

# Huddersfield Technical College

Inspection report

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

#### Grading

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

The descriptors for the four grades are:

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

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

#### Scope of the inspection

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

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

## Description of the provider

1. Huddersfield Technical College is a large general further education college (GFE) with its main campus located in the centre of Huddersfield. Specialist accommodation for construction, engineering and animal care is housed in purpose built sites. The college provides adult and community learning in a number of sites across Kirklees. Although Kirklees has areas of affluence, nine local wards are in the 10% most deprived in England. The college recruits 47% of its 16-18-year-old learners from communities categorised as areas of depredation. Huddersfield is a multicultural borough and the college population reflects this with some 20% of learners from minority ethnic heritage groups. In 2007, 55.5% of Year 11 school leavers in Kirklees obtained five or more general certificate of education (GCSE) passes at grades A\* to C, which is much lower than the national average of 62%.
2. During 2006/07, the college had 28,460 enrolments. The majority of learners (79%) on full-time programmes are 16-18-years-old, with adults making up 73% of all part-time enrolments. The highest proportion of enrolments for long programmes, some 44% were at level 2, 29% at level 3 and 27% at level 1. A very small cohort of learners enrol onto higher level programmes. The college provides courses in all sector subject areas with most enrolments in the areas of preparation for life and work, retail and commercial enterprise, engineering technology and manufacture and health and public services. The college has Centre of Vocational Excellence status (CoVE) for computer-aided design and manufacture.
3. The college is part of the 14-16 Kirklees Collegiate and together with some contracts with individual schools, provides programmes for approximately 720 Year 10 and 11 learners. At the time of inspection, 652 learners were following apprenticeship programmes in engineering, construction, retail and commercial enterprise, health, public services and care, and business administration. The college leads a consortium of approximately 16 providers. During 2006/07, the consortium enrolled 1,250 learners onto Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes, 60 of whom were following college courses. In addition, the college acts as lead partner in a large and diverse consortium of providers who provide Train to Gain (T2G) provision to 3,700 learners across the region. The college is currently awaiting approval to build a new college.

## Summary of grades awarded

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

### Subject sector areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Good: Grade 2
Construction, planning and the built environment	Good: Grade 2
Information and communication technology	Inadequate: Grade 4
Arts, media and publishing	Good: Grade 2
Languages, literature and culture	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The effectiveness of provision is satisfactory. Learners' achievement is satisfactory but retention rates have remained low over the last three years. Long programme success rates have improved, some at a faster rate than the national average. However, success rates at level 1 for all learners and at level 3 for learners aged 16-18 remain low. Work related skills are generally good apart from information and communication technology (ICT) where learners have insufficient work related experience. Key skills success rates are below the national average, particularly at level 2.
5. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This judgement disguises significant variations in the quality of teaching. In good lessons, learners are motivated and engaged, learning through imaginative and well conceived activities and assignments. However, in many lessons teachers are insufficiently focused on learning and its demonstrative outcomes. The college's arrangements for quality assuring teaching and learning are not yet sufficiently effective. The management of key skills is inconsistent, with insufficient improvement in the quality of provision and success rates in some areas.
6. The college's response to social inclusion is outstanding. The college offers an exceptionally diverse range of learning opportunities to people of all ages in a multicultural community. Through open and effective partnerships, it provides well targeted learning. Arrangements for meeting the needs of learners are good. Personal support for vulnerable learners is prompt. Innovative projects to address issues such as sexual health and community empowerment are highly effective. The energetic students' union and a lively enrichment team organise a particularly inclusive set of cross college activities. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners' attitude and behaviour were identified as an area for improvement in the college self-assessment report and are now much improved.
7. Educational inclusion is satisfactory. Most learners on level 2 programmes are successful. Progression is good between levels. However, whilst personal and discrete support is good, there is little additional support for learners in classes. Tutorials and progress monitoring vary in quality with the setting of targets often poorly recorded. Some curriculum areas do not inform parents of their sons' or daughters' progress.
8. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors and managers have improved the inadequate provision from the last inspection, maintained strong partnerships and effectively managed the inception of the successful T2G consortium. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. However, managers have not succeeded in embedding a consistent approach to quality assurance across all areas. Provision in ICT has declined and is inadequate.

