

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **The City Literary Institute**

**27 January 2003**



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

The City Literary Institute is one of the largest providers of part-time adult education in the United Kingdom. It is situated in central London and was established in 1919 as one of five literary institutes. Over the years it has extended its provision in the arts, humanities and languages, to programmes in information and communication technology; health and fitness; literacy and numeracy; provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and the Centre for Deaf People.

### Overall judgement

The provision in visual arts and in performing arts is outstanding. That for humanities, languages, community learning and information and communication technology is good. The provision at the Centre for Deaf People, reported on under the heading community action, is also good, as is the health and fitness provision, here reported under hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. Programmes in speech and language therapy and programmes for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, all reported on under the heading of other adult and community learning, are satisfactory. Basic skills courses, reported on under foundation programmes, are unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are good, as are equality of opportunity and quality assurance. Overall, the quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it.

### GRADES

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	2

Areas of learning	Grade
Information & communications technology	2
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	2
Visual & performing arts & media	1
Humanities	2
English, languages & communications	2
Foundation programmes	4
Community action	2
Community learning	2
Other adult and community learning	3

### **KEY STRENGTHS**

- effective strategic planning
- good communication
- significant amount of stimulating and effective teaching and learning
- very good standards of learners' work
- strong emphasis by specialist staff on enriching the learning experience
- good support for all learners
- good support and development of staff
- effective strategies to improve retention rates
- strong focus on learning in quality assurance
- good promotion of equal opportunities
- very extensive range of courses
- productive partnerships

### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- incomplete use of management information system
- some weak monitoring arrangements
- insufficient use of personal statements of learning on non-accredited courses
- insufficient measurement of achievement on non-accredited courses
- some inadequate accommodation and resources

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better moderation of internal teaching observations
- further develop basic skills strategy and skills for life agenda
- better progression for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- more sharing of good practice

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of 18 inspectors spent a total of 87 inspection days at The City Literary Institute (The City Lit) in January 2003. They observed 192 lessons, spoke to 852 learners, examined 662 personal learning statements, looked at 163 learners' portfolios and interviewed 159 staff, including senior managers and governors. They also examined a range of documents, including policies, plans and minutes of meetings, together with the self-assessment report and development plans.

### Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	1	3	6	1	1	0	0	12
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	1	4	13	3	1	0	0	22
Visual & performing arts & media	12	19	18	6	0	0	0	55
Humanities	5	8	9	5	3	0	0	30
English, languages & communications	4	7	7	5	0	0	0	23
Foundation programmes	0	2	5	5	1	0	0	13
Community action	0	5	8	2	1	0	0	16
Community learning	0	2	5	2	0	0	0	9
Other adult and community learning	1	5	2	3	1	0	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>per cent</b>	<b>79.17%</b>			<b>16.67%</b>	<b>4.17%</b>			

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. The City Lit is located in central London, in the London Borough of Camden and in the City of London. It was established in 1919 by the London County Council as one of five literary institutes. Its original brief was to stimulate demand for evening study among office workers, mainly in the arts and humanities. This is still part of its mission, though its work has been much extended since then. The City Lit was incorporated in 1990 and is both a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Following the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, the institute was designated as a specialist adult education institution, eligible for funding from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Most of the provision funded was for non-accredited learning. During this period it was inspected twice by the FEFC. Since April 2001, The City Lit has been funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for London Central. In 2001-02, the local LSC accounted for 63 per cent of The City Lit's income. A further 25 per cent came from tuition fees and 12 per cent from other sources.

3. The City Lit serves a number of communities, both local and London-wide. It also attracts learners from outside London because of the specialist nature of many of its courses. All courses are part time and a number are short, one-day and weekend courses. The City Lit operates across seven sites in the centre of London, as well as alongside partner organisations in a variety of community venues. Some of its buildings are open 14 hours per day, six days a week and there is some Sunday provision. At the time of inspection, a number of accommodation changes had been made, following the demolition of one site as plans for a new building are implemented.

4. In 2001-02 there were 24,391 learners and 49,553 enrolments on 3,355 courses. These enrolments accounted for 1,431,189 student hours of activity. Sixty-eight per cent of learners were women. The largest age cohort was the 30-39 years age range. Sixty per cent of learners were under 40 years of age. Thirteen per cent were aged 60 years or over. An estimated 19 per cent of learners were from a minority ethnic group and 64 per cent of learners were in the widening participation category, as defined by the LSC. In the current year, 25,914 learners have enrolled on courses with The City Lit.

5. The City Lit organises its provision into seven programme areas: performing arts; visual arts; liberal arts; languages; the Centre for Deaf People; essential skills/learners' services; and community learning. The City Lit employs 210 permanent members of staff, 120 of whom are lecturers and academic managers and 90 support staff. It employs some 700 part-time specialist tutors.

6. The largest number of The City Lit's learners come from the London Borough of Camden. In May 2002, the London Borough of Camden's unemployment rate was 2.2 per cent, compared with 3 per cent nationally. According to the 1991 census, the London Borough of Camden's minority ethnic population represents 17.8 per cent of the



population, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally.

### **Adult and Community Learning**

7. There is a good deal of stimulating and effective teaching and learning. The quality of teaching and learning was good, or outstanding, in eight of the ten areas of learning inspected. Of the 192 lessons observed, 12 per cent were graded excellent, 67 per cent good, or very good, 17 per cent satisfactory and only 4 per cent unsatisfactory. Achievement levels and retention rates are good. Learners produce very good standards of work. The extensive range of courses offers a wide choice for learners. Many tutors are exceptionally well qualified in their own area of expertise and make effective use of their skills as artists, performers, writers and educators to enhance the experience of learners. There is a good range of learner support arrangements, including an effective dyslexia support service. The City Lit is well managed and strategic planning is effective. There is a strong focus on learning in quality assurance. There are good communications within a complex and large staff group. Tutors are supported effectively through a system of lesson observations, staff development and appraisals. The promotion of equal opportunities is good and a range of productive partnership arrangements is helping to widen participation. The City Lit does not consistently use personal statements of learning on non-accredited courses to assess and measure progress, and link these to formalising achievement. The basic skills strategy is not sufficiently linked to programme development throughout The City Lit. The management information system is not used effectively to support curriculum planning. There is some inadequate accommodation.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

## Grade 2

8. The City Lit's governing body is responsible for the overall strategy and ethos of the organisation. It includes students, staff, councillors and people with relevant professional and business experience. The governors also have responsibilities as charitable trustees and company directors. The principal and executive are responsible for strategic day-to-day management, and the four senior members of the executive take overall responsibility for programme development, quality assurance, resources, finance and planning, and external initiatives. Six senior heads of programmes lead the development of curriculum areas. Twenty programme managers are responsible for the management of full- and part-time teachers and for quality assurance of curriculum delivery. The six senior heads of service oversee the management of central services, marketing, finance, premises, management information systems, and enrolments, information technology (IT) and personnel. In addition to the principal and four senior members of the executive, there are 106 full-time and fractional teaching staff and programme managers, and 680 hourly paid teaching staff.

9. There are standing committees for health and safety, quality assurance and equal opportunities, a senior managers' advisory team attended by all programme and service managers, and five advisory groups. These include the IT advisory group, widening participation strategy group and basic skills strategy group. The City Lit has been accredited as an Investor in People since 1998; this is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

### STRENGTHS

- effective strategic planning
- good communication
- good support and development for staff
- effective strategies to improve retention
- good promotion of equal opportunities
- strong focus on learning in quality assurance

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient measurement of achievement on non-accredited courses
- incomplete management information system
- some weak monitoring of the provision

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- identify clearer roles and responsibilities within new roles
- further develop basic skills strategy and its role in widening participation

- better moderation of internal teaching observations

10. Leadership and management are good. Effective strategic planning is the basis for the work of The City Lit. Clear strategic objectives reflect The City Lit's mission and values. These are set out in the strategic plan against a sound rationale and good analysis of risk factors. A major element in The City Lit's strategy has been the decision to create a new building better suited to the future needs of the organisation. The building project, which forms a significant part of the institute's long-term strategy, has placed considerable demands on the time of governors and senior managers. Following the demolition of one site, some provision was moved to temporary accommodation on several different sites. Due to factors outside the control of The City Lit's management team, the planned completion date for the new building has been considerably delayed, placing further pressure on staff as the provision has been moved into temporary accommodation. Careful planning has helped to minimise the impact of these moves on the learner. For example, learners and those dealing directly with them have been accommodated on the main site, while other staff, including the principal, moved to temporary accommodation elsewhere. Overall, these changes and the difficulties created by them have been well managed.

11. The management structure has been reviewed to reflect strategic priorities, including the building project, more accurately. The roles of staff at different levels are mostly clear. There is, however, confusion over the responsibilities of staff in some new roles. A new post was created at senior management level, to oversee the development of external initiatives. It provides a good focus on strategic objectives to widen participation and develop partnership working. The City Lit recognises that an important aspect of this strategy is the development of basic skills, although at the time of inspection the management of basic skills provision and the basic skills strategy is not sufficiently developed. The value of many of the individual initiatives is evident, but The City Lit's rationale for prioritising particular projects is not fully articulated in the strategic plan.

12. Governors use their wide-ranging experience to focus on strategic rather than operational issues. One executive meeting a month focuses entirely on strategy. Full-time and fractional staff are able to contribute their views on strategic direction through various committees. The senior management advisory team, representing all the programme and service areas of The City Lit, is particularly valued by staff as a forum for communication and representation of views.

13. The City Lit offers a diverse range of programmes, consistent with its strategic objectives. Curriculum planning is effective at programme level. The annual curriculum review is a particularly effective element in the planning process. A wide range of evidence is used to inform discussion and shape plans for future development. This evidence includes observation grades for teaching, the outcomes of course evaluations, retention and achievement data and the gender and ethnicity profiles of learners.

14. Resources for teaching are satisfactory overall, and some curriculum areas are very well equipped. Staff are very satisfied with the level of information and communications technology (ICT) support. There are some problems with the accommodation, which mostly result from the move into temporary accommodation. These include inadequate access to some buildings for those with restricted mobility. Although these problems have not had a serious impact on the learners who already attend courses, they are a source of growing concern to staff and learners. There are also some inappropriate health and safety practices associated with unsuitable accommodation.

