

University of Cumbria

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 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: agriculture, horticulture and countryside management; animal care and equine; sport and outdoor education; performing arts and media; visual arts; and literacy and numeracy.

Description of the provider

1. The University of Cumbria was established in August 2007 as a result of a re-organisation of the provision offered at St Martin's College, Cumbria Institute of the Arts and selected aspects of the provision offered by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) at the Newton Rigg campus in Penrith. The further education (FE) provision inherited by the university is offered on two of the University's main sites. The Faculty of Arts, located at the Brampton Road campus in Carlisle, offers level 3 provision in visual and performing arts and media. At the Newton Rigg campus, in Penrith, the Faculty of Science and Natural Resources provides specialist land-based provision. An expanding range of other courses from entry to level 3 is available in childhood studies, animal management, sport and outdoor education and skills for life. The university recruits mainly from Cumbria but more widely for specialist provision in specialist land based programmes. Residential accommodation is available for learners who live too far away to travel on a daily basis.
2. The university offers courses in 10 of the 15 sector subject areas, the majority are in land based and the arts. In 2007/08 678 students aged 16 to 18 and 1,159 aged 19 and over enrolled on FE courses at the university. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18 and study at level 3. Work-based learning is offered to 122 apprentices and 50 learners on Train to Gain programmes, many on specialist land based provision. The university in partnership with local schools offers vocational land based courses to 70 pupils aged 14 to 16.
3. The Newton Rigg campus is in the district of Eden, much of the rural area is isolated with poor communication and transport links. Carlisle is the most northern district of Cumbria. The city has an FE college and several schools across the county have their own sixth forms. Unemployment across Cumbria is low with many jobs in public services and small firms in traditional manufacturing, agriculture and distribution. A very small proportion of the population is from minority ethnic groups. The number of pupils achieving five GCSE grades A* to C improved in 2008 to just above the national average.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Inadequate: Grade 4
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Inadequate: Grade 4
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Inadequate: Grade 4
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Satisfactory: contributory grade 3</i>

Sector subject areas

Agriculture and horticulture	Good: Grade 2
Animal care and equine	Inadequate: Grade 4
Sport and outdoor education	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Performing arts and media	Inadequate: Grade 4
Visual arts	Inadequate: Grade 4
Literacy and numeracy	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

4. The overall effectiveness of FE provision is inadequate; in contrast to the institution's own judgement of satisfactory. The new university inherited its FE provision from other institutions; the quality of which has not kept pace with national improvements. Since the formation of the University of Cumbria in August 2007 the FE provision has been through significant change that focuses on improvement. The university has now established FE at two main sites and has invested in a new management structure, additional staffing and improved facilities, particularly at the Newton Rigg campus. Staff at all levels are committed to the integration and improvement of FE provision. Many of these recent actions have not yet impacted on outcomes for learners. Achievement and standards are inadequate. In 2007/08 long course success rates, particularly for learners aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses, the largest group of FE students, were below the national average of similar specialist institutions. On General Certificate of Education (GCE) courses the progression rate from AS to A2 courses is low. The proportion of students achieving high grades is unsatisfactory. Success rates on level 2 courses are good. Overall retention is low with evidence of some improvements this academic year. Attendance is satisfactory but a minority of students have poor attendance.
5. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Insufficient attention is given in lessons to learning and meeting the needs of all learners in the group. Often teachers do not have high enough expectations of their students. The extent to which provision meets the needs of students and the rural community is satisfactory. Social inclusion is good and educational inclusion is satisfactory. A broad range of initiatives have been introduced to widen participation and meet the needs of vulnerable groups in the local community including provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the travelling community. The university recognises that it needs to do more to improve the gender balance on some courses.
6. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral and welfare support are good. Academic support to achieve high standards is inadequate. Monitoring of student progress is not sufficiently detailed or robust. Individual student action plans do not contain clear targets that help students stay on track and improve. Support for students with a range of additional needs is appropriate.
7. Leadership and management are inadequate. The university recognises the need to quickly improve some of the poor quality FE provision they have inherited. A lot has been achieved in a short time. Managers have been appointed to oversee FE but some roles remain fragmented and so responsibilities and accountabilities lack clarity. A new quality assurance system provides a satisfactory framework for improvement but is not yet implemented consistently. Some aspects of curriculum management are weak and the use of accurate and timely data to raise standards is ineffective. The university's