9. The college manages a very successful work-based learning and T2G provision. E2E progression rates are improving and satisfactory. Success rates are significantly improved and good on apprenticeships and T2G programmes. Learners demonstrate improved confidence, skill development and good health and safety practices. Effective links with the workplace reinforces learning. Support for individual learners is good as are partnership arrangements, supporting a wide range of provision and opportunities for learners. Target setting on apprenticeship programmes is inconsistently rigorous and literacy and numeracy support is underdeveloped on T2G programmes. The successful management of T2G is making a significant contribution to the accreditation of workplace skills in the region. Effective quality assurance maintains improvements in apprenticeship programmes. However, the quality assurance arrangements of the T2G provision are underdeveloped.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. The college's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The college is in a good financial position, adapting its provision well in response to funding priorities. It has successfully maintained its strong commitment to inclusion and expanded employer engagement through its successful T2G provision. Success and retention rates are improving, but not quickly enough at levels 1 and 3 to match national rates. Quality improvement initiatives are inconsistently applied and have had insufficient impact on some curriculum areas. Self-assessment is broadly satisfactory. The college has a general understanding of its strengths and areas requiring improvement. Some areas of the college were over generous when grading provision and the college did not include T2G or additional learning support in its self-assessment report. Development plans often lack detail with insufficient focus on key areas for improvement. Targets are often not precise or sufficiently time bound.

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

11. The college has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection with many key strengths maintained. It has improved provision in arts, media and publishing; engineering and manufacturing; and construction. The last inspection judged work-based learning provision in hairdressing and construction as unsatisfactory. These have significantly improved and are now good. Standards of provision have declined in ICT from satisfactory to inadequate. The inconsistent application of quality improvement initiatives, the management and success rates of key skills and retention rates, were issues identified at the last inspection and continue to be areas for improvement.

## Key strengths

- high apprenticeship, T2G and national vocational qualifications (NVQ) success rates
- good development of learners' practical skills
- broad and responsive range of provision
- outstanding social inclusion
- good promotion of equality and diversity
- strong partnership working.

## Areas for improvement

*The college should address:*

- the inadequate provision in ICT
- low success rates at level 1 for all learners and at level 3 for 16-18-year-olds
- slow progress in improving retention
- unsatisfactory key skills management and outcomes
- insufficient focus on learning
- poor setting and review of targets for learners
- the inconsistent application of quality assurance arrangements to improve provision.



## Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Train to Gain*

*Good: Grade 2*

*Learners aged 14-16*

*Good: Grade 2*

*Learners aged 16-19*

*Unsatisfactory: Grade 4*

12. Inspection agreed with the college's view that achievement and standards are satisfactory. From a very low starting point, success rates have improved at all levels and for all age groups apart from learners aged 16-18 at level 3. However, many remain below national rates. On long courses for learners aged 16-18 success rates remain low at level 1, similar to the national average at level 2 and consistently low with little improvement at level 3. For adults, level 1 long programmes have seen significant improvement but remain low. At levels 2 and 3 success rates have improved and are above the national average. NVQ success rates for all ages are improved and high. Success rates for general national vocational qualifications (GNVQ) and precursors at levels 2 and 3, and AS courses for 16-18 learners show declining trends and have particularly low success rates. Level 2 GNVQ and precursors have declined by 24% over a three year period. The success rates on AS courses have declined from 57% during 2004/05 to 47% during 2006/07.
13. Low retention rates were a weakness at the last inspection. Although the college has retained a significant focus on improving retention rates, they have remained a low 78% between 2005 and 2007. Current year records for 2007/08, of retention, attendance and punctuality identify improvements. However, the college's lack of systematic monitoring against previous years data makes comparison difficult. The combined key skills success rate is slightly below the national average. However, key skills success rates at level 2 are low. Success rates for key skills communication have remained at 35% over the last two years. Application of number success rates were 33% in 2005/06 and 34% during 2006/07.
14. Success rates for the college's wider remit work are good overall. T2G overall success was high during 2006/07 at 84% and early returns for 2007/08 are 85%. The overall and timely successes of apprentices are much improved and well above national rates. Advanced apprentices overall success rates are similar to national rates and timely rates are high. Apprenticeship high success rates disguise some underperformance in vehicle maintenance. The progression rates for E2E programmes have improved from 49% during 2005/06 to a current 54%, which is close to the expected average.
15. The standard of learners' work and acquisition of workplace skills is generally good. Learners aged 14-16 produce good work and their success rates are high. Skill development and the acquisition of industrial levels of

competency are particularly good in engineering and construction. Learners develop good conversational language in modern foreign languages and some art and design learners producing outstanding work in textiles. In ICT, there are too few opportunities to develop work related skills.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grades:*

