



Dunstable College



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Better
education
and care

Inspection report

Audience Post-sixteen	Published October 2006	Provider reference 130598
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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Dunstable College
Type of college:	General Further Education
Principal:	Christine Vesey
Address of college:	Kingsway, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, LU5 4HG
Telephone number:	01582 477776
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Chair of governors:	Stephen Janes
Unique reference number:	130598
Name of lead inspector:	Paul Fletcher, ALI
Dates of inspection:	24-28 April 2006

Background of the organisation

1. Dunstable College is a medium-sized general further education (GFE) college in south Bedfordshire and is part of the urban conurbation of Luton and Dunstable. In addition to learning provided at the main site, the college also operates from the Kingsland site, a former community college in Houghton Regis. It also uses a number of community based locations including two dedicated information technology (IT) centres. The proportion of 16-18 year olds staying on in education is high across the county. In 2004/05, the proportion of school leavers achieving at least five general certificates of secondary education (GCSE) at grade C or above was 3.3% below the national average of 57.1%. The unemployment rate for January 2006 was 1.8%, which is 0.7% below the average for England.
2. The college enrolls almost 2,500 full-time equivalent learners each year, just over two thirds of whom are aged 19 and over. In 2002/03, 76% of all learners attended on a part-time basis and 63% were female. About 17% of learners were from a minority ethnic background which is significantly higher than the average for south Bedfordshire. Almost two thirds of enrolments are for level 1 courses and a quarter for level 2.
3. The college delivers programmes in 12 of the 15 sector subject areas. The majority of learners are enrolled on programmes in information and communication technology (ICT), preparation for life and work, arts, media and publishing, health public services and care, and retail and commercial enterprise. In 2005/06, 62 learners follow work-based learning (WBL) programmes. The college has a small group of 35 entry to employment (E2E) learners.
4. The college's mission is to develop its reputation as a high quality provider for key markets and to make a significant contribution to the economic health of the community as a valuable learning resource by playing a leading role in partnership working.

Scope of the inspection

5. In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the college's previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); the college's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits; and data on enrolments and learners' achievements over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:
 - overall effectiveness of the college and its capacity to improve further
 - achievements and standards
 - quality of provision

- leadership and management
- specialist provision in: engineering and manufacturing technologies; information and communication technology (ICT); leisure, travel and tourism; literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), entry to employment (E2E); business administration and law.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Inadequate: grade 4
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: grade 3
Achievements and standards	Inadequate: grade 4
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: grade 3

Note: Where contributory grades have been awarded, they are shown in the relevant sections of the report. Contributory grades represent the judgement of the team that the quality of the aspect of provision indicated by the grade differs from the grade overall.

Curriculum areas

Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Satisfactory: grade 3
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: grade 3
Leisure, travel and tourism	Inadequate: grade 4
Literacy, numeracy, ESOL and E2E	Satisfactory: grade 3
Business administration and law	Satisfactory: grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate: grade 4

6. Achievements and standards are inadequate and are reflected in the grade for effectiveness. Although success rates demonstrate improvement at nearly all levels, they are still too far below national rates to be satisfactory. For the largest group of learners, adults studying at level 1, success rates are still over 15% below the national average. At level 3 for adults, they remain significantly below the national average. The achievement of work-based learners has improved to the national average for advanced apprentices but remains significantly below for apprentices. Pass rates for key skills remain poor. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory.
7. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college has reduced the proportion of inadequate lessons since the last inspection but there remain too few good or better lessons. Assessment is satisfactory with good practice in some areas. Key skills are ineffectively linked to learners' vocational studies.
8. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. The range of provision meets the needs and interests of most learners. Collaboration with local schools is extensive with very successful 14-16 programmes. Links with employers are underdeveloped and insufficient opportunities exist for learners to develop work-related skills. The college has a wide range of enrichment activities but fails to monitor participation rates.
9. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Initial assessment is effective in identifying additional learning needs. Individual tutorial support is good. Learners receive good additional and personal support. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive particularly high levels of support. Initiatives to improve punctuality and attendance have not been wholly successful. Target-setting for learners is weak.
10. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Clear and firm leadership promotes steady improvement. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall but is weak in leisure, travel and sport. Quality assurance is improving. The college has established outstanding partnerships and is very responsive to local demand. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, although its promotion in lessons is insufficient. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: grade 3

11. The college has satisfactory capacity to improve. The self-assessment report identified most of its strengths and areas for improvement although there remains much work to do in developing action plans and targets to remedy weaknesses. Management data are timely and reliable, but insufficiently used.

