59. The programme offer is satisfactory. Liaison with employers is strong. Courses are matched closely to employer needs and include provision of a wide range of additional learning opportunities. These include external speakers, visits, access to industry standard training manuals and work experience. Progression

opportunities across course levels are limited. However, this year there has been an increase in the number of new learners at level 3. Only a small number of learners progressed into employment in 2006.

60. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Induction is helpful and teachers establish supportive working relationships with learners. Initial assessment includes the recent introduction of diagnostic assessment to identify more accurately individual learning needs. The results of this assessment are not used consistently to inform individual support needs. Learning support staff provide effective individual support but this is not identified in lesson plans, and there is little formal coordination of learning support.

Leadership and management

61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. A recent management reorganisation has improved communication considerably. Staff share good practice regularly and they have fully embraced the strong vocational focus developing across the college. The provision of continual professional updating for staff is good and includes annual updates by employer partners. Resources are satisfactory but there is insufficient staff training to support the use of ILT in lessons. Strategies to improve attendance are not working consistently. The self-assessment is insufficiently self-critical and uses a limited evidence base.

Arts, media and performing arts

Good: grade 2

Context

62. The college offers a range of courses in visual arts, media and performing arts at levels 1 to 4. Song writing and modern music certificates are offered through the college's franchise partner, Brighton Institute of Modern Music. Part-time courses include accredited courses in jewellery, drama, art and design and pattern cutting. In addition, there are a range of non-accredited art and design adult and community learning courses. There are 570 learners on art and design courses, 92 learners on performing arts and 97 learners on media courses. The 400 learners aged 16-18 mainly study level 3 courses.

Strengths

- good success rates on level 3 courses
- excellent standard of learners' work
- very good teaching of vocational skills
- good productive partnerships
- strong curriculum leadership.

Areas for improvement

- some unsatisfactory accommodation in art and design
- insufficient learning support.

Achievement and standards

63. Learners' achievements and success rates on level 3 courses are good. Pass rates on BTEC diploma in foundation studies, BTEC national diploma in photography and BTEC national certificate in music technology have exceeded national averages for three consecutive years. Retention rates on level 3 courses have also increased. Success rates on several level two courses including the intermediate certificate in creative crafts are satisfactory. Overall progression rates are good. In 2006, some 80% of learners progressed from level 2 to level 3 courses and 75% progressed to higher education
64. The standard of learners' work is excellent. Learners produce sketchbooks full of analytical drawing and mixed media visual research is used as a basis for projects. Many learners are excited about exploring and experimenting with visual techniques. Excellent design sheets are produced that combine design ideas, drawing and 3D materials. Poor punctuality in some lessons impedes learners' progress at the start of lessons.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers use their specialist expertise well to deliver practical vocational skills. Activities are well planned, build on existing

knowledge and assignments are challenging. In one project, learners were given bundles of clothes donated by Oxfam and asked to recreate a garment. Learners were asked to consider the era in which the garment was made to provide a historical context. The project focused on shape, embellishment, fastening, seams and fabric. Money raised from the show was donated to Oxfam. In 2005, performing art students presented a dynamic whirlwind of physical theatre based on five of the Grimm's tales at the Tower Theatre in Brighton.

- 66. Assessment of students' work is good and feedback is thorough and constructive. Performing arts, media and photography courses are well equipped with industrial standard equipment. In art and design, the ceramics room is small and does not have extraction in the main studio. Noise disrupts teaching and learning in one of the large art and design rooms.
- 67. The programme and activities meets the needs and interests of learners very well. Good, productive partnerships enhance the learning experience. Performing arts has its own record label and provides vocational experience with professionals in this field.
- 68. Guidance and support for learners are good. Initial guidance is effective and teachers assess learners' level of ability through a short art and design project. Individual and group tutorials support learners' progression on the course and learners are well supported. Target setting is satisfactory and individual learning plans are effective. There is insufficient support for learners with literacy and numeracy learning needs.

Leadership and management

- 69. Leadership and management are good. Strategic leadership is good and the curriculum team has a strong vision for the future. Staff have knowledge of contemporary art, media and performance practice and attend regular subject specific and educational training. Regular course team and management meetings support communication. Curriculum development days enable management to address issues in teaching and learning and professional development. Course reviews are effective and identify strengths and weaknesses. However, the self-assessment report is not sufficiently evaluative.

Preparation for life and work Skills for Life

Inadequate: grade 4

Context

70. The college's Skills for Life Centre offers English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), literacy, numeracy and key skills. The provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities did not form part of the inspection. Full and part-time accredited ESOL provision is offered at the college's main centres. Currently, there are 364 learners, mainly adults, on part-time programmes and 154 on full-time programmes from entry level to level 2. Most literacy and numeracy provision is part-time at entry level to level 2. Currently, there are 93 students on these programmes. There are also some 30 students on two programmes in the community.
71. There are 1,280 full-time students in vocational areas studying for either basic skills or key skills qualifications. Of these, 106 are aged 16-18. Individual or in class support in literacy, numeracy and language is provided for 381 learners.

Strengths

- good development of language skills
- good pass rates on adult entry level certificates in literacy and numeracy.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates in literacy at levels 1 and 2 and level 1 in numeracy
- low success rates in key skills
- unsatisfactory planning and monitoring of learning
- insufficient language, literacy and numeracy support
- inadequate quality improvement
- unsatisfactory management of the Skills for Life strategy.

