INSPECTION REPORT

Wokingham LEA

25 November 2002

ADULT LEARNING

INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

In those cases where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:
- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Wokingham adult and community learning service manages part-time adult and community learning across the district of Wokingham in Berkshire. All adult and community learning is provided through subcontracting arrangements with a local college of further education. Currently Wokingham Local Education Authority subcontracts to one college. In 2001-02 two colleges were subcontracted. The range of courses is also offered to learners from Bracknell Forest. All classes therefore, have a mix of learners from the two authorities. Courses are provided in 22 learning centres throughout the district. In 2001-02 there was a total of 6,855 enrolments and 3,521 learners. There are courses in 12 areas of learning.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training is good in visual and performing arts and hospitality, sports, leisure and travel, and satisfactory provision in information and communications technology, languages and foundation programmes. Leadership and management are satisfactory, as is equality of opportunity. Quality assurance arrangements are not satisfactory.

GRADES

Leadership and management	3
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Areas of learning	Grade
Information & communications technology	3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	2
Visual & performing arts & media	2
English, languages & communications	3
Foundation programmes	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- innovative projects to widen participation
- good retention and achievement
- good teaching and learning
- good personal enrichment for learners
- good staff development systems

KEY WEAKNESSES
- majority of learners did not have initial learning plans
- no formal system of recording learners' progress
- poor initial information and advice
- lack of awareness regarding equal opportunities issues
- weak monitoring of subcontracted learning provision

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
- more systematic programme planning
- better sharing of good practice
- better promotion of learning opportunities and progression routes

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of nine inspectors spent a total of 45 days with Wokingham adult and community learning service in November 2002. The areas of learning are also available to learners from Bracknell Forest Local Education Authority (LEA) and both LEAs were inspected at the same time. The areas of learning have grades which apply to both Wokingham and Bracknell Forest. The leadership and management teams were separate and provided different reports. Inspectors from both teams visited a range of venues where lessons were held and had joint discussions with relevant personnel from the college. In total, inspectors observed and graded 86 classes. During these visits, they reviewed samples of learners' practical work, including artwork and needlecraft. Inspectors carried out interviews with teaching staff and managers. Other documents reviewed included the district's adult learning plan, quality assurance documents, marketing and learning materials, prospectuses, and information on courses. Inspectors also reviewed the LEA's self-assessment report and development plan, both of which were produced in August 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	2	3	5	1	0	0	11
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	6	7	4	0	0	0	17
Visual & performing arts & media	1	11	13	8	1	0	0	34
English, languages & communications	0	6	2	4	1	0	0	13
Foundation programmes	0	3	5	2	1	0	0	11
Total	**1**	**28**	**30**	**23**	**4**	**0**	**0**	**86**
per cent		**68.60%**		**26.74%**		**4.65%**		

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. Wokingham became a unitary authority in April 1998. The head of libraries and lifelong learning has overall responsibility for the work. A full-time lifelong learning manager was appointed in September 2002 and is responsible for the management of the learning partnership and the direct management of adult and community learning. Since 2001, adult and community education has been funded by Berkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The LEA also handles external funding.

3. Contracts for adult and community learning are re-tendered annually through a formal competitive process. Currently adult and community learning is contracted to one further education college. As well as an annual budget, additional money is available to develop projects and carry out research. Once a project is proven and running successfully it is generally transferred to the mainstream provision. Adult and community learning is provided through 22 sites, including the college, schools and community centres. In 2001-02 there were 3,527 learners and a total of 7,455 enrolments. Approximately 35 per cent of learners are on courses in the visual and performing arts and media. Forty-two per cent of all classes take place during the day. Forty-nine per cent of learners are aged over 55.

4. Most adult and community learning in the Bracknell and Wokingham districts is provided by the two respective LEAs through contracts with Bracknell and Wokingham College of further education. Joint inspection of the subcontracted provision was undertaken by members of the Bracknell and Wokingham inspection teams. Five areas of learning were jointly inspected, information and technology and communication, sports, leisure and health, visual and performing arts, languages, and programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All statistical information under each area of learning is presented as a total figure for both LEAs. Grades awarded to these areas apply to both LEAs. All courses offered are non-accredited. Learners can progress onto college courses, which are not part of the adult and community learning programme, to pursue accreditation and qualifications. College managers have specific responsibilities for adult and community learning. Overall responsibility for managing the college's contractual obligations to both LEA's rests with the assistant principal for adult and professional studies. All tutors teaching on the adult and community learning programmes are employed by the college. Some tutors are on permanent part-time contracts, while others are employed on an hourly basis.

5. In Wokingham, 28 per cent of employment is in the business and financial sector and 22 per cent in public services. Skills shortages have been identified in information and communications technology (ICT), technical and craft engineering. Less than one per cent of the population is registered as unemployed. In some wards, participation in adult learning is low with low or very low basic skills. The proportion of the local population from minority ethnic groups is 3 per cent. In 2001, the proportion of young people

achieving five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above, was 61.3 per cent, compared with national average of 47.9 per cent.

