

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Blake College Limited**

**03 November 2005**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## **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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnndirect** 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.

## **Pre-inspection analysis**

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

## Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

## Grading

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

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

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Blake College Limited

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# INSPECTION REPORT

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Blake College Limited (Blake College) is a privately owned independent college. It operates as a company limited by guarantee and was established in 1986. The college contracts with the London Central Learning and Skills Council (LSC). It provides a range of arts and media courses. Most of its learners are privately funded. There are 15 part-time teaching staff who are managed by a part-time director of studies and a course director. These two curriculum directors take joint responsibility for quality assurance and report to a managing director and an executive director.

2. The national census for 2001 records that the London Borough of Westminster, in which the college is situated, has a population of 181,286. Over 73 per cent of the residents are white. The unemployment rate for the area is 2.4 per cent. The Department for Education and Skills' general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) performance tables of Westminster schools for 2004 show 43.9 per cent of pupils gained GCSEs at grade C or above, against the national average of 53.7 per cent.

## OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

**Grade 3**

3. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** Leadership and management, quality improvement and equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The arts, media and publishing provision is satisfactory.

4. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** Blake College has produced four self-assessment reports. The most recent is comprehensive and makes good use of the criteria in the Common Inspection Framework. Good processes exist to consult with teaching and administrative staff. The report contained much evaluative content and provided useful contextual information.

5. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.** Blake College is self-critical and has historically taken action to rectify weaknesses. Managers resolve most problems well and are given strong strategic direction by their leaders.

## KEY CHALLENGES FOR BLAKE COLLEGE LIMITED:

- make better use of individual learning plans
- take action on reasonable adjustments to improve access for people with restricted mobility
- improve the formal processes for monitoring staff
- maintain consultation on strategic development
- improve the challenge to learners in the classroom

## GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

Leadership and management		3
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality improvement		3

Arts, media and publishing			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
<i>Fine arts</i>		3	
Adult and community learning	15	3	

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

6. Only the foundation diploma in art and design was graded as most learners at Blake College are privately funded.

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	38
Number of staff interviewed	20
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievements and standards

7. **Achievement rates for the past two years are satisfactory. Retention rates are excellent, but are based on very small numbers of learners.** Retention rates were 100 per cent for 2002-03 and 2003-04. Achievement rates were 83 per cent for 2002-03 and 77 per cent for 2003-04.

8. **Learners produce good experimental work in arts classes.** Learners in the initial stages of the foundation diploma in art and design are encouraged to experiment and explore media well.

## The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Arts, media and publishing	0	5	3	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>

9. **Tutors provide good final assessments and feedback for learners and manage this process well.** They assess thoroughly learners' final work and give accurate and coherent information to help learners' development.

10. **Effective use is made of learners' diversity and culture.** Learners come to Blake College from a wide range of economic and social backgrounds. The college promotes a safe and enjoyable environment in which learners are encouraged to exchange valuable life experiences. Tutors manage and use learners' varied experiences well in the classroom to add new aspects to teaching activities.

11. **Blake College's staff provide good support for learners.** They understand their learners well and support them in a range of pastoral and academic ways. They are interested in learners' well-being and do much to help learners enjoy their course and achieve their aims.

12. The arrangements for literacy, numeracy and language support are satisfactory. A new skills for life project provides literacy support. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. Good consultation takes place to embed literacy into the curriculum. Language support is given in additional classes. Diagnosis of, and support for, numeracy needs is at the planning stage.

13. **Tutors do not check learning sufficiently in classes.** They make little reference to learning outcomes. Some tutors do not check sufficiently whether learners have understood concepts that have been explained.

14. **Tutors and learners do not make good use of individual learning plans.** Tutors and learners do not have ownership of them. The documents are used for recording purposes only and are held centrally. Specific targets are not compared with those on the previous learning plan to help measure learners' progress.

15. **There is insufficient challenge and interaction in teaching and learning.** Particularly in small classes, learners are sometimes insufficiently motivated. Little debate and discussion is generated among learners. Learners show insufficient drive and initiative when discussing art.