Achievement and standards

72. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Pass rates on entry level literacy and numeracy are good and improving. However, the success rates for learners on literacy levels 1 and 2 and numeracy level 1 programmes are low. Success rates on ESOL courses are satisfactory and improving. Success rates in key skills have not improved significantly since the last inspection and remain very low overall. Achievement rates for learners receiving literacy and numeracy support is significantly below other learners in the college. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Learners acquire new literacy and communication skills. Learners develop self-confidence and skills to support further education and employment. Overall, attendance in ESOL, literacy, numeracy and learning support is poor. Monitoring procedures are in place but these are not yet raising attendance levels.

Quality of provision

73. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In better ESOL lessons, learners develop a range of language skills; learn to use grammar and accurate pronunciation. Weaker lessons are not planned effectively, use a narrow range of resources and activities are not sufficiently challenging. Lessons are often not sufficiently related to learners' vocational interests.
74. The planning, recording and monitoring of individual learners' progress are unsatisfactory. Target setting does not meet the diverse range of needs and is rarely used to inform teaching and learning or learners' vocational interests. Learners often do not understand the purpose and process of target setting. Progress reviews do not sufficiently reflect on the development of skills. Learners often do not know about the content of their individual learning plans.
75. The range of provision is unsatisfactory and does not fully meet the needs of the community. There has been a significant decline in the provision of literacy and numeracy. There is insufficient ESOL provision. There are gaps in the range of levels and some learners are placed on inappropriate courses. There is insufficient literacy, numeracy and language support to support learners' vocational ambitions.
76. The provision of learning support is unsatisfactory. The number of learners identified for literacy, numeracy and language support has increased. There are long waiting lists for learning support and insufficient numbers of specialist staff. In vocational courses, the role of the learning support tutor is not identified clearly and there are few strategies to ensure that learning support tutors contribute to the learning process. Planning between subject teachers and support tutors is poor and vocational teachers are often not informed about learners' specific learning needs.

Leadership and management

77. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. A relatively new management team and many new systems and procedures are yet to impact on quality improvement. There is ineffective monitoring of the quality of the curriculum and data is not used sufficiently to inform quality improvement. Teaching and learning observations are insufficiently evaluative and not linked to performance reviews and specific staff development. There are few strategies to address progression and capacity issues. Self-assessment is insufficiently critical.
78. The management of the Skills for Life strategy is inadequate and insufficiently integrated into vocational areas. The role of Skills for Life across the college is not fully communicated and there is slow progress in sharing good practice. There has been insufficient focus on subject specialist professional development and training to meet national requirements. Plans are in place to train all staff by July 2008.

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. Please note the college produced the 2005/06 data set.

16-18						19+			
National Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	03/04	565	57	60	-3	2,684	59	59	0
	04/05	724	52	64	-12	1,814	57	62	-5
	05/06	687	68			1,127	60		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	11	55	65	-10	16	62	50	12
	04/05	12	58	68	-10	1	100	59	41
	05/06	5	100			N/A	N/A		
NVQs	03/04	91	85	62	23	103	66	67	-1
	04/05	150	68	68	0	46	78	70	8
	05/06	73	48			27	81		
Other	03/04	771	65	68	-3	5,776	74	76	-2
	04/05	809	52	70	-18	3,172	67	77	-10
	05/06	609	70			1,100	60		

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. Please note the college provided the 2005/06 data set.

16-18						19+			
National Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	03/04	899	60	56	4	1,935	43	54	-11
	04/05	1,195	59	61	-2	1,669	51	59	-8
	05/06	1,339	73			1,669	58		
GCSEs	03/04	138	60	61	-1	223	57	59	-2
	04/05	184	46	64	-18	192	54	62	-8
	05/06	134	40			176	52		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	62	65	63	2	172	77	76	1
	04/05	69	55	68	-13	91	47	83	-36
	05/06	24	63			3	33		
NVQs	03/04	113	55	53	2	327	46	56	-10
	04/05	178	58	57	1	284	49	63	-14
	05/06	177	58			298	55		
Other	03/04	652	59	58	1	2,042	41	66	-25
	04/05	843	62	63	-1	1,707	57	71	-14
	05/06	1,004	78			1,192	59		

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. Please note the college provided the 2005/06 data set.

16-18						19+			
National Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	03/04	602	57	64	-7	1,456	60	53	7
	04/05	601	62	67	-5	1,309	60	57	3
	05/06	541	65			1,042	60		
A/A2 Levels	03/04	31	71	84	-13	67	55	65	-10
	04/05	22	91	86	5	67	72	69	3
	05/06	20	65			43	28		
AS Levels	03/04	106	43	63	-20	247	45	50	-5
	04/05	149	42	66	-24	243	48	52	-4
	05/06	111	20			138	36		
GNVQs and precursors	03/04	55	42	52	-10	9	33	44	-11
	04/05	66	58	60	-2	12	25	53	-28
	05/06	12	50			40	58		
NVQs	03/04	43	61	54	7	155	44	47	-3
	04/05	28	68	62	6	144	45	54	-9
	05/06	39	69			169	50		
Other	03/04	377	62	58	4	1,411	61	62	-1
	04/05	340	70	61	9	1,028	66	65	1
	05/06	359	80			652	70		

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes managed by the provider/college 2004 to 2006

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No, of learners *	College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate **	College framework rate **	National framework rate **
Advanced Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	21	38	48	10	31
		timely	22	23	30	5	19
	04/05	overall	16	50	48	6	34
		timely	16	19	31	6	21
	05/06	overall	18	67	54	33	44
		timely	16	50	34	13	27
Apprenticeships	03/04	overall	61	46	47	26	32
		timely	58	10	24	5	16
	04/05	overall	72	36	50	21	38
		timely	83	11	29	7	22
	05/06	overall	89	44	58	37	53
		timely	90	30	38	24	33

* 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'