Clear leadership and increasingly effective quality assurance provide a firm foundation for continued improvement.

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

12. The college has made steady progress since the last inspection. However, success rates are still well below national rates for too many learners. It has improved the quality of provision in the three areas that were judged unsatisfactory in 2002 and improved curriculum management. The quality of teaching and learning and quality assurance have also improved. The college has successfully extended the range of courses for learners aged 16-18.

Key strengths of the college

Strengths

- firm and clear leadership
- strong governance
- excellent strategic partnerships
- good individual support for learners
- very effective 14-16 provision.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low pass rates on many courses
- the coordination and consistency of key skills provision
- the need to increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching
- learners' low attendance and poor punctuality
- the quality of individual target-setting for learners
- the need to increase employer engagement
- the promotion of equality and diversity in lessons
- the lack of a consistent approach to the management of work-based learning
- the quality of provision in sport, travel and tourism.

Main findings

Achievements and standards

Inadequate: grade 4

13. In the three years to 2003/04, success rates for all ages were significantly below the national average. In 2004/05, success rates for all ages at level 2 improved to around the national average. At level 1 and level 3, success rates remain significantly below the national average although they have risen for learners aged 19 and over at level 1 and for learners aged 16-18 at level 3. Success rates for learners from minority ethnic groups are significantly below national averages.
14. Retention rates have improved significantly. In 2004/05, retention rates for all ages and levels rose to the national average for level 1 courses and exceeded it substantially at level 2. At level 3 for learners aged 16-18, retention rates rose from significantly below in 2003/04 to the national average. At level 3 for learners aged 19 and over, they rose from slightly below to significantly above the national average.
15. Pass rates for all ages and at all levels have remained significantly below the national rate in the three years to 2003/04. In 2004/05, level 2 pass rates improved but remain significantly below the national average. They fell substantially at level 1 for learners aged 16-18 and at level 3 for learners aged 19 and over. Pass rates for key skills at all levels have remained very low in each of the three years to 2004/05.
16. In 2004/05, the overall success rate for advanced apprenticeships rose to around the national average. For apprenticeships, the success rate fell and remains significantly below the national average. Progression rates on entry to employment (E2E) have improved and are now good.
17. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Work-based learners develop good skills in business and engineering. ESOL learners progress well. Learners aged 14-16 develop good skills in engineering. Learners' attendance and punctuality are poor in ICT and sport, leisure and travel and on some business courses.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: grade 3

18. The college's self-assessment report accurately judges the quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory overall. Although the proportion of inadequate teaching has reduced since the last inspection, the percentage of lessons which are good or better remains low. Learning takes place in these lessons but it is often limited by dull and unimaginative teaching. In the good lessons, teachers concentrate on how each individual in the lesson learns and use a range of methods to help learners achieve challenging goals. The careful use of well prepared questions in these lessons contrasts sharply with tedious and often confusing questions that slow the pace of many of the weaker lessons.

Teachers make little use of information and learning technology (ILT) in lessons, except in ESOL where it is used well.

19. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that actions to improve key skills have had little impact. Reference to key skills is included in lesson plans but seldom results in evidence collection in the classroom.
20. There is effective assessment practice. Learners appreciate the rapid and helpful feedback from teachers. The monitoring of learners' progress is broadly satisfactory. However, progress reviews do not set learners sufficiently specific and challenging targets. Arrangements to keep parents and carers of learners aged 16-18 informed are satisfactory.
21. The range of courses is satisfactory in meeting the needs and interests of most learners. A curriculum review has increased the range of courses at level 1. Progression opportunities exist for full-time learners from level 1 to level 3 in most curriculum areas. The range is less well developed for work-based and part-time learners. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. Learning shops in the community provide ICT courses which effectively enable learners to develop skills at convenient times. A lifelong learning centre provides opportunities for women from minority ethnic groups to improve their language skills. Other community venues enable learners from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to participate in education.
22. Collaboration with local schools is extensive. The college has a very successful 14-16 programme. Very effective partnerships ensure the college is represented well in the community. However, links with employers are underdeveloped in some areas and insufficient opportunities exist for learners to develop enterprise and work-related skills. Learners have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment activities. However, the monitoring of enrichment activity, including attendance, is ineffective. Few opportunities exist for enrichment away from the main site.
23. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Full-time learners, particularly on the main site, benefit from a good range of information and welfare services including finance, accommodation, travel, and assistance with childcare. Learners on other sites are encouraged to use these services.
24. Initial advice and guidance are generally effective. The induction programme helps learners settle into their studies quickly. Information and advice about progression into higher education, further training and employment are good. Learners have easy access to Connexions personal advisers. Appropriate advice on staying safe is promoted to learners. Learners are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and work is ongoing to promote healthier food choices.
25. Arrangements to identify the learning support needs of full-time and substantial part-time learners are good. Support is provided promptly. The take-up of additional support is high and the impact on learners' progress is carefully

monitored. Support is particularly good for learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability and learners aged 14-16.

26. Individual tutorials for full-time learners are generally good and much appreciated by learners. Group tutorials contribute to learners' economic wellbeing by satisfactorily promoting personal finance and progression opportunities. Tutorial support for part-time learners takes place mainly in lessons. Initiatives to improve punctuality and attendance are not rigorously implemented and have had little impact on some courses.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: grade 3

27. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Inspectors have confidence that firm and clear leadership is placing the improvement of teaching and learning, learners' success and quality assurance, at the heart of the college. Steady progress has been made since the last inspection. Success rates at some levels have improved significantly although many are still too far below national averages. Retention rates are now above national averages. Teaching and learning have improved. The college has successfully placed itself at the centre of local collaboration to promote skills development. It has exceeded its targets for recruitment, substantially widening participation, and its financial position has improved.
28. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall although it is weak in leisure, travel and sport. The good management of work-based learning in engineering is not replicated in business, where its management is inadequate. The management of key skills is poor.
29. Governors, managers and staff have a realistic appreciation of the college's performance. They know that much is still to be done, especially to improve learners' success. There is a strong team culture and a shared responsibility for ensuring that learners succeed. Governors are highly committed and well informed. The work of the standards committee is particularly effective.
30. Quality assurance has improved since the last inspection. There is a clear cycle of review of performance and action planning for improvement. Teachers understand these procedures and use them increasingly well, but not consistently effectively. The more robust lesson observation programme is making a contribution to raising standards. The self-assessment report is self-critical, comprehensive and mainly accurate with the exception of achievement and standards and overall effectiveness. The management information system provides accurate and timely information but is not yet fully accessible, or sufficiently used, by all teachers. It is increasingly used by managers to set targets and monitor progress closely.
31. Most teachers are suitably qualified and supported. However, in engineering there are too few trained teachers. A new and improved appraisal scheme has been implemented. The staff development programme is comprehensive,

suitably planned and directed towards improving standards. Resources are satisfactory overall, but teaching accommodation in engineering is unsuitable. The property strategy is well advanced. The college is financially secure and resources are used efficiently. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

32. The college is proactive in its pursuit of strategic partnerships. It has fostered highly effective partnerships with local schools, other colleges, employers and statutory authorities. These allow the college to respond well to the needs of the local community.
33. The environment is safe and healthy. The college meets its statutory requirements under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Young learners and vulnerable adults are adequately protected, although members of the governing body and staff have yet to complete their programmes of training on child protection. Effective measures have been taken to ensure good physical access for all on the main site. The college's strong commitment to, and promotion of, equality and diversity is reflected in the diversity of its learners and the attention given to individual needs and support. Equality of opportunity is well monitored, although not consistently by course teams. The promotion of diversity through the curriculum is underdeveloped.