## Leadership and management

16. **Leaders set a clear strategic direction for the company.** A three-year strategic plan coherently identifies how the provision might change and develop in the future. The plan takes good account of the latest sector skills council and awarding body information. It reflects a good awareness of the cultural industries. Proposals for the future make good use of the company's international contacts and its intention to develop closer links with local communities.

17. Operational and curriculum management are satisfactory. Resources are managed appropriately. Arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory. Arrangements for staff development and strategies for providing additional learning support are satisfactory.

18. **Tutors and managers do not routinely share good practice.** Tutors have insufficient opportunity to discuss the quality of teaching and learning and to identify elements of good practice taking place in classes. There are few formal meetings held and the written records of such meetings are inadequate. Verbal communication is satisfactory across the college but records of curriculum meetings are not shared well with staff. There are no written records of meetings between the company's managers and the company's chief executive.

19. **Blake College does not make sufficient use of data to manage performance.** Only recently has some information begun to be collected. Much information, including information such as achievement and retention rates and analysis of different cultural groups, is yet to be used. Steps have clearly been taken to incorporate this information in the next self-assessment report.

20. **Blake College's self-assessment process is well established. Its most recent report is comprehensive and particularly evaluative** and matched the inspection team's findings in most respects. It reflected the inspection teaching and learning profile well. Blake College has implemented many changes in response to its previous inspection, by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). It continues to recognise weaknesses and plan further improvements.

21. **Blake College includes learners from varied social and economic backgrounds well.** Good working relationships are actively promoted. Tutors use good strategies in classes to promote the inclusion of new learners. Learners' needs, whether funded by the LSC or privately, are met equally well. Blake College has clear policies to tackle bullying, harassment and discrimination. Staff have a good understanding of different cultural traditions.

22. The College's response to the requirement of the Special Educational and Disability Act 2001 to provide auxiliary aids for learners with sensory impairments has been satisfactory. Its actions to provide reasonable adjustments to improve access for people with restricted mobility are, however, inadequate.



## **Leadership and management**

### **Strengths**

- clear strategic direction
- comprehensive and particularly evaluative self-assessment report
- good inclusion of a wide range of cultural groups

### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient recording of meetings with staff
- insufficient use of data to monitor learners' performance
- inadequate arrangements for people with restricted mobility

## **Arts, media and publishing**

### ***Fine arts***

### ***Grade 3***

#### *Strengths*

- good experimental work in drawing, painting, sculpture and textiles
- good final assessment and feedback to learners
- effective use of learners' diversity and culture
- good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient checking of learning in classes
- insufficient use of individual learning plans
- insufficient challenge and interaction in classes
- insufficient sharing of good practice

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BLAKE COLLEGE LIMITED:**

- the friendly and supportive atmosphere
- teachers' expertise and enthusiasm
- the useful and helpful induction
- open access to facilities
- trips and visits to galleries

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK BLAKE COLLEGE LIMITED COULD IMPROVE:**

- the information on library facilities could be clearer
- the amount of information before entry onto the course

## Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

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
<b>Learning goals</b>	<b>Main learning goals</b>  <b>Secondary</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 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 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>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 self managing, 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 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.
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## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

#### Strengths

- clear strategic direction
- comprehensive and particularly evaluative self-assessment report
- good inclusion of a wide range of cultural groups

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of meetings with staff
- insufficient use of data to monitor learners' performance
- inadequate arrangements for people with restricted mobility

23. Strategic planning for 2005-08 is clear. Key priorities for the future development of the college's provision are identified. The plan reflects a good understanding of current developments in the cultural industries. It takes good account of current progress by the sector skills council and the accreditation developments of relevant awarding bodies. Proposed initiatives include developing work with London's schools, developing foundation provision at level 4, short-course provision including provision at levels 1 and 2, and the development of evening and summer school provision. The college's existing international links are to be further developed. A new appointment to the executive management team has brought additional expertise in marketing and promotion and experience in further education and higher education provision for international students. Careful consideration has been given to staff development needs and the resource implications for the further diversification of the college's provision.

24. Operational management of the curriculum is satisfactory. Managers, tutors and administrative staff have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. There is a comprehensive staff handbook and additional information is provided at a team meeting for tutors at the beginning of the year. Not all new members of staff have received the handbook. Managers have regular informal discussions and e-mail contact with teaching staff. A learners' handbook provides a clear introduction to the college, and a course handbook for the foundation diploma programme gives detailed guidance on assessment methods, portfolio preparation and appeals procedures.

