



Hartpury College

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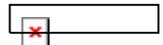
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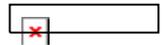
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Basic information about the college

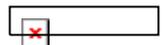


Name of college:	Hartpury College
Type of college:	Specialist Land-Based Further Education College
Principal:	Malcolm Wharton
Address of college:	Hartpury House Hartpury Nr. Gloucester GL19 3BE
Telephone number:	01452 700283
Fax number:	01452 700629
Chair of governors:	Mark Davison
Unique reference number:	130687
Name of reporting inspector:	John Gusterson (ALI)
Dates of inspection:	21-25 January 2002

Part A: Summary



Information about the college

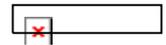


Hartpury College is based some five miles north west of the city of Gloucester. It was established as a specialist agriculture further education (FE) college in 1948 to train those working in land-based industries in Gloucestershire. All teaching takes place at Hartpury and through work-experience links with industry throughout the county. In 1997, the college became an associate faculty of the University of the West of England. The college is in an area with low levels of social deprivation and unemployment. Only 1% of the population is from minority ethnic groups.

The college attracts a significant proportion of its students from outside Gloucestershire, including overseas. The college enrolls approximately 1,460 full-time students annually, of whom 45% are on FE courses. Of these, 73% are students aged 16 to 18. The majority of these are on Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded full-time vocational courses; about 7% are on work-based learning programmes and 10% are on part-time and adult courses. Approximately 35% of the FE students live on campus in college accommodation.

There is little land-based provision below level 1 or for part-time students. The college offers full-time courses which lead to a range of vocational, academic and technical qualifications with good progression routes from level 2 to higher education (HE) and employment. The college's mission requires it to be committed to making available relevant, effective, good quality education and training for the land-based and allied industries locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; to increase participation in learning and skills transfer; to ensure accessibility of all college services and to ensure viability of the college and its programmes.

How effective is the college?



Inspectors judged the overall quality of provision to be adequate. Education and training are good in agriculture and countryside, animal care and sport and leisure; and satisfactory in equine studies and horticulture. Leadership and management are good. The college's key strengths and the areas that should be improved are listed below:

Key strengths

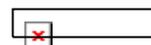
- improved quality of teaching and learning in many areas since the last inspection
- excellent resources
- effective quality assurance
- good individual support for full-time students by staff
- good strategic planning and management
- good progression rates to higher education (HE) and employment
- strong links with industry.

What should be improved

- quality of training and assessment in the workplace
- some ineffective implementation of key skills
- inadequate arrangements for monitoring and promoting equality of opportunity
- health and safety procedures
- provision for part-time and level 1 students.

Further aspects of provision requiring improvement are identified in the sections on individual subjects and courses in the full report.

Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas



The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum areas and on the effectiveness of leadership and management in the range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5)

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Agriculture and countryside	Good. Retention and pass rates on most courses are good and have improved over the last two years, although pass rates for modern apprentices within the contracted period are low. Teachers make good use of the college estate as a learning resource. Students receive good support through tutorials and through additional support in lessons. Assignments are used effectively for assessment and to develop learning.
Animal care	Good. Pass rates are good and progression routes are effective and well used. Tutorial support for students and for their academic work is good. Theory teaching is good, but some practical teaching is insufficiently challenging. Animal care resources are well designed and easily accessible with an adequate number and range of animals. National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) assessment and the

	management of work experience are unsatisfactory.
Equine studies	Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates on equine courses are in line with the national average, but retention rates at national diploma level are low. Teaching in theory lessons is good, but the management of some practical lessons is weak as is the awareness of health and safety. Students enjoy their studies and are well prepared for employment. NVQ assessment practice is poor and key skills provision is poorly managed. Resources to support learning are excellent. Work experience is not well managed.
Horticulture	Satisfactory. Teaching is generally well planned to meet the needs of students. Achievement at national diploma level is good, but pass rates in the majority of work-based learning and some adult provision are poor. Students receive effective tutorial support and they are well supported by employers. Machinery and equipment for practical classes are insufficient and the management of work-based learning is unsatisfactory.
Sport and leisure	Good. Teaching and learning are good, particularly in practical lessons. Some theory lessons are less well planned and do not involve the students sufficiently. Pass rates on national diploma courses are good. Sport and recreation facilities are excellent and students gain significant benefits and use from them. Courses are well managed and teachers provide effective support and promote inclusion.