approach to equality and diversity is satisfactory. Specialist resources and library facilities are good. Value for money is inadequate.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. The university has satisfactory capacity to improve its provision. Many changes have occurred in the short time since the university was established and these are beginning to bring about improvements in the FE provision inherited from predecessor organisations. Governors and senior managers are aware of strengths and areas for improvement and have recognised the need for further significant changes to improve responsibility and accountability for the management of FE provision. Quality assurance is inadequate due to inconsistencies in the implementation of the new system. Self-assessment is broadly accurate though managers do not always give areas of improvement sufficient weighting. Increased resources are committed to integrate and improve the quality of FE provision. Managers have the support of staff in driving forward a culture of improvement.

Key strengths

- high success rates on level 2, Train to Gain and in agriculture, horticulture and countryside management programmes
- successful initiatives to widen participation
- good pastoral support for learners
- clear strategic commitment to the integration and improvement of FE provision at all levels in the university
- good specialist resources and library facilities.

Areas for improvement

The university should address:

- low success rates on many courses, particularly learners aged 16 to 18
- poor progress on GCE AS and A2 courses
- inadequate teaching and learning
- poor target setting and monitoring of learners' progress
- inconsistent implementation of quality assurance framework
- insufficient access and use of timely data management
- some weak curriculum management
- fragmented roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in management.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Inadequate: Grade 4

Contributory grades:

WBL

Train to Gain

Satisfactory: grade 3

Good: grade 2

9. Achievement and standards are inadequate; this does not agree with the institution's self-assessment judgement of satisfactory. In 2007/08, the first year of the University of Cumbria, the long course success rate of learners aged 16 to 18 is well below the national average of similar specialist provision. The success rate of adult learners is broadly satisfactory. The low increase in success rates of the provision inherited from predecessor institutions means that they have not kept pace with the improvements in the national average. The success rates at level 2, with a relatively small numbers of learners, improved and are above national average. At level 1 and level 3 for students aged 16 to 18, long course success rates in 2007/08 are significantly below national average for adults on long level 3 courses. Success rates are satisfactory.
10. Retention rates are low, particularly for students aged 16 to 18. Current in-year retention shows improvement from the same period in 2007/08 and is broadly satisfactory. Too many students do not progress from AS to A2 courses. Overall pass rates are broadly satisfactory with high achievement on some courses, particularly in agriculture and sport. The proportion of students who achieve high grades is unsatisfactory. High proportions of students on the diplomas in agriculture, horticulture and countryside management achieve above expectations and attain high grades.
11. In 2007/08 success rates on work-based learning are satisfactory, with high rates in land based apprentices but low in engineering. Timely success rates are very low. Improvement in the monitoring of work-based learners indicates a significant improvement in the progress of current apprentices. Success rates of the small number of learners completing Train to Gain courses in 2007/08 are high. Success rates of students aged 14 to 16 are satisfactory overall and are good in agriculture and low in engineering.
12. The standard of students' work is broadly satisfactory. Students develop good vocational and employability skills. In many programmes, including apprentices, learners achieve relevant additional qualifications. Success rates on key skills have improved considerably and are well above national average in numeracy and literacy. Students on adult literacy courses achieve well and improve in confidence. Attendance is monitored more closely and is satisfactory, although a minority of students have poor attendance. Progression to higher level courses within the institution is satisfactory. Whilst progression into higher education has improved, it is still relatively low, although many students on vocational programmes obtain relevant employment.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

