

Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education

Inspection report

Provider reference 130585
Published date February 2008

Contents

Background information	3
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement	6
Key strengths and areas for improvement	7
Main findings	9
Sector subject reports	14

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 at 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); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; 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: information communication technology (ICT) and adult literacy and numeracy.

Description of the provider

1. Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education (the institute) is a large general further education (GFE) college and the main provider of post-sixteen education in Grimsby and the wider area. At the main Nuns Corner campus in Grimsby, the curriculum includes courses at all levels from entry to degree, community provision, business training and commercial activities. Art and design, construction, animal care and horticulture are offered at two other sites located in Grimsby. The institute operates seven satellite centres offering courses, mainly in, information and communication technology (ICT), in central and north east Lincolnshire. Advanced level provision is offered in partnership with Toll Bar School.
2. The institute has over 4,500 full-time learners and 14,000 part-time learners. Of full-time learners 77% are aged 16-18. Of the current learners on roll, 52% are male and 98% are of white origin.
3. The most recent census data shows that north east Lincolnshire has a population of 159,000. In 2006, the GCSE achievement of five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is 35%, which is significantly below the national average. The unemployment rate of 6.4% is higher than the national average of 5.5%. The 2001 census showed that 1.4% of the residents are from minority ethnic groups.
4. The institute has provision in all sector subject areas from entry level to level 3 and offers level 6 provision in a broad range of subjects. It makes a key contribution to local 14-16 provision, providing training for 346 school pupils and is a key partner in the development of the specialist diplomas being introduced in 2008. It holds several national quality service standards, is an Investor in People (IiP), and provides Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) in digital media, ports and logistics, autotronics, food manufacturing technology and gas/plumbing technology. It operates a number of commercial ventures, providing realistic working environments for learners.
5. The institute's mission is 'to be a world class, customer focused and dynamic provider of education and skills'. It has experienced considerable growth over the last four years. Currently, approximately 39% of the institute's income is not Learning and Skills Council (LSC) generated.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject areas

Information and communication technology	Good: Grade 2
Adult literacy and numeracy	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

6. The effectiveness of provision is good. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. After a significant decline in 2005/06, success rates are now satisfactory. In work-based learning (WBL), success rates for apprenticeships are high and timely success rates are outstanding. Success rates for 14-16 learners are good. Retention rates are broadly satisfactory, but remain an area for improvement. On GCE A level programmes the majority of learners make at least the progress expected of them. Key skill success rates are high. Progression by learners between levels of study is good. Attendance is good and monitored rigorously.
7. Inspectors agreed with the institute's self-assessment that teaching and learning are good. The institute has invested effectively in improving teaching and learning. Most lessons are well planned and meet the differing needs of learners. Learners enjoy their lessons and now make good progress. Resources to support learning are good in many areas and outstanding in media and in aspects of engineering, for example, refrigeration.
8. The institute's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers is outstanding. The institute offers a broad range of provision to meet learners' needs. It has successfully invested in developing community sites to meet the needs of the wider community. A varied enrichment programme is well attended and adds significant value to the learners' experience, raising their career aspirations.
9. Education and social inclusion are outstanding. Provision for 14-16 year olds is very good, particularly for Year 10 and 11 school pupils who experience difficulties within a school setting. Approximately 67% of these learners progress onto higher level courses at the institute. Productive partnerships, for example, with the probation service and an agency that supports homeless young people are particularly effective in re-engaging these and other groups back into education and training.
10. Guidance and support are good. Additional learning support is good and learners who access support make at least the same progress as their peers. However, take up is low on full-time courses. Induction activities are very effective. Learners' support needs are identified and planned for before the start of programmes. Careers advice is good. The tutorial curriculum is varied and interesting, and contributes well to learners' personal and social development.
11. Leadership and management are good. The management team provide strong leadership. Partnerships are strong and very productive. Governance is good, but some aspects of reporting at governors' meetings lack sufficient clarity and detail. Quality improvement is good and is contributing to

improved success rates. Judgements in the self-assessment report are accurate and most action plans are detailed. Accommodation is good and some specialist resources are outstanding.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

12. The institute's capacity to improve is good. Financial management is strong. Management information is accurate and used well. Business planning is thorough. Success rates in WBL and key skills have improved significantly and are good. Achievement rates are high. Retention rates have improved and are now broadly satisfactory.
13. Quality improvement strategies are good and demonstrate improvement, particularly in teaching and learning. Under-performance by curriculum areas is identified quickly and management interventions are effective in bringing about improvements. The self-assessment process is robust and the institute accurately identified many of its strengths and areas for improvement in the self-assessment report.