15. Communications are effective within The City Lit. The very high proportion of hourly paid staff, the wide range of programme areas, and the additional difficulties created by the building project, make communication throughout the organisation particularly challenging. The City Lit values the contribution of part-time staff and has worked hard to improve communication with them. There is a very good and concise staff handbook which brings together key employment policies and other useful information to help teaching staff to do their jobs well. In addition to a range of committees and the formal reporting structure, regular staff meetings are held, and additional meetings are arranged to keep staff informed about progress on the building project. Staff find the monthly newsletter informative. A regular newsletter is also sent to partners and other stakeholders to keep them in touch with developments. At programme level, the variety of formal and informal meetings help to ensure that part-time staff are kept in touch with developments and have the chance to contribute their views. All staff have access to the intranet, although part-time staff have limited access. A communications strategy has been developed in response to feedback from the last staff survey, which aims to improve communication further through, for example, more effective use of meeting time. A one-day staff conference held twice a year is a valuable opportunity for staff to hear about developments and share good practice. This event is poorly attended by hourly paid staff.

16. There is good support and development for full- and part-time staff. This is important in a context where a very high proportion of staff are part-time. Staff share experience and good practice at an informal level in their curriculum areas and this is a valuable source of professional support. This includes part-time staff. Payment of an attendance allowance has encouraged many part-time staff to participate in events, and, following an increase in this, participation by part-time staff across the college has increased significantly. Over half the hourly paid sessional staff attended an event last year. Staff have been given support to attend external events and conferences, departmental events, and The City Lit's courses. A number have attended a staff development course leading to the European computer driving licence courses, and the training and development team are helping staff to achieve recognition for their teaching skills. There is an induction programme, but this is not well attended by part-time tutors. The annual appraisal system for full- and part-time fractional staff also identifies their needs and the appropriate support to meet them. Development needs directly related to teaching are identified through the cycle of teaching observations; a team of mentors supports staff to make improvements to learning and the quality of provision.

17. The information learning technology (ILT) strategy and the use of ILT mentors in particular have begun to make a significant impact on the wider curriculum. For example, a drama teacher has used the internet to research a recent drama production and the use of software for a creative writing course has been highly successful.

18. The City Lit has developed effective strategies to improve retention rates. These aim to ensure that learners choose courses which match their needs, and that teaching is of a very good quality. Among the initiatives in place are subject specialist advice and guidance; 'visitors passes', which allow a learner to try out a course before enrolling; flexible transfer arrangements to help a change of course, and a 'no cancellation' policy which guarantees that most of courses advertised will be available. The college sets challenging targets for improving retention rates, rising from 75 per cent in 1999-2000 to 80 per cent in 2001-02. Retention rates have risen from 81 per cent in 1999 -2000 to 87 per cent in 2001-02. The retention rate at the time of inspection is 96 per cent.

19. There is not enough recording of progress and measurement of achievement on many non-accredited courses, which comprise most of the college provision. This is an area of weakness acknowledged by the college in its self-assessment report. The use of personal statements of learning (PSLs) was introduced to remedy this problem, but has been largely ineffective, although the process has served to raise staff awareness. They are not used at all on some courses, and they are used inconsistently elsewhere. Tutors do not endorse the learners' statements, so they are of little value as an objective measure of achievement.

20. There is insufficient use of management information to support curriculum planning and review. A new management information system and support team are beginning to provide a range of reliable data to inform planning, but this was not available for all programme areas when curriculum reviews were carried out. The reviews and self-assessment were based on data from different sources, with varying reliability.

21. Governors and college senior managers are given detailed financial information to support decision making, and curriculum managers are provided with a breakdown of course costs for discussion in curriculum reviews.

## **Equality of opportunity**

## **Contributory grade 2**

22. Equality of opportunity is effectively promoted. There are clear and detailed policies for equal opportunities and these are regularly reviewed and revised and take account of recent legislation. A summary of the policies is included in the handbook issued to all students, and the full equal opportunities policy is available in the institute's libraries and enrolment offices. The full policy is also included in the staff handbook. There are satisfactory arrangements for dealing with complaints, although learners do not always use the official system and prefer to approach staff in their programme area.

23. The arrangements for monitoring equality of opportunity are regular and effective. The equal opportunities committee reports on the implementation and monitoring of the policy, and makes recommendations to senior management. Identified post-holders are responsible for monitoring different sections of the policy. Relevant student data is gathered and analysed. The annual monitoring reports are detailed and thorough. Progress against each of the statements in the policy is identified, and new targets are set. The effectiveness of this approach can be seen in the increase in the percentage of ethnic minority students from 22 per cent in 2000-01 to 31 per cent in 2001-02. A separate annual employment report includes a thorough review of the gender and ethnicity patterns of staff recruitment, and an action plan giving equality of opportunity objectives. Ethnic minorities are under-represented on the staff, in comparison with the population of inner London, and the institute has set up a black staff focus group to advise on improvements in procedures. Equality of opportunity is part of the induction course for new staff, but only 20 per cent of them have attended such courses during the past academic year. Other staff training events concerned with equality of opportunity or widening participation are organised on a regular basis. This has included training for managers in the implications of the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

24. The City Lit's commitment to equality of opportunity is made very clear. Good use is made of images representing people from different cultural backgrounds in all promotional materials and in learning materials. Publications are available in different formats such as Braille and audio-tape. Programme managers monitor the recruitment of ethnic minority students to their courses, and, where appropriate, take action to broaden their intake by re-designing the courses, altering the admission procedures, or targeting particular groups. The City Lit is aware that for some popular courses admissions procedures, such as postal or telephone enrolment with payment by credit card may discriminate against potential students from certain groups. It is attempting to resolve this issue. Cultural diversity is highly valued in the institute, and is used positively to enrich many of the courses.

25. Arrangements for providing additional support to learners with a variety of needs are generally effective. A range of financial support for learners is available including support for childcare. Other additional support includes that for literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), study skills, and dyslexia. Much of this support is available through the study skills centre. Students are unable to access this facility on

Fridays. The dyslexia support service is particularly effective, but language support for those with English as an additional language is often inadequate. Students with a very wide range of disabilities can also receive individual support either from specialist staff, or through the loan of equipment. For example, hearing impaired students can attend special classes in certain subjects, use the loop systems that are installed in some classrooms, borrow radio hearing aids, or apply for the support of an interpreter, communicator or note-taker. The City Lit also offers a wide range of discrete courses for adults with learning difficulties, and speech therapy courses.

26. Access to many parts of the institute for learners with restricted mobility is poor, as several of the buildings have no lifts. Staff at the institute do their best to assist such learners, for example by rescheduling lessons to an accessible location if at all possible, but nevertheless some specialist facilities remain inaccessible. The institute's new building has been carefully designed to provide not only full accessibility, but to incorporate many other features to make it welcoming and easy to use for those with disabilities. However, it will be at least two years before the building is ready. Another issue which causes irritation or discomfort to many left-handed or disabled learners is the general use in classrooms of chairs with writing tablets attached to the right arm.

27. The City Lit is increasingly involved in developing provision for under-represented and 'hard to reach' groups. The projects have included family learning for parents' groups in primary schools, skills for learning and life for the homeless, and stress management with seven Chinese community centres across London. Nearly all the institute's programme areas have been involved in at least some of these projects, although further progression opportunities are limited for some participants. Part of the institute's strategy has also been to help build capacity in the area for this sort of work by training the staff of voluntary and other organisations, and a number of initiatives have been directed towards this objective.

## Quality assurance

## Contributory grade 2

28. There is a strong focus on learning in the quality assurance system. This is described in a clear and concise handbook which summarises the main components of the system and how they link together. It gives a timetable for implementing each stage and identifies who has responsibility for action. A particularly strong feature of the system is the close link between the different elements of the system and the clear focus on the quality of learning. For example, the outcomes of classroom observations, and data on retention and achievement inform the annual curriculum review, which then forms the basis for the self-assessment report and for development planning.

29. There are clear arrangements to monitor and improve the quality of teaching. These require that all new staff are observed within their first term of teaching and that one third of all staff are observed annually on a rolling programme. This target was met in most areas of learning for 2001-02 and the outcomes monitored by the senior manager responsible for curriculum and quality assurance, through the curriculum review. Constructive feedback is given to staff during these observations and lessons are graded. Where development needs are identified, action for improvement is agreed and noted on the form. The observers do not always specify action to be taken and some have graded lessons too generously.

30. There are good arrangements for consulting with learners and staff and for acting on this feedback. Staff surveys are carried out by the personnel department and the outcomes are reported to the staff. For example, feedback from staff about communications led to the development of a communications strategy. Programme areas administer the system of course evaluations and these are well used as part of the evidence base for the self-assessment report. The use of 'mystery shoppers', researchers who visit The City Lit in the guise of learners, is an innovative way of testing the quality of learners' experience. This has led to a number of improvements, including changes to the signage, to the appearance of the reception area, and to the training of front-line staff.

31. There is an effective self-assessment procedure, which is fully integrated into the overall quality assurance procedures. It makes good use of the evidence base and analysis arising from the curriculum review. This is valued by curriculum managers and provides senior managers with a thorough overview of the quality of the curriculum. Strengths and weaknesses identified in programme area self-assessments, form the basis for development planning and are directly linked to strategic priorities for action. The City Lit's overall self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses emerging from inspection.

32. There are some weak monitoring arrangements. Senior managers and others do not always have enough information to check that initiatives and procedures are working adequately. For example, the data collected about learner complaints does not include those made directly to programme areas. The work of the learning and quality assurance mentors has not been monitored. The City Lit is unaware of how many staff have been



supported, or the reasons why. In addition, responsibility for monitoring and reviewing policies and initiatives is sometimes unclear.

### **Good Practice**

*The quality assurance handbook given to all staff summarises the whole quality assurance framework in an A4 booklet of less than 40 pages. It is clearly and concisely written, with helpful flow charts showing the quality assurance cycle and the relationship between the main elements of the system, including self-assessment, curriculum and service reviews, staff appraisal and staff development. Policies and supporting documents are included in appendices. This makes clear to all staff their roles and responsibilities for quality assurance without unnecessary bureaucracy.*

*Each of the programme areas at The City Lit has to complete a section on 'equalities considerations' when preparing its self-assessment report. This helps to ensure that all parts of The City Lit are focusing on making improvements in the area of equality.*

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Information & communications technology

### Grade 2

33. The City Lit offers a wide range of courses in computing, at a variety of levels, six days a week and including short, intensive provision. In 2002-03 the programme includes basic computing, computing for unemployed people, computer applications, desktop publishing, web page design and web programming. In the current year, 86 per cent of learners are enrolled on non-accredited courses, many of which offer three levels and clear progression opportunities. There is a small programme of courses accredited through schemes such as the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), and various desktop publishing awards. All courses take place at the Stukeley site. Learners are able to use the learning centre facilities to support their studies. The ICT department also provides courses for a number of external organisations and is involved in various partnership arrangements through externally funded projects.