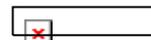
How well is the college led and managed?

Leadership and management are good. Governors and senior managers provide a clear strategic direction. They set realistic and challenging targets. Internal communication is good. The management of most full-time courses is good, but the management of training in the workplace and in the college has been poor. Arrangements for the quality assurance of curriculum areas are clear and well understood. There is insufficient awareness or promotion of equality of opportunity. The reliability of management information has improved significantly in the past year. Financial management is good. The college provides good value for money.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

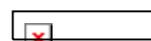
The college is recruiting increasing numbers of full-time students who do not reach the minimum entry requirement for their course. Most of these students achieve well. The college is making provision for some new groups of students. These include women who wish to return to training and learners aged under 16 years. However, the provision for new groups of students is not extensive and at foundation level it is limited. The college is sensitive to equal opportunities issues, but does not promote or monitor equality of opportunity effectively. However, individual students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



Guidance and support for full-time students are good. The college provides impartial advice and information for prospective students. The majority of students are effectively inducted into the college. Arrangements for tutorial support for most students are good. However, some part-time and work-based students do not receive the same level of support as full-time students. The college provides a broad range of services, including counselling, and advice and guidance on welfare matters, such as accommodation and finance. College wardens provide good support for residential students. The small numbers of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well supported. Provision of support for students going into HE is good, but careers advice into employment is less well developed.

Students' views of the college



Students' views about the college were taken into account and a summary of their main comments is presented below:

What students like about the college

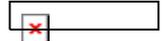
- effective support from hardworking and helpful college staff
- stimulating and friendly atmosphere of the college as a place to study
- very good facilities
- valuable, readily available advice on HE
- industrial and commercial expertise of staff.

What they feel could be improved

- access to computers in the learning resource area
- teaching and assessment of key skills

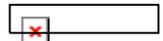
- level of support for part-time and adult students.

Other information



The college has two months to prepare an action plan in response to the report. It must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors must agree the plan and send copies of it to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

Part B: The college as a whole



Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

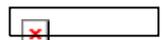


Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	59	33	8
19+ and WBL*	46	46	8
Learning 16-18	56	33	11
19+ and WBL	46	54	0

Key: Inspectors grade three aspects of lessons: teaching, learning and attainment. The range of grades includes: Excellent (Grade 1), Very Good (Grade 2), Good (Grade 3), Satisfactory (Grade 4), Unsatisfactory (Grade 5), Poor (Grade 6) and Very Poor (Grade 7).

* work-based learning

Achievement and standards



1. The college offers a wide range of full-time and some part-time courses in land-based provision. Most vocational courses are provided, including NVQs and national certificates and diplomas. The college also provides courses for professional qualifications, for example, those of the British Horse Society (BHS). Courses offered are predominant at levels 2 and 3. There is a small amount of work-based learning.

2. Since the last inspection, the college has set and met a target for students' retention at, or just above, the national averages for specialist colleges. Overall, retention rates at levels 1, 2 and 3 for students aged 16 to 18 have improved over the last three years and are now above national averages. Retention rates for adult students declined in 2000/01, but remain above the national average at level 3. Pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are now well above national averages and rising. Pass rates for adults have varied over the last three years, but generally remain at, or above, national averages. The proportion of students progressing to employment and FE is good. The proportion progressing to HE has increased steadily.