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

14. The institute has made good progress in addressing many of the areas for improvement noted during the last inspection and the annual assessment visit. The proportion of good teaching and learning has increased. Success rates in WBL and in key skills are good. Success rates, particularly of learners aged 16-18, have improved markedly and are now satisfactory. Retention rates were low at the last inspection and have improved. Good provision has been maintained in ICT and provision in adult literacy and numeracy has improved from satisfactory to good.

Key strengths

- high success rates on work-based learning
- good teaching and learning
- outstanding educational and social inclusion
- some outstanding realistic working environments
- good support for learners
- strong leadership and vision
- extensive employer engagement
- strong financial position
- good quality improvement strategies
- good promotion of equality of opportunity.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- retention rates
- the use of target setting in individual learning plans
- insufficiently embedded Skills for Life strategy.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grades:

Work-based learning

Good: Grade 2

Learners aged 14 to 16

Good: Grade 2

15. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The institute judged them to be good. Retention rates have improved and are broadly satisfactory. The institute has worked hard and has taken appropriate action to effect improvements.
16. Success rates are satisfactory. After a significant decline in 2005/06, success rates for learners aged 16-18 improved in 2006/07. Learners on National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) at level 1 perform better than expected based on their prior attainment at GCSE. On NVQ courses at level 1 and on adult short courses at level 3, success rates are consistently good. Since the last inspection, success rates have been low on GCE A level programmes. In 2006/07, success rates at GCE A level for learners aged 16-18 and at AS level for all ages have improved but remain slightly below the sector average. However, the value added data shows learners make at least the progress expected of them based on their prior attainment at GCSE and some make good progress.
17. Key skill success rates at levels 1 and 2 for all ages in application of number and communication in 2006/07 are high. In ICT, success rates are improving and are broadly satisfactory. Success rates are good at level 2 for learners aged 16-18.
18. In WBL, success rates for apprenticeships are high and timely success rates are outstanding. Success rates on advanced apprenticeships are good. There is good early framework achievement in engineering.
19. The institute analyses the performance of different groups by age, gender, disability and minority ethnic groups. Learners with a disability and those from minority ethnic groups perform in line with other learners. Success rates for 14-16 learners are good. There is good progression by learners between levels of study.
20. Attendance is good and is monitored rigorously. Current attendance rates have improved by 3% when compared with the same period the previous year. The institute is responsive to the needs of learners who travel some distance to the institute and provides free transport and adapts lesson start and finish times appropriately.
21. The standard of learners' work observed in lessons is good. Learners displayed particularly good standards of work in engineering, ICT, art and hairdressing. Learners enjoy their work and are well motivated.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

22. Inspectors agreed with the institute's self-assessment report that teaching and learning are good. The self-assessment report provides an accurate view of strengths and areas for improvement. Thorough systems are in place to assure the quality of teaching and learning. Lesson observers are well trained and arrangements for moderation to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the process are robust. Joint lesson observations carried out by inspectors and internal observers showed close agreement about all aspects of the lessons observed. However, verbal feedback to teachers following joint observations did not focus sufficiently on how sessions could have been improved.
23. Action planning following lesson observations is well linked to staff development. A focused staff development programme is effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning. New staff and staff awarded satisfactory or inadequate observation grades are well supported. Teaching and learning coaches are used well to support improvements. The lesson observation system is supportive.
24. Most lessons are well planned with frequent changes of activity to meet the differing needs of learners. Learners enjoy their lessons and now make good progress. The best lessons are well paced with high levels of challenge and skilful use of questioning to test learners' understanding. In the weaker lessons, individual learner targets are not used well to inform the planning of the lesson and questioning techniques are not effective. While some improvements have been made in the use of individual learning plans since the last inspection, they are still not used effectively to set learning targets. Whole class activities give insufficient attention to the individual needs of learners. Resources to support learning are good in many areas and outstanding in media and in aspects of engineering, for example, refrigeration. Information learning technology (ILT) is used well, has increased significantly since the last inspection and is used effectively in many areas. The use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) to support learning is variable across curriculum areas.
25. Key skills provision has improved greatly since the last inspection. Specialist key skills staff are based in curriculum areas. Assignments are vocationally based and key skills are more embedded into the curriculum. Learners are encouraged to use evidence from their course to meet key skill assessment requirements.
26. Assessment practices are satisfactory. Internal verification is thorough. Tutors provide detailed and comprehensive written feedback to learners on how to improve their performance. Parents are kept well informed of the progress their son or daughter is making.
27. The institute's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners and employers is outstanding. The institute has developed strong and highly productive partnerships with local businesses, the local authority and