*Work-based learning*

*Good: Grade 2*

*Train to Gain*

*Good: Grade 2*

*Learners aged 14-16*

*Good: Grade 2*

*Learners aged 19+*

*Good: Grade 2*

16. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, which is lower than the college's own self-assessment. The college's judgements are drawn mainly from observation of teaching and learning. Some observation records focus on students' learning and provide teachers with clear guidance on how to improve. However, many are not sufficiently rigorous with observers placing insufficient attention on whether students are learning and making progress. Some grades are too high and most do not provide constructive feedback to the teacher.
17. Well planned lessons include a good range of activities that engage and challenge all learners. In construction, teachers check learners' understanding through imaginative use of information and learning technology (ILT) and quizzes. In art and design, teachers use interesting assignments that stimulate and motivate learners. Very effective links between the workplace and the college reinforce learning for apprentices. In ICT, planning is not sufficiently focused on students' learning and they do not have sufficient opportunity to apply their learning in the workplace.
18. A small team of advanced practitioners and subject learning coaches provide good support for teachers. Whilst there is evidence of impact in individual subjects, opportunities to share good practice are not maximised. Teachers generally are well qualified and experienced. Learning resources are good in most areas. Inspectors agree with the college that the use of ILT and the college virtual learning environment (VLE) needs to be increased.
19. The management and delivery of key skills have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. Enthusiastic liaison teachers have successfully supported improvements in some curriculum areas. However, the strategy is insufficiently led and managed and rates of improvement are inconsistent across the college. Not all learners see the relevance or importance of key skills.
20. Learners complete literacy and numeracy assessments early in their course with diagnostic testing used appropriately to identify those needing specific help. Learners receive help quickly, including those on work-based programmes. Although well managed, the college does not carry out an overall analysis of the impact of these services on learners' success.

21. Assessment feedback to learners is satisfactory. However, the use of individual learning plans to set learners targets for achievement and to monitor their progress is poor in most areas. Targets are often vague and do not help students to understand what they need to do to improve their chances of success.
22. The college is highly responsive to community needs and those of its learners. Good collaborative partnerships help the college offer a very broad and diverse curriculum. Young learners attend a well established and award winning school links provision. Seven hundred scouts and guides attend classes that challenge occupational stereotypes. The college's extensive consortium arrangements provide a broad spectrum of training and education linked to employment and the accreditation of work related skills. Employer engagement is good on apprenticeship programme and well planned English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) provision is provided in the workplace. Despite changes in national priorities, a responsive community-learning offer continues to serve local needs.
23. Cross college and curriculum enrichment is very diverse and sensitively planned; for instance, the prize-winning cheerleaders evolved in response to the limited sporting activities for women. However, timetable clashes limit access to activities. Most mainstream courses include work placement opportunities but some do not.
24. Information, advice and guidance overall are satisfactory. The college responds promptly, providing well managed support for learners with personal or particular learning needs. New learners value the pre-enrolment taster days and the allocation of student mentors. The college strongly promotes healthy lifestyles. The well conceived 'Choices' project developed young Asian men as sexual health mentors. Counsellors provide both one-to-one assistance and group sessions to raise learner's awareness of emotional health. Links to other specialist services are well established.
25. The new code of behaviour, negotiated with students, combined with related staff development, has effectively improved student attitudes and behaviour. Guidance on careers and higher education is satisfactory. Induction is satisfactory. Subject teams deliver customised sessions with core generic activities. Counsellors provide both one-to-one assistance and proactive group sessions to help students' emotional health. Links to other specialist services are well established and improving. Activities on-site and elsewhere are systematically managed to minimise risk to learner safety. Pastoral support is good. However, tutorials vary in quality and content with some reviews showing little evidence of detailed and measurable targets set for learners. Parents and carers are not always kept informed of their young peoples' progress.

## Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

*Contributory grades:**Equality of opportunity**Good: Grade 2*

26. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers set clear strategic objectives that staff understand and share. Senior managers have successfully developed an inclusive team approach to leading and managing the college. However, this has not yet had sufficient impact on improving provision, retention and success rates in some curriculum areas. In other areas, for example, work-based learning, T2G and construction, improvements have been significant. Communication is strong. Regular meetings and a weekly briefing from the principal informs staff. Staff value the management initiative of 'walking the job' to review the quality of provision and to improve communication. Actions to improve student behaviour and attendance and reduce persistent staff absence have been very successful.
27. Partnership arrangements are strong, a strength identified at the last inspection. The college works collaboratively with a wide range of partners in innovative and effective ways. The college is highly regarded by its partners, taking the lead on two successful consortium arrangements involving E2E and T2G provision. These good partnerships plan strategically as they inform and support the development of the educational, social and skills infrastructure in the region.
28. Governors reflect the profile of the local community and bring a wide range of skill and experience to the college. They are well informed, understand the challenges facing the college and closely monitor the college's performance. They appraise the executive management as a collective team in addition to individual reviews. They effectively inform and support the college's strategic direction, but have failed to sufficiently influence timely improvement in some underperforming provision.
29. Equality of opportunity is good and promoted well throughout the college. The college responds promptly to complaints and diversity data are effectively analysed with good actions taken to improve underperformance. For example, externally funded projects have led to the development of good materials to market positive role models to students. Initiatives in some curriculum areas have successfully attracted under represented non-traditional groups to their courses. The college complies with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 (SENDA). The college has thorough arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults.
30. The impact of quality assurance arrangements across the provision is unsatisfactory. Improvement in success and retention rates has been slow in some areas of the curriculum. Inspectors found the outcomes from observations of teaching and learning did not lead to effective plans for