13. The quality of provision is satisfactory which agrees with the institution's self-assessment.
14. Inspectors judged teaching and learning to be inadequate in disagreement with the university's view of satisfactory. In three of the six curriculum areas inspected teaching and learning was inadequate. Much of the teaching in these areas lacks sufficient challenge to promote effective learning and does not cater sufficiently for the needs of students of differing ability. Schemes of work and lesson plans follow the university model but too many lesson plans are badly executed. Teachers' comments in some lesson plans reveal insufficient understanding of differentiation. Students learn better in practical sessions than in theory classes. The use of information learning technology (ILT) in teaching and learning is limited, sometimes by lack of equipment. In visual arts students are often sent to learn independently in the well-equipped workshop areas but not enough teacher support is provided for them to benefit from independent study. Teaching and learning are good in agriculture, horticulture and countryside management. The best of the teaching and learning is well matched to the needs of individual students and promotes learning through a variety of interesting and engaging activities.
15. In September 2008 new lesson observation arrangements, representing significant changes for teachers at the Carlisle campus, were effectively introduced but the system is not yet fully established. Teachers value the detailed verbal feedback and support to improve the quality of their lessons. Observers are eager to improve the effectiveness of their observations but too often they focus on teaching with insufficient emphasis on students' learning. In many instances recorded evidence lacks detail to support the grade awarded, resulting in an over estimate of the quality of provision in some areas. Links between teaching observations, performance management and staff development are improving and the system is beginning to identify and address areas for improvement.
16. Assessment is satisfactory and most students receive timely written feedback. Internal verification provides adequate quality assurance of the processes and standardisation activities promote consistency of assessment practice. The monitoring of students' progress is satisfactory. Additional learning support is satisfactory. Initial assessment is effective and results are processed and fed back to curriculum staff quickly. The university provides an effective range of timely additional support in lessons, in discrete group sessions, in the work place and individually. Data show that additional support helps to improve retention but is less effective in improving success rates.
17. The university offers satisfactory provision to meet the needs of learners. Work is taking place to develop progression pathways. A range of course levels is available in most curriculum areas but there are gaps in some, particularly at levels 1 and 2. Courses are offered at a range of sites to meet the needs of the rural community and there are good examples of work to widen participation

with young people and adults. The university is active within 14–19 partnerships and is the lead partner for the introduction of some of the diplomas to be offered in 2009. Projects include work with disaffected young people. A popular community outreach programme targeted at adults includes literacy and numeracy classes.

18. Enrichment opportunities are satisfactory. Learners benefit from a range of additional qualifications and work placements that help to develop their work related skills. Learners enjoy the trips and visits organised but would like more in some areas. There is good promotion of health and safety within the curriculum, although there is limited follow-up of some aspects covered by external speakers. There are insufficient activities in the evening for residential learners. Response to employer engagement is satisfactory. Work-based learning and Train to Gain programmes expanded in 2008/09 and the courses on offer meet the needs of employers. The university offers very relevant short courses to employers.
19. Support and guidance for students are satisfactory. There is a comprehensive range of specialist support services that are well promoted to students. Monitoring of the uptake does not give sufficient information about how well different groups of learners use the services. Pre-entry guidance and the induction of new students are satisfactory. The university has improved the application process to ensure learners are on the right course but it is too early to see the impact of this on retention.
20. Pastoral support is good. Learners benefit from a lot of informal support from tutors. They have individual review meetings with their tutor twice a term. However, the actions agreed as a result of these are not always sharp enough to help learners make progress. Learners living in the university's residential accommodation are supported well with very regular contact between their parents/guardians and tutors. Students feel safe and are encouraged to stay healthy. Curriculum areas have discretion about how they organise group tutorials and some aspects of this are currently under review. There is insufficient monitoring of both individual and group tutorials. There are satisfactory arrangements for the delivery of careers education and guidance. Progression of learners between different levels of FE provision is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Inadequate: Grade 4

*Contributory grades:**Equality of opportunity**Satisfactory: grade 3**WBL**Satisfactory: grade 3**Train to Gain**Satisfactory: grade 3*