25. The management of resources is satisfactory. Tutors have good specialist vocational experience and two-thirds of them have a recognised teaching qualification. College resources are adequate. Good use is made of London's museums and galleries to extend learning. Learners are given insufficient guidance on how to make the most of local libraries.

26. Arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory. Managers and administrative staff have designated responsibilities for health and safety. General guidance is provided in the staff handbook. Tutors complete risk assessments for their classes and are informed of relevant health and safety regulations. Learners are given specific information on particular studio practices to supplement general guidance in the learners' handbook.

27. The arrangements for staff development are satisfactory. Administrative staff are well supported in developing their roles. Teaching staff do not have formal learning plans. Their training needs are identified through observation of teaching and learning or through internal verification. Tutors do not get enough opportunities to share good practice.

28. The management of additional support for learners' literacy and language needs is satisfactory. Provision was developed in 2004-05 and revised for the current academic year. All learners are given a diagnostic assessment in literacy as part of their induction. Morning sessions provide individual support and afternoon sessions cover the development of specific skills. Sessions are held for learners who speak English as an additional language and additional classes are scheduled for later in the year. Provision for numeracy is currently being developed.

29. There is insufficient formal recording of meetings with staff. Records of meetings held at the beginning of each year are not promptly distributed or easily accessed. Records of the end-of-module review meetings with tutors are not being completed well. Agreed actions following teaching observations are not formally recorded. There are no written records of meetings between college managers and the company's chief executive. At a time of proposed expansion and diversification of the work at Blake College, formal arrangements for the monitoring and review of the existing LSC-funded provision by the recently appointed managing director have yet to be finalised.

30. There is insufficient use of management data to monitor learners' performance. Information on learners' declared disability or learning difficulty has only been collected since 2004-05. Information on learners' ethnicity has been collected centrally since the start of the current academic year. Until recently, a clear distinction has not been made between the performance of LSC-funded learners and that of other college learners. Data has not been regularly analysed to identify trends in retention and achievement or the achievement of high grades by course programme, by learners' age or ethnicity, or their full-time/part-time status. Data has been compiled recently which will serve as a useful starting point for future target-setting, performance monitoring and course evaluation.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

31. Blake College attracts and includes a wide range of cultural groups, which are helped to settle in to the college well. Good working relationships are actively promoted. Learners come from many different countries and social and economic backgrounds. Staff are supportive of all learners and know them individually. Staff have a good understanding of cultural differences and traditions. The needs of all learners, whether funded privately or through the LSC, are met equally well. Clear policies and procedures exist for tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination. Clear complaints procedures have been used successfully. For example, when learners made a formal complaint about the standard of teaching in one class, action was taken to resolve the complaint.

32. Satisfactory action has been taken in response to the Child Protection Act 2004. A designated member of staff, who is taking relevant training, is the welfare officer responsible for the well-being of learners and is the main pastoral contact for learners. If additional professional help is required, learners are referred to specialist support agencies. There is, however, no child protection policy and references to child protection are not explicit in information to staff.

33. Blake College has satisfactory equality and diversity policies. Staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity, but some tutors and learners are unclear about the company's policies. Insufficient formal training takes place for all staff. A race equality policy and plan purposefully outline the company's mission and aims. The company sets appropriate objectives to monitor the performance of minority ethnic groups, including specific target dates for review. Managers have recognised in the self-assessment report for 2004-05 the need to improve the monitoring and recording of minority ethnic groups' performance. Currently, this monitoring activity is insufficient. Information on age and gender is used and analysed in the self-assessment report.

34. In response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, provision of auxiliary aids for learners with sensory impairments is satisfactory. Staff have taken part in discussion groups on disability awareness. Resources have been allocated for specific training for some staff. The new arrangements to support learners with additional literacy and language needs are satisfactory. Plans are in place for the diagnosis and support for numeracy to be introduced.