improvement. Observation records insufficiently identify good practice or effectively informed performance reviews of any training and development needs. Management information provides accessible, reliable and comprehensive data on learners' performance and attendance in most areas. However, the college does not use data to analyse or measure the impact of additional learning support. In some curriculum areas, staff do not use the information available sufficiently to plan for improvement. Self-assessment, development planning and target setting in some curriculum areas are insufficiently analytical and measurable, and improvements are slow.

31. Accommodation is satisfactory and some specialist resources are good, particularly in arts and media, and engineering. However, ILT resources to support teaching and learning are insufficient. Staff are appropriately qualified and have access to regular professional updating. Financial management is good. The college overall provides satisfactory value for money.

## Sector subject area

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Good: Grade 2

## Context

32. The college offers a range of programmes in motor vehicle, manufacturing, fabrication and welding, electrical installation and electronics engineering. There are currently 1,654 learners, 484 are full-time, 1,170 part-time, 51% are adults and 49% are aged 16-18. There are 116 apprentices and 90 advanced apprentices on engineering apprenticeships, and 174 learners on T2G programmes. There are also 196 learners aged 14-16 from local partner schools. The college achieved CoVE status in November 2003 for computer-aided design and manufacture.

## Strengths

- high success rates at levels 2 and 3
- good development of practical skills
- good specialist training resources
- broad curriculum responsive to employer needs.

## Areas for improvement

- low retention on most level 1 programmes
- low motor vehicle advanced apprenticeship success rates.

## Achievement and standards

33. Achievement and standards are good. Many of 2006/07 success rates were high and above the national rates. The levels 2 and 3 electrical courses and the level 3 manufacturing courses have high success rates. The intermediate certificate in engineering and technology has consistently high success rates over a three year period. BTEC national diploma in manufacturing engineering has significantly improved with particularly high rates for 2006/07. Although achievement rates are generally good at level 1, retention rates on most courses are low, for example, the certificate in welding and fabrication, the BTEC introductory diploma in engineering and the award in vehicle maintenance programmes. Although much improved, the success rates for advanced apprentices on motor vehicle programmes remain below the national average. Success rates in key skills are poor. The progression of learners to higher levels and into employment is good.
34. The standard of learners' work in practical lessons is good. Learners make good progress towards achieving their qualification and develop good practical skills in all occupational areas. The department regularly celebrates success at awards events. Attendance is good.

## Quality of provision

35. Teaching and learning of practical subjects are good. Lessons are well planned, effectively structured and stimulate productive learning. Teachers use their good occupational skills effectively to support learners' development in practical lessons. Good use of ILT supports and enhances learning. Learners use electronics simulation software programmes proficiently to design and test electronic circuits. In some theory lessons teachers fail to check individuals' understanding. The standard of key skills teaching is inconsistent. Some courses follow college guidance and integrate key skills effectively into core curriculum units whilst others do not.
36. Assessment is good in practical lessons and learners' progress is well monitored. A wide range of courses widens learners' experience and enables good progression, including apprenticeships. Many employers engage with the college through its CoVE in computer-aided design and manufacture. The college is very responsive to employers, providing bespoke programmes to meet their needs.
37. Support, advice and guidance are satisfactory. All learners complete initial assessment at enrolment. Additional support is timely with most learners receiving additional support outside their vocational classes.

## Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management are good. Management have adopted an open style approach and walk the floor regularly. There is a clear focus on improving teaching, learning and communication. The self-assessment report sufficiently identifies the key strengths and areas for improvement. Managers and staff have access to accurate data on the college portal on learner attendance. Staff use this information very effectively to improve retention on many programmes.
39. The engineering workshops have a good wide range of specialist resources in all curriculum areas. The promotion and monitoring of equality and opportunity is good.

## Construction, planning and the built environment

Good: Grade 2

## Context

40. The college provides programmes in plumbing, trowel trades, wood occupations and technician studies from levels 1 to 3. The majority of the 947 enrolments are 16-18-year-old learners, 59 are advanced apprentices and 195 apprentices. The college provides training and assessment in the workplace for 57 Train to Gain learners in brickwork and site joinery skills.