34. In 2001-02, there were 1,928 learners, accounting for 2,924 enrolments on courses. Learners in ICT accounted for 3.8 per cent of total student hours. Forty-one per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. In the current year, there is a planned programme of 191 courses, excluding summer school courses. Since September 2002, 1076 learners have been recruited. Sixty-six per cent are women, 14 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 3 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 42 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees.

35. The area of learning is managed by the ICT programme manager, who is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance and curriculum development. The department includes one full-time, one 0.5 fractional tutor and 18 hourly paid lecturers who work between three to 18 hours each week.

### STRENGTHS

- good retention and achievement rates
- good standard of teaching
- effective use of good quality resources
- wide range of courses to meet the differing needs of learners

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficiently objective methods for assessing non-accredited courses
- ineffective use of personal statements of learning

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better chairs in computer rooms to ensure effective health and safety practice

36. The standard of learners' work is good and older learners report that they have benefited from the intellectual stimulation of developing new skills. Learners are set challenging assignments, display good standards of skill acquisition and are encouraged to work outside of lesson time to consolidate their learning. Achievement rates on accredited courses are good, at 79 per cent in 2001-02 and learners on non-accredited courses also achieve their personal learning goals. Retention rates were good for all courses in 2001-02 exceeding targets set at 90 per cent and achieving an overall rate of 94 per cent. Attendance is also good and in lessons observed it was 80 per cent.

37. The standard of teaching is good. Eighty-three per cent of lessons observed were good or better. Courses and lessons are well planned with detailed documentation. Tutors are skilful, communicate effectively and their expectations of learners are high. They carefully build on learners' previous knowledge and experience. Tutors provide learners with systematic feedback on their progress. Resources such as data projectors and handouts are used widely and effectively to enhance teaching and learning.

38. The City Lit has good quality resources. Rooms are adequate in size, accessible and there is ample work space. Computers and software are up to date and fit for the purpose. The tutors are very skilled. The learning centre provides a valuable resource for private study. It is used widely by ICT students who appreciate the range of additional resources and support.

39. The range of courses offered is wide and demand is high. Students express satisfaction with almost all aspects of their programmes, including arrangements for payment of fees. Complaints are rare. The provider arranges courses for local employers, such as the London Borough of Camden, and is involved in numerous initiatives aimed at improving the employability of disadvantaged groups. Employers are frequently happy to pay fees on behalf of employees attending mainstream classes. Most learners receive guidance prior to admission. Initial assessment is effective and learners are placed on appropriate and challenging courses. Information about courses and support facilities is readily available. Learning difficulties are identified and arrangements for support are made at entry or early in the course. The Advice and Guidance Centre provides various kinds of support, including help with employability.

40. The management of ICT is satisfactory. Staff are appraised through a college-wide system. This includes lesson observation, with priority given to new teachers. Staff development is encouraged. Skills are enhanced through in-house courses when available, for example in web page design, and externally when necessary, in commercial software. All ECDL assessors are required to do relevant training. Although staff are involved in developing more thorough quality assurance, these processes are

not universally understood.

41. Most learners on non-accredited courses do not receive any formal objective assessment. Although there is some informal assessment, this information is not recorded and collated. The accredited ECDL courses have a verification process and the learning centre meets with all requirements. ECDL candidates receive immediate feedback on their attainment in modular tests.

42. The use of personal statements of learning is ineffective. Although these are widely used, they are not adequate to measure progress and achievement and they are not sufficiently developed or used to inform course review and curriculum planning.

43. Learners praise their courses. They appreciate the inclusive atmosphere in their classrooms. They recognise their tutors' special qualities and abilities and value the genuine interest and the personal support they receive. Many learners believe that their learning will improve their employment opportunities. The facilities and in particular the learning centre are much appreciated, though older learners find the stairs difficult to use.

#### **Good Practice**

*Almost all tutors make effective use of data projectors which have been permanently set up in each teaching area. Learners comment on the novelty and extra interest that this brings to the teaching.*

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

44. The City Lit currently offers 82 courses in health and fitness. These include a wide range of accredited and non-accredited courses. The accredited courses include subjects such as: holistic massage, sports massage, nutrition and diet, a certificate in teaching, and reflexology. This area of learning has the highest number of accredited courses at the The City Lit. The non-accredited courses include a diverse range of physical activities and study subjects. These include: herbal medicine; massage for friends; introduction to anatomy and physiology; T'ai Chi and yoga at various levels; Chi Gung; working with crystals; Alexander Technique; Shiatsu; reflexology; self-defence for women; and several types of keep fit, including unusual ones such as Lambada and Capoeira. Some of the fitness classes are targeted at the over 50s and over 60s. Non-accredited courses vary in length between single sessions and 11 weeks. Many are repeated each term. Accredited courses vary in length from 17 to 48 weeks. The course programme is provided for 40 weeks of the year at various sites in central London.

45. In 2001-02, there were 2,811 learners, accounting for 5,211 enrolments on courses. Learners in health and fitness accounted for 5.8 per cent of total student hours. Thirty-six per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. Since September 2002, a total of 2,332 learners have been recruited. Eighty-one per cent are women, 13 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 3 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 37 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees. In the current term, 139 classes were planned and eight were cancelled.

46. This area of learning is managed by a full-time head of department who has overall responsibility for planning and staffing the programme, budget management and quality assurance. There are two full-time tutor co-ordinators and one fractional co-ordinator, two administrators, and a tutor acting as a quality mentor who also reports to the head of department. The head of department reports to a senior head of programme, who is responsible for approval of the programme and the cancellation of classes. There are 62 hourly paid tutors.

**STRENGTHS**

- good achievement rate by learners
- good standard of teaching
- good learner support
- effective programme planning

**WEAKNESSES**

- some poor resources
- inadequate initial assessment on non-accredited courses
- weak progress monitoring on most accredited courses

## **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- clearer beginner class descriptions

47. There are good levels of learners' achievement on both accredited and non-accredited courses. Pass rates on accredited courses were 90 per cent in 2001-02 and the retention level was 82 per cent. Learners on all courses have a good, or better, understanding of their subjects. On non-accredited courses learners learn, not only how to perform exercises, but also about the effects of exercise and how the body works. Learners achieve their personal objectives, including improvements in stamina, flexibility, balance and co-ordination. Most learners have a good understanding of how much they were progressing.

48. There is a good standard of teaching. Eighty-two per cent of the lessons observed were good or better. Classes are well planned and adapted where appropriate, to accommodate different learner needs. There is regular and effective performance feedback to learners during sessions. Tutors are very skilled at physical demonstrations, have a good rapport with learners, and use methods that stimulate them and maintain their interest and participation, even in late evening sessions. There is a good emphasis on learning in physical activity classes.

49. City Lit's support for learners is good. There are a number of examples of this. One learner who has spent most of life as a traveller and who has little formal education, is being extensively supported by a basic skills tutor as they work towards a vocational qualification. A basic skills tutor works in the evenings to support learners on a vocational course, including a number of learners with language support needs. An interpreter was provided for a hearing impaired learner in a T'ai Chi class. Departmental records show that several learners have received dyslexia support. Two staff in the department are being trained to provide basic skills and dyslexia support.

50. Programme planning is effective. The courses offer a diverse range of accredited and non-accredited subjects and activities and include excellent progression routes. Learners can easily move between related subject areas, both vocational and practical, and/or choose to advance their skills and knowledge in a specific subject or activity. However some classes, described as being for beginners, have learners who have attended classes for several terms, and in some cases several years. Tutors can provide for the diverse needs of such classes, but the content does not reflect what is described in the course outline. Genuine beginners are at a disadvantage. There are well-established research activities which help in the development of the programmes. Good use is made of the summer programme to market and test innovative ideas for courses. Development plans are put in place to manage the introduction of new

courses. Specific groups are well targeted, such as the over 50s and 60s, and women's self defence. In 2000-01 no classes were cancelled and in 2001-02 there were only seven cancellations out of a total of 318 courses offered during the year. The programme attracts a mixed age and ethnic population, which is representative of the diverse central London community.

51. Some resources are poor. Two of the sites where physical activity courses are offered have poor facilities. At one site, where there is a significant number of dynamic exercise classes, the room that is used has a hard, unsprung floor, making it unsuitable for the purpose. Risk assessments carried out by tutors have not identified this health and safety issue. This affects 50 per cent of the exercise/physical classes at this venue. A room at the second site which is used extensively for T'ai Chi, Chi Kung, Yoga, and other activities where relaxation is a significant component of the session, is poorly decorated, dingy, smelly, and the door bell frequently rings to allow other people to access the property. This does not help tutors to create an effective environment for relaxation. This affects 90 per cent of the exercise/physical classes at this venue. Both rooms are also too small for the number of learners in the classes. If all the learners on the register attended at the same time, it would not be possible for the class to proceed safely. There are no adequate changing facilities. This is a particular problem at the site where there are dynamic exercise classes, after which people need to shower and change.

52. Initial assessment is inadequate for non-accredited courses. The use of personal learning statements is inconsistent. In several classes, none had been completed and in all classes observed, the use of learning statements was incomplete. There is insufficient consistent guidance by tutors about how learners should record specific personal objectives, and the design of the form does not allow learners to record more than one personal objective. The statements do not enable or ask learners to identify their starting point. For example, the statements do not establish the level of knowledge, skill or experience in the subject that a learner brings to the class. Pre-exercise questionnaires are used to collect health and medical information, but not recent exercise history. The latter is a relevant issue in relation to adaptation and adjustment of activities to meet learners' needs. In seven of the classes observed, these forms had not been completed, and in others very few of the forms had been completed.