Adult and Community Learning

6. Most learners make good progress within the service. There are no data for learners' achievement at the level of individual courses, but summary data across the service is available, giving number of learners and retention figures. The service is effective, through its community projects, in widening participation and recruiting learners from disadvantaged communities. Many learners gain significant personal and social development in addition to the skills they gain which are relevant to their area of learning. Progression routes are clear in some areas such as ICT and languages. If a learner wants to progress to an accredited course they will, in most areas of learning, join a course provided in the mainstream college provision. The range of adult and community courses on offer is often based on historical data, for example the success of previous courses. There are no clearly defined targets for level of courses, number of learners, gender or ethnicity.

7. Teaching is generally good. Sixty-nine per cent of lessons observed were good or better and 95 per cent were satisfactory or better. There were some unsatisfactory teaching in all areas except in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. Teachers and learners enjoy good relationships and learners support each other well. A pilot scheme to introduce individual learning plans is currently under way. At the time of inspection few learners had adequately detailed individual learning plans. Most teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced and good staff development opportunities were available to both the Wokingham LEA and the college's staff. The majority of enrolment onto courses is completed by telephone or post, with learners choosing courses from publicity material. The publicity material is often not detailed enough to give prospective learners a full understanding of the course. Learners do not take any initial assessment before they enrol. Wokingham LEA do not monitor the provision closely enough to ensure that the range of courses is appropriate to the learners in the area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade   3

8. Overall responsibility for the adult and community learning of Wokingham LEA, rests with the head of libraries and lifelong learning, who reports to the assistant director of education. The day-to-day operation of the adult provision, including financial matters and elements of strategic planning, is the responsibility of the lifelong learning manager, who also carries out a management role for the Wokingham learning partnership. Additionally, she manages the information, advice and guidance co-ordinator and the information and advice outreach worker, both of whom are based at the Wokingham LEA's offices. The manager's post is funded equally by the Wokingham LEA and the Wokingham Learning Partnership. The lifelong learning manager is supported by a full-time development officer and a part-time administrative assistant. The Wokingham learning partnership operates widely within the Wokingham LEA's boundaries and has a membership of some 50 organisations, representing a wide range of interests including the education sector, training providers, local business user groups, information advice and guidance service and voluntary organisations. An executive group, including the local authority and further education colleges, meets at six-weekly intervals to steer the work of the partnership and to set its strategy with regard to adult learning matters.

9. Organisations are invited to participate in the annual competitive tender for the adult and community learning contract. For the current year, the LEA awarded the contract to one local further education college which has an arrangement with another college to enable learners at one side of the borough to attend courses in a college nearer to their homes. Fee structures are determined by the college with reduced fees offered to a range of people, including the over 60s and the unemployed. A range of community-developed initiatives is funded through a development fund and managed by the lifelong learning manager.

STRENGTHS

- clear strategic objectives
- good management and effectively communicated support for community projects
- effective involvement between Wokingham LEA and the college in developing the adult
  learning plan
- good appraisal system
- wide-ranging staff development
- good targeting of disadvantaged groups

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient management of programme delivery
- insufficient awareness equal opportunities issues by tutors and learners
- inadequate quality assurance system
- inadequate use of data
- no established method of assessing learning outcomes

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better system of measuring and monitoring the support offered to learners
- better recording of staff training and development

10. There are clear strategic objectives which are communicated effectively. The lifelong learning manager post is based within the libraries and lifelong learning service, which in turn is based within the education and cultural services department. This structure allows all sections to work effectively together. All staff working on the adult and community provision fully understand the strategic plan. All relevant departmental managers are involved in the development of the adult learning plan. In addition, there are business plans for each department within the authority and quality assurance procedures are included in each of these plans. There are good links between departmental staff and senior management and regular meetings are held between departmental managers, the assistant director of education and the director of education. Regular departmental team meetings are held and detailed minutes are retained on file. Action plans raised from team meetings are closely monitored to ensure that targets are achieved.

11. There is good management support for community projects within the district. Wokingham LEA makes effective use of resources to enable them to reach a wider community and attract new learners. There is a network of good links with other agencies. Funds are available for projects which reflect the objectives within the adult learning plan.

12. Wokingham LEA and the college have worked well together in developing the adult learning plan. Wokingham LEA and the college meet formally on a termly basis to discuss issues relating to the overall future development of adult learning. Wokingham LEA carries out needs analysis directly or through its training provider partners, partnerships and focus groups. They develop new courses based on this analysis and ensure that successful pilot projects are transferred to what the college can offer. However, Wokingham LEA is not sufficiently involved in monitoring the management, planning and provision of the learning programme. There is too much reliance on the college systems, for example, to identify individual learners' needs, to ensure adequate support systems are in place, and to monitor the effectiveness and suitability of equipment and resources.