Curriculum area inspections

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

34. The college offers a range of engineering courses from levels 1 to 4. Some 120 learners aged 16-18 and 428 aged 19 and over follow engineering courses. Full-time courses are taken by 123 learners. Around 28 apprentices follow work-based learning programmes. More than 120 pupils aged 14-16 from local schools take vocational qualifications in engineering and construction.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on level 1 courses
- high success rates on the advanced apprenticeship programme
- good assessment practice in work-based learning
- good management of work-based learning.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low pass rates on level 2 courses
- poor teaching and learning resources
- ineffective curriculum planning.

Achievements and standards

35. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on level 1 courses have improved considerably and are now high. The framework success rate for the advanced apprenticeship has improved significantly and is now high. However, many advanced apprentices do not complete their training within the expected timescale. Pass rates for level 2 courses and for key skills are low. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Learners aged 14-16 develop good engineering skills. Attendance is high and learners are punctual.

Quality of provision

36. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers make good use of imaginative activities and open and directed questioning to check learners' understanding. In a level 1 electrical engineering lesson, learners completed with much enthusiasm a "graffiti" exercise which enabled them to identify basic terminology. Lesson plans do not always contain clear learning outcomes or identify how activities will match the learning needs of each learner.
37. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory, but there is insufficient use of target-setting for college-based learners. Assessment for

work-based learners is planned effectively and linked closely to their jobs. Learners understand well the range of evidence needed and employers ensure a good range of assessment opportunities is available.

38. The range of courses is satisfactory although progression routes for motor vehicle learners are narrow. Learners aged 14-16 take relevant vocational qualifications and their programme is planned and delivered well.
39. Advice, guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. All full-time and most part-time learners complete a comprehensive initial assessment. They benefit from regular tutorials and individual progress reviews. Where additional learning needs have been identified, effective learning support is provided.

Leadership and management

40. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The management of work-based learning is good. However, curriculum development planning is ineffective. The curriculum development plan fails to identify the low numbers on technician courses and the lack of progression routes for motor vehicle learners. The self-assessment report fails to identify a number of weaknesses. Only a small proportion of teachers have qualified teacher status. Teaching and learning resources are poor. Most engineering classrooms lack ICT equipment. Many classrooms are unattractive and in poor decorative state.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

41. The college offers a broad range of ICT courses. Full-time courses are taken by 110 learners, mostly aged 16-18 at levels 2 and 3. Over 670 learners, mainly adults, are enrolled on part-time courses in two dedicated learning centres.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on most courses
- effective teaching for part-time learners
- good tutorial support to improve full-time learner retention
- particularly well managed part-time provision
- successful initiatives to improve provision.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low standard of learners' work on the national diploma in information technology course
- low pass rates for key skills
- poor attendance and punctuality on national and first diploma courses
- ineffective teaching on many full-time courses.

Achievements and standards

42. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on the most significant courses have improved substantially over three years and are now high. The pass rate for the national diploma has improved but remains low. Pass rates for key skills are low. The standard of learners' work on the national diploma in information technology is poor and progress is slow. Learners display low aspirations in completing assignment work. Attendance and punctuality on the national and first diploma courses are poor.

Quality of provision

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Part-time learners benefit from effective teaching in the dedicated and well equipped learning centres. Learning materials encourage learners to work purposefully as they develop their ICT skills. Their understanding is carefully checked through regular, helpful and constructive progress reviews. In the better lessons for full-time learners, teaching includes a mix of interesting group and individual activities that check learners' understanding. However, on many full-time courses the teaching is dull. Teachers fail to engage learners fully and learning resources are not used effectively.