53. Progress monitoring on most accredited courses is weak. These courses represent 22 per cent of the programme as a whole. There are no progress benchmarks against which managers can measure whether class groups are achieving the expected rate of progress. Progress is discussed at team meetings, but there is no quantitative analysis of progress data to systematically determine how classes and tutors are performing.

54. Learners speak well of their experiences at The City Lit. Significant numbers of learners on physical activity courses reported a wide range of health benefits. Most learners, including those on evening classes said that lessons were very stimulating, and that they looked forward to attending each session. Some learners were dissatisfied with the lack of proper changing and shower facilities, and felt that some rooms were

dingy and depressing.

#### **Good Practice**

*A rigorous pre-enrolment process is used for most accredited courses. Learners who enquire about courses are sent detailed and clear information, including a detailed questionnaire which asks the learner about prior knowledge, interests and qualifications. The department analyses these against a set of well-defined criteria. Those who are called for interview are invited to attend for a day. During the day, learners are introduced to the course and the types of activities involved. This gives learners the opportunity to fully assess the relevance of the course to their needs, and tutors to assess whether learners are sufficiently committed and would benefit from the course.*

#### **Poor Practice**

*There is insufficient consistent authentication of tutors' qualifications.*



**Visual & performing arts & media****Grade 1**

55. Visual arts and performing arts were inspected and graded separately because of the large numbers of learners involved. Both aspects of the provision were outstanding.

56. The City Lit provides an extensive programme of visual and performing arts. Courses range from entry to postgraduate level and include both accredited and non-accredited courses. In the visual arts the main accreditation is through vocational awarding bodies, but some courses have university accreditation. There is no accredited provision in music. Music programmes include music appreciation, instrumental and vocal tuition, musicianship and music technology within a variety of traditions, including jazz, classical, rock, Indian, folk and pop music. Dance provision includes tap, ballet, jazz and folk dancing. In addition to the range of drama and speech courses, The City Lit also offers magician classes, stand-up comedy, clowning, a repertory company and an Uta Hagen workshop. Programmes in the visual arts include courses in fine art, foundation art, sculpture, ceramics, stone carving, printmaking, jewellery, textiles, video, animation, digital media, calligraphy, stained glass, basketry and bookbinding. Currently most of the classes operate from the Bolt Court Centre. Partnership arrangements with the Lauderdale House Arts Centre in Highgate have resulted in a small number of digital media courses for specific groups such as: University of the Third Age, refugees, and young adults with learning difficulties. Summer schools have been developed and Sunday courses are becoming a feature of the programme offer.

57. The visual arts programme is managed by a senior head of programme. The area is organised into three programmes, with four programme managers, two of whom job share. There are two full time and 10 fractional tutor co-ordinators and three additional tutor teachers on fractional contracts with course co-ordination responsibility. Twenty-one tutors are hourly paid and work for six hours or more each week, with a further 95 working for less than six hours per week.

58. In 2001-02, there were 4,652 learners, accounting for 7,495 enrolments on visual arts courses. Learners in visual arts represent 20.9 per cent of total student hours. Forty-five per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. Since September 2002, a total of 3,530 learners have been recruited. Seventy-six per cent are women, 8 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 4 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 49 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees.

59. The performing arts area is managed by the senior head of performing arts. The head of drama, speech and dance, and the head of music manage six full-time and fractional academic tutors, four administrative staff, and 134 part-time tutors, who work an average of four hours each week. The senior head of performing arts is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance and the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

60. In 2001-02, there were 6,389 learners, accounting for 10,933 enrolments on

performing arts courses. Learners in performing arts accounted for 24.8 per cent of total learners' hours. Approximately 33 per cent of learners were entitled to concessionary fees. In the current year, there is a planned programme of 600 courses. Since September 2002, a total of 4,749 learners have been recruited. Sixty-one per cent are women, 14 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 3 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 17 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees.

### **STRENGTHS**

- very good achievement
- very high standards of finished work in visual arts
- excellent standards of teaching and learning
- enrichment of learning by professionally experienced teachers
- good digital, computing and video facilities in visual arts
- good progression in visual arts
- very good support and guidance for learners

### **WEAKNESSES**

- some inadequate accommodation and resources
- insufficient recording of progress and achievement on non-accredited courses

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- further development of pre-course information and advice
- better mechanisms for identifying needs and attracting new learners

#### Visual Arts

61. Learners achieve a very high standard of work. On accredited courses, pass rates are at, or above, the national average, with 100 per cent achievement on a range of courses. On non-accredited courses the standard of work is consistently high. Learners achieve awards, and are given exhibitions and commissions which often result in opportunities to work as artists and designers. The best work combines technical competence with creative ability. The exhibition of basketry work included traditional pieces, as well as sculptural forms and artefacts and one learner was awarded a medal of excellence by a national awarding body. On the stone carving course lessons stimulate further research and the production of design ideas are well beyond the requirements of the course. Learners exceed their personal learning goals and achieve

standards beyond their own and teachers' expectations.

62. The rate of progression in visual arts is good. The programme has been developed to both support learners' differing abilities and experience and offers a comprehensive range of progression opportunities. Learners progress to other accredited or non-accredited courses within The City Lit, to other colleges, or into employment. For example, learners on the non-accredited City Lit fine art course, can prepare for postgraduate courses or for self-employment. The course equally meets the needs of crafts people who do not opt for the higher education route, but who want to learn a new craft skill. Overall progression rates are good. On the foundation course, approximately 80 per cent of learners are placed in higher education each year. In the current year, approximately 61 per cent of learners on accredited courses came from non-accredited provision.

63. Teaching standards are outstanding. Ninety-three per cent of lessons observed were good, or better. Learners are challenged during lessons. In watercolour painting, learners used a combination of traditional and non-traditional methods and materials to produce expressive experimental pieces, stretching the learners' personal experience and expectations. In painting, students linked colour theory to practice, to define space in terms of colour and temperature. As a result, learners' expectations of colour were challenged as they developed still-life pieces. Tutors have high expectations of learners. On a beginners digital technologies course, by the fourth week learners had mastered using a digital video camera and software, while developing concepts, images and storyboards. Tutors skilfully promote group presentations and group critiques to give feedback and raise achievement among less-confident learners. Tutors work to create a climate of openness in which students are happy to share ideas. One group visited an exhibition at Tate Modern. At the end of the day they shared their sketchbooks and ideas with each other, recognising the range of perceptions in the group. A member of staff has recently developed a distance learning package in partnership with Tate Modern, to familiarise students who cannot visit collections personally.

64. Tutors, who are often practising artists and designers, inspire, motivate and significantly enrich learning. They bring samples of their own work to stimulate ideas, introduce new techniques and inspire confidence with materials. During one lesson about surface printing on clay, the tutor showed how a wide variety of methods could be used to decorate pieces. Stencils were used with different coloured slips, underglaze and oxides which the tutor had used in their own work. The tutor showed learners how to produce many variations and to compare results, sharpening their ability to make design judgements. Learners are encouraged to examine and discuss the tutor's work in detail. In some art history classes learners brought in slides, artefacts and photographs and carried out research on behalf of the tutor and the group. The sharing of work allows learners to feel equal to tutors as fellow professionals, artists and craftsmen.

65. Tutors offer effective individual support for learners and there is good awareness of equality of opportunity. On the foundation course, the teacher provides additional support for learners with dyslexia and mental health problems, as well as elderly

learners. Learners in the community courses produce interesting and highly individual pieces of digital art work. Teachers know their learners well and are committed to their success, frequently helping them outside of normal lessons. However, pre-course information and advice is not sufficiently effective to ensure that learners select the most appropriate course.

66. There is not enough recording of progress and achievement on non-accredited courses. There has been a lot of progress in the assessment of learning and learners receive good individual feedback, on an on-going basis. This is not detailed in either course records, or learners' records of achievement.

67. Most facilities in digital IT and video are very good. There is a specialist Mac suite accessed by all learners at the centre. The room is well laid out to facilitate group work, paired work and individual access. Life-drawing students used a model, and software packages to produce interesting images. Some of the accommodation and resources are inadequate. In some studios, space is cramped and inhibits the production of work. Some venues have limited access for elderly learners, or those with mobility difficulties. A new building is planned for completion in January 2005.

68. There is an excellent range of courses. New courses are developed on the basis of feedback from learners and there is a growing number of courses for new groups in the community. Approximately 50 per cent of learners are new to visual arts each year. The City Lit's systems for identifying new needs and attracting new learners are limited.

69. Visual arts is well led and effectively managed. The area has undergone significant development over the past three years. Changes in the staffing structure have resulted in the establishment of tutor teacher and tutor co-ordinator posts, supporting the range of hourly paid staff who teach on a daily basis. Performance indicators show that staff development for this group has contributed to the increased percentage of course review forms returned, by almost 30 per cent. Staff are regularly observed and given feedback on their performance and feel valued as key team members, who often suggest and develop new courses. The self-assessment report was comprehensive and accurate.

#### Performing Arts

70. There are consistently good levels of achievement. The standards of practical, technical and theory work throughout the provision are very good. Achievement rates on accredited drama courses are good; in 2001-02, 91 per cent of learners who had started on an open college access certificate achieved accreditation. Achievement and retention rates on accredited music courses have been excellent, at 100 per cent over the past two years. Learners are set and satisfy challenging standards in relation to their prior skills and experience. For example, in one intermediate keyboard lesson, learners achieved standards of musicality and technique well above that which would normally be expected. Learners value the broad range of personal, social and learning skills they develop, in addition to specialist and professional skills. Retention rates on accredited

programmes are good, at over 90 per cent, those for non-accredited programmes are rising and currently average 81 per cent. Attendance rates are satisfactory. In lessons observed, the attendance rate was 77 per cent.

71. There are very good standards of teaching and learning, 84 per cent of lessons observed were good or better. In drama, the teaching and learning standards are consistently good or very good. In music, there is a significant amount of outstanding teaching. Tutors use an effective range and variety of teaching methods, and develop supportive and effective working relationships with learners. Learners make very good progress and work with a good deal of enthusiasm. In a class on public speaking, sensitive individual guidance by the tutor allowed learners to successfully overcome nerves and give a speech to the whole group on a topic of personal interest. In a very small number of less-successful sessions, learning is not effectively adapted to meet individual needs. For example, in a small number of ensemble classes, traditional rehearsal methods used by teachers were not effective in ensuring that all learners made satisfactory progress. The content of the curriculum is good. The careful and progressive planning of a broad-ranging repertoire in music supports and challenges learners' development. There is good use of handouts, study books, CDs and resources to support learning in music.