16 to 18 year olds

3. The staying-on rates for students aged 16 at school or in FE in the college's main catchment area are substantially above the national average. Many new students enter the college with levels of prior achievement below that stipulated by the college. The college provides learning and tutorial support, and encourages students to gain qualifications appropriate to their aspirations and ability. In this it is successful, and with few exceptions, students comment favourably on their learning experiences. Retention and pass rates for foundation and level 1 courses are good, and many students progress to higher level courses.

4. Most students on level 2 courses make appropriate gains in knowledge and understanding. Standards achieved in theory and practical lessons are usually good. Most students make satisfactory progress in developing their information technology (IT) skills and some use these to good effect, for instance, in recording information for their course files and in the preparation and presentation of assignments. While retention rates are generally good, students' pass rates vary widely across the college. In 2000/01, students achieved pass rates of 100% in first diplomas and national certificates in agriculture and animal care.

5. Many students aged 16 to 18 study vocational level 3 programmes. The entry qualifications of some students are low. On national diploma courses, students carry out practical work with good levels of competence and develop a balance of appropriate practical skills and supporting knowledge. The standard of supervisory skills developed on some courses is low. Assignments and other written work from students are generally good. Students demonstrate good levels of understanding and make perceptive contributions during group discussions. Results vary between curriculum areas and many students, particularly in agriculture and animal care, achieve higher grades than those predicted by their qualifications on entry. Some other students with higher qualifications on entry are not performing as well as expected.

6. Generally, students aged 16 to 18 on courses at all levels achieve good pass rates in key skills examinations. Students on work-based learning programmes carry out practical work with appropriate levels of competence and show adequate understanding of supporting knowledge. Retention rates for these students are mostly satisfactory, but pass rates within the contracted period are low. A good proportion of work-based learners are slow to achieve in the allotted time, continue with their studies and pass at a later date.

Adult learners

7. Most adult learners are following the same courses as the students aged 16 to 18. A small proportion of the total number of adult students attends college for specific part-time courses at levels 2 and 3. Many of these are either attending college for the first time or returning to acquire further training. A substantial proportion study vocational programmes such as the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) general certificate in horticulture. Most make good progress, acquiring relevant skills and knowledge, and draw effectively on their own experience. Retention rates are good, but pass rates vary. Most adult students on part-time courses complete their course, but a significant proportion do not choose to take advantage of opportunities to have their achievements accredited.

Quality of education and training

8. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded in 86 sessions. Teaching was good or better in 57% of these, satisfactory in 35% and unsatisfactory in 8%. The quality of practical and theory teaching varies in different areas of learning. The quality of theory teaching is better than that of practical lessons in equine studies and animal care. The quality of practical teaching in sport and leisure is good. Attendance and punctuality are good in most classes.

9. Teachers try hard to meet the needs of individual students on foundation courses. In many lessons, learning support tutors ably assist them. Students are involved in a range of activities, their attention is maintained successfully and they are able to work at their own pace. Teachers explain topics carefully and use questioning techniques that encourage students to build on their existing knowledge. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given every assistance to participate fully in classroom activities.

10. At level 2, most lessons involve a variety of teaching methods to motivate and interest students. Teachers use their own industrial experience and that of students, to relate theory teaching to commercial practice. In most subjects, teachers make good use of the college estate to support teaching. In some lessons, particularly with small, combined groups, lesson planning takes little account of the range of ability in a class. In less successful lessons, teachers talk too much and students become bored. Assignment guidelines are clear with explicit grading criteria. Teachers check that students understand what is required of them and provide advice to those needing help. Teachers give constructive comments on marked assignments which help students to improve their performance. There is poor co-ordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training for students on work-based programmes and work experience for full-time students was not used effectively to develop or consolidate teaching at the college.

11. Many level 3 lessons are well structured and provide students with a range of learning activities, the most successful of which are well-managed practical activities and class discussions. Practical teaching sessions offer an appropriate mix of activities to build students' competence, but the development of supervisory skills is often poor. In some poorer practicals, insufficient attention is paid to health and safety. Some practical skills are developed and assessed at college or on work experience for full-time students, rather than in the workplace, which would be more appropriate. In some theory lessons, students spend too much time copying notes from the board.