13. There is an effective system of staff appraisal, both in Wokingham LEA and the college. Appraisals are carried out on an annual basis and all staff are included in the process. However, some part-time staff in the college do not take advantage of the offer, which restricts the provision of suitable training and development. For those staff who have appraisals, this method is effective in identifying staff training and development needs and Wokingham LEA ensures that these needs are met. The Wokingham lifelong learning staff have attended courses provided by the LEA and external bodies. The outcomes of training have had a positive effect in developing both the training provision for adult and community learning and personal development by increasing, for example, marketing and management skills. Tutors are competent and qualified in their area of learning. Staff who do not hold teaching qualifications are required to gain an adult teaching certificate and this training is funded by the college. However, Wokingham LEA does not formally monitor details of college staff involvement in training and development.

14. Wokingham LEA has been responsible for a number of projects to widen participation and increase social inclusion. These projects include childcare workforce development, Outreach 2001 which provides information, advice and guidance in local communities, and the establishment of a carers' forum. Mobile units have been used to support two projects. One mobile unit is used to extend the information advice and guidance service and to promote ICT, literacy and numeracy to the traveller communities in Wokingham LEA's two permanent sites. In partnership with Bracknell and Wokingham College, ICT programmes are provided for the over 50s and people with disabilities. A carers' project provides short taster sessions and follow-on six-week sessions in computing for carers. Additionally, a number of family learning weekends have taken place, which in total attracted 175 learners. A series of family learning courses is planned to take place in local primary schools. A liaison worker has recently been appointed to work with schools. In most instances learning programmes originating from projects, develop into mainstream LSC-funded provision within the college.

15. Wokingham LEA monitors the college's compliance with its contract. Data collected by the college are used to monitor the overall number of learners against targets, enrolments, attendance and retention figures. Data are used to make comparisons each year which are analysed and checked for trends. Generally the data are not used enough to inform decisions regarding adult and community learning curriculum development. Data are not used to assist target-setting or the process of continuous improvement. Discussions have taken place with the college and the Berkshire LSC, and funding is now available for a new data-handling system.

Equality of opportunity   **Contributory grade   3**

16. There is an equal opportunities policy that is kept up to date. Recent changes in legislation have been appended and a simplified explanation has been made available to all staff and council members. Equal opportunities is a priority within the authority and staff develop and follow an annual action plan. Equal opportunities training with paid attendance is available for tutors, but response has been poor. The LEA requires that the college has equal opportunities policies, but these are not reviewed regularly. All learners are introduced to the college's equal opportunities policy during the induction process. Procedures are in place for learners' feedback, complaints, and relevant support services. There are good, informal responses by staff and managers when concerns are raised or a complaint is made, and the level of support for individuals is good. Learners with additional learning needs are particularly well supported. Good resources are available to learners.

17. There is good targeting of disadvantaged groups. Wokingham LEA carried out a full post-19 participation analysis, based on electoral wards, to enable them to measure the impact of adult and community education within areas identified as relatively deprived. Areas where participation was relatively low and/or basic skills needs were relatively high, were pinpointed. This knowledge was used to influence decisions about project work, including the introduction of family literacy and numeracy projects in primary schools. A new member of staff has been appointed to liaise with schools to identify needs and ensure these needs are met. In addition, Wokingham LEA has used information from partners, a range of needs analyses, surveys and links with local agencies to identify groups in need. The community outreach projects have been set up to support groups such as carers and travellers. Older adults and those with mental health issues have also been targeted and this has resulted in adults from this group undertaking learning. Information, advice and guidance have been integrated with outreach provision to ensure adults are informed of learning opportunities. The use of a bus to take information about literacy, numeracy and information technology (IT) courses to local areas has greatly assisted the identification of new learners. The outreach programme has benefited from the LEA's good relationships and support for the many community and volunteer groups that have provided the link to the disadvantaged.

18. Learners do not fully understand equality of opportunity and do not recall any discussions on relevant issues in their learning group. Although equality of opportunity is referred to in the LEA's self-assessment report and development plans, there is not enough effective coverage of equal opportunities in marketing and publicity materials. There is no question relating to equality of opportunity in feedback questionnaires. There are a number of the college's initiatives to raise awareness and promote understanding, but these have not been effective. There is an annual equal opportunities theme week which includes learning centres, a dedicated prospectus for learners with learning disabilities, and student representation on the equality forum attended by senior managers. Leaflets and posters for equality of opportunity are poor.

19. Some collection of equal opportunities data takes place, including age, gender and

ethnicity of adult learners. Data are not sufficiently detailed to enable the authority to use it to inform planning in curriculum, resources or access to accommodation. Qualitative information is shared, and this is particularly evident between outreach workers and staff on community projects, but it is not recorded. Despite this, a range of community projects has been set up with partners which support the policy and the social inclusion agenda for the LEA.

Quality assurance   Contributory grade 4

20. The quality assurance system is inadequate. Those procedures that are in place are built into the department's business plan and relate to Wokingham LEA, but do not cover the provision in the college. Wokingham LEA has in place a system of lesson observations and the feedback to observed tutors is good. However, not all tutors have been observed. Wokingham LEA is not informed of the results of lesson observation carried out by the college. Although there is good informal liaison with the college, formal communication between Wokingham LEA and the college are not good and there is an over-reliance on the college quality assurance and monitoring systems. There is no formal monitoring of learner support at the college. Information relating to learners' needs is collected through the college student services department, and the student service responds effectively. For example, learners with children are supported with either childcare provision on site, or a contribution to meet the cost of childcare in the local community. There is not enough formal evidence of monitoring of this support by Wokingham LEA.