72. Learners benefit from the up-to-date expertise and experience of tutors. Many of the tutors are qualified to teach in their specialist subjects as well as being highly regarded as practising professionals. They inspire learners, and their currency within their subject areas motivates learners and ensures that teaching and learning takes account of the best practice available. This greatly enhances the curriculum. In music, the programme includes work with an established composer and the educational department of a major London orchestra. Learners from woodwind, brass and string classes can participate in workshops on a newly commissioned piece, led by the composer, including an exploration of learners' response to the music. Learners participating in workshops will receive complementary tickets to the performance of the work at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Excellent piano accompanists are effectively used to enhance vocal and ensemble learning sessions.

73. There is some unsuitable accommodation and music teaching sometimes takes place in classrooms which are cramped and unsuitable for performance work. Noise pollution from neighbouring classrooms and external roadworks affects learning. Learners complain that classrooms are often too hot. There is no live sound room for learners on music technology courses and no rehearsal rooms for private study. A speech class takes place in a cafeteria. There is insufficient equipment for amplified rehearsal to support learning. Music equipment is not secure. New building plans involve many improvements which will resolve these issues.

74. The assessment of learner's progress on non-accredited courses is not sufficiently developed. Progress and achievement is monitored at the end of courses, but learners interviewed suggest that more written feedback on progress during courses would be appreciated.

75. There is an extensive range of courses which provide progression opportunities from beginners level to professional master classes. There are many opportunities to enhance learning. For example, drama provision includes career development classes and a small-scale touring theatre company which works with the local community. Music appreciation classes are planned, to relate to performances at leading concert halls. Professional and semi-professional performance groups provide further opportunities for public performance and the development of professional skills. Many learners progress through the curriculum range from beginners to advanced levels, involving a wide range of courses. Many drama learners progress to drama school and into the profession.

76. All learners are appreciative of the support and guidance they receive. The City Lit's initial guidance and advice on the choice of courses is thorough, and learners are placed on appropriate courses. There is a designated personal advisory scheme for drama learners. Specialist tutors give appropriate and sensitive support.

77. The curriculum is well planned and there is evidence that new quality assurance measures are beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Communications are good throughout the provision and staff are supported effectively. Some staff make good use of the range of staff development opportunities available to them. In some cases, line management responsibilities are not fully understood by staff.

#### The views of learners

78. The learners interviewed commented that they are very appreciative of the teaching and learning standards in visual and performing arts. In performing arts they value the support and individual guidance they receive at the beginning and throughout the duration of their courses. They appreciate the range and depth of the curriculum and the dedication of their tutors. In visual arts, learners also appreciate their courses and feel that they benefit from the use of tutors' own work in practical demonstrations. Learners value the support and the encouragement they receive to use London's museums and galleries as a resource. Some learners commented on the cramped accommodation, but did not feel that it was significantly detrimental to their learning. Many learners are prepared to travel from towns throughout the southeast of England to attend specialist classes. Some learners work in central London and use flexi-time working in order to attend classes. Some learners aspire to make a career change, others are updating their technical or technological skills. Some learners state that they are using the professional tuition to maintain their skills and find they still have much to learn.

### **Good Practice**

*In a beginners' session in digital photography, the tutor introduced the group of learners to Photoshop. Learners then worked in pairs to manipulate given images. The lecturer circulated, supporting the pairs, but was able to highlight group issues using the digital projection system. Having gained confidence, students then worked successfully on individual pieces. Many learners keen to reinforce their learning and develop new ideas booked in for the open access session that afternoon.*

## English, languages & communications

## Grade 2

79. The City Lit provides an extensive programme, covering 21 languages, many at seven different levels with flexible entry points and progression routes. The programme offers opportunities to gain qualifications. There is a wide range of European and non-European languages and courses in Celtic and classical languages. The languages programme operates for 51 weeks a year and includes some Sunday courses and taster programmes. There is a language festival every year. In addition, a programme to develop language skills for work includes business language training, translation courses accredited by the linguistic organisations and teacher training. Partnership work includes research into the language training needs of businesses.

80. In 2001-02, there were 5,564 learners accounting for 10,298 enrolments on courses. Learners in languages accounted for 16.2 per cent of total student hours. Approximately 29 per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. Since September 2002 a total of 3,906 learners have been recruited. Sixty-three per cent are women, 9 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 2 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 30 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees.

81. The area is managed by the senior head of languages. There are four full-time and two fractional post-holders and over 80 hourly paid tutors. The senior head of languages is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance and the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

### STRENGTHS

- very good achievement levels on all courses
- very effective teaching
- excellent range of courses
- very good professional support for tutors

### WEAKNESSES

- some unsystematic feedback to learners about progress on non-accredited programmes
- some unsuitable accommodation

82. There are very good levels of achievement on all courses. Learners make good progress, and many have exceeded their own expectations. Results for accredited courses are very good, with more than 90 per cent of learners achieving qualifications. Many learners progress through a number of levels, starting as beginners and reaching fluency level. Some learners who are already fluent, find classes challenging, which



helps them to maintain their language skills. Other learners, with particular difficulties such as dyslexia, start courses having no previous experience of foreign language learning, and have exceeded their own expectations. At higher levels, learners are using or acquiring transferable key skills in a variety of contexts by, for example, researching and presenting information on a variety of cultural, historical and topical subjects. Most learners wish to continue to attend classes in order to make more progress and to maintain and practise the skills they have already acquired. Learners are using their new skills in a variety of contexts, including visits to relatives, holidays, work, hobbies and interests. Learners are knowledgeable about progression opportunities. In many cases they enrol for other subjects, including new languages, as a result of their studies.

83. Teaching is very effective. Seventy-eight per cent of lessons observed were graded good or better. Lessons are appropriately planned and well paced. Most tutors show a good awareness of learners' needs and actively engage learners' interest. The content of lessons is relevant and inclusive. Many learners choose to do extra work outside class contact time. They receive constructive feedback. Tutors are aware of the progress being made by learners, although there are not enough formal systems in place to monitor, record, analyse and respond to the feedback. In all classes there is a friendly, but professional atmosphere. Tutors set challenging goals for learners, and guide them sensitively and intelligently.

84. There is an excellent range of courses. The City Lit provides clear progression routes and adapts its courses to the interests of learners. For example, in Spanish there are level 5 courses in art and culture, discussion and conversation, history and literature, language and culture, and translation. Many learners choose to enrol on several courses to supplement their learning. There are many taster courses and workshops and some are offered to test the demand for courses. There is a languages festival every year with special workshops and events. Accreditation is chosen to reflect the needs of learners, for example, those learners considering becoming translators.

85. There is very good professional support for tutors. There are opportunities for professional and personal development, including teacher training courses, workshops for sharing ideas or good practice, stress management, presentation skills and ICT. Staff are offered discounts for any of the courses offered by The City Lit and an attendance allowance for additional training, payable three times a year. New members of staff are invited to observe an experienced tutor in class. Staff are observed on a rotational basis once every three years, and comprehensive, constructive feedback is offered. Where problems are identified, the tutor is given help to solve them, and a further observation may take place. Tutors may also request to be observed. Staff are asked to evaluate their courses and action is taken to remedy any problems. For example, last year there was a marked drop in retention rates. Figures were analysed, and as a result changes were made to the initial assessment process for accredited courses.

86. Most teaching staff are native speakers and well qualified. The City Lit has introduced its own teacher training programme for language teachers. Most classrooms are well equipped and tutors use a good variety of learning resources, including books,

newspapers, videos, tapes and games. There is also a library and resource centre which is well used by language learners. It has computers with internet access, foreign newspapers and magazines, relevant course books, and a good range of dictionaries. Learners are also able to watch the news in the language of their choice and borrow cassettes and videos.

87. All learners on accredited courses are required to attend a pre-course interview to discuss the demands and suitability of the course for them. Learners select non-accredited courses with the aid of The City Lit's prospectus and, where necessary, with advice from members of the language team. Potential learners are given a visitor's pass to enable them to attend the first lesson of a course before deciding to enrol. After enrolment, learners may transfer to another class within the first three weeks, as long as there is space in the new class. Sometimes learners will choose a class because it is conveniently timed, rather than because it is at the right level.

88. The languages office is open for learners during the day and learners with special needs are supported by their tutors. For example, one tutor learned British Sign Language so that she could help a hearing-impaired learner to speak French on one of her beginners' courses. That learner has now progressed to level 3. Another tutor specialises in helping learners with dyslexia and has developed strategies and learning materials for this purpose. Some staff have been trained to offer one-to-one support for learners with additional learning needs. This is scheduled into the programme before, or after, classes. A file of case studies is kept in the languages office to monitor learners' choices.

89. Some formative assessment is not systematically recorded on non-accredited programmes. At the beginning of the courses, learners are invited to complete a personal statement of learning, which establishes learners' aims and the outcomes they hope to achieve. However, all learning outcomes for a group are the same and the statements are not used to record milestones in achievement. They are largely used as initial questionnaires and for final evaluation; there is no established way of recording learners' progress. Some learners are unclear about their learning outcomes; there is currently no way for them to record on-going learning, particularly if they produce no written work. The problem is particularly marked where the class is concentrating on listening, speaking and reading, rather than writing. Some learners' habitual mistakes are passed over without correction. In some cases, learners' questions are not dealt with adequately in the class, on the grounds that they are too difficult or not relevant.

90. Some of the accommodation is unsuitable. Some classrooms are set up traditionally, with tables in rows. This inhibits communication and movement, and is unsuitable for language classes. There is a high level of noise in some classes. Learners are unable to hear the tutor easily, and communications are seriously impaired, particularly in the context of group or pair work. There are lifts in some venues, but access is not always easy for people with restricted mobility. Venues are not always clearly signposted from the main streets, and some new learners have difficulty in locating the buildings.

91. Learners find the teaching stimulating and of a very good standard. They appreciate the variety and range of levels in the course programme and the possibilities for additional learning. Learners appreciate the opportunities to extend their knowledge of a language and to maintain language skills, as well as progressing to new levels.