12. The college's large estate provides a welcoming and friendly environment for students. The specialist accommodation is impressive. The animal care centre, the equine centre, the college farm and the extensive sports facilities are equipped to current industrial standards and provide students with excellent opportunities to develop practical skills. The accommodation is used appropriately by students who are following full-time specialist courses and by those who are enriching their studies by gaining additional qualifications in subjects that interest them.

13. A newly equipped learning resource centre is well used by students who wish to research and work independently. The college has invested heavily in computers for teachers and students. All full-time teachers have laptop computers. The ratio of full-time equivalent students to computers is approximately 7:1. All computer rooms are available for drop-in use by students when timetables allow. However, the demand for computers is sometimes very high, and at times, students who wish to use a computer in the learning resource centre for their work cannot do so because other students are using the machines for recreational activities.

14. Imaginative use of teaching spaces enables practical demonstrations to large groups of students to take place in comfort. Most classrooms are well equipped. Some 90% of the classrooms are accessible to wheelchair users and, if necessary, timetables are altered to ensure that mobility-impaired students can attend. One wheelchair user has a specially trained dog equipped with a harness to carry assignments to tutors in the less accessible areas of the college.

15. Teachers are appropriately qualified. Some 88% of full-time teachers have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. Most staff have received information and communications technology (ICT) training to help them to improve their teaching, and many of them have taken the opportunities provided to improve their specialist skills and qualifications. However, few teachers have taken up opportunities for secondment into industry. Staff awareness of risk assessment is

inadequate. Routine monitoring of health and safety is carried out in the workplace and risk assessments are completed, but contain insufficient detail. Assessments are not checked for accuracy.

16. There is regular and effective assessment of students' written work on full-time courses. The college's internal review body, Hartpury Assessment and Learning, meets weekly to ensure that assignments are clear and set at an appropriate level. Standards are closely linked to the requirements of examining and awarding bodies. Marking of assignments is mostly systematic and accurate, and the feedback provided by teachers helps students to improve their work. The detailed assessment records enable students to keep a regular check on their progress, and with the help of their tutor, to set targets for improvement.

17. There are insufficient work-based assessors. Assessment of work-based learners is mainly carried out by college staff. Many NVQ assessments take place in the college, rather than in the workplace, and some students have had few assessments by direct observation of their work.

18. The college meets the needs of some but not all of the people in the local area. A wide range of vocational courses for full-time students is provided at intermediate and advanced levels. However, there are insufficient courses at foundation level or clear progression routes to level 2 courses. The college has undertaken a number of initiatives to widen its participation, such as the provision of IT courses for women. It has increased the number of courses for students who are less than 16 years old, including those who have been excluded from school. However, the college has not used its extensive links with industry and the local community to identify other courses that could be offered.

19. There are effective arrangements for providing advice and guidance on courses for potential full-time students. Prospectuses, leaflets and taster courses all help students to understand the range of options available to them. All full-time students are interviewed. The advice that they receive is impartial and helps them to make an appropriate choice of course. Few students wish to change their course once they have chosen it. Induction arrangements are comprehensive and enable students to make a smooth transition from school to college. Information on careers, financial support and counselling is freely available. In the current year, 90% of students have received some form of additional financial support to help them follow their courses.

20. All full-time students are assessed for their individual learning needs soon after joining the college. The assessment covers literacy, numeracy and IT. Students are informed of the results of their assessment promptly. Tutors interview students diagnosed as requiring support. Arrangements for support include individual and whole-class work with a learning support tutor. Most students who are diagnosed as requiring learning support receive it.