## Strengths

- high success rates on construction crafts and advanced apprenticeship programmes
- good development of learners' skills
- good activities to promote learning
- particularly effective monitoring of learner progress.

## Areas for improvement

- inadequate verification of assessment in the workplace
- insufficient focus on quality assurance to improve good practice.

## Achievement and standards

41. Achievement and standards are good, success rates on construction crafts programmes and advanced apprenticeship programmes have been significantly above national rates for the last three years. Over the same period success rates on technician programmes have been at national rates. Key skill success rates vary with some sections below national rates. Learners' skill development is good and match industrial levels of competence. Learners on craft programmes have successfully gained national skill awards. Current attendance at 88% is good. Standards of written evidence in portfolios and learner files are also good.

## Quality of provision

42. Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well planned and managed. Better lessons link to previous topics and progressively develop the subject area. Tutors make good use of a detailed learners' profile in planning contents to meet the needs of individual learners. Tutors use a good range of activities to promote learning. Quizzes used at the start of the lesson are particularly effective at recapping key points from previous sessions. Tutors use ILT effectively. Learners particularly enjoy a software package replicating a popular game show that effectively checks learners' understanding. The recent reorganisation of how key skills are taught is more successful in some areas than others. Assessment overall is satisfactory. Initial assessment is effective in identifying the need for literacy, numeracy and language support. Construction staff act promptly,



providing one-to-one additional support. Verification of assessment in the workplace is inadequate. The college has yet to complete any direct workplace observations. Monitoring of learner progress is particularly effective with tutors making good use of an electronic system introduced on apprenticeship programmes, and paper based records on other programmes.

43. A wide range of programmes satisfies learners and employers' needs across most skill areas. Progression through the levels and onto higher education is good with any learners returning to act as role models. Learners have good access to one-to-one tutorials and the tutorial programme overall is satisfactory. Guidance and support for learners are also good; although, some support services are not available on the construction training site over the whole week. Good initiatives are in place to widen participation including a Saturday club for young people interested in construction trades.

### Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are good. The area has made significant progress since the last inspection in raising success rates and improving the learner's experience. Many new initiatives are being introduced with some staff adapting more successfully than other to the improved and good access to management information and its use in self-assessment. Communication within the sections and with senior staff is good. However, strategies to more effectively disseminate and share good and emerging practices are still being developed. Promotion of equality of opportunity is good. Resources overall are good. Staff are well qualified and supported to develop their skills further.

## Information communication technology

Inadequate: Grade 4

## Context

45. The college offers courses at level 1 to level 3. There are 202 full-time learners in ICT, of which 181 are 16-18. The majority of these are undertaking vocational courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels at the main campus. Overall, some 40% of learners are adults undertaking part-time ICT courses on applications software and information technology technician courses in a number of community venues.

## Strengths

- high success rates for level 1 provision
- wide range of provision at all levels.

## Areas for improvement

- low success rates for full-time level 3 courses
- insufficient focus on learning
- poor use of additional learning support in class
- insufficient opportunities to experience the workplace
- unreliability of resources to support learning
- inadequate quality assurance.

## Achievement and standards

46. Full-time success rates for 16-18 year olds at level 3 are low and declining. The college has made slow progress in reviewing and resolving the decline. Pass rates on key skills have improved by 22% but remain below national rates. Success rates are high on level 1 programmes, particularly on the BTEC introductory award. During 2006/07, adult success rates at level 1 significantly improved. The area has improving attendance rates with inspectors noting 100% attendance in one class.

## Quality of provision

47. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Lesson plans and schemes of work fail to identify learning outcomes and teachers fail to check if learning has occurred. The VLE is underdeveloped and there is poor use of ILT in class or as planned additional learning. In better sessions, tutors effectively use quizzes to consolidate learning.
48. Arrangements for in class additional learning support are poor. Liaison between staff is limited and session planning does not make best use of specialist tutors. Individual learning plans vary in quality and many lack appropriate targets. Tutorial schemes of work are weak and focus mainly on learners completing assignments. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and meet awarding body requirements. Students received appropriate detailed written and verbal feedback on their work.

49. The college offers a good and varied range of provision to attract a diverse learner profile. Progression routes through levels are satisfactory, as is the number progressing to higher education. There are insufficient opportunities to experience the workplace. Few learners have work placements, attend trips into the workplace or have the contact with visiting speakers.
50. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. The college is currently reviewing the entry criteria of its ICT programmes. Adequate guidance, such as subject interviews and information sessions, provide learners with comprehensive programme information. Progression rates are satisfactory with 25% of learners progressing from BTEC introductory to BTEC first, and 47% progressing from BTEC first to applied A level. Progression to higher education has declined over the past three years from a good 80% to 60%.