## Humanities

## Grade 2

92. The City Lit's humanities provision includes access to higher education courses which have four different formats. These are: four day, two day, one day and evening courses operating over one or two years. There is a pre-access course, including mathematics and English at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE), and a range of psychology and counselling courses which include a diploma in counselling programme. A range of other courses includes classical studies, business, history, creative writing, literature, English as a second language (ESL), and philosophy. Many of these courses are not accredited, although there are qualifications in business start up, ESL, business English, and one philosophy course.

93. In 2001-02, there were 5,110 learners, accounting for 8,770 enrolments on courses. Of these, counselling and access provision accounted for 1,256 learners and 1,860 enrolments. Learners in humanities accounted for 14.1 per cent of total student hours. Forty-six per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. At the time of inspection, a total of 4,082 learners have been recruited since September 2002. Sixty-nine per cent are women, 16 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, with the highest percentage within the access programmes; 9 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 43 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees. The area is managed by the senior head of liberal arts. There are two full-time area heads, two fractional staff and over 100 hourly paid staff.

### STRENGTHS

- very good standards of work
- excellent contributions by learners
- stimulating, enthusiastic teaching
- effective support for learners
- extensive range of courses for a wide cross section of learners

### WEAKNESSES

- some inadequate management of learning programmes
- some poor teaching accommodation

94. Standards of work are very good, with excellent contributions by learners in lessons. Some assignments, written by learners on access and counselling courses are extremely well researched, organised and presented. Individual learners make considerable progress in their writing during their courses and learners' work on creative writing and writing courses is exceptional. Many learners have had their work published, and The City Lit has a considerable reputation in this area of study. Some

writing by learners on creative writing courses is extremely effective.

95. Learners make excellent contributions in most classes. They bring a wealth of previous experience and knowledge, which they share to enhance the learning of whole groups. Learners in a class about Greek drama showed impressive knowledge of the Greek theatre, were able to analyse the text in translation with great perception, and comment on the relative merits of different translations. In a GCSE English class, learners' responses in an analysis of two poems by William Blake were often at a level appropriate to an advanced (A) level course. They demonstrated a real understanding of Blake's themes and style.

96. Achievement levels on the counselling skills diploma course are good. In 2001-02, 93 per cent of learners who completed the course achieved the diploma. Achievement levels for access courses have fallen during the past two years. Retention rates are also low on some access courses, for instance, 69 per cent on the two-day course for 2001-2. The pass rate at A\*-C grade on the GCSE courses in mathematics and English are well above the national average of 47.9 per cent.

97. A good deal of the teaching is stimulating and successful. Seventy-three per cent of lessons observed were good, or better. Many tutors successfully communicate their own enthusiasm to learners. In most classes tutors give learners opportunities to contribute, which they do enthusiastically. Discussion is often lively and well informed. There is good group work in some classes. Learners work well together and encourage each other. In the counselling course, learners often take a major responsibility for presenting ideas and managing activities. Most tutors ensure that a sense of purpose is maintained. In a few classes the teaching is much less effective. Tutors attempt to cover topics in too much detail and depth for the length of the course. Their classes are dominated by tutor presentations, with insufficient time for discussion, and for learners to develop their own ideas and interests. Occasionally, teaching lacks focus, variety, and clear learning objectives. Most courses are well planned, but there are variations in the effectiveness of schemes of work. Some tend to list the content, without indicating methods to ensure that learning is enjoyable and productive.

98. Most tutors support learners very effectively. Learners on access and counselling diploma courses benefit from regular individual tutorials and their progress is reviewed regularly and thoroughly. On the business start-up course, learners receive very thorough individual guidance on a project. In many classes tutors encourage learners and give clear advice about how to improve their work, or to develop their knowledge and understanding. On those accredited courses where written assignments are crucial, the written comments on learners' work are extensive, and give detailed suggestions for further improvement. Learners' work clearly benefits from this. In many classes learning is helped by good quality hand-outs. For instance, in a film studies class, learners were given a synopsis of the film, and useful background information. This ensured that in viewing scenes from the film, the learners had enough knowledge to enable them to respond in an informed way. Learners value the support they receive from tutors and also from the study skills support staff, who give very considerable help

to individuals who have difficulty organising and presenting work. However, the support centre at the main site is not open for the whole week.

99. There is an extensive range of courses. These are thoughtfully planned to provide a wide range of options to a wide range of learners. The non-accredited courses in history and literature are based around particular periods of history each term, so that courses complement each other. In other subjects, such as film and classical studies, courses develop progressively on a termly basis. Many courses have unusual topics, which attract learners from a wide geographical area. The non-accredited provision is reviewed annually and careful account is taken of evaluations by learners, and how successful courses are in recruiting and retaining learners.

100. Many of the tutors contribute significantly to the quality of learning. They are very well qualified in the subjects which they teach, and offer learners exceptional knowledge of their subjects. Many have higher degrees, experience of university teaching, have published books on the subjects they teach, or have other media experience. In many lessons learners benefit directly from this, and value the expertise of their tutors.

101. Curriculum leaders maintain contact with the large number of part-time staff in a variety of ways. Many decisions and plans are made by a relatively small central team, but care is taken to ensure that all staff are consulted and informed. Email is a significant way of conveying important information and exchanging ideas. Managing the extensive provision, with many part-time tutors, poses particular problems which are still to be resolved. Curriculum leaders make sure that all new staff have copies of the staff handbook and are available to offer additional help.

102. Some teaching accommodation is poor. Some rooms do not have enough natural light and are in poor condition. On some courses learners spend long periods in these environments. In most rooms there are no desks or tables, which makes it difficult for students to write, and manage files and other materials during classes. Noise from other classes and corridors reaches distracting proportions in many classes. The library offers extensive bookstock and other resources to support humanities learners, but provides very restricted and cramped study space.

103. Some management of learning programmes is inadequate. There are inconsistencies in the way that learners' attendance is monitored, personal learning statements developed and used, and how progress is recorded. Curriculum managers observe lessons, but the amount of useful feedback to staff varies. In some cases it is extremely brief. The self-assessment report is accurate in some respects, but fails to identify some of the weaknesses in teaching, and the inconsistencies of practice.

104. The learners interviewed enjoy the friendly atmosphere and the support they receive from tutors and from sharing with other learners. They appreciate being taught by tutors who are notable in their fields and who have considerable subject expertise. Learners report that they feel their ideas are respected and that learning at The City Lit

has opened up new opportunities. Many learners wish that the courses could last longer. A number of learners think that some of the accommodation is poor, noise levels are too high and the closure of the learning centre on Fridays restricts study opportunities.

## Foundation programmes

## Grade 4

105. Essential skills and learner services offer a range of services including dyslexia and learning support, and learning opportunities within the learning centre for all levels, from pre-entry to postgraduate level. Basic skills provision is a part of this service. Discrete basic skills courses are offered in the day and evening, primarily at the main site. Most of the courses are delivered in one-term modules. Basic skills provision includes a two-hour course, three mornings a week. Twelve students currently make use of this facility. There is no afternoon group provision and a limited part-time evening facility at entry and pre-entry level. At level 1 and beyond, students have good progression opportunities, including pre-GCSE courses. Basic skills support is also offered within study skills support, mainly in the form of drop-in sessions, and within the one-to-one sessions for people with dyslexia. This includes a full diagnostic service.

106. In 2001-02, there were 244 learners, accounting for 412 enrolments on courses. Learners in basic skills accounted for 0.8 per cent of total student hours. Enrolments involving concessionary fees amounted to 95.6 per cent. Since September 2002, a total of 176 learners have been recruited. Fifty-two per cent are women, 31 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 23 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 100 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees. Of this number, 13 learners were receiving support for dyslexia and 47 learners were receiving additional support through the study centre. The department estimated that 30 per cent of those using the study skills centre provision were at level 1 or below, but that only 2 per cent were at entry level or below. Ninety-five learners at level 1 or below made use of the study skills centre provision for 2001/2002.

107. The area is managed by a full-time head of programme area. In basic skills there are two fractional staff and seven part-time staff. In the learning support area, which includes some responsibilities to support basic skills, there are four full-time staff, a 0.5 support staff member, five fractional staff and nine part-time tutors.

### STRENGTHS

- effective development of personal and life skills
- good teaching in numeracy classes and dyslexia support
- good communication between staff

### WEAKNESSES

- poor attendance rates
- retention rates falling
- inadequate provision to meet needs of beginners
- inadequate individual learning plans



108. Most teaching is satisfactory and 54 per cent of lessons observed were good, or better. In the best lessons, tutors used group discussions to enable learners to explore problems together. Numeracy classes are well taught. For example, in a mathematics class, board work and lively discussions are used. In role play in a beginners' numeracy session, learners wrote cheques for items sold by other learners. In one-to-one dyslexia support sessions for learners with dyslexia, the materials and methodology are tailored to suit the needs of the learners. These strengths are recognised in the self-assessment report. In some basic skills groups, learning is marred by the domination of other more vocal learners and tutors do not always manage classroom dynamics well.

109. Learners' personal and life skills are developed effectively by The City Lit's provision. Learners develop self-awareness, self-confidence and independent learning skills. Many of them improve oral skills and levels of assertiveness. One woman reported that attending the class helped her to recover from a nervous breakdown; another said that he had become more comfortable with other people. On some courses, learners have been able to develop advanced oral skills, but this is less evident with speakers for whom English is an additional language.

110. Attendance rates are poor in many whole-group sessions, the average attendance for those lessons observed was 60 per cent. Retention rates for non-accredited courses fell from 86 per cent in 2000-01 to 72 per cent in 2001-02, although retention rates for the accredited provision remained steady, at 84 per cent for both years. Of 176 learners recruited in the current year, 112 learners are attending classes. Achievement on discrete accredited courses is falling, it was 64 per cent for 2000-01 and 52 per cent for 2001-02. There is evidence that study support improves retention rates for all courses. In 2001-02, 85 per cent of learners who received support were retained. Eighty-eight per cent of learners receiving individual dyslexia support were retained on The City Lit's courses.

111. The City Lit recognises the importance of developing basic skills provision. The basic skills department is very new, having been introduced following a 2001 basic skills quality initiative, in which the college made a commitment to implement a basic skills strategy and develop the provision. Until 2001, basic skills had been part of the pre-access fresh start provision. The basic skills team have regular meetings and training sessions. There is a strong team spirit and a shared vision for future developments. Systems of communication are well-organised and support high numbers of part-time and fractional staff. For example, a system of questionnaire sheets in the study skills centre enables resources to be evaluated and information shared.