35. Access into and around the building for people with restricted mobility is inadequate. This is recognised in the most recent self-assessment report. Blake College commissioned an audit which made a number of recommendations in 2003, but key aspects of these recommendations have not been implemented. For example, the audit recommended reasonable adjustments to existing toilets to provide facilities for disabled people. Access for people with restricted mobility was an area of concern at the FEFC inspection in 1999.

### **Quality improvement**

### **Contributory grade 3**

36. The most recent self-assessment report is comprehensive. It is particularly evaluative and makes good use of the criteria in the Common Inspection Framework. Annual self-assessment is well established at Blake College. Good processes exist to consult with teaching and administrative staff. Judgements based on solid evidence are made on all aspects of the provision, along with a thorough evaluative commentary. The grade profile of internal lesson observations given in the report closely matched the grade profile at inspection. Inspectors gave the same overall grades for the provision as those in the self-assessment report, with the exception of a lower contributory grade for equality of opportunity.

37. The action plan that accompanies the self-assessment report sets out clear actions in response to the main weaknesses. A named person is responsible for each aspect. An indication of timescales for actions is given. The action plan that came out of the previous self-assessment process has been regularly updated to show the progress made in taking action. Good progress has been made to remedy most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.

38. Blake College has detailed procedures for assessment, the observation of classes and guidance on teaching and learning. Well-formulated standard templates have been introduced recently for schemes of work, lesson plans and individual learning plans. Having said that, the overall framework for quality improvement is too general. There is no audit cycle to monitor the implementation of procedures. A manual intended to bring together the various quality improvement procedures is in preparation.



39. All tutors are observed annually. Records of observation are satisfactory in evaluating teaching, learning and assessment. Most action points are clearly identified and follow-up observations have taken place when necessary. The scheme calls for tutors to complete a self-evaluation and to agree an action plan with the observer following the observation. In most cases, neither of these procedures have been followed. Action has been taken where particularly poor performance has been identified and the outcomes from teaching observations have been usefully summarised in the self-assessment report.

40. Blake College gives learners clear guidance on the procedure for complaints. Complaints are dealt with promptly and records are kept in learners' files. No annual summary of complaints is routinely prepared.

41. The annual course review for the foundation diploma programme provides a detailed account of the performance of individual learners. It identifies clearly action points arising from assessment. The review does not assess systematically all modules, refer to learner feedback, or refer to trends in achievement and retention. Arrangements for internal verification are good. Blake College responds effectively to any concerns identified through external verification.

42. Arrangements for collecting feedback from learners are adequate. Satisfaction surveys are conducted annually, but response rates have been low. A useful survey of learners was carried out to evaluate the arrangements for the September 2005 induction.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Arts, media and publishing

**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i><b>Fine arts</b></i> Adult and community learning	15	<b>3</b> 3

43. Only the national foundation diploma in art and design is in the scope of this inspection. Learners select six modules from a variety of subjects that including drawing, painting, textiles, fashion drawing, art and design theory, digital imagery, printmaking and web design. Currently, 15 learners attend the course on the one site in Cavendish Road, central London. The course is taught by 15 part-time tutors, who report to a part-time director of studies.

#### ***Fine arts***

**Grade 3**

#### *Strengths*

- good experimental work in drawing, painting, sculpture and textiles
- good final assessment and feedback to learners
- effective use of learners' diversity and culture
- good support for learners

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient checking of learning in classes
- insufficient use of individual learning plans
- insufficient challenge and interaction in classes
- insufficient sharing of good practice

### **Achievement and standards**

44. Learners produce good experimental work in drawing, painting, textiles and sculpture. Their work shows good levels of exploration and experimentation. Many learners are encouraged to develop a range of ideas and concepts. The enthusiasm and expertise of tutors ensures that time is used efficiently. Learners are eager and enjoy the experimentation with their own work. Learners make very good use of presentations to discuss their work with the rest of the group. Most learners are making good progress in achieving relevant skills and completing work in the initial stage of the course.

45. Achievement rates for very small numbers of learners completing the foundation studies diploma in art and design course are satisfactory, at 83 per cent for 2002-03 and 77 per cent for 2004-05. Retention rates are excellent at 100 per cent for 2003-04 and 2004-05, although these rates are based on small numbers. Attendance is good at 88 per cent and punctuality is good. Most learners progress to higher education.