21. Leadership and management are inadequate. Since the formation of the University of Cumbria in August 2007, a strategic plan and vision encompassing the FE provision has been developed. Managers, staff and stakeholders are positive about the steps the university has taken to integrate FE provision. A number of key FE management posts have been appointed. New initiatives to develop the FE curriculum and drive up improvement have been implemented and are beginning to have an impact. Communication links across the main sites are improving. Aspects of line management responsibilities remain fragmented with provision at the Carlisle site outside the main FE management structure.
22. A new quality assurance framework has been established but is not yet consistently implemented in all curriculum areas. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning are slow. The university's first self-assessment report (SAR) is critical and broadly accurate but overstates some strengths and does not identify some key weaknesses. Key aspects of the university's provision such as equality and diversity and governance have not yet undertaken any self-evaluation. The SAR process has been inhibited by a lack of access to timely and accurate data. The quality improvement plan lacks measurable targets for improvement and does not address all the issues emerging from curriculum SARs. Several of the newly appointed governors have a good understanding of FE. Governors have recognised the need for a sub committee to scrutinise the FE performance of the university but it is not yet in place.
23. The management of work-based learning and Train to Gain is satisfactory. Curriculum management is weak in some areas. The quality and frequency of course team reviews and action planning is variable. Curriculum managers and teams are beginning to develop a culture of target setting. The lack of available management information reports is preventing managers from monitoring key aspects of performance on retention and attendance.
24. The university's approach to equality and diversity is satisfactory. The university's policies and framework meets legislative requirements in respect of race, disability and gender equality. The equality and diversity action plan is monitored regularly. Most staff and managers have received training and appropriate criminal records bureau (CRB) checks are in place. Due to shortcomings in the university's data management system learner performance by gender, age or ethnicity is not yet analysed. However, managers monitor the recruitment of staff. Promotion of equality and diversity in curriculum areas is satisfactory. However, opportunities for reinforcement during individual learner

reviews are missed. The university has plans to extend its policy for safeguarding young people to include vulnerable adults. The management of health and safety is good with detailed monitoring of actions and a comprehensive induction for all learners.

25. Students benefit from modern well resourced learning facilities and some high quality specialist visual and performing arts resources at the Carlisle campus. Most teachers are suitably qualified and have access to an extensive range of staff development opportunities though these are not always linked to individual appraisal needs or the strategic priorities of the university. A monthly 'tutor's forum' is providing a useful vehicle for the dissemination of good practice. With lower than average success rates and some poor utilisation of staffing and physical resources the university offers poor value for money.

Sector subject area

Agriculture and horticulture

Good: Grade 2

Context

26. The University of Cumbria offers a range of full and part-time courses from entry to level 3 in agriculture, horticulture and countryside management. The majority of the 145 full-time students are aged 16 to 18. Of these 80 are on level 3, 40 on level 2 and 25 on entry or level 1 courses. In agriculture and associated land based studies, 80 learners are on apprenticeship programmes and there are around 400 enrolments on short courses.

Strengths

- good success rates on all courses, except national diploma in agriculture
- high standard of student written and practical work
- good teaching and learning
- high quality tutorial support
- good curriculum management.

Areas for improvement

- low retention on national diploma in agriculture
- low timely success rates for apprentices
- insufficient use of farm resources to enhance teaching in agriculture
- insufficient use of management information data to improve standards.

Achievement and standards

27. Success rates are improving and in 2008 are above national average on all full-time courses, except the national diploma in agriculture. Many students achieve merits and distinctions. Retention on most courses is high. In 2007/08 retention on the national diploma in agriculture was low, although all students who completed the course were successful. In year retention and attendance has improved and is good. Pass rates on short courses are very high. Students' practical and written work is of a high standard; they enjoy their studies and participate well. In 2007/08 the overall success rates in agriculture apprenticeships are high; however, timely completion is low.

Quality of provision

28. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Most lessons have a good range of activities to meet the needs of individual learners. In some lessons teachers use ILT well to support learning and key skills are embedded appropriately. Teachers use their current vocational experience very effectively in their teaching. Practical teaching is very good and learners are actively engaged. As recognised by the university, the farms are not fully utilised in the delivery of agricultural courses, although

they are well used in countryside management. Assessment briefs are well written and teachers' feedback to students is good. Students value the knowledge and support provided by their tutors. Students' progress is monitored well and areas for improvement are clearly identified. Regular tutorials and individual targets help students make good progress. In year timely success rates of apprentices have improved following changes to the delivery of key skills and better monitoring of their progress.