21. There is no established method of assessing learning outcomes. Some tutors assess learners' progress during their courses and record achievements at the end of each term. A small pilot programme is currently being carried out in the use of individual learning plans. However, there is no regular and consistent method of recording gains in knowledge and skills set against individual learning objectives.

22. The self-assessment report was the first produced by the LEA. It was written by the head of libraries and lifelong learning and the lifelong learning development officer guided by a consultant provided by the Berkshire LSC, and with input from the LEA's main subcontractors. There was not enough input from other stakeholders. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the report. Parts of the report were descriptive rather than evaluative.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology   **Grade 3**

23. ICT courses are provided in five college sites including open learning centres, schools and local libraries. At the time of inspection, there had been 390 enrolments onto 27 courses. Courses include basic computer courses, one-day Saturday courses on software applications, and taster courses. More advanced courses include database programmes and website design. All courses take place in the day during term-time. There are no evening courses. Most learners are aged over 50, and 40 per cent are men.

STRENGTHS
*   good retention rates
*   good resources
*   effective staff development

WEAKNESSES
*   no individual learning plans
*   insufficient sharing of good practice
*   inadequate initial advice for learners
*   insufficient development of ICT learning programme

24. Retention rates are good, at 97 per cent in 2001-02. Attendance for the same year is 88 per cent. Retention and attendance are monitored well and tutors discuss any absences with learners. Learners are able to progress to more advanced courses. For example, some learners have progressed from taster and basic computer courses onto accredited college training programmes. Currently there is no systematic collection or analysis of data on learners' progression, however, systems are being developed to monitor the progress, outcomes and destinations of learners.

25. Resources are good. Some new learning centres have up-to-date equipment and software. Computers are all networked and have Internet access. There are self-docking digital cameras, smart-card readers, digital projectors, and colour printers. However, some facilities at some older training sites are not adequate. For example, some rooms have poor ventilation. In other rooms, noise levels from equipment can cause problems for those learners with hearing difficulties. There are good learning support materials, including good, well-illustrated handouts and exercises. Many of these materials are available in larger print.

26. There is good and well-established staff development. The college pays both for the course fees and tutor's time while they have training. The college section head ensures that all tutors have prompt training on new equipment and software. All tutors either hold, or are working towards, teaching qualifications. They have a good range of technical and vocational qualifications. Recently all tutors completed an advanced computer qualification. In addition, tutors can carry out additional personal and professional development, such as stress management, dyslexia training and a certificate in management studies.

27. Learners do not have individual learning plans. There is no formal setting of objectives for individual learners, for tutors and learners to monitor and assess progress. The college is piloting the use of individual learning plans in some learning centres. Those plans currently in use are not being used effectively to identify learners' individual needs and provide relevant support.

28. There is insufficient sharing of good practice. There is no standardised scheme of work. Schemes of work are produced by individual tutors even when the subject is taught at the same level during different sessions. Handouts and other course materials are also prepared separately by each tutor. There is no house style or template for learning materials. The staff intranet is not used enough. Team meeting minutes are not widely distributed. There is an annual course review, but not all part-time tutors attend. There are no other learning programme reviews during the year. Part-time staff are observed in their first term of teaching, but are not observed again unless they request it personally.

29. Initial advice for learners is inadequate. Learners do not receive sufficient guidance about the suitability of courses before enrolment. Most learners rely on the prospectus which generally does not provide enough information for learners. Each learning centre enrols its own learners. Some learners are on courses at inappropriate levels. Several learners were on courses that were either too advanced or too basic to adequately meet their needs. Additional support needs are not identified until a learner has started a course. Many of the courses are short and it is often too late to provide this support.

30. There is insufficient development of the ICT learning programme. The programme comprises only beginner and one-day classes. Much of the planning of the current ICT provision is based on historical data, which is generally based on the number of learners on courses. There is no coherent approach to research learner's needs or target selected groups to promote courses and progression routes. Some new courses have been developed following requests made by learners.

31. The standard of teaching is inconsistent. Some lessons are well planned and well structured with good objectives. Various teaching methods are used, including lectures, demonstration and individual tuition. Tutors make good use of questioning to monitor learning. In other lessons, some teaching is poor with insufficient use of various teaching styles and not enough involvement of learners in the lessons.

32. Learners speak highly of the support from their tutors. Learners are well motivated and enjoy learning new skills and gaining confidence. Some learners appreciated the handouts which enabled them to practise on their own computers at home. Other learners state that they are now able to produce posters, leaflets, labels, and use mail merge, to support their involvement in charity and community organisations. Learners enjoy learning to use e-mail to communicate with family members living abroad and using the Internet for research and online shopping. Learners in mixed-level groups state that they would prefer to work in smaller groups and have more individual time with the tutor. Some learners reported that some sessions were too short to make adequate progress.