21. There are effective tutorial arrangements for full-time students. Tutors and students use students' individual action plans to monitor progress against the targets that have been agreed. Tutorial arrangements for part-time students are less effective. However, teachers provide good levels of informal support to those students who need it. Full-time students receive written reports on their progress three times each year. The reports are detailed and clearly identify where improvement is needed. Copies of reports are sent to the parents of younger students.

22. Arrangements for supporting work-based learners are unsatisfactory. There is little dialogue between the college and the employers who provide the placements. At entry, guidance is weak. Employers do not receive reports on students' progress nor are they informed whether students have achieved their qualification. Some students are following an inappropriate course.

Leadership and management

23. Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection, the college has significantly increased its number of students, particularly on HE courses, and diversified its sources of income. The expansion has been effectively managed. Governors and senior managers provide a clear strategic direction and ensure that the college is meeting its mission. The strategic plan sets clear targets. Operational objectives are derived from the strategic plan, and in turn, form the basis of

departmental action plans. Governors are well informed about the college and monitor its financial position carefully. The quality and standards committee monitors the academic performance of students on different courses and reports to the full corporation. Most governors have established links with individual departments and meet staff and students regularly. Communications are good. The weekly staff information sheet, monthly staff meetings and regular professional development days help staff to have a clear understanding of the college's strategic objectives and its progress towards meeting them.

24. A recent re-organisation has simplified the management structure. Accountabilities are now clear. Courses are organised into seven departments. The newly appointed academic managers of the departments have weekly meetings to ensure that college policies and procedures are applied consistently. The management of most full-time courses is good. However, work-based training has received insufficient attention and the management of training in the workplace and in the college has been poor. The college has conducted a comprehensive revision of work-based training, but at the time of the inspection, it was too early to tell whether the new arrangements were effective.

25. The college sets targets against which its performance can be measured that are realistic and challenging. Target setting at course level is informed by national standards, past performance and the prior achievements of students on the course. A senior manager moderates these targets and then aggregates them to produce college targets. The college has been successful in meeting its targets and students' achievements are improving. Many full-time students are achieving better results than their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades at entry would suggest.

26. Quality assurance arrangements for curriculum areas are well documented and clearly understood by staff. The college's self-assessment is self-critical and thorough. The views of employers are taken into account wherever possible. Students' views are drawn from the twice-yearly surveys which are undertaken by all full-time and some part-time students. They show that most students are happy with their courses. However, the college has been slow to process the results of the surveys and their usefulness in providing information to support self-assessment has been reduced. Action plans are detailed and clearly identify actions required to improve students' performance and the quality of teaching. They clearly state who is responsible for each action and the date by which it is to be achieved. Monthly departmental review meetings monitor progress against the plans. Detailed course reviews take place twice each year. Quality assurance of support services is less well developed. Although some services, such as the library and students' advice and guidance have identified service standards, other support services have few measurable targets.

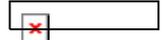
27. There are effective systems for monitoring and improving the performance of staff. The college's appraisal system applies to all full-time and part-time teaching staff. The observation of teaching is part of the appraisal and helps to identify an individual's training needs. The lesson observation programme is comprehensive and enables the college to identify correctly strengths and weaknesses in teaching. A 'buddy' system, which assigns teachers into pairs to share good practice, is highly valued by staff. There are good opportunities and much encouragement for teachers to gain or improve their teaching qualifications. However, owing to its recent expansion, the college employs a large number of full-time and part-time staff who do not possess teaching qualifications. The quality of the teaching of unqualified staff was not as good as that of the qualified teachers.

28. There is insufficient awareness or promotion of equality of opportunity. The equal opportunities policy is under review and the college has yet to approve an equal opportunities development plan. Although the college records the ethnic origin and gender of its students, it does not examine in sufficient detail the experiences of different groups of students in the college. Few initiatives have been taken to raise the awareness of staff or students of equal opportunities issues and there is little positive promotion of equal opportunities to local ethnic and disadvantaged groups.