29. Students benefit from a good range of additional courses and enrichment opportunities. Although the university offers a broad range of courses to meet the needs of the local rural community, including a new level 1 agriculture course, there remain some notable gaps in provision. Level 2 agriculture provision is only available as an apprenticeship with no internal progression to HE. Students receive good careers advice and progression through FE and to HE or vocationally relevant employment is good.

Leadership and management

30. Leadership and management are good. Communication and teamwork are good. Teaching is monitored and action plans are in place to further improve the quality and share good practice. Self-assessment is inclusive and broadly accurate. However, data is not used sufficiently to further improve standards. Overall, resources are satisfactory. Students have easy access to a good range of library and electronic information which supports their independent study. Although practical resources for countryside management are very good the farm and associated facilities do not reflect best practice in the industry. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

Animal care and equine

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

31. The university offers full-time courses from entry level to level 3 in animal management and horse management. These include entry level in animal management, first and national diplomas in both animal management and horse management and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 in animal care. Most students are aged 16 to 18 with 17 students on level 1, 27 on level 2 and 67 on level 3 courses. A small group of school pupils in Key Stage 4 attend a level 2 programme in animal management.

Strengths

- good individual support for learners.

Areas for improvement

- low retention on level 3 animal management courses
- insufficiently challenging teaching and learning
- weak curriculum management.

Achievement and standards

32. Achievement and standards are inadequate. Success rates on animal management courses are low and well below the national average of similar specialist institutions. Success rates on horse studies courses are satisfactory. Retention on the national diploma animal management has been very low for two years. However, in year retention has improved. Pass rates for those learners who complete their courses are good. Progression onto higher level courses has improved and is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Learners develop good vocational skills. Equine learners improve their riding and horse management skills; they grow in confidence and develop good team working skills. In animal management students develop good handling and dog grooming skills.

Quality of provision

33. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Teaching of equine practical skills and riding is good. In some classes teachers make good use of questioning techniques and challenge learners to improve. However, in too many classes teaching is not well planned and does not sufficiently meet the needs of individuals. Learners are not challenged and the pace is too slow. Teachers' expectations of students are often too low. Links between practical and theory are excellent in horse management but are weak in some animal care sessions. The use of ILT is limited. Too much teaching focuses on learners passing their assessment rather than improving their knowledge and understanding. Assessments are planned well with clear assessment criteria. Learners receive good feedback to enable them to improve but in some assignments learners receive too much guidance.

34. Learners' additional support needs are identified early and quickly put in place. Learners receive good pastoral support. Insufficient pre-course advice and guidance for some animal care learners has recently been improved. Learners' progress is regularly monitored in one to one tutorials. However, the use of specific targets and clear actions to help learners improve and against which their performance can be monitored, are weak.
35. The faculty has a satisfactory range of full and part-time courses. Staff use industry links to good effect to enhance learners' experience through the use of visiting speakers, industry visits, work experience, voluntary work and competitions. Many learners successfully complete additional qualifications in horse riding and health and safety.

Leadership and management

36. Leadership and management are inadequate. Course management in equine and day-to-day management of the practical resources are satisfactory. However, accountabilities for improvement are unclear. Managers were slow to implement actions to improve retention on animal management courses. Practical resources are satisfactory with an appropriate range of horses and companion animals. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.
37. Quality assurance is weak. Internal observations of lessons are not sufficiently focused on learning or considered in the planning of staff development. Observations have not covered practical sessions, tutorials and routine duties. Managers have an appropriate view of the overall quality of the provision. However, in the self-assessment report, strengths are often overstated and the areas for improvement do not prioritise actions. The quality improvement plan lacks sufficient detail, targets are not specific and progress is not rigorously monitored.

Sport and outdoor education

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

38. The University of Cumbria offers FE programmes in sport and outdoor education at level 2 and 3 and exercise studies at level 1. Most learners are full-time aged 16 to 18. Of the 75 students on sports courses, 14 are on the first diploma with the remainder on national award, certificate or diploma at level 3.