112. The learners interviewed report that teachers are friendly, dedicated and professional. On some courses, learners said the pace is too fast. In the study skills drop-in provision, students at entry level feel that they need more specialist tuition for

longer periods. Most learners expressed the need for more hours of tuition, including afternoon classes. Many learners complained about the swivel-top desk-chairs, especially left-handed students.

113. The provision is inadequate in meeting the needs of beginners. The range of abilities is too wide in some classes and tutors sometimes focus more on speakers whose first language is English, or on higher level learners. This is exacerbated by the inappropriate placement of learners in some courses. In some groups there is insufficient distinction between whole group and individual activities. In drop-in study skills sessions, work sometimes lacks focus and tutors are not always well matched to the very varied needs of the learners. In cases where study skills provision works well, students receive very specialised help that enables them to make considerable progress.

114. Most teaching and learning materials are satisfactory although some materials are devised for young children, and are not appropriate for adults. In a basic skills evening group there was noise interference from a music class below and a lot of scraping of chairs from the class above. Another group had a room change at short notice. The new room was too small and contained poor seating. There is insufficient integration of ICT into the curriculum, although there are plans to remedy this problem. In one basic skills room, the chairs have very small swivel desks that are not suitable for studying or writing. Left-handed students found such desks impossible to use. Advice and guidance take place in a staff office which does not provide a professional, private environment for new learners, although plans for better accommodation are in place.

115. Individual learning plans are inadequate. They are matched with the core curriculum by listing a reference, but do not include specific, meaningful details. In most cases objectives are too general to assess progress. Follow-up progress records are often vague and many do not have dates, further impeding the ability to judge learners' progress. Learners on accredited courses do not keep systematic portfolios during the first half of the teaching year. At the time of the inspection, some students on accredited courses were not sure whether they would be following an accreditation scheme. In a mini-induction for two new students, health and safety procedures were effectively included and existing students introduced themselves to newcomers in a welcoming, informative manner. However, some aspects of the mini-induction were not relevant to existing learners.

**Community action****Grade 2**

116. The Centre for Deaf People (the centre) offers a wide variety of specialised accredited and non-accredited programmes. These attract hearing impaired learners from the local area and other parts of Britain. The work of the centre is divided into four main areas: communication development and professional training; the continuing education service; sign language and professional development; and the further and higher education support service. These areas offer specialist, part-time programmes in: lipreading; professional training and development; English; numeracy; information technology; British Sign Language; specialist support for learners who attend City Lit courses; and support for learners who attend over 30 further, higher and adult education institutions in London and the surrounding area.

117. In 2001-02, there were 766 learners, accounting for 1,183 enrolments on courses. Learners attending programmes accounted for 5.3 per cent of total student hours. Fifty-two per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. Since September 2002, a total of 662 learners have been recruited. Sixty-nine per cent are women, 18 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 73 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability within the continuing education service and 24 per cent within the other three main areas. Throughout the whole programme, 55 per cent of learners are entitled to concessionary fees.

118. The highly specialist staff include the head of centre, three managers, 16 full-time and 10 fractional staff and 14 hourly paid teaching staff, as well as approximately 80 other hourly paid staff.

**STRENGTHS**

- good standards of learning and teaching
- extensive curriculum for learners
- effective information and guidance service

**WEAKNESSES**

- ineffective use of information learning technology
- insufficient internal verifiers

119. Learners make good progress in developing their skills and knowledge. The standard of work achieved is to a good, or very good standard. Learners are highly motivated and state that programmes have a significant effect on their lives, including increased confidence, resolved relationships, hope, ability to find work and the ability to help others. Learners are able to clearly articulate what they want to achieve and why they want to do it. Retention rates and the achievement of qualifications are good for

2001-02 and compare favourably to national data for this area. In 2001-02, 703 learners were entered for qualifications. Of these, 89 per cent were successful in achieving a range of accreditation, including British Sign Language qualifications and driving theory tests. In 2001-02, 392 learners enrolled for non-accredited provision. The retention rate for these learners was 82 per cent, the figure for those in accredited provision was 80 per cent. The development of the management information systems has made it easier for staff to monitor attendance, and absences are followed up with a letter and a telephone call. Learners who do not attend their first booked session are also contacted. Most learners attend regularly and are punctual. The average attendance for the lessons observed was 80 per cent.

120. There is a great deal of good learning and teaching taking place. Eighty-one per cent of the lessons observed were good, or better. Most lessons are very well planned and managed. Teaching methods include pair work, discussion, role-play, role reversal, learner presentation, individual and group work. In most lessons, the teaching methods are stimulating and encourage interaction by learners. In sign language classes, clear explanations are given to learners about hand shapes and how these can be improved. In lip-reading classes the continuous reinforcement of the recognition of lip patterns has enabled learners to maintain their skills.

121. The centre offers an extensive range of accredited and non-accredited provision. Programme planning and the content of the curriculum portfolio is influenced by feedback from learners, end of course reviews, external agencies and the hearing impaired community. The programmes are offered at all levels, from pre-entry to advanced levels. However, the centre does not currently offer courses to learners with hearing impairments who have complex learning difficulties. The Further and Higher Education Support Service within the centre holds a database which monitors support, progress, assessment, achievement, type of learner and support offered. The service employs communicators, note takers, interpreters, lip speakers and offers additional tutorials as and when required. Every support worker receives a skills assessment before they are employed by the service.

122. Learners are offered clear information about the courses. There is a centralised service. Three staff are available for one hour every week throughout the year, to offer information guidance and assessment to potential learners. Specialist staff provide numeracy, English and sign language advice, so that potential learners have the opportunity to discuss programmes in detail and what support they may require. Learning support needs are assessed and provided for in most cases. However, learners who are hearing impaired and dyslexic are not supported; the centre has been trying, without success, for several years to find appropriate staff and/or training in this area.

123. The centre is well managed. Staff meetings are regular: there are two meetings a month, one for all staff and one for programme staff. In addition, newsletters, individual meetings, lunchtime meetings and informal meetings support communications. A range of staff development opportunities is available for all staff. Lesson observations and appraisals support the quality improvement strategies. However, although appraisals

are given to full-time staff, they are not systematic for part-time staff. Improvements to the provision are made in response to staff and learners' comments. End of course evaluations from learners and staff also help in the development of the centre.

124. Achievement and progression is continuously checked, using specific assessment procedures to ensure that learners understand and are aware of their progress and what they need to do to achieve their targets. The checking of achievement and progression in some classes is through observation and set tasks. Learners use this assessment information to build on existing skills, knowledge and confidence to enable them to interact fully in the lesson. Initial assessments are provided for entry to sign language, literacy and numeracy classes and lip-reading classes. This assessment is also used for individual learning plans for accredited courses and personal statements on non-accredited courses. These are used to set goals and appropriate targets, as well as to help plan and deliver programmes. Learners have access to their learning plans and progress reviews to enable them to judge their own progress. Learners with personal statements of learning review their statements every term.

125. Insufficient use is made of computers in most lessons. In particular, computers are not used to support literacy or numeracy activities. The skills for life agenda for basic skills, requires that learners are encouraged to use relevant IT equipment. The centre's IT equipment is in need of updating. Most accommodation is spacious, however, for some of the classes the noise level is disruptive, particularly for those learners wearing hearing aids.

126. Internal verification processes are not fully developed because there are not enough appropriate staff. This has a limited impact on learners. There are 36 British Sign Language staff, 36 notetakers and 22 lip readers who will require internal verification. There is no internal verifier for British Sign Language stage 3 and 4, lipreading and notetaking courses. This was recognised in the self-assessment report.

127. The learners interviewed said that the on-going assessment offers a strong sense of achievement. The teachers encourage them in a positive, effective way. Tutorials are valued and acknowledged as an important support mechanism which helps them to cope with complex language. Learners report ill treatment before arriving at The City Lit and comment on how the courses have helped them to regain their self-confidence. Some learners find rooms too noisy and too small. Learners said that they would like to develop literacy or numeracy skills through using computers.

## Community learning

## Grade 2

128. The City Lit provides a range of programmes for those people who would not usually use its facilities, and socially excluded groups and communities. A good deal of this work takes place at outreach centres in the community. Learners include long-term unemployed people who have complex and multiple difficulties, homeless people, including those experiencing tenancy difficulties and people with severe and enduring mental health difficulties. Many of the learners have a combination of these difficulties. There is also a programme of parent education. There is a particular emphasis on recruiting parents who would not necessarily identify themselves as learners, including those from refugee communities, minority ethnic groups and white working class groups. Community learning initiatives are developed on the basis of a wide range of partnership arrangements, including local authority neighbourhood renewal activities, as well as work with voluntary agencies. A range of funding sources are used to develop and support projects, as well as subcontracting arrangements with local authorities.

129. In 2001-02, there were 823 learners, accounting for 1,448 enrolments on courses. Learners attending programmes accounted for 0.9 per cent of total student hours. Ninety-eight per cent of enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. Since September 2002, a total of 364 learners have been recruited. Sixty-eight per cent are women, 41 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 5 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability and 98 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees.

130. The work is developed by three full-time staff, two fractional staff and 19 hourly paid tutors. There is extra staffing support by a number of voluntary agencies, particularly those involved with the homeless. Some tutors are bilingual and in some schools, additional tutorial support is offered by voluntary agencies.

### STRENGTHS

- good achievement of social and personal skills
- good support for 'hard to reach' learners
- effective use of partnerships to develop provision

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient opportunities for developing languages skills
- inadequate monitoring of learners' progress

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better progression opportunities in the community

131. The achievement by learners of social and personal skills is good. Learners achieve their learning goals, as well as acquiring other skills. In the parent education classes parents develop a greater understanding of the way their children are taught in school. Sometimes, parents and children share learning activities, which helps them to feel more confident when talking to school teachers. One mother is now able to visit the school office when her child is ill and explain the reason for non-attendance. Learners also enjoy the social benefits of the learning sessions, meeting new people and establishing closer support systems within their community. Head teachers have a strong commitment to the programme and see tangible benefits in the performance and behaviour of their children. Some parents now help in schools. Learners with enduring and severe mental health problems are able to work independently, using the college ICT facilities. Many of them now have the confidence to seek permanent employment. Learners with a long history of homelessness find that the programmes help them to deal with the personal issues contributing to their situation and are now able to offer support to others. Many of them have the confidence and knowledge to be able to maintain tenancies and move towards independent living. Many learners report how learning has supported their personal development, helping them to gain insight into their problems and to deal with them.