## The quality of provision

46. Tutors and managers provide good final assessment and feedback to learners. Tutors assess thoroughly learners' final work. Final assessment and feedback gives learners good guidance for the future. Project briefs contain clear learning outcomes and useful assessment criteria. The content of projects and assignments is based on an agreed template and is used well across the area of learning. Tutors give learners an effective framework in which to present their work and support them in their evaluation.

47. Effective use is made of the learners' diversity and culture. Learners come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Blake College successfully promotes a safe learning environment where learners can initiate interesting ideas and learn from each others' different life experiences. Blake College focuses well on the different needs of individual learners. Their different backgrounds and cultures are drawn on effectively in classes, which adds value to teaching activities. Good contrasts in cultural approaches to art are made during trips to exhibitions.

48. Blake College provide good support for all learners. The well-being of learners is promoted well. The college provides good financial assistance. Learners appreciate the support they get from their tutors and the individual pastoral and academic care and attention they get from everyone in the college. Blake College knows its learners extremely well and can actively monitor attendance. The college is piloting a skills for life programme to give additional support for learners in literacy and language. The planning for this support is consultative. It involves useful dialogue between the skills for life tutor and those teaching arts and media, in order to embed literacy and language into the arts curriculum.

49. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors demonstrate clear aims and objectives when planning sessions. They use the resources available to them well. Teaching and learning is project-based and introduces learners to a range of interesting topics. Some tutors make good use of demonstration to introduce learners to a range of techniques and materials. In some lessons, learners make insufficient use of sketchbooks to develop their drawing and design, often relying on secondary sources of research and investigation.

50. The foundation diploma in art and design course is now established. In the past two years, managers have successfully recruited an increasing number of new learners. Learners come from different backgrounds and some have no qualifications in art. The course provides satisfactory choice. There are currently no progression routes within the area of learning, although Blake College has approval for a level 1 and level 2 course in art and design. The college uses its geographical position well and learners benefit from regular visits to London galleries and studios.

51. Tutors do not check learning sufficiently in classes. They make little reference to learning outcomes. Some learners are uncertain about the content of the courses and modules available to them. In some classes, tutors assume a level of comprehension among learners when introducing topics and do not check how much learners have understood. Some learners are not grasping basic concepts and do not participate fully in discussions or debate.

52. Tutors and learners make insufficient use of individual learning plans. Blake College has devised satisfactory individual learning plans but these are insufficiently integrated with

the process of teaching and learning. They are not used to help identify learners' progress or to help them set targets for improvement. Learners do not have ownership of their plans as the plans are part of a monitoring document held centrally.

53. There is insufficient challenge and interaction in classes. In one successful lesson in drawing and painting, the tutor captured the attention of learners particularly well. The tutor's enthusiasm and specialist expertise ensured that the learners were highly motivated and clearly challenged by the range of techniques demonstrated. In some classes, however, particularly those with small numbers, learners are insufficiently motivated. Tutors do not do enough to encourage discussion and debate. Learners show limited ideas and insufficient drive and initiative.

### **Leadership and management**

54. Classroom management and day-to-day operational management are satisfactory. Communication between managers and tutors is positive. The tutors are well qualified and suitably experienced. A tutors' handbook provides useful information on assessment policies and procedures, but not all staff are given it. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. There is sufficient equipment for the numbers enrolled and an appropriate level of classroom and studio space. Facilities for computer-aided design and digital imagery are improving but some learners still have to share monitors. There is no specialist workshop for three-dimensional design work.

55. Activities designed for quality improvement are satisfactory. Lesson observation grades accurately reflect the teaching and learning profile found by inspectors. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and contains findings similar to those of inspectors. Course reviews are not sufficiently focused on the design, content and the evaluation of courses.

56. Tutors and managers do not share good practice sufficiently. Tutors are not sufficiently involved in quality improvement activities. Most aspects of management rely on informal communication. Tutors seldom meet to discuss the quality of teaching and learning and identify areas of good practice taking place in classes. There are few formal meetings and inadequate formal recording of those that are held.

57. Equality of opportunity in the curriculum is satisfactory. Effective use is made of learners' diversity and cultures in the processes of teaching and learning. Many learners, however, are unaware of Blake College's equality and diversity policies in the learners' handbook.