community organisations. Curriculum planning takes close account of the views of partners to plan and provide a curriculum which is highly responsive to the needs of the whole community and is very effective in meeting the skills needs of the area. Over 1,000 school pupils are involved in activities at the institute, who sponsor competitions and events in schools. The institute works in partnership with Toll Bar School to deliver GCE A level provision. The institute provides a broad range of provision in all vocational areas and at all levels, including higher education, which supports progression. The institutes five CoVEs provide high quality training to large numbers of company employees.

28. The institute's response to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. Many learners are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have low prior attainment when joining the institute. Provision for learners aged 14-16 is very good, particularly for school pupils who experience difficulties within a school setting. Approximately 67% of these learners progress onto higher level courses at the institute. Achievement rates are high at 92%. Community sites are very effective in attracting young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) and participation rates have increased for this group.
29. Curriculum enrichment is extensive. Participation rates are high and the institute gives financial support to learners to help them access enrichment opportunities, which include residential opportunities regionally, nationally and internationally. Locally, there are many opportunities for learners to contribute to activities at the institute and also in the wider community where learners are a highly visible and acknowledged presence and make a positive contribution to the community. Learners' achievement are celebrated and displayed throughout the institute.
30. Learners benefit from good guidance and support. Initial assessment is effective. Additional learning support is good and for those receiving it, they make at least the same progress as their peers. However, take up is low on full-time courses. A Skills for Life strategy has been further developed, but is not yet fully embedded in the curriculum. Induction activities are very effective. Induction events are held before courses begin, which prepares learners well for their course and wider college experience and enables identified additional support to be in place at the beginning of the course.
31. Careers and progression advice are good. Links with many local and national industries and well planned trips and residential activities gives learners a good insight into a variety of careers and helps them to prepare effectively for the work place. Former learners are used regularly as positive role models.
32. The tutorial curriculum is varied and interesting, with a strong focus on preparing learners for the world of work. The provision contributes well to all aspects of Every Child Matters. The institute's approach to promoting health awareness to learners is outstanding and their approach to learners' safety is good. Learners report that they feel safe within the college.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

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

33. Leadership and management are good. The principal and senior managers provide strong leadership. The work of the institute is highly valued by the community. Business planning is good. A thorough planning cycle monitors the financial performance of curriculum areas. Financial management is good. Governance is good. Governors strongly support the institute's inclusive curriculum and community strategy. Some aspects of the reporting of governors' meetings lack sufficient detail and clarity.
34. Partnerships are very strong. Links with employers are often based on the CoVEs and have led to the development of a range of social enterprises. There are close links with local schools. The institute is a key partner in the development of specialist diplomas.
35. Curriculum management is good. Communication is good and staff meet regularly within curriculum teams. Performance targets related to retention and achievement are set at all levels and regularly monitored. Staff development is extensive with particular emphasis on improving teaching and learning.
36. Accommodation and learning resources are good, providing welcoming, well resourced learning environments. The curriculum is enhanced by an unusual range of outstanding realistic working environments including a pet hotel, a television broadcast studio and a food factory training unit. These facilities provide an innovative context for learning and develop learners' wider employability skills effectively.
37. Quality improvement is good. A number of quality improvement initiatives are contributing to improved success rates. Retention rates were an area for improvement at the last inspection and have now improved. The self-assessment report is clearly evidenced and most action plans are detailed. Judgements in the report had a high degree of accuracy. Strengths and areas for improvements were clearly identified. However, some grades in the report were over generous.
38. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The institute runs many celebration events including a cultural awareness week involving all curriculum areas. Gender-stereotyping is challenged. The institute leads an equality and diversity forum for employers. Equality and diversity is celebrated and well promoted around the institute but is not fully embedded within the curriculum. The institute's approach to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 is satisfactory. Appropriate checks are in place to meet safeguarding requirements.

39. The institute provides good value for money. Success rates are satisfactory and improving. Resources are used well and income from a range of sources is invested appropriately for the benefit of learners.

Sector subject areas

Information and communication technology

Good: Grade 2

Context

40. Full- and part-time ICT courses offer progression from beginners through to foundation degree level. Approximately 90 learners mostly aged 16-18, study on full-time courses including entry level skills for working life, a national certificate in information technology (IT) and a national diploma for IT practitioners. Almost 900 learners, mostly adults, are enrolled on part-time courses such as the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and a range of City & Guilds e-Qualifications.

Strengths

- high success rates on foundation IT, certificate for IT users, and on the certificate in information technology
- good teaching and learning
- good curriculum management.

Areas for improvement

- low retention rates for learners aged 16-18 on levels 1 and 2 at the satellite centres
- declining success rates on level 3 courses for adults.

Achievement and standards

41. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates are high on the foundation IT course, the certificate for IT users and the OCR national certificate. Success rates improved on several courses in 2006/07 after declining in 2005/06 and are now satisfactory. Success rates for adults on City & Guilds courses at level 3 are low. Retention rates are low for learners aged 16-18 on levels 1 and 2 courses at the satellite centres.
42. Most learners make good progress and apply their skills effectively. Learners on a digital applications course produced well designed presentations and recorded narrations to accompany them. On a BTEC national course, learners produced effective designs for databases. Adult learners on City & Guilds courses learn new skills quickly and are able to apply them to new situations. Punctuality and attendance is good.

Quality of provision

43. Teaching and learning are good and have improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned, include a wide variety of teaching approaches, motivate learners successfully and promote the good acquisition of skills. In many lessons, learners are enthusiastic and their practical work is good.

They are encouraged to review the quality of their work and to be self-critical. Assessments are used effectively. Marked work is returned quickly and teachers' comments are detailed and advise learners how to improve.

44. The range of courses are good. On successful completion of their course, many learners progress on to the next level course. A small number of level 3 learners progress to higher education courses at the institute.
45. Support for learners is good. Additional support needs are accurately identified and learners receive good support with literacy and numeracy. Teachers provide good pastoral support for learners. Retention rates of learners who receive support are particularly good. At tutorial reviews, learners are set challenging targets and their progress is monitored thoroughly.

Leadership and management

46. Leadership and management are good. Curriculum teams work effectively together and communication is good. Good practice is shared and new skills are promoted well. Teaching resources are shared across institute sites. Data are analysed carefully and used well to inform decisions on course management. The self-assessment report is mainly accurate but did not identify the poor retention rates of learners aged 16-18 as an area for improvement. Action plans to address identified areas for improvement are realistic. Promotion of equality and diversity is good.

Adult literacy and numeracy

Good: Grade 2

Context

47. The institute offers courses in literacy and numeracy up to level 1 and key skills to level 2. In 2006/07, there were 1,930 learners aged 16-18 and 374 adults enrolled on courses. Key skills are delivered in curriculum areas. Basic skills are offered in discrete sessions at the main sites and in the satellite centres. Support for dyslexia is provided for adults in the study support centre on the main campus.

Strengths

- high and improving success rates in key skills and the certificate in adult numeracy in 2006/07
- high achievement rates on many courses
- much good teaching
- good initiatives to support basic skills in the workplace
- very good dyslexia support
- effective and timely initial assessment.

Areas for improvement

- retention rates on level 1 in adult literacy
- target setting in individual learning plans
- insufficiently precise development planning.

Achievement and standards

48. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates in literacy and numeracy have improved significantly in 2006/07. Key skills success rates are high. Achievement rates are high and range from 81% to 96% on most adult literacy and numeracy courses. Retention rates have improved between 2005/07 with the exception of the certificate in adult literacy at level 1, but remain below sector average. Attendance is good. Learners produce work of a good standard, particularly in the work place.

Quality of provision

49. Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons, planning is thorough and teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to motivate and meet learners' needs. Learners take responsibility for their own learning and develop confidence in their skills and abilities. The teaching of key skills is mostly good and often better. In less successful lessons, insufficient attention is paid to meeting individual learners' needs. Teachers do not set precise targets for learners in individual learning plans. There is too much emphasis on recording learners' activities rather than setting challenging targets for improvement. The use of ILT is not yet fully embedded into the curriculum.