132. Standards of teaching and learning are effective. All the programmes offer tasters and short courses, and teaching methods are flexible. Tutors identify clear aims and objectives, monitor individual learners' progress and offer regular feedback to learners. There is a good degree of interaction between learners; this develops trust and support for some of the more vulnerable learners.

133. Resources for much of the community learning programme are adequate and appropriate. In a number of the schools there is a dedicated parent's room appropriately furnished and equipped. However, in some cases child-sized furniture is used and crèche facilities are in the same room as the parents' class; this can distract parents from their own learning. In school settings, the use of ICT as a learning tool is limited or non-existent. For most of the courses for the homeless, premises are provided by the partner organisation. These are generally of a high standard, often with access to ICT equipment. All learners on community courses have access to The City Lit's main learning and ICT centres.

134. The support for learners is good. On courses for the homeless, tutors work alongside volunteers from the housing association, to help support learners' personal issues. There is a good level of tutorial support. Peer group support is encouraged and a group of hostel-based learners have developed workshops, to reflect their own experiences and share them with those still on the streets. Learners are invited to join

the main programme and are given a tour of the services on offer. Learners with mental health problems attend an initial workshop in the community and then join courses in the learning centre. They are encouraged to work independently and one group of learners is now completing an accredited computing course. There are crèche and nursery facilities in all schools and learner support funds are used to help with travel and the costs of learning materials.

135. There are strong and effective partnerships. These promote the development of a range of activities to increase facilities and sustainable community learning. Partnership arrangements support some good initiatives to widen participation. There is a real attempt to encourage learners from socially deprived communities and also learners who have a range of social and personal issues. The parent education programme has targeted women from ethnic minority backgrounds who experience social and educational exclusion. One learner was able to use the programme to stay at school once her children were in class. She is now working at the school as a classroom assistant. Provision for the homeless has developed in a flexible and informal manner, to match the lifestyles of the potential learners. In a shelter in the centre of London, people are offered a secure place to stay for a few weeks. On several evenings, mural painting is offered and one learner is now sufficiently engaged in the process to be considering an art course.

136. In some of the parent classes not enough attention is given to the language needs of individual learners. Although there is some assessment of individual needs at the beginning of the course, relevant support is not always provided. There is insufficient use of oral work in these lessons and some learners' do not have the language skills to contribute fully. In one observed lesson, a small group of learners relied on each other to provide satisfactory explanations to questions. In another, the bilingual support worker was used mainly as a translator, rather than to support the development of language skills.

137. On some courses the monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate and there is insufficient formal monitoring of learners' destinations. Many learners are aware of the opportunities available to them, but there is insufficient collection of progression and destination data by The City Lit. The key strategy in the provision of these programmes is to 'engage' the prospective learner. It is difficult to measure the extent of continued engagement of these learners. In some of the community provision the opportunities for progression at the local centre are limited.

138. The learners who were interviewed report a strong sense of achievement and new purpose in their lives. Some are now thinking of taking further education and qualifications. For others, the provision has offered an opportunity to take stock of their circumstances, to understand their problems, and to start working on making life better.



**Good Practice**

*In one parent education class the group have devised a 'keeping in touch' card that they send to any members of the group who have not attended for several weeks, asking how they are and hoping that they will rejoin the group soon.*

**Other adult and community learning****Grade 3**

139. The inspection included The City Lit's section for independence through education (SITE) programme and the speech therapy service. Both these programmes fall within The City Lit's Essential Skills and Learner Services. SITE provides a specially designed programme of courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The programme includes general studies, visual arts, performing arts, IT and media, and work skills. It offers opportunities for progression, accreditation, support in other areas of learning and work preparation. Seventeen courses are offered in the current year. Learners choose up to four options and two basic skills sessions, giving a maximum attendance of 10 hours a week. Learners can study for the pre-foundation progression award and gain accreditation for basic skills and other units through the Open College Network (OCN). Programmes are organised in blocks of learning and all learners have a personal tutor to co-ordinate their support needs.

140. Programmes in speech and language therapy offer a range of provision at three levels. The stammering therapy service is a unique provision, and includes professional development opportunities for those already in the profession, or considering careers within speech and language therapy. In addition, programmes are offered for adults who stammer, in either intensive three-week block courses, or evening class sessions over 24 weeks.

141. In 2001-02, there were 372 learners, accounting for 996 enrolments on courses. Of these, speech therapy accounted for 272 learners and 357 enrolments. Learners in programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities accounted for 1.9 per cent of total student hours. Twenty-seven per cent of enrolments involved concessionary fees. Since September 2002, a total of 288 learners have been recruited. 41 per cent are women, 21 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 73 per cent have declared a learning difficulty/disability within the SITE programme and 12 per cent within the speech therapy programme. Thirty-four per cent of all enrolments are entitled to concessionary fees. SITE also runs a training programme to develop skills for working with adult with learning difficulties. Currently there are 15 learners on this programme.

142. The programmes are managed by the inclusive learning quality assurance manager. In the current year, there are two full-time teaching staff, two fractional post-holders and four hourly paid tutors working within the SITE programme. In speech therapy there is one full-time tutor, two fractional post-holders and five hourly paid tutors.

**STRENGTHS**

- good achievement of personal learning goals
- good initial assessments
- effective support for tutors

**WEAKNESSES**

- poor progression from programmes for people with learning difficulties
- insufficient development of the skills for life national agenda

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- develop systems to monitor learner destinations on speech and language programme
- share outcomes from staff development events to promote good practice
- reinforce health and safety compliance

143. Achievement levels of personal learning goals in accredited and non-accredited programmes are good. In speech and language therapy, goal setting takes place in a very structured way, giving learners ownership of the process. Learners who stammer are asked to plot their levels of confidence and mark this off on a scale of one to 10. They are then asked to identify what they need to do to move to the next point on the scale. Learners identify their next goal, discuss the resources they need, agree a date when they will achieve it and confirm their commitment to work on their chosen goals. Homework is set at the end of each session, based on the learner's individual chosen goals. Learners with learning difficulties are also set goals, but in a less structured way, these goals are then supported in a specific session and regularly reviewed with tutors. This system provides good support for learners to plan their progress. The success of learners is celebrated annually and includes art work in the college calendar and on display at The City Lit. Attendance is good and in the lessons observed it was 82 per cent. Systems to follow up absences are thorough and effective.

144. Initial assessments are good and help to ensure appropriate support for learners. Personal interviews ensure that learners have an informed understanding of the aims and content of their courses. Additional support needs are established at this early stage. For example, a learner with a visual impairment attended an interview prior to her course and was provided with the induction and course material in Braille. The support materials enabled her to work at the same pace as other learners. The assessment process is also prolonged over an extended period; the results are summarised and recorded on personal statements of learning. Target-setting is discussed against the range of assessment information.

145. There is some good teaching and 67 per cent of lessons observed were good or better. A range of resources is used effectively, including the use of digital cameras. Cameras are used as a means of capturing assessments, recording achievements and for

stimulating ideas for further work. Worksheets and notices are produced using signs and symbols. Learners' work is not displayed sufficiently in those premises shared with other organisations.

146. Tutors in both teams are effectively supported. Arrangements include good communication, regular staff meetings and staff development opportunities. These are matched with the strategic plan and help to extend staff expertise. Speech and language therapy tutors are involved in research projects and work with others to promote fluency strategies for people who stammer. They share their research with others by writing articles in journals and present papers at national and international forums. This has led to the introduction of new programmes in speech and language therapy. Good practice is not always shared among all members of the teams. Target-setting and personal planning are features common to both areas, however, this has not been distributed effectively. Staff are well supported by managers and believe that the lesson observation and the appraisal process provides a valuable means of feedback about performance and development needs. Tutors are encouraged to observe each other's teaching. The City Lit's lesson observations do not contain comments or make a direct reference to health and safety issues, although risk assessments have been carried out in appropriate circumstances.

147. The progression opportunities for people with learning difficulties are poor. Many learners return to the same programme of learning, although they receive an assessment to ensure that they enter the programme with a fresh view and establish new starting points. This situation was identified in the self-assessment report. Although opportunities for joining mainstream programmes exist and include the support of volunteers and additional support staff, these are not sufficiently developed. College data for 2001-02 indicates that only 4 per cent of learners progressed into mainstream programmes. The speech and language therapy programme has established progression opportunities by adding different levels into the overall programme. Destination information is not always easy to establish and monitor.

148. There is insufficient development of the national skills for life agenda. Curriculum planning and provision does not reflect the national standards for literacy and numeracy. One member of staff has been trained in the new standards but this has not had an effect on the provision or planning of learning. Only small numbers of learners have taken advantage of the basic skills provision. Seven per cent of learners have enrolled for basic skills sessions.

149. Learners on speech and language programmes enjoy their courses, those interviewed reporting that they gain confidence and strategies to deal with everyday aspects of communication. They feel that they receive realistic guidance to achieve their goals and gain a great deal from being with other learners and sharing their experiences. Learners with learning difficulties value their programmes and the way they are included in college life. They feel respected for their views, contribute to programme development and feel proud of their achievements. They value the good levels of support that enhance their confidence and independence. Learners receiving

additional support in other areas of learning are also positive about the support they receive and some commented on how much this had improved in recent years.

## 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	
<b>Provider</b>	<b>Provider</b>	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
<b>Learner</b>	<b>Learner</b>	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
<b>Teacher / trainer</b>	<b>Tutor</b>  <b>Mentor</b>	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.  Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
<b>Learning goals</b>	<b>Main learning goals</b>  <b>Secondary learning goals</b>	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.  These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
<b>Personal and learning skills</b>	<b>Personal and learning skills</b>	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
<b>Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome</b>	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.
<b>Subject-based programme</b>	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.
<b>Issue-based programme</b>	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.
<b>Outreach provision</b>	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.
<b>Neighbourhood-based work</b>	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.
<b>Community regeneration</b>	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.

<b>Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning</b>	
<b>Community capacity building</b>	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.
<b>Active citizenship</b>	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.