Strengths

- very good success and retention rates for national diploma in sport
- good development of individual and group skills
- good support in individual tutorials
- good operational management of the area.

Areas for improvement

- poor success rate on certificate in exercise studies and national certificate in sport
- insufficient use of ILT to support teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. In 2007/08 overall success rates on level 3 courses were below the national average of similar institutions and particularly the national certificate in sport. Success rates on the certificate in exercise studies were low. Success rates on both the national and first diploma were good. Pass rates are generally high for those learners who complete the courses. Low retention rates on some programmes have been affected by the collapse of a local professional football club and the subsequent withdrawal of this large group of learners.
40. Learners develop a good range of individual and group skills. These include development of sport specific skills as well as wider skills such as team working, negotiation and the ability to contribute effectively to discussions. Learners' work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

41. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and identify the needs of learners. Teachers make good use of open and directed questions to check students' understanding. Teachers manage class discussions well. In the better lessons, staff use good strategies to engage students and manage challenging behaviour. Limited use is made of ILT to support learning. In less effective lessons, teachers focus too much on football as an example and miss opportunities to develop discussion on wider issues in sport. Assessment and verification are satisfactory.

42. The range of programmes is satisfactory. The university currently offers programmes in sport and outdoor education at levels 2 and 3. Delivery of level 3 courses is organised to enable learners to achieve an award, certificate or a diploma. In September 2008 the university successfully launched an apprenticeship programme in operational services and recruitment has exceeded targets. A range of appropriate sports coaching qualifications and enrichment opportunities are available to all students.
43. Guidance and support for learners are good. Initial assessment identifies learning support needs and the university meets these in a timely manner. Regular one-to-one tutorials provide good support, guidance and encouragement to learners. Students are set helpful targets for both pastoral and academic issues and the monitoring of their progress has improved and is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

44. Operational management of the area is good. Course leaders have clear roles and responsibilities. Communication within the team is good. Regular meetings focus effectively on the quality improvement plan. Managers identify actions required and follow these through to completion. Team meetings address and review current performance against targets. Managers respond well to suggestions from the staff. The divisional leader regularly audits course files. Self-assessment is largely accurate, evaluative and involves staff at all levels. Recent quality improvement activities and staff development have improved schemes of work and the quality of teaching and learning.
45. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory and a wide range of equality issues are covered in course delivery. Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities. The proportion of female students is low.

Performing arts and media

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

46. The University of Cumbria has a good range of level 3 vocational national diplomas and academic GCE AS and A2 courses in performing arts, music technology, music practice, media, film studies and drama. Almost all of the 160 students are full-time aged 16 to 18 with 23 sixth form students from local schools who study GCE AS and A2 courses at the university part-time.

Strengths

- high success rates on the national diploma performing arts
- good specialist accommodation and resources.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on the national certificate media production
- poor progress on GCE AS and A2
- insufficiently challenging teaching
- poor use of management information.

Achievement and standards

47. Achievement and standards are inadequate. Success rates are high on the national diploma in performing arts. However, success rates for national certificate media production are low. Retention and the proportion of students achieving high grades are low. Progression from AS to A level is low. The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Students participate in a range of performances including role plays to support police officers training, productions with the institutions HE students and local concerts. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

48. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Planning of lessons is generally satisfactory but more able learners are unchallenged. In the less effective lessons not all students are engaged, the teacher spends too much time presenting ideas and frequently dominates discussions. Teachers' questions are not sufficiently directed to check individual students learning. In most practical lessons teachers use the good range of technical equipment and a variety of activities to develop students' theoretical knowledge. In a sound recording lesson, students alternated between practical use of the specialist recording facilities and a variety of imaginative activities which checked and broadened their knowledge and ensured that the session kept a lively pace.
49. Students extend their studies with a good range of visits, enrichment activities and public performances. Most students who complete their advanced level course progress to HE with good opportunities within the university.

50. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Teachers provide effective pastoral support but there are insufficient checks on whether students are achieving their personal targets. Links between teaching and learning support staff are much improved and are now good. Appropriate additional learning support is provided promptly.