44. The monitoring of learners' progress is good. Assessment is satisfactory, overall. Feedback for some level 3 learners does not indicate clearly how they can improve their performance.
45. The broad range of courses enables clear progression from level 1 to level 3 and to higher education. Learners enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities. Links with employers and commerce are insufficiently developed.
46. There is good support for learners. Those requiring additional learning support are quickly identified and support is provided promptly. The supportive tutorial system has improved learners' retention. Tutors ensure that individual action plans contain targets which are measurable and achievable. Group tutorials contain useful contributions from external speakers, but some sessions are not planned or delivered well.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The part-time provision is particularly well managed, with clear leadership and direction. Initiatives to improve the overall quality and range of provision have been successful. Procedures, such as monitoring and follow-up of visits, are routinely and effectively applied. The self-assessment report is evaluative and generally accurate. However, the assessment of the quality of teaching and learning is too generous. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Teaching takes place in suitably equipped classrooms although some are too small for the size of the group.

Leisure, travel and tourism

Inadequate: grade 4

Context

48. The college offers full-time travel and tourism courses at levels 2 and 3 and full-time sports courses at levels 1 to 3. In addition, part-time sports courses are offered in community locations. Full-time travel and tourism courses are taken by 53 learners and 69 learners study sport full-time. There are 73 part-time learners.

STRENGTHS

- high success rates on the first diploma in travel and tourism.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low pass rates on most sports courses
- poor attendance and punctuality
- narrow curriculum range
- weak curriculum management.

Achievements and standards

49. Achievements and standards are inadequate. Success rates on the first diploma in travel and tourism have been consistently above the national average. However, pass rates remain low on most sport courses and for key skills. Most retention rates have improved over recent years and are now above the national average. The standard of learners' work in lessons is satisfactory overall. In travel and tourism, learners demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of good customer care. At level 3, the standard of some sports learners' work in lessons is low. Attendance and punctuality are poor. Registers show a general fall in attendance on most programmes. Many learners arrive up to 15 minutes late regularly.

Quality of provision

50. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, teachers make good use of interesting and stimulating activities to engage learners. They draw on their vocational experience well to help learners understand difficult concepts. In the less successful lessons, the teaching fails to engage learners sufficiently and learners are slow to concentrate on learning activities. In practical sports lessons, there is often a lack of enthusiasm to complete tasks.
51. The curriculum range is narrow and fails to reflect sufficiently the diversity of employment in travel and sport. Most sports courses lead to qualifications in fitness and exercise; they do not enable learners to develop wider skills associated with the sports profession and leisure industry. Few opportunities exist to take life-saving, sports leader or coaching qualifications. Travel and

tourism courses do not prepare learners sufficiently for the specific local employment opportunities associated with airports and tour operation.

52. Support and guidance are satisfactory. Learners value the individual guidance they receive through tutorials. Pastoral support is good and responsive to individual learners' needs. Individual learning plans are sometimes incomplete and not routinely updated. Tutorial records are insufficiently monitored.

Leadership and management

53. Curriculum management is inadequate. Management information is not used systematically to identify and make improvements. Communication is often poor. Changes in sports timetables are not communicated well to staff and learners. There have been frequent changes in staffing with some unfilled vacancies. Lessons have been cancelled at short notice and learners' work has been misplaced. The management of key skills is poor. The self-assessment report accurately identified most of the areas for improvement but overstated the strengths.

Literacy, numeracy, ESOL and E2E

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

54. The college offers courses in English Spoken as Other Language (ESOL), literacy and numeracy and Entry to Employment (E2E). ESOL accounts for almost two thirds of the provision. Over 520 learners follow ESOL courses from entry level to level 2 on either a full or part-time basis both at the main site and at two community locations. Literacy and numeracy support are offered through key skills communication and application of number at levels 1 and 2. Around 35 learners follow the E2E programme.

STRENGTHS

- good progression on ESOL and E2E courses
- effective use of ILT by learners
- good arrangements to meet community and employer needs in ESOL
- effective management of the ESOL provision.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- poor key skills success rates
- insufficient challenge in lessons
- insufficient development of writing skills.