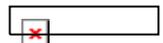
29. The reliability of management information has improved significantly since the last inspection. Managers receive monthly reports which help them to analyse attendance, retention and pass rates. At the time of the inspection, this information was not accessible to all managers on-line.

30. Management of the college's finances is good. Spending has been prioritised to benefit learners. For example, the college has recently made a significant investment in new computers to support learners. There are tight controls on spending. Prudent arrangements for tendering and expenditure on capital items have helped to reduce overall costs. The college carefully monitors the cost of its provision against that in similar colleges. Its costs are low. Value for money is assured by the detailed monitoring of teachers' workloads to ensure that their time is used efficiently and through the careful deployment of resources.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



Agriculture and countryside



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Contributory grade in work-based learning is satisfactory (grade 3)

Strengths

- good retention and pass rates on most courses
- effective use of additional learning support in lessons
- good use of the college estate as a learning resource
- effective use of assignments to develop learning
- good tutorial support
- good achievement from low entry qualifications level

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates for modern apprentices

- poor management of teaching to small combined groups.

Scope of provision

31. The college offers a good range of full-time provision from entry level to level 3 in agriculture, farm mechanisation, game and fishery management and countryside management. Entry-level courses are offered through a two-year rural skills course, leading to the National Proficiency Tests Council Vocational Foundation Certificate or NVQ level 1 qualifications. Other full-time provision includes first and national diploma courses and national certificates. There are 150 students across this range of full-time courses, almost all of whom are aged 16 to 18. Part-time provision includes work-based learning for 21 modern apprentices of NVQ in agriculture at levels 2 and 3, with key skills at appropriate levels. An extensive programme of short part-time courses is aimed largely at people working in industry.

Achievement and standards

32. Retention and pass rates on most courses in this programme area are good. Individualised student record (ISR) data are unreliable for some courses for 1998/99 and 1999/2000, but college data show that students' achievements are at, or above, national averages. Value added data show that 47% of students completing courses in 2000/01 achieved at a higher level than their predicted grades based on entry qualifications. There are high progression rates to FE and HE and to employment. A wide range of vocational qualifications is available to students in addition to their main award. Pass rates are good for those students who take these qualifications.

33. The standard of assignment work on the first diploma courses is good and above the level expected based on students' prior attainment, but the quality of students' work in some lessons on the first diploma in agriculture is below the standard expected. Students on the rural skills foundation course make good progress and achieve well in lessons.

34. Over the last three years, pass rates for modern apprentices within the contracted period are low, but pass rates for NVQ over a longer period of time are good.

A sample of retention and pass rates in agriculture and countryside, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
First diploma agriculture	2	No. of starts	11	10	11
		% retention	64	90	91
		% pass rate	71	89	100
NVQ crops and livestock	2	No. of starts	50	25	19
		% retention	92	88	85
		% pass rate	83	100	85
NVQ gamekeeping	2	No. of starts	**	9	14
		% retention	**	100	86
		% pass rate	**	89	100
National diploma	3	No. of starts	30	24	29

mechanisation		% pass rate	*	*	96
National diploma rural studies, game and fishery management	3	No. of starts	28	16	18
		% retention	79	94	83
		% pass rate	91	87	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

* ISR data unreliable

** course not offered

Quality of education and training

35. Teaching is good overall. The best teaching is in theory lessons, where 87% was very good or excellent. Classroom activities regularly include presentations, workshops and discussions. Teachers make good use of IT to stimulate students' curiosity and to enhance their studies. In one lesson, IT was used effectively to demonstrate visually the symptoms of mastitis in cows to stimulate group discussion and learning. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of question and answer techniques to involve all students and to check learning.

36. Teachers make effective links between theory and practical applications. They have good relevant industrial experience and maintain close links with industry. They effectively use their own industrial experience, and that of the students, in both classroom and practical lessons. In a lesson for students on the rural skills foundation course, an interactive and lively classroom session helped the students to learn well so that they all achieved the required skills and understanding to complete a practical session on ditