University of Derby Buxton

Inspection report

Provider reference	133811
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Contents

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 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: health, public services and care; information and communication technology (ICT), hospitality and catering; sport, leisure and tourism; and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD).

Description of the provider

1. Further Education (FE) provision in the University of Derby Buxton, a faculty of the University of Derby, provides around 7% of the University's provision in terms of income. Provision for learners aged 16 to 18 is based predominantly at the University's Devonshire campus in Buxton. Adult programmes are offered at the Buxton Campus and at the main University campus in Derby City. A range of off-site community courses is delivered through training clubs and centres and there are franchise arrangements for some provision outside of Derbyshire. The University's mission states: 'We are value driven and provide flexible, high quality learning, teaching and support for a diverse student body'.

2. The High Peak district has a population of around 89,500. The county's unemployment rate is low. The majority of FE learners come from Buxton and the other towns and villages across the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales.

3. Programmes are offered in all of the Learning and Skills Council's sector subject areas but the numbers enrolled in some are very small. The sector subject areas with the largest enrolments are preparation for life and work, information and communication technology, retail and commercial enterprise, health, public services and care, and leisure, travel and tourism. At the time of inspection, there were 2,673 learners enrolled on FE programmes, 978 were aged 16 to 18 and 1,695 were aged 19 or over. There is a greater proportion of female learners to males across both age groups. A total of 199 learners are enrolled on work-based learning programmes in engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, hospitality, sport and leisure, food manufacture and childcare. Train to Gain programmes are offered via consortia in food manufacture, hairdressing, plant operations, health and social care and motor vehicle with 72 learners enrolled on partnership programmes. There are 184 pupils from eight local schools aged 14 to 16 attending vocational courses at the college. Around 2% of learners aged 16 to 18 and around 9% of adult learners studying further education programmes at the college are of minority ethnic heritage.

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

Equality of opportunity	*Satisfactory: contributory grade 3*

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Hospitality and catering	Good: Grade 2

Sport, leisure and tourism	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grade:

Learners aged 14 to 16   *Good: grade 2*

4.   The overall effectiveness of the University of Derby's FE provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall, including for work-based learning. Success, retention and pass rates show a gradual trend of improvement, although performance across the college's sector subject areas is variable. Success rates are high on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) programmes for both learners aged 16 to 18 and over 19, particularly at level 2 where they are consistently well above that of similar colleges. Success rates for adult learners on level 3 programmes remain unsatisfactory. Learners develop good workplace skills and a high proportion progress to other FE courses, higher education (HE), employment or training, so positively contributing to their future economic well-being. The college promotes the learners' voice well and the majority of learners enjoy their study and appreciate the benefits of the college's university status. The provision for and achievement of learners aged 14 to 16 is very good.

5.   Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between teachers and learners are good but there is insufficient focus in lessons on meeting individual learners' needs and maximising their learning. The support provided by learning support assistants in lessons is generally very effective.

6.   The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good. The college works well with a wide range of partners and has successfully developed productive community links and initiatives. For example, the college has been instrumental in raising the general public's awareness of the potential of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through its outreach provision. Its approach to social inclusion is good.

7.   Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support to complete their studies. Pastoral support is particularly strong. The college recognises that guidance and support is an area for improvement on access courses. Tutorial provision is satisfactory. The use of individual targets through tutorials to raise learners' achievement is too variable.

8.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders and governors set a clear strategic direction for the FE provision. Governance is good, as is the college's financial management. Despite improving quality assurance and self-assessment processes, the expected positive impact is not yet evident in all parts of the college. The implementation of quality improvement is inconsistent. The self-assessment report is comprehensive but lacks rigour and was over-generous in much of its evaluation. The quality of accommodation is much

improved. Specialist resources in hospitality and beauty therapy are outstanding. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve   Satisfactory: Grade 3

9.   The college has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Governors and senior managers demonstrate a genuine commitment to raise the quality of provision. The self-assessment process has improved and is inclusive, but is implemented inconsistently. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and detailed but the accuracy of its judgements varies; in the best sections, the judgements are correct and are useful to the college. In the less rigorous areas the text and the judgements do not match and in others the judgements are over-generous.

10.   Quality improvement procedures have improved since the last inspection but their implementation is inconsistent. The internal lesson observation process has improved but judgements are not always accurate. Outcomes inform appraisal and staff development effectively. The impact of the quality processes is variable. Where implemented rigorously, curriculum provision has improved but in other areas the quality of provision has been slow to improve or has declined.

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

11.   The college has made satisfactory progress in addressing the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Data are much more accurate, credible and accessible. Many staff are much more competent at collecting, analysing and using data to inform management decisions but others interpret data less effectively. The quality assurance and self-assessment arrangements have improved but their implementation is inconsistent. The diagnostic assessment process has improved and is effective. Accommodation and specialist resources have improved significantly and are of a high quality. Accommodation and resources at Harpur Hill have also improved but they are below the standard of the main site.

Key strengths

- high success rates on NVQ programmes
- high rates of progression to FE, HE, training and employment
- productive community links and initiatives
- very good provision for learners aged 14 to 16
- good development of learners' workplace skills
- strong pastoral and in-class support for learners
- outstanding specialist resources in hospitality and beauty therapy
- good governance
- very good financial management.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low success rates at level 3 for adult learners
- the insufficient focus in lessons to meet individual learners' needs and maximise learning
- the use of individual target setting to raise learners' achievement
- the inconsistent implementation of quality improvement
- the rigour of its self-assessment.

Main findings

Achievement and standards   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grade:

Learners aged 14 to 16   *Good: grade 2*

12.   Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Overall success rates have improved each year, although the rate of improvement since the last inspection has been slow in some areas. At college level, pass and retention rates on most long programmes are satisfactory but this conceals variable performance between different sector subject areas. For learners aged 16 to 18 success rates improved in 2007/08, most notably at level 3, and are now satisfactory. There are high and improving success rates on NVQ programmes at all levels, particularly at level 2 where performance is consistently very strong.

13.   For adult learners, success rates on levels 1 and 2 programmes continue to be at or above that of general and further education colleges. However, at level 3 the proportion of learners who successfully complete and achieve their full-time qualification is low. Many of these learners are on the college's main access programme which has had very low success rates for two years. As with younger learners, success rates for adults studying on NVQ programmes are high and consistently very high at level 2.

14.   Most learners make reasonable progress. Good progress is made by work-based learners particularly in hospitality and catering and hairdressing. There is effective preparation for learners' future economic well-being. A high and improving proportion of learners progress to FE, HE, employment or training. There is good development of learners' workplace skills in many areas. However, the previous high and improving success rates in key skills fell markedly in 2007/08 and were unsatisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory but varies between sector subject areas.

15.   There is little significant difference in performance by gender. Although learner numbers are relatively small, success rates for many minority ethnic groups are consistently low. The college considers the performance of different groups of learners but does not evaluate it in sufficient detail or prioritise specific actions to promote improvement.

16.   Achievement and standards for work-based learners are satisfactory. Success rates for apprenticeships are broadly average but they are low for all advanced apprenticeships. Performance on Train to Gain programmes has been variable but the provision is now satisfactory and improving. There are very high success rates for pupils aged 14 to 16 years who attend the college's school link programmes.

17. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory, although there are examples of good standards; for example, within hospitality and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners enjoy their education and appreciate the benefits of the college's university status.

18. The college's evaluation of learners' achievement is broadly accurate, although it lacks sharp assessment of all of the strengths and areas for improvement. Consequently, not all strengths are adequately celebrated or all issues clearly identified.

Quality of provision   Satisfactory: Grade 3

19. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Over the past year the college has prioritised the development of detailed lesson plans, differentiation, and the integration of information learning technology (ILT) in lessons and arranged training to develop these skills. The best lessons incorporate such skills so that learners are challenged and engaged. Planning is based on thorough assessment of individual needs and an appropriate range of activities and projects are devised, often incorporating ILT, to meet them. However, too much teaching does not engage or challenge learners sufficiently or provide for their individual needs. In all lessons, relationships between teachers and learners are good.

20. The college has a long established lesson observation scheme to assess the quality of teaching and learning. It uses standardised documentation to guide judgements and comments, although its completion is variable. Some observations provide detailed written feedback but others do not give sufficient detail to justify grading or guide improvement. The college's self-assessment of the quality of teaching and learning is over-generous and does not emphasise learning and/or the progress of individual learners sufficiently. The college's moderation of observations does not always identify this over-grading or address inconsistencies between the judgements made.

21. The identification and provision of additional learning support are good. The college assesses learners' starting points well but the effective use of this information in planning lessons varies. The support provided by teachers and learning support assistants in lessons is good. The quality of teaching accommodation and learning resources are good and in some curriculum areas are outstanding.

22. The college has well established policies and procedures for learner assessment and internal verification is thorough. Assessment feedback is satisfactory. There is some very good practice which guides learners to improve but some feedback is insufficiently detailed and fails to address all spelling and grammar mistakes. Communication with parents is good. Most curriculum areas hold regular parents' evenings and discuss with parents the best way to support learners who are at risk of not achieving.

23.   The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good. The college works well with a wide range of partners. The range of full-time courses is good with most available at levels 1 to 3, although there is insufficient part-time provision in some areas. The college contributes well to social inclusion and community cohesion; for example, spa packages have been designed specifically to encourage wide ranging client groups into the college's spa training facilities, such as some complementary treatments for the carers of cancer patients.

24.   Provision for 180 learners aged 14 to 16 from six local schools is successful and well organised. Progression from these courses to further education and/or training is very good. Each curriculum area has an extensive range of additional and enrichment activities and many include additional accredited vocationally-related qualifications. The range of centrally organised enrichment available is more limited and participation is low, consequently the opportunities available for all learners to take on additional responsibility or make a positive contribution to the college or community are reduced. Links with employers are good and developing. The college works collaboratively to identify and meet the needs of employers in the region. Imaginative work with High Peak Borough Council and Vision Buxton has established a support programme for new, small businesses.

25.   Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support to complete their studies. Initial assessment arrangements to identify support for literacy, numeracy or other support are effective and support is provided swiftly. Data show that adults who receive support do much better than those who do not. Impartial advice and guidance are satisfactory. The college recognises that advice and guidance for those wishing to join Access to HE courses is not always effective. Progression from level 3 to HE courses, although improving, remains modest. Some handbooks for learners are good, particularly those for work-based learners. Learners enjoy good pastoral support and access to a wide range of support for personal and welfare matters. These services are enhanced by the availability of services provided to HE learners. In-class support is particularly effective.

26.   Tutorial arrangements are satisfactory. The programme covers aspects of staying safe, healthy lifestyles, citizenship, equality and diversity and careers education. The quality of tutorials and the use of targets to raise learner achievement are too variable. This was raised as an issue at the last inspection and progress has not been swift enough.

Leadership and management   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grade:

Equality of opportunity   *Satisfactory: grade 3*

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. This agrees with the college's self-assessment. Leaders and governors set a clear strategic direction for the college. Senior managers and governors are well aware of the main strengths and areas for improvement and are very committed to raise quality and improve learners' outcomes.

28. Despite improving quality assurance and self-assessment processes, the expected positive impact is not yet evident in all parts of the college. Key skills success rates declined in 2007/08. Access course success rates have been low for several years. Three sector subject areas self-assess as inadequate. Many changes to the senior management team have occurred in the last few years, and other managers have found this lack of continuity unsettling. Outcomes from lesson observations feed into appraisal, and subsequent development needs inform the staff development programme.

29. The self-assessment process involves staff at all levels, learners and governors but few external stakeholders. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and detailed. Where data are used effectively and judgements are based on clear evidence, the report is accurate and informs the quality improvement plan well. In the less rigorous areas, judgements are over-optimistic and do not correlate with the text.

30. Staff are well qualified and most teachers are teacher trained or are undergoing relevant training. Managers have responded well to the workforce reform agenda. Communication and staff morale are good. Curriculum management is satisfactory. The management of work-based learning, Train to Gain and Entry to Employment (E2E) is satisfactory but the management of work-based learning in hospitality and catering and in hairdressing is good.

31. The college promotes the learners' voice well through learner representatives, learners' questionnaires and by learners' active presence on the academic board and the governing body. It responds well to issues which learners raise. Learners feel empowered to express their opinions openly. Managers do not, however, analyse learners' views by different groups.

32. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Staff at all levels have very effective links with local schools and communities, and meet the needs of learners with diverse needs and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities effectively. Policies and procedures integrate equality and diversity issues well. The success rates of learners from minority ethnic groups however, are consistently below those of other learners. The emphasis given to improving the achievement and standards of different groups of learners is insufficient.

Managers analyse the recruitment of staff by different groups very thoroughly but do not do so for promoted staff. Equality and diversity action plans are monitored rigorously and the outcomes are reported annually to governors. Learners feel very safe in the college. Not all staff have received recent updating on safeguarding. The college's response to the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Disability Discrimination (Amendment) Act 2005 and the Child Protection Act is satisfactory.

33. Governance is good. Governors are very well experienced and bring highly relevant skills to their meetings with middle and senior managers. They challenge managers rigorously but provide advice and guidance where relevant. Governors produce a skills audit but do not self-assess. They promote compliance with HE safeguarding measures but do not apply best practice on governor training.

34. Financial management and forecasting are prudent and very effective. Managers adopt best value principles and monitor estimated and actual expenditure closely. They work well with curriculum staff to adjust provision to meet the LSCs changing priorities. Success rates have improved over the last three years but most are at or below the national average. Success rates for adult learners on level 3 courses, however, are very low. Most learners make satisfactory progress, compared with their prior attainment. Value for money is satisfactory.

Sector subject area

Health, public services and care   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

35. The college offers full- and part-time courses from levels 1 to 4 in health and social care, childcare and public services. There are currently 117 learners mainly aged 16 to 18 on full-time courses in health and social care and childcare with 86 learners on public services programmes. A total of 108 adults are studying part time on counselling courses and NVQs in childcare and health and social care. Currently 35 learners aged 14 to 16 are following the foundation award in childcare.

Strengths

- high success rates on part-time courses for adults
- good development of vocational and practical skills
- broad range of provision responsive to local needs
- good support for learners.

Areas for improvement

- low retention on many full-time courses for learners aged 16 to 18
- insufficient planning to meet the needs of individual learners
- insufficiently rigorous self-assessment.

Achievement and standards

36. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates for adults on part-time courses are very good at level 2 and have improved to above the national average at level 3. Success rates have also improved at level 2 and level 3 for learners aged 16 to 18 and are now satisfactory, although retention is low on many full-time courses. Learners aged 14 to 16 make good progress and achieve well. Progression to employment and further study is good. The standard of work for learners aged 16 to 18 is satisfactory. Adult learners achieve high standards. Learners develop good work-related skills which they use effectively in a wide range of professional settings.

Quality of provision

37. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The better lessons engage learners' interest fully and are vocationally relevant. Teachers relate theory to professional practice well, drawing from a wide range of professional settings; for example, in a childcare lesson learners planned activities to promote children's physical and intellectual development and raise awareness of equality of opportunity. Public services learners make effective use of the virtual learning environment to improve their learning. However, too often planning is

not sufficiently rigorous to meet the needs of all learners. Learning activities often lack academic challenge, particularly at level 3.

38.   Learners receive satisfactory feedback on their overall progress. Assessment in the workplace promotes the development of good practical and vocational skills. Recruitment and initial assessment are rigorous. Support is quickly put in place for learners at risk. However, some in-class assessment does not focus sufficiently on individual progress.

39.   The area's response to meeting learners' needs and interests is satisfactory. There is a relatively broad range of provision which is responsive to local needs and good partnership arrangements with local schools and employers. Learners take appropriate additional vocationally-related qualifications in subjects, such as health and safety, food hygiene, first aid and volunteering, which improve their potential economic well-being.

40.   Support and guidance are good. The tutorial programme is vocationally relevant and contributes well to learners' personal and social development. Learners are aware of equality and diversity issues as well as health and safety issues.

Leadership and management

41.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strategies to improve success rates are beginning to take effect but self-assessment is insufficiently rigorous. There is too little focus on the impact of teaching on learning and insufficient analysis of data to inform planning. Weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been partially addressed. Quality assurance arrangements remain underdeveloped.

Information and communication technology   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

42.   There are 67 full-time learners aged 16 to 18 on vocational programmes at levels 1, 2 and 3. Courses include Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma and diploma in digital applications at levels 1 and 2. A total of 129 adult learners are on part-time programmes at levels 1, 2 and 3. Adult programmes are offered at the college main site and in three community venues throughout the day. Learners work towards a range of awards, including Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) and European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).

Strengths

- high and improving success rates on vocational programmes for adult learners
- good tutorial support
- good provision to meet specific community needs.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates for learners aged 16 to 18 on levels 1 and 2 courses
- underdeveloped planning of learning activities to maximise learners' progress
- insufficiently rigorous self-assessment.

Achievement and standards

43.   Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on most part-time vocational programmes for adults are high and improving. Success rates on levels 1 and 2 courses for learners aged 16 to 18 are low. Learners who receive additional learning support achieve well in comparison to others. The standard of most learners' work is satisfactory. Most learners acquire appropriate and relevant workplace skills. Learners' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

44.   Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There have been improvements in the use of ILT. ILT is used widely in teaching and learning, although not always creatively. There is some good teaching in the community venues. However, some lessons, particularly for learners aged 16 to 18, lack the challenge and pace to maximise learners' progress. Learners' understanding is not always checked effectively. The recording and monitoring of adult learners' progress is good. Assessment is satisfactory. Learners' targets and action plans vary in the level of challenge they provide.

45.   The response and range of ICT provision to meet learners' needs is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for learners to progress from level 1 to higher level programmes, higher education or employment. Support and guidance for

learners are good, particularly tutorial support. Tutors are very approachable and learners value the support they receive. Learners pay good attention to health and safety practices when using computer work stations and take regular breaks. However, tutors do not reinforce the need for correct posture or prohibit the consumption of refreshments in lessons.

Leadership and management

46.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. The management of the provision for learners with specific learning needs in the community is good. The use of management information for target-setting and monitoring performance at course team level is satisfactory. Self-assessment and lesson observations are insufficiently rigorous in identifying key strengths and areas for improvement. Some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Equality and diversity are not actively promoted in the curriculum. Staff are suitably qualified and morale is good. Accommodation and resources are good.

Hospitality and catering   Good: Grade 2

Context

47.   The college provides vocational programmes in hospitality and catering from
      entry to level 3 which can be studied full-time, part-time or within the
      workplace. Provision includes catering and hospitality, professional cookery, and
      food and drink service. The BTEC national certificate in hospitality supervision
      programme and NVQ level 3 hospitality provide progression to HE.
      Apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships are offered as well as a range of
      short courses. Practical cookery programmes are provided for 14 to 16 year-
      olds. At the time of inspection there were 90 learners aged 16 to 18 and 11
      adult learners on full-time programmes. Of the 49 part-time learners 34 were
      adults. Some 36% of learners were female.

Strengths

   •   high success rates on NVQ programmes
   •   much good teaching and learning
   •   assessment records which are used effectively to track learner progress
   •   effective additional learning support in lessons
   •   good communication within and between course teams.

Areas for improvement

   •   low proportion of high grades in national certificate in hospitality supervision
   •   insufficient challenge to develop work skills for full-time NVQ learners
   •   lack of rigour in the self-assessment process.

Achievement and standards

48.   Achievement and standards are good. There are high success rates on all NVQ
      programmes. The pass rate on BTEC national certificate in hospitality
      supervision has improved slightly but high grades fell noticeably in 2007/08 and
      are low. Few learners progress to HE. Work-based apprentice framework
      success rates have improved and are generally good. High standards of
      practical work are reflected in learner successes through national and local
      competitions.

Quality of provision

49.   There is much good teaching and learning and some excellent practical
      resources. Teachers use ILT well to support learning in their lessons; for
      example, pre-prepared activities, accessible through individual computer
      terminals, are used well by learners to develop their financial and cash
      budgeting skills. Practical cookery and service skills development are good. The
      good use of close circuit TV in demonstration areas and kitchens helps learners

to check and practice culinary techniques. Thorough record keeping helps teachers to check on progress and supports learners' improvement.

50.   The needs and interests of learners are satisfactorily met. Realistic work environments for NVQ learners do not always reflect industry staffing levels and workloads often provide insufficient challenge. In a minority of lessons some incorrect practices go unchecked. There is high uptake of curriculum enhancement by learners through regular and high profile extra-curricular events and competitions. Employers value their links with the college and their employees benefit from the training provided. However, the amount of provision for adults has declined.

51.   Guidance and support are good. Learners receive good support to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Additional support is effective and enables learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate confidently in lessons. Tutorials are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

52.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although the self-assessment report correctly grades the area as good there is insufficient rigour in the process which led to this judgement. Lesson observations tend to over-grade the quality of lessons and actions to improve performance are not always included in the report. There is good communication within and between course teams. Teaching, training, assessment and support staff have current industry experience and are appropriately qualified. Effective mentoring support for new staff ensures that learners are successful in their studies.

Sport, leisure and tourism   Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

53. The college offers full-time courses in sports and travel and tourism, including first and national diplomas. A range of additional part-time courses are offered as additionality to full-time learners. Currently, there are 89 learners on sports courses and 40 learners on travel and tourism courses. Most learners are aged 16 to 18.

Strengths

- high and improving success rates on most full-time courses
- good in-class learner support
- good opportunities for curriculum enrichment.

Areas for improvement

- low proportion of high grades on full-time courses
- insufficient challenge for learners of different abilities in lessons
- narrow range of provision.

Achievement and standards

54. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on most full-time courses in 2007/08 were good and most show improvement over the last two years. A wide range of short courses is offered as enrichment. However, despite improving trends, there are some low success rates in this additional provision. Learners' work is of a satisfactory standard. The proportion of high grades on full-time courses is low. Progression onto HE courses from BTEC national diploma in sports is good.

Quality of provision

55. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons teachers' enthusiasm motivates learners and as a result learners make good progress. In many lessons learners demonstrate good research and presentation skills. However, there is a lack of challenge and stretch for more able learners in many lessons. A few lessons are held in rooms that are too small for the size of the class, sometimes restricting the amount of learning which takes place. The extent to which the area meets the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. The overall range of full- and part-time programmes is narrow; for example, there is currently no part-time provision and no full-time courses at level 1. There are good opportunities for curriculum enrichment. A wide range of additional courses are undertaken by learners to enrich their programme of study and meet the needs of employers. Learners have insufficient opportunities to take part in the central college enrichment programme.

56.   There is good support for learners. Additional support for learners is effective in most lessons. Targets are set for learners and are monitored satisfactorily through tutorials. Learners have good access to a variety of work placements which are used well to develop their workplace skills and understanding.

Leadership and management

57.   Leadership and management are satisfactory. Facilities are good at the main campus. The range of practical sports facilities at Harpur Hill is satisfactory but used well. Communication between teams is good. Some aspects of quality assurance lack rigour; for example, the self-assessment report and action plan do not specify clear targets for improving provision. Areas for improvement identified through lesson observations do not always lead to a structured plan of support. Some lesson observations are graded over-generously. The promotion of equality and diversity is generally good.

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities   Good: Grade 2

Context

58.   There are 222 learners on the Step 2 programme for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Just over 100 of the 176 part-time learners study in nine outreach venues based in day centres around the Buxton area. There are 194 adult learners. Virtually all learners aged 16 to 18 are full-time. There are 17 learners aged 14 to 16 on a schools link programme who attend for one day per week. All learners are working towards a range of external accreditation from pre-entry through to level 1.

Strengths

- good learner achievement
- high standards of practical work
- good progression
- productive links with the local community
- good support
- tangible improvements to the quality of the provision.

Areas for improvement

- lack of standardised tracking of progress in non-accredited learning
- insufficient detail in lesson plans to support individual target-setting
- insufficient co-ordination of the outreach provision.

Achievement and standards

59.   Achievement and standards are good. Success rates are good and improving. Learners gain a good understanding of work opportunities through a well considered programme of voluntary work in the local community and through work experience. Learners improve their living skills by working on tasks, such as money management and preparing simple meals. Standards of practical work are good, although there is insufficient moderation and tracking of the standard of learners' work on non-accredited programmes. The majority of learners progress to a higher level of study.

Quality of provision

60.   Teaching and learning are good. Staff have a good understanding of learners' individual needs and use a sensitive approach to encourage and motivate them. Many learners make good progress, often from very low starting points, and gain in confidence and self-esteem. Lesson plans do not always contain sufficient detail to identify how learners' individual skills will be developed. The quality of target-setting is inconsistent; too many are written in difficult language and are insufficiently specific.

61.   The response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is good. There is a broad range of provision that offers learners a good understanding of the wider community and the world of work. The college has made good links with the local community. Learners take part in a wide variety of voluntary activities, such as working with local park rangers. The college has been instrumental in raising the general public's awareness of the potential of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

62.   Support is good. The area has good links with specialist support services and supported employment agencies. Support workers provide an appropriate level of guidance. All learners have a comprehensive initial assessment. Learners have regular tutorials and reviews, which reinforce their understanding of what it is they have to do to progress.

Leadership and management

63.   Leadership and management are good. There is a strong sense of direction and a very high commitment to meeting learners' needs. There have been significant improvements to the curriculum and resources since the last inspection. Regular meetings are well attended by staff, including those from outreach centres. There is however, insufficient co-ordination of the outreach provision to monitor the quality of this provision; for example, ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. The self-assessment report, although identifying many of the issues found on inspection, was too generous in its judgements. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, 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	05/06	506	72	69	3	1,079	64	65	-1
	06/07	336	71	74	-3	599	66	70	-4
	07/08*	217	73	…	…	509	75	…	…
NVQs	05/06	146	84	72	12	6	68	74	-6
	06/07	80	83	75	8	4	100	75	25
	07/08*	88	86	…	…	4	100	…	…
Other	05/06	360	67	69	-2	1,073	64	65	-1
	06/07	256	68	74	-6	595	66	70	-4
	07/08*	129	64	…	…	507	75	…	…

*   college data

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, 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	05/06	350	63	66	-3	572	63	66	-3
	06/07	366	69	70	-1	415	75	69	6
	07/08*	441	74	…	…	381	76	…	…
GCSEs	05/06	11	82	68	14	18	72	67	5
	06/07	1	100	71	29	15	67	70	-3
	07/08*	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	6	67	69	-2	1	0	68	-68
	06/07	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	07/08*	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
NVQs	05/06	81	80	65	15	218	82	68	14
	06/07	185	81	68	13	188	87	69	18
	07/08*	180	77	…	…	161	87	…	…
Other	05/06	252	56	66	-10	335	50	65	-15
	06/07	180	56	70	-14	212	64	69	-5
	07/08*	261	73	…	…	213	69	…	…

*   college data

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, 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*
3 Long	05/06	281	62	71	-9	562	49	64	-15
	06/07	298	63	73	-10	412	53	68	-15
	07/08*	467	71	…	…	428	58	…	…
A/A2 Levels	05/06	14	36	87	-51	16	69	72	-3
	06/07	14	64	87	-23	1	100	76	-24
	07/08*	13	100	…	…	1	0	…	…
AS Levels	05/06	31	55	67	-12	30	43	55	-12
	06/07	61	62	69	-7	14	43	59	-16
	07/08*	82	62	…	…	13	62	…	…
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	28	61	66	-5	2	100	57	43
	06/07	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
	07/08*	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
NVQs	05/06	25	68	71	-3	73	69	63	6
	06/07	29	90	74	16	64	59	69	-10
	07/08*	38	87	…	…	60	82	…	…
Other	05/06	183	65	65	0	441	45	64	-19
	06/07	194	60	70	-10	333	53	69	-16
	07/08*	334	71	…	…	355	53	…	…

*   college data

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning apprenticeship programmes managed by the college, 2006 to 2008

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate **	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	05/06	overall	6	50	53	33%	44
		timely	7	29	34	14%	27
	06/07	overall	12	58	64	50%	58
		timely	15	40	43	33%	37
	07/08#	overall	28	31	…	50%	…
		timely	48	23	…	23%	…
Apprenticeships	05/06	overall	54	72	58	67%	52
		timely	66	44	38	42%	34
	06/07	overall	50	64	65	60%	61
		timely	49	29	47	27%	44
	07/08#	Overall	58	63	…	64%	…
		timely	63	43	…	43%	…

* 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 and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the Individual Learning Record (ILR)

College data

Table 5a

Success rates on work-based learning Train to Gain NVQ programmes managed by the college, 2007 to 2009.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	college/provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain NVQ	2006/07	overall	16	93
		timely	41	67
	2007/08	overall	28	55
		timely	28	55
	2008/09 (3 months)	overall	60	58
		timely	35	58

Note: 2008/09 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first three 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

** NVQ qualification success rates are calculated using data supplied to Ofsted by the college/provider prior to inspection

Table 6

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college, 2007 to 2009

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate* (%)	Progression rate** (%)
2006/07	27	41	41
2007/08	44	70	68
2008/09 (4 months)	11	91	73

Note: 2008/09 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the three months or greater of the LSC contract year

* 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.

Note: E2E 'achieved objective' and 'progression' rates are calculated using data supplied to Ofsted by the college/provider prior to inspection

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