### Leadership and management

51. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Although many areas for improvement at level 3 are identified through self-assessment over a three year period, staff did not identify failings in quality assurance in remedying and improving standards. Lesson observations lack rigour with few robust actions to improve teaching and learning. The minutes of course team meetings have few actions and where actions are identified these are not discussed at subsequent meetings. Equality for students from different backgrounds is satisfactory.
52. The management of resources to support learning is poor. Some ICT rooms are cramped and one of the two interactive whiteboards has been broken for a number of weeks. Although the majority of classrooms have projectors and overhead projectors (OHPs), some computers are slow to log onto the network at the main site. The learning resource centre has adequate drop-in computing facilities and a good selection of ICT related books. The majority of staff have teaching qualifications and a significant amount of staff development has taken place; however, there is no formal procedure for monitoring the impact of this.

## Arts, media and publishing

Good: Grade 2

### Context

53. The college offers art and design, music, media and performing arts courses at levels 2 and 3. There is some level 4 provision in design. Currently 513 learners follow full-time programmes, of which 65 are adults. One hundred and ninety learners follow part-time programmes. Art and design, music and media courses are located on the Highfields site, and media on a town centre site. Both are a short distance from the main college.

### Strengths

- good success rates on most full-time courses
- high standard of student work
- good teaching and learning
- very good accommodation and resources
- good progression rates.

### Areas for improvement

- low success rate on BTEC national diploma in performing arts in 2006/07
- weak target setting for students
- inadequate technician support in performing arts.

### Achievement and standards

54. Success rates on full-time programmes are good, some have improving trends and many are above the national average. Some level 2 courses are significantly above the national average. During 2006/07, retention and success rates were low on BTEC national diploma in performing arts. However, current in-year retention appears improved. Key skills success rates are low. Progression rates between levels are good, as is progression into higher education. Practical work is of a high standard. Some learners work in textiles is outstanding. There is good work in observational drawing, which was an inspection weakness last time. Attendance and punctuality during inspection were satisfactory.

### Quality of provision

55. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is particularly well structured and challenging on level 2 courses. Much teaching is motivational, stimulating and often fun. Assignments are well planned, interesting and engage students' interest. Verbal and written feedback is good and gives clear advice for improvement. Students enjoy their studies, are able to manage their learning and to work collaboratively. Some good industry links are established. Textiles students work with a local vintage clothing shop on a recycling theme. Companies hiring the college theatre involve the performing arts learners in front of house duties. Good use is made of ILT with specialist digital sites specifically developed to set and mark work online

for music technology learners. Computers are easily accessible and well used as a creative tool in art lessons.

56. The setting of learners' achievement and progression targets is poor. Learners' individual learning plans and achievement targets do not take sufficient account of their previous attainment and achievement. Subsequent progress is not monitored in terms of added value or whether learners are achieving at expected levels. Assessment and internal verification is satisfactory.
57. Some good industry links provide a wide range of experience for learners such as textiles students working with a local shop on a recycling clothing theme. Companies hiring the college theatre facilities, hire learners to help with productions. Arrangements to support learner's additional learning needs are satisfactory with good collaborative working between curriculum and specialist staff. Many students cannot access college enrichment programmes. However, the curriculum area has satisfactory levels of course specific enrichment.
58. Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners' additional learning needs are appropriately identified and supported at the start of their programme.

#### Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There have been recent management changes but inconsistent practice still remains between the subject areas. The self-assessment report is generally accurate but not all judgements match those of inspection. Teams regularly monitor the resulting operational action plans. The college has discontinued many of the adult programmes with low success rates. Staff can easily access management information systems but do not always use data as an effective management tool for improvement. Best use is not made of aspects of good practice between the arts teams. This was a weakness at the last inspection.
60. Accommodation and facilities are very good, secure and highly valued by staff and learners. Inadequate technician support in performing arts affects learners' productions and their ability to understand the technical aspects of theatre. The promotion of equality and diversity is good.

## Languages, literature and culture

Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Context

61. The college offers courses in English and modern foreign languages from level 1 to level 3. Most of the 114 learners on GCSE, GCE AS and A2 level English courses are aged 16-18. The college offers a wide range of modern foreign languages courses in European and non-European languages. A significant majority of the 960 learners on modern foreign languages courses are adults studying part-time.

## Strengths

- high pass rates at A\* to C in GCSE modern foreign languages
- good development of skills
- much good teaching and learning in modern foreign languages
- responsive curriculum that meets the needs of the local community, employers and learners.