Poor Practice
In one learning centre, there are cables linking two computers which are a safety hazard to learners.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel   **Grade 2**

33. A programme of 39 courses is provided in this area of learning, including fitness classes in yoga, badminton, Tai Chi and general keep fit, bridge, wine appreciation and sugar craft. Learners are able to progress to more advanced courses. Courses take place throughout the week. They are mostly two hours long, generally run for a ten-week period and many are repeated three times a year. The course programme is provided in many venues, including adult education centres, a youth centre, sports halls, and schools. The Saturday workshop programme includes courses in this area. In 2001-02 there were approximately 346 learners and 881 enrolments on sports and leisure courses. Most current learners are women. There are some learners from minority ethnic groups. Part of the course programme is targeted at older learners and many learners are aged over 60 years. There are several learners aged over 90 years who are attending classes. This area of learning is managed by different college managers, across a number of areas of learning. There are 27 part-time tutors, none of whom teach for more than twelve hours in any one week.

STRENGTHS
*   good achievement rates
*   good attendance and retention rates
*   effective teaching and learning
*   very good progression of learners

WEAKNESSES
*   inadequate procedures for collecting health information from learners
*   inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
*   insufficient quality assurance systems

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
*   more individual coaching in fitness classes
*   more systematic planning of course programme

34. Achievement rates are good. All learners in observed classes are achieving their learning goals and participate effectively in the activity. Learners are able to try new fitness activities such as Tai Chi or Yoga. Many improve their overall general fitness. Some have been helped to recover from accidents and surgery. Learners in sugar craft and bridge can acquire new skills. For example, learners are able to decorate wedding and birthday cakes. Older learners, in particular, are being supported in maintaining

their independence through either fitness classes or classes that help continue to develop other skills and mental agility. Many learners are able to participate in clubs and societies as a result of the skills they have learned in these classes. Recruitment to classes is good and attendance and retention rates are good at over 80 per cent.

35. There is effective teaching and learning. Courses are well structured and lessons are well planned. Tutors fully understand the needs of their learners and there is good health and safety practice. Individual learning needs are met. One yoga teacher helps learners with different abilities, and in some cases, disabilities to participate effectively in the lesson. Tutors have a good understanding of learners' progress through observation and learners' feedback. Learners work well together. In some large groups, learners worked in pairs and small groups. There is particularly good group discussion on sugar craft and bridge courses. There is not enough individual coaching in some exercise classes. Learners progress well when tutors do provide individual instruction. There is not enough use of praise and specific verbal coaching points for individual learners. However, when it is used, learners' motivation and understanding is improved. Tutors make good use of the accommodation and work effectively to provide additional heating or exercise mats. Tutors are well qualified and experienced. The fitness tutors maintain their professional development in their own professional associations.

36. Learners' progression is very good. Some courses, including wine appreciation, bridge, and Tai Chi, are available to learners at several levels. For example, learners in bridge are able to progress to competition standard. Some learners progress onto college accredited programmes and into employment. In exercise classes, progression is provided by adaptation of exercises. Tutors provide more advanced learners with appropriate exercise variations.

37. There are inadequate procedures for collecting health information for learners. There is no formal system for the initial assessment collection of health and medical status or exercise experience. Tutors use their own methods to collect this information, based on the requirements of the professional organisations to which they belong. The type and amount of information collected is not consistent between tutors. The college asks learners to sign a health disclaimer which states it is the learners' responsibility to consult a doctor before starting an exercise programme. This does not provide tutors with information about problems such as joint injuries, cardio-respiratory problems, skeletal deformity, or conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy.

38. There is inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress. Although tutors have a good understanding of the progress of their learners, some do not maintain satisfactory written records. Tutors do not monitor learners in a consistent way. The college system uses a matrix on a single sheet with learners' names and sessions. Some tutors use numbers and others use letters to record progress in relation to a course objective. Some tutors only tick boxes to indicate that learners were present when a given topic was covered. Records do not clearly show learners' progress and are not adequate for a tutor covering absence or leave of another tutor.

39. There are insufficient quality assurance systems. Appraisal is available to all part-time tutors, but is not obligatory for those who teach for less than eight hours in any one week. Tutors are not being appraised and there are no alternative review systems in place. Tutors are expected to complete course reviews, but there is not enough formal follow-up of these reviews. The observation scheme aims to observe every tutor once a year, but there is no arrangement for observation by subject specialists. Learning centre managers' and course leaders' responsibility is not clear for observation and follow-up action. Some tutors have taken up staff development offered by the college, including first aid and ICT training, but there are no criteria for what training is either obligatory or desirable beyond basic qualifications. There is no systematic monitoring of what professional training is undertaken.

40. Planning of the course programmes takes account of learners' views, local knowledge provided by learning centre managers, and what is offered by other training providers. However, there is no systematic needs analysis. The course programme reflects the priorities of both local authorities in terms of health and support for older learners. It is not clear, however, why there are so many yoga classes or why there are gaps in the programme, especially in the area of cookery.