Achievements and standards

55. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Pass rates in ESOL have improved and are now high. Progression from ESOL courses is good. Many learners with higher qualifications from other countries gain ESOL qualifications quickly and progress to further and higher education. Most learners gain confidence and demonstrate good language skills.
56. Most learners on the E2E course also progress well. In the current year, almost two thirds have progressed to employment or further training. The standard of their work in lessons is satisfactory overall. They make good oral responses and are skilful in structuring an argument.
57. Success rates in key skills are poor and remain significantly worse than the already low national average. The college introduces key skills very late into learners' courses and, in many cases, learners draw on evidence for key skills from assignments they completed much earlier in the course.

Quality of provision

58. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, learners are given the opportunity to use ILT to practise literacy, numeracy and language skills independently. In ESOL, learners submit and receive most of their work through

e-mail. Effective use is made of interactive websites to prepare learners for examinations. Most lessons, however, lack sufficient challenge. Too much teaching is aimed at the whole group and fails to meet individual learners' needs. Learners have insufficient opportunity to develop and extend new vocabulary or apply numeracy skills to real situations. Written work is largely focused on the completion of worksheets with little opportunity to apply writing skills to wider and more imaginative contexts. Targets on individual learning plans are insufficiently challenging.

59. There are good arrangements to meet community and employer needs in ESOL. Many learners benefit from courses in their workplace supported through their employer. The college has increased the number of ESOL learners through successful community partnerships and promotes its courses in specific neighbourhoods.
60. Learners receive a good level of individual support. They benefit from childcare facilities at the lifelong learning centre. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

61. The management of ESOL is good. There is effective communication between staff. Data are used effectively to make improvements. Teachers are appropriately qualified and attend relevant professional development courses. The self-assessment report is detailed, thorough and accurate with an appropriate action plan. The college acknowledges that its key skills policy is unsuccessful. It plans to place accountability for key skills with each head of department.

Business administration and law

Satisfactory: grade 3

Context

62. The college offers courses in business, administration, professional and trade union studies. Some 110 learners aged 16-18 study mainly on full-time courses in business and administration, 21 work towards apprenticeships in business and customer service, and around 124 adult learners undertake part-time professional qualifications. About 1,000 learners have enrolled on trade union studies courses.

STRENGTHS

- high retention rates on most courses
- high pass rates on most full-time level 2 and 3 courses in 2004/05
- good development of learners' vocational skills in work-based learning
- good management of the trade union studies provision.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- low pass rates on most part-time management and professional courses
- very low success rates on work-based learning
- insufficiently developed arrangements for key skills
- insufficient use of specific and challenging targets to improve learners' performance
- inadequate management of work-based learning.

Achievements and standards

63. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Retention rates on most courses have improved significantly and are now above the national average. Pass rates on full-time level 2 and 3 courses have also improved and are now above the national average on most courses. Pass rates on trade union studies courses have been consistently higher than national averages. However, pass rates on most part-time management and professional courses have declined and are significantly lower than national averages. Success rates on work-based learning are very low for advanced apprentices with no completion of frameworks in 2004/05. Current learners make slow progress towards NVQ and framework completion.
64. Work-based learners develop good vocational skills. They gain confidence and apply their skills well in the workplace. In lessons, learners apply appropriately the skills of independent research, reflective thinking and critical evaluation. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall although attendance rates are low on the certificate in administration and diploma in text processing courses.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons appropriately and include relevant variety of activities and suitable use of ICT. In the better lessons, the teaching challenges learners and integrates key skills well. In the less successful lessons, teaching fails to reduce learning outcomes into smaller objectives. Assessment is satisfactory overall but some feedback does not indicate how learners can make further improvements. Arrangements for key skills are insufficiently developed. Lesson plans contain reference to key skills but do not regularly enable learners to collect evidence for their portfolios.
66. There is insufficient use of specific and challenging targets to improve learners' performance. Individual learning plans lack detail. Progress reviews and action plans set short term targets and fail to review overall progress.
67. The range of full-time courses is satisfactory. The range of general part-time courses is narrow but good for trade union studies. Enrichment opportunities are satisfactory.
68. Support for learners is satisfactory. Most learners on level 1 courses have been identified as needing support and satisfactory arrangements are in place to provide additional support. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

69. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Trade union studies courses are managed well and have grown substantially in response to regional union branches and employers' needs. Appropriate use is made of data and targets to review courses. However, no clear plan exists to raise pass rates and extend the range of part-time courses. Teachers are appropriately qualified. Few formal arrangements exist for industrial updating. Self-assessment is largely accurate.
70. The management of work-based learning is inadequate. Progress to make improvements is slow. The co-ordination of training and employer involvement is insufficient. Some learners are undertaking inappropriate levels of training.

Learners' achievements

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	02/03	255	30	56	-26	2554	25	55	-30
	03/04	185	51	60	-10	2224	32	59	-27
	04/05	310	44			2316	42		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	24	46	60	-14	3	0	47	
	03/04	9	33	65	-32	3	33	52	
	04/05	35	51			3	67		
NVQs	02/03	11	55	56	-1	86	62	57	5
	03/04	8	75	61	14	21	52	62	-10
	04/05	49	53			43	60		
Other	02/03	220	27	56	-29	2465	24	55	-31
	03/04	168	51	60	-9	2200	32	59	-27
	04/05	226	40			2270	42		

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	02/03	401	20	52	-32	881	41	49	-9
	03/04	353	39	56	-17	545	44	53	-9
	04/05	403	53			559	58		
GCSEs	02/03	123	16	57	-41	99	40	55	-15
	03/04	25	48	61	-13	38	61	59	2
	04/05	76	37			28	61		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	90	21	59	-37	14	21	53	-31
	03/04	27	59	63	-4	2	50	57	
	04/05	0	0			0	0		
NVQs	02/03	70	29	42	-14	177	24	49	-25
	03/04	98	29	52	-23	73	29	53	-25
	04/05	108	50			80	43		
Other	02/03	118	19	50	-32	591	46	48	-2
	03/04	203	40	54	-14	432	46	52	-7
	04/05	219	60			451	61		

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2003 to 2005, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	02/03	301	35	62	-27	420	32	51	-19
	03/04	396	29	64	-35	482	32	53	-21
	04/05	325	52			395	32		
A/A2 Levels	02/03	5	60	82		15	53	63	-10
	03/04	5	40	84		4	50	66	
	04/05	3	100			4	50		
AS Levels	02/03	17	18	61	-43	19	47	48	-1
	03/04	18	22	63	-41	15	33	50	-16
	04/05	17	24			24	50		
GNVQs and precursors	02/03	180	36	50	-14	39	46	45	1
	03/04	172	11	52	-41	28	4	43	-39
	04/05	14	50			0	0		
NVQs	02/03	8	63	51	12	95	14	45	-31
	03/04	9	44	54	-9	116	22	47	-25
	04/05	25	68			31	16		
Other	02/03	91	33	55	-22	252	34	54	-19
	03/04	192	45	56	-11	319	39	56	-17
	04/05	266	52			336	32		

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2003-04 to 2004-05.

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	34	24%	32%	26%	47%
	Advanced	32	19%	31%	38%	48%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	19	16%	38%	26%	50%
	Advanced	26	31%	34%	50%	48%

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

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

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2003/04	Apprenticeship	28	7%	16%	11%	24%
	Advanced	31	6%	19%	23%	30%
2004/05	Apprenticeship	22	9%	21%	14%	29%
	Advanced	27	4%	21%	15%	31%

* The number of learners who planned to complete their learning programme in the given year

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

1. Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Year	Number of starts in year	Achieved Objectives *	Progression **	Still in learning
2002/03	60	30%	45%	0
2003/04	67	33%	52%	0
2004/05	45	56%	51%	0

* 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