## Areas for improvement

- low success rates in AS English
- insufficient planning of teaching to meet the needs of all learners
- insufficient focus on action planning for improvement.

## Achievement and standards

62. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pass rates at grades A\* to C are high on GCSE modern foreign languages courses. Pass rates at A\* to C in English were low in 2007, but high the previous year. Success rates for AS English language and literature are consistently low and below the national average. Retention is low on several courses.
63. Most learners who complete their courses make good progress. They make good contributions to discussions and understand and use key vocabulary and specialist terminology. Learners' written work is accurate and of a high standard. They develop good study skills and helpful strategies in preparation for examinations. Learners on modern foreign languages courses are confident to ask questions in the foreign language and demonstrate good understanding of foreign languages spoken at natural speed.

## Quality of provision

64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with much good teaching of modern foreign languages. In good lessons, teachers use a variety of resources, including ILT to stimulate learning and extend the learners' experience, such as well designed learning activities, games and quizzes. In these lessons, learners clearly enjoy their learning, are enthusiastic and keen to contribute their ideas. In less effective lessons students are insufficiently

involved, lose interest with over long activities or non-stimulating learning resources. Too many lessons do not take sufficient account of all learners needs. In less effective lessons teachers do not monitor learners' progress effectively or clearly identify targets for improvement.

65. The college offers a good range of courses to meet the needs of the local community, employers and learners. Foreign languages courses recruit well, take place at different levels and in several venues during the day and in the evening. Flexible, tailor-made provision is available to employers. Initial information, advice and guidance are overall satisfactory, although some learners' on part-time programmes have insufficient contact before starting the programme.

### Leadership and management

66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Organisation of courses is good and there are clear communications within teams. Staff generally work well together to share best practice and to develop strategies and resources for teaching and learning. Teachers respond well to the views of learners. Comments from modern foreign language learners have led to changes in the types of courses offered, provided and assessed.
67. Judgements in the self-assessment report are broadly accurate but some areas for improvement are not included in the action plan. Actions to address underperformance are not specific or measurable. Timescales and responsibilities for actions lack definition and the level of quality when monitoring progress is variable. The promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity is good.

## Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Context

68. The college provides Skills for Life programmes for 1,956 learners of whom 177 are full-time. The college provides English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses from entry level to level 2 in a number of college, community and workplace contexts. Some 215 learners are working towards GCSE maths via a progressive structured set of qualifications. All full-time learners have an entitlement for three key skills up to level 2. Current numbers are communications 2,243, application of number 3,227, and information technology (IT) 2,564.

## Strengths

- high pass rates in GCSE maths, literacy and numeracy national tests at level 1
- good progression within Skills for Life and ESOL
- good teaching in Skills for Life and ESOL
- responsive provision in Skills for Life and ESOL
- strong leadership and management with focus on improvement in Skills for Life and ESOL.

## Areas for improvement

- low success rates in ESOL and key skills level 2
- insufficient use of individual learning plans and monitoring of targets in ESOL and key skills
- lack of monitoring and formal improvement strategies in key skills.

## Achievement and standards

69. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory. GCSE maths pass rates are high, as are literacy and numeracy pass rates for level 1 national tests. ESOL success rates are low, particularly at level 2. Key skills level 2 success rates are low overall in communication and application of number but there is great variability across the college. Progress between levels and to accredited courses is good. Many learners are well motivated, make good progress, gain confidence and self-esteem. Standards of learners' work are satisfactory overall. In key skills underpinning skills are not always sufficiently well developed. Retention remains an issue for ESOL.

## Quality of provision

70. The quality of provision is satisfactory. There is much good teaching in ESOL and Skills for Life. In good lessons, tutors clearly identify learning outcomes that link well to varied activities to engage learners and stimulate learning. Good use is made of ICT and teachers use effective questioning techniques. In the less effective lessons there is little variation, activities are overly tutor led and key skills have insufficient links to vocational context.



71. Initial and diagnostic assessment effectively informs Skills for Life learners' individual learning plans (ILPs) and appropriate targets. However, ESOL and key skills ILPs are less effectively linked to learning and predicted progress. Accreditation requirements overly influence key skills ILPs rather than the needs of learners.
72. The range of provision is good and responsive. Flexible timetabling, gender specific courses, childcare and workplace provision suit the needs of a wide range of learners. Good links are established between Skills for Life and ESOL programmes, and T2G employer based provision. In ESOL, courses link well to citizenship and job-related modules.
73. Satisfactory guidance and advice is available to all learners supported by good induction processes. Teachers and ESOL development officers provide sensitive pastoral care and effective agency links. However, there are only three development officers to support the larger number of ESOL learners. Additional learning support is adequate. Part-time learners have no identified tutorial time, though teachers take constructive opportunities during class time for individual discussion.