Leadership and management

51. Leadership and management are inadequate. Lines of responsibility and accountability lack clarity. A new lesson observation system, introduced in September 2008, is well managed. However, observation records do not place sufficient focus on learning and the outcomes are not yet used to inform staff development. Action plans following lesson observations are not always rigorously monitored.
52. The self-assessment report is generally accurate, although not all staff have contributed to the process. The use of management information to inform quality improvement is poor. Access to reliable data has improved recently but they are used inconsistently. Target setting to plan, monitor and improve course performance is weak. Specialist accommodation and resources are very good. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

Visual arts

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

53. The university offers a range of full-time art and design courses for learners aged 16 to 18 and adults from level 1 to 3. The majority of the full-time students are aged 16 to 18. Of the 170 students, 70% are enrolled on foundation studies diploma, GCE AS and A2 courses, national diplomas or access to HE courses at the Carlisle campus. The remaining students are enrolled at the Penrith campus on part-time first diploma and national award in art and design.

Strengths

- high success rates on the foundation certificate in creative craft
- good access to excellent resources.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on most courses
- low high grade achievement
- poor management of student learning
- insufficient challenge in lessons
- insufficient management action to address underperformance.

Achievement and standards

54. Overall achievement and standards are inadequate. Success rates on most courses are low and well below national average. Success rates on access to higher education in art and design are good. On the foundation certificate in creative craft success rates are good and have been 100% for the last two years. Retention on the first diploma is low. The proportion of students achieving high grades on GCE AS and A level is low.
55. The standard of work produced is satisfactory. Students' drawing skills and visual language are not developed well. On foundation studies and in fashion and textiles sketchbook work is satisfactory with some good experimental and developmental work. Most students are enthusiastic and contribute well to class discussion. Attendance has improved and is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

56. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Although teachers have specialist knowledge and are often skilled practitioners they do not use their expertise effectively to promote learning. In the better lessons teachers use a range of tasks to encourage and engage students to develop individually. However, in many lessons teachers use a narrow range of teaching strategies. Students creative skills are not developed sequentially and they are not challenged sufficiently to produce higher standards of work. The organisation and management of students' learning is often poor and teachers do not have high

enough expectations of their students. Opportunities for drawing from direct observation and investigation are limited. Students have access to an excellent range of specialist resources and workshops, however, these facilities are not fully exploited. Learners are expected to work independently before they have developed the technical skills and knowledge to develop their ideas and this inhibits their experimentation.

57. The range of provision is satisfactory. Many enrichment activities are available including an annual overseas trip to extend students' studies. Most students who complete their course progress to HE, many within the university. Pastoral support for students is good. However, tracking of students' progress in weekly tutorials does not clearly identify actions for improvement or set specific minimum targets for the following week's work. Students requiring additional learning support are identified early, given prompt support and they achieve well.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are inadequate. Quality assurance is weak; managers have been slow to implement actions to improve the provision. The responsibilities and accountability of managers and staff lacks clarity. The use of data to monitor and evaluate the quality of provision is poor. A new teaching observation system has been successfully introduced and managers have a clearer understanding of areas for improvement. Communication and opportunities for sharing of good practice are limited. Some staff work in isolation on different sites. Although team meetings are held regularly on some courses, they do not involve all staff.
59. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate; provision in art was judged inadequate by the university. However, some strengths are overstated and insufficient attention has been given to setting specific targets and actions for improvement. Not all staff are involved in the self-assessment process. Specialist resources are very good. Equality and diversity is promoted effectively.

Literacy and numeracy

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

60. The university delivers part-time adult literacy and numeracy courses on both campuses, in the community and for employers. Around 180 part-time adults are enrolled on Skills for Life courses. Across the institution there are around 600 key skills qualifications delivered at levels 1 and 2, mostly to students aged 16 to 18. In September 2008 provision was expanded to include GCSE resit English and mathematics courses and an access to higher education course.

Strengths

- high success rates in adult literacy
- teaching well matched to learners' individual needs
- good integration of vocational topics and key skill delivery
- flexible approach to curriculum delivery
- good monitoring of students' key skills progress.