41. Learners are enthusiastic about the programme and classes. They value their teachers and appreciate their increased fitness and improved health and/or new skills. Many learners relate their learning experiences to their home or working lives, describing for example, a better ability to relax and increased mobility. Learners also value the social interaction within lessons, and the opportunity to develop and maintain social contacts. Learners enjoy easy access in terms of location, however, some requests for better accommodation have been made.

Visual & performing arts & media   Grade 2

42. The visual and performing arts provide the largest programme of adult and community learning funded under contract by the two LEAs. Most of the provision is in art and crafts, including ceramics, quilting, Christmas crafts, and soft furnishing, with a smaller number of dance classes. There is one music class. Provision includes courses at beginner, introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. Sessions are generally two-hours long. There are a number of one-day courses, although most classes last for 10 weeks. The curriculum is generally planned on a 30-week cycle. Currently, there is a total of 1,785 enrolments in this area of learning, which is approximately 41 per cent of the total adult and community learning provision in the two districts.

STRENGTHS
- good skills acquisition and application
- good teaching
- good standard of visual arts work produced by learners
- significant personal enrichment

WEAKNESSES
- some inadequate accommodation and resources
- insufficient range of provision

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
- better formal monitoring of learning

43. There is good skills acquisition and application by learners. Learners' self-confidence improves and they make good use of materials and techniques. They identify improvements in their use of visual, creative and technical language. For example, learners working in an upholstery class showed systematic and sustained skill development. Garments produced in a dressmaking class are of a professional standard. Learners in an art and design class produce good work on the use of perspective. Learners in soft furnishing achieve high standards in their individual projects, including patchwork quilting, and curtain and duvet making. Still-life drawing and painting is good. However, in some lessons, learners are encouraged to work towards a completed watercolour painting before they have the appropriate painting and basic visual language skills. Attendance is good on most courses. Learners are punctual and well prepared for sessions and demonstrate good study skills.

44. Good teaching is provided by well-qualified and appropriately experienced tutors. Lesson plans are thorough with good aims and objectives set and achieved. For example, in one session, the tutors adjusted schemes of work to accommodate the changing needs and abilities of the learners. Learners receive copies of schemes of work at the beginning of their course. Tutors use a wide range of teaching methods. Teaching and learning resources are good and enhance the learning process. For example, handouts used in a ceramics class to reinforce construction techniques were very clear with good use of graphics. Learners produce good work in Christmas crafts classes.

45. A good standard of visual arts work is produced by learners. In upholstery classes, learners produce a photographic record of their completed projects and the stages of construction. One learner prepared a particularly well-documented record of a process and had written accompanying notes. Where appropriate, learners are encouraged to display and discuss their work. The importance of sketchbook and research material is reinforced at this time. Many learners work on individual projects negotiated with their tutors. There is a very good interaction of skills and ideas, particularly between new and experienced learners. Some lessons demonstrate an effective use of collaborative learning. Learners work well together and question and advise each other. Learners are also encouraged to take part in demonstrations by their tutors.

46. Tutors give good structured individual feedback to learners. Feedback is constructive, motivating and enables learners to improve their work. Some staff are involved in a pilot project to develop and monitor individual learning plans. Many of these staff are starting to recognise the potential benefits of a systematic recording of learners' aspirations and progress, which is 'owned' by the learner. However, there are currently no procedures in place to track learners' progress beyond and between each term's activities. In the one music class, formal assessment is at the request of the learner. Initial assessment of learners' abilities on entry is generally carried out well at an informal level. However, there is no systematic procedure for ensuring that this information is collected and used to inform the individual learning plan.

47. There is some inadequate accommodation and resources. Some classrooms are too small and learners find it difficult to produce an adequate range of work. There are inadequate storage facilities and insufficient space for learners to work on larger pieces of work. Access for learners with mobility difficulties is good in most of the learning centres, however in two of the centres, access is poor. There is no Internet access or library provision in some learning centres. Some accommodation is adequate with good lighting and suitable furniture.

48. There is an insufficient range of provision. Most of the provision is non-accredited. Some classes are organised in ability levels which enables learners to identify an appropriate learning programme and encourages progression. In other classes however, the ability level is not specified. The relative ability level of courses in different subject areas and between accredited and non-accredited provision is not always clear. Learners are encouraged to progress onto higher-level courses and there are some good

examples of successful progression. However, there is no formal mechanism to support and encourage progression. Some staff are not aware of the progression routes available. Some learners' groups consist of a high proportion of learners who are repeating the learning programme, rather than progressing or trying something new.

49. Good and regular communication between managers and full- and part-time staff supports the programme and staff development opportunities are good. All tutors are entitled to one free staff development programme per year. One tutor had taken advantage of this and had completed a flower-arranging course. However, some tutors had no knowledge of this facility. Decisions on the curriculum offer are formed primarily on the basis of immediate consumer demand and courses which have proved successful in the past. A number of measures have been introduced to assure the quality of provision including course reviews, staff lesson observations and learner questionnaires, all of which contribute to the growth and development of the provision. There is evidence of new initiatives to improve quality including a newsletter for part-time learners.