#### Leadership and management

74. Leadership and management of Skills for Life and ESOL are good. Managers have a good understanding of their areas and are developing sound processes for improving quality. They use data effectively to inform action plans and monitor progress. There is a strong team approach to on-going review and improvement. Appraisal links well to improvement actions and changing learners needs. Self-assessment is broadly accurate though somewhat descriptive. Sharing of good practice, including materials is common and effective. Quality assurance and the monitoring of strategies to improve key skills are poor. The quality of judgements and grades during observations of teaching and learning for key skills is variable. The promotion of equality and diversity is good with a good representation of staff from ethnic groups.

## Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	04/05	872	59	65	-6	3,767	48	62	-14
	05/06	919	62	69	-7	2,912	58	65	-7
	06/07*	667	67			1,635	62		
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	47	68	68	0	1	100	64	36
	05/06			N/A				N/A	
	06/07*								
NVQs	04/05	141	73	68	5	91	85	66	19
	05/06	140	86	72	14	28	93	74	19
	06/07*	98	86			22	74		
Other	04/05	684	55	64	-9	3,675	47	62	-15
	05/06	779	58	69	-11	2,884	58	65	-7
	06/07*	569	64			1,613	62		

\* college data (use where complete, validated and produced using proprietary software)

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	04/05	1,428	62	61	1	1,563	62	60	2
	05/06	1,370	69	66	3	1,577	68	66	2
	06/07*	1,443	71			1,214	73		
GCSEs	04/05	267	49	64	-15	258	67	63	4
	05/06	237	61	68	-7	183	66	67	-1
	06/07*	192	60			183	81		
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	68	76	67	9	23	48	75	-27
	05/06	74	51	69	-18	23	39	68	-29
	06/07*	21	52			20	55		
NVQs	04/05	399	59	57	2	283	57	60	-3
	05/06	272	73	65	8	448	80	67	13
	06/07*	353	70			261	80		
Other	04/05	694	67	61	6	999	63	59	4
	05/06	787	71	66	5	923	63	65	-2
	06/07*	877	74			750	70		

\* college data (use where complete, validated and produced using proprietary software)

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
3 Long	04/05	1,395	60	68	-8	1,504	58	58	0
	05/06	1,499	64	70	-6	1,359	63	63	0
	06/07*	1,371	63			1,177	68		
A/A2 Levels	04/05	96	75	86	-11	112	67	69	-2
	05/06	109	79	87	-8	90	79	72	7
	06/07*	84	81			82	80		
AS Levels	04/05	391	57	66	-9	234	48	52	-4
	05/06	377	55	67	-12	254	48	55	-7
	06/07*	303	47			198	62		
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	127	37	61	-24	42	33	54	-21
	05/06	119	52	66	-14	37	51	57	-6
	06/07*	38	37			14	71		
NVQs	04/05	61	77	63	14	209	69	56	13
	05/06	60	67	71	-4	202	64	63	1
	06/07*	50	82			145	63		
Other	04/05	720	63	60	3	907	58	59	-1
	05/06	834	68	65	3	776	65	64	1
	06/07*	896	67			738	70		

\* college data (use where complete, validated and produced using proprietary software)

Table 4

Outcomes on Train to Gain programmes (T2G) managed by the college 2006 to 2007.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	2006/07	overall	405	84%
		timely	155	55%
	2007/08 (7 months)	overall	1,081	85%
		timely	822	72%

Note: 2007-08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first 3 months or greater of the LSC contract year

- \* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned
- \*\* College/provider qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'
- \*\*\* Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'Skills for Life'

Table 5

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2005 to 2007

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners	Provider NVQ rate	National NVQ rate	Provider framework rate	National framework rate
Advanced Apprenticeships	04/05	overall	68	59	49	34	35
		timely	75	37	31	24	22
	05/06	overall	67	67	54	46	44
		timely	50	54	34	32	27
	06/07	overall	84	71	64	57	58
		timely	82	55	43	44	37
Apprenticeships	04/05	overall	142	73	52	55	40
		timely	68	31	29	24	23
	05/06	overall	296	52	59	47	53
		timely	288	43	38	39	34
	06/07	overall	232	81	65	75	61
		timely	227	71	47	64	44

Table 6

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2005 to 2007.

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
2005/06	1306	74%	49%
2006/07	1100	77%	50%
2007/08 (7 months)	613	79%	54%

\* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

\*\* Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period