50. The range of provision is good. Provision is delivered flexibly to meet the needs of the learners. Learners identified as needing additional support are offered individual tuition, in class support or the opportunity to attend additional support workshops. However, take up is low. Key skills are fully embedded in curriculum areas.
51. Learning support is good. Initial screening and diagnostic assessment is effective and timely and takes place before courses start, ensuring that appropriate additional learning support is in place for the start of the academic year. Very good support is provided for learners with dyslexia and for those learners referred by the National Probation Service. Initiatives to support learners' literacy and numeracy needs in WBL and in the work place are good.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are good overall. A new management structure for literacy and numeracy was introduced in January 2007. Communication is now effective and staff are well supported and curriculum development is good. Staff development is good. Successful partnerships with industry have been developed and Skills for Life qualifications are being delivered in the work place. Full-time staff are well qualified and hold appropriate qualifications in literacy and/or numeracy.
53. Quality improvement strategies have focused effectively on improving retention and success rates, and teaching and learning. The self-assessment report accurately identified most strengths and areas for improvement. The quality improvement plan developed from the self-assessment report is insufficiently precise. A Skills for Life strategy has been further developed but is yet to be fully implemented across the institute.

Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to 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	2625	67	65	2	1948	57	62	-5
	05/06	3828	65	69	-4	2004	69	65	4
	06/07	2997	71	...	...	1742	66	...	...
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	67	69	68	1	...	...	...	...
	05/06	54	59	72	-13	1	0	...	...
	06/07	26	85	...	...	1	100	...	...
NVQs	04/05	222	73	68	5	84	82	66	16
	05/06	233	75	72	3	329	89	74	15
	06/07	207	71	...	...	135	87	...	...
Other	04/05	2336	66	64	2	1864	56	62	-6
	05/06	3541	64	69	-5	1674	65	65	0
	06/07	2764	70	...	...	1606	64	...	...

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to 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	1447	61	61	0	2005	59	60	-1
	05/06	1800	57	66	-9	1544	70	66	4
	06/07	1703	68	...	...	1921	67	...	...
GCSEs	04/05	405	62	64	-2	208	59	63	-4
	05/06	460	54	68	-14	193	57	67	-10
	06/07	302	65	...	...	205	70	...	...
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	138	67	67	0	92	58	75	-17
	05/06	54	59	69	-10	29	66	68	-2
	06/07	92	72	...	...	33	58	...	...
NVQs	04/05	339	53	57	-4	455	60	61	-1
	05/06	357	62	65	-3	541	79	67	12
	06/07	494	67	...	...	613	70	...	...
Other	04/05	565	62	61	1	1250	58	59	-1
	05/06	929	57	66	-9	781	68	65	3
	06/07	815	68	...	...	1070	64	...	...

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to 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	1137	58	68	-10	1061	53	58	-5
	05/06	1069	58	70	-12	886	63	63	0
	06/07	1092	70	...	...	864	68	...	...
A/A2 Levels	04/05	143	76	86	-10	63	68	69	-1
	05/06	109	62	87	-25	51	67	72	-5
	06/07	101	86	...	...	40	78	...	...
AS Levels	04/05	374	40	66	-26	119	50	52	-2
	05/06	385	46	67	-21	138	51	55	-4
	06/07	224	63	...	...	116	49	...	...
GNVQs and precursors	04/05	188	61	61	0	121	17	54	-37
	05/06	142	61	66	-5	44	50	57	-7
	06/07	7	71	...	...	5	20	...	...
NVQs	04/05	57	68	63	5	205	44	56	-12
	05/06	59	54	71	-17	148	50	63	-13
	06/07	62	52	...	...	129	65	...	...
Other	04/05	375	65	60	5	553	63	59	4
	05/06	374	69	65	4	505	71	64	7
	06/07	698	72	...	...	538	71	...	...

Table 4

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

Programme	End Year	Success Rate	No, of learners *	College NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate **	College framework rate **	National framework rate **
Advanced Apprenticeships	04/05	overall	24	33	48	17	34
		timely	25	16	31	8	22
	05/06	overall	24	83	53	67	44
		timely	20	65	34	60	28
	06/07	overall	18	83	...	67	...
		timely	25	64	...	48	...
Apprenticeships	04/05	overall	118	65	51	59	39
		timely	109	29	29	27	22
	05/06	overall	128	63	58	59	52
		timely	122	39	38	38	34
	06/07	overall	140	80	...	78	...
		timely	128	73	...	73	...

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

*** Adult training (long courses) includes 'Train to Gain' provision, but not 'Skills for Life'