Areas for improvement

- poor success rates on entry level English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and numeracy courses
- underdeveloped target-setting and action planning for key skills.

Achievement and standards

61. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates in adult literacy are high, at 96% for level 1 and 88% at level 2. Success rates for level 1 ESOL and numeracy level 2 are good. Adult learners make steady progress in class, developing confidence in writing and their ability to apply mathematical principles to everyday life. Key skills success rates for 16 to 18 year olds on vocational programmes are satisfactory. Success rates for ESOL and numeracy are poor.

Quality of provision

62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan carefully to meet individual learners' needs. They draw on a variety of activities such as games, pair work and presentations to motivate and interest learners. However, the very low numbers in some adult classes restrict the range of teaching strategies that can be used. Teachers set clear targets with adult students who clearly understand the progress they are making. Specific targets for key skills are underdeveloped and opportunities to increase the pace of progress are missed.
63. Key skills are now well integrated into vocational topics, an area for improvement identified in the self-assessment report. Joint planning and delivery by vocational and key skills tutors is strengthening learners' understanding of the relevance of key skills to the work environment.

64. Curriculum delivery is flexible; adult courses are offered at a range of levels, venues and times, to suit learners. Two new courses provide a progression route to higher education. In response to learners' feedback, key skills delivery has been changed and is now more effective. Where appropriate, university staff access and benefit from the skills for life provision.

Leadership and management

65. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The recent amalgamation of key skills and Skills for Life has improved communication. Regular team meetings focus well on curriculum issues, and staff have benefited from professional development opportunities. Targets for achievement at course level have been recently introduced. Staff listen to and act on learners' feedback. Arrangements for the observation of teaching have improved; feedback to teachers is constructive and leads to actions for improvement. However, the lack of emphasis on learning restricts their impact.
66. Staff were consulted in the production of the self-assessment report. The overall grade, many of the strengths and areas for improvement are accurate. It has proved a useful tool for quality improvement. Equality and diversity is satisfactory. The needs of disadvantaged groups in the community have been targeted through courses offered. However, opportunities are missed to promote equality and diversity issues in the classroom.

Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2007/08, compared with the national rates for providers 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>
1 Long	06/07	...	...	82	...			76	...
	07/08*	112	58	N/A	...	153	68	N/A	....
GNVQs and precursors	06/07			...				...
	07/08*			N/A				N/A	
NVQs	06/07			79				...	
	07/08*			N/A				N/A	
Other	06/07			82	...			76	...
	07/08*	112	58	N/A	...	153	68	N/A	...

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2007/08, compared with the national rates for providers 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>
2 Long	06/07	...	...	78	...	...	...	66	...
	07/08*	87	87	N/A	...	209	85	N/A	...
GCSEs	06/07			71				70	
	07/08*			N/A				N/A	
GNVQs and precursors	06/07			79				...	
	07/08*	1	100	N/A		1	100	N/A	
NVQs	06/07			68				73	
	07/08*	3	67	N/A		27	85	N/A	
Other	06/07			78				70	
	07/08*	83	88	N/A		181	85	N/A	

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2007/08, compared with the national rates for providers 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	06/07	...	...	77	...	...	...	65	...
	07/08*	490	71	N/A	...	271	79	N/A	...
A/A2 Levels	06/07			87				76	
	07/08*	43	88	N/A		14	86	N/A	
AS Levels	06/07			79				59	
	07/08*	122	70	N/A		15	67	N/A	
GNVQs and precursors	06/07			...				...
	07/08*			N/A				N/A	
NVQs	06/07			74				69	
	07/08*			N/A		114	82	N/A	
Other	06/07			76				66	
	07/08*	325	69	N/A		128	77	N/A	

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning apprenticeship programmes managed by the university, 2007/08.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	07/08	overall	7	28.6%	67.8%	14.3%	62.8%
		timely	5	0	48.2%	0	44%
Apprenticeships	07/08	Overall	24	95.8%	67.3%	66.7%	64.4%
		timely	30	16.7%	51%	6.7%	48.5%

* 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)