50. Learners consider the staff to be experienced and friendly. They appreciate the high standard of demonstrations and handouts and the range of techniques and skills they are learning. They also enjoy the social interaction with other members of the group. Some learners state that there is not enough group feedback on the work they produce and that storage areas are not adequate. Some learners find it difficult to complete their work in the time allowed.

Good Practice
In a quilting and needlecraft lesson, one learner was able to explain, in great detail, the advantages of one particular technique against another, having been taught a range of different techniques.

Poor Practice
There is insufficient use of objective drawing and too much use of magazine and photographic images to provide the basis for painting and drawing tasks during some lessons.

English, languages & communications **Grade 3**

51. Modern language courses, comprising French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Arabic and Chinese are provided at eight different college and community venues. Courses are available at different levels, depending on the language. Courses run during the day and also in the evening. Short taster courses are provided during the summer term. Thirty-six language programmes were offered in the current year, of which 28 subsequently ran. Currently, there are 534 enrolments. Adult and community learning courses are planned to run over 26 weeks, however, some courses run for 10 weeks and learners must re-enrol each term. Target size for groups is 15, with a normal maximum of 18 learners in each class. Some classes are run with fewer than 15 learners. There are 23 part-time tutors.

STRENGTHS
•   good achievement of learning goals
•   good teaching
•   good staff development
•   effective communication with part-time staff

WEAKNESSES
•   insufficient initial assessment of learners' existing language skills
•   lack of adequate rooms and resources in some learning centres
•   insufficient curriculum development
•   some gaps in quality assurance processes

52. There is good achievement of learning goals by most learners. For example, new vocabulary and structures introduced during lessons are used correctly by learners and are consolidated by written tasks set as homework. Individual learning plans are being piloted on some courses. Targets on these plans include communicating in the target language when travelling in the appropriate countries, communicating with friends or relatives from the target countries, and developing new skills. Learners are clearly working towards these targets. There is good retention and attendance in most classes with an average retention rate for all courses of 88 per cent. These are particularly good on post-beginner courses.

53. There is good teaching in most classes. Tutors carefully select a good range of learning materials directly relevant to the needs, interests and learning styles of the learners. For example, there is use of authentic written materials, current tape recordings, and Internet materials. Activities encourage and challenge learners to acquire greater fluency in the target language. For example, group work, pair work and

games are regularly used to develop learning oral communication skills. Tutors are well qualified. For example, all language tutors have either a degree-level language qualification or are native speakers. In addition, most tutors have, or are working towards, a relevant teaching qualification.

54. There is a good staff development. All part-time staff are included in the college staff development plan. Training relevant to particular languages is organised by the language department. Regular observation of tutors by the section heads is used to assess relevant training needs. Part-time staff are encouraged to attend training, and are paid for their attendance. Training sessions are scheduled well in advance at convenient times for the staff.

55. There is effective communication with part-time staff. A wide range of methods is used to maintain good communications with the teaching staff. For example, a language department newsletter, scheduled meetings with paid attendance, communication by inclusion in the register folder, direct communication through learning centre heads and mentors and by e-mail.

56. There is insufficient initial assessment of learners' language skills. Many learners self-select their language courses using information from course brochures and information sheets. This approach is inadequate. There is no clear descriptions of the competency levels expected for each course, which are only defined in terms of the number of years of language experience. Although there is some informal assessment once learners have started their courses, learners may require two weeks of a 10-week programme to identify their correct language level.

57. There is a lack of adequate rooms and resources in some learning centres. For example, some rooms have poor acoustics, which adversely affect listening and speaking activities, particularly for learners with impaired hearing. Resources in most learning centres comprise only whiteboards, overhead projectors, and tape recorders. Video recorders and monitors are available in most learning centres, but have to be booked in advance in some school-based centres. Language laboratories and IT are not available for use in the language classes.

58. There is insufficient curriculum development. There is no standardised scheme of work for each language course. Schemes of work are produced by individual tutors and differ even when offered in the same language at the same level. There is not enough use of learners' feedback to develop the curriculum, for example in the selection and sequencing of themes and topics, which largely follow those in the course books. There is insufficient target-setting. The scope of languages and levels and the number of courses offered are based primarily on historical success. There are no clearly defined targets for language provision by language, level, number of learners, gender or ethnicity.

59. There is a satisfactory spread of language provision. Languages are available in eight accessible centres spread across the regions. Most languages are available at

various times, for example morning, afternoon, evening sessions Mondays to Thursdays and Saturday taster sessions. Some less frequently offered languages are available for example Chinese, Portuguese and Dutch.

60. There are some gaps in the quality assurance processes. There is no course evaluation of learners until the end of the programme, by which time it is often too late to make appropriate course changes. The college has introduced an assessment and progress monitoring form, however, its use is not standardised and the assessment tools are left to individual tutor's discretion. Although task observation of tutors is used for identification of training needs, it is not clearly linked to quality assurance systems. There is however, some effective use of learners' feedback, for example in the introduction of new courses, such as French for graduates, and in the change of a course book. There is also evidence of timely response to learners' feedback on logistic and administrative issues.

61. Learners are very satisfied with the accessibility of language provision in terms of the range of times and locations offered and the range of languages. Learners praised the dedication of tutors and the supportive learning environment. Most learners interviewed also preferred non-accredited provision. They did not want exam pressure. Many learners would like more or longer sessions and some would like better facilities.

Good Practice
There is a good support system for learners. Attendance is monitored closely. When learners are absent from classes they are quickly contacted, encouraged to return and sent summaries of missed sessions and homework.

Foundation programmes   **Grade 3**

62. There are 17 courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
Provision takes place during the day and includes 30-week courses as well as short
taster or introductory sessions lasting for three or four weeks. Provision includes
introductory courses in computing, courses in cookery for independent living, creative
dance, metalwork, needlecrafts, photography, digital photography and self-advocacy. A
carers project provides short taster sessions and follow-on six-week sessions in
computing for carers. Some courses are run in LEA community venues while others are
held at various college sites. Currently, there are 176 learners enrolled on programmes
in this area of learning.

STRENGTHS
- good levels of personal achievement
- good teaching and learning
- effective partnership arrangements

WEAKNESSES
- inconsistent use of individual learning plans
- weak initial assessment
- insufficient formal recording of learners' progress and achievement

63. Learners attain good levels of personal achievement. They make good progress
toward their personal learning goals, including maintaining skill levels and personal
health and fitness. Learners on computing and photography courses pursue these
activities in their home environment to further develop their skills between sessions.
Learners are able to progress to more advanced courses. Learners self-confidence and
self-esteem are also improved during the courses. Learners' social skills are developed
through groups tasks. Learners attend regularly. Attendance levels and retention rates
are good.

64. Much of the teaching and learning is good. Tutors use well-prepared teaching
materials and vary activities to maintain learners' interest using a combination of whole-
class, individual and small group activities. Tutors have good knowledge of their
learners' individual needs and abilities and successfully provide a variety of activities to
meet these needs. Learners receive good personal feedback on their progress from
tutors and very good individual support. Most learners maintain very good portfolios of
their work.

65. Physical resources are satisfactory. Most of the courses are provided at one

learning centre where accommodation is spacious, although kitchen and ICT facilities are out of date. Some classrooms are cluttered and have several uses, including a library, small kitchen and easy chair area. College staff are able to refer learners to relevant learning materials. Some courses are provided at different college sites where there is good accommodation for learners with severe learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff from the college audit resources at community locations before the start of classes. However, accessibility for learners is considered to be a priority and community-based courses are provided at accessible locations. Teaching accommodation for the needlework group is good, with good wheelchair access. Accommodation for the photography classes is poor for learners with restricted mobility. However, computing resources at this learning centre are good. Tutors are well qualified and experienced in their specialist areas. However, most do not possess a specialist qualification for working with adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

66. There is satisfactory learner support. There is good support for learners with severe learning difficulties and disabilities who attend the communication programme. Support staff are available at one learning centre to help learners with restricted mobility. However, there are no staff at another learning centre to provide this help. Where support staff are available, they work effectively with tutors and learners.

67. The management of this area of learning is satisfactory. Part-time staff receive good support and have access to staff development activities. Tutors are aware of their equal opportunity responsibilities when working with learners. However, quality assurance activities including the observation of teaching, are not carried out on a regular basis.

68. Partnerships arrangements are effective. A review of educational provision for adults with learning difficulties was carried out by Wokingham LEA, Bracknell Forest LEA and the college between May and October 2001. As a result, there has been successful development of an LSC-funded project to improve adult and community learning provision specifically geared to the needs of adults with learning difficulties and disabilities throughout the Bracknell and Wokingham areas. Both Bracknell LEA and Wokingham LEA are involved in a Prince's Trust pilot project for carers.

69. There is inconsistent use of individual learning plans. Some learners do not have an individual learning plan. Some tutors discuss intended programme outcomes with their learners, but there is no formal recording of this process. The college has identified the need to consolidate a consistent approach to individual learning plans and is currently conducting a pilot of new documentation. This includes a specific planning system to take account of the particular needs of learners with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

70. There is weak initial assessment of learners' existing skills and competence. At the start of courses tutors often carry out an informal assessment of learners' existing levels of competence, but this is not formally recorded. Formal recording of learners' progress and achievement is insufficient. Forms to monitor progress are provided by the college, but these only allow for the recording of brief comments and are not completed by all

tutors. Although college staff complete termly records of learner' progress, formative assessment relies on verbal feedback from tutors to learners, and no records are maintained of learners' progress within each session. Learners' progress is dependent on the continuation of the existing working relationship between tutor and learner.

71. Learners value their tutors and regard them as patient and supportive. They appreciate the personal attention from tutors. They regard the learning materials as very helpful and of good quality. Learners look forward to their classes and appreciate the accessibility of venues and the timetabling which suits their domestic commitments. Most learners report that they have learned a lot in a short period of time and are interested in progressing to other courses. Some learners state that their courses help them to maintain good personal levels of health and well-being. Many learners refer to the sense of achievement during practical lessons.

Language of the Adult and Community Learning

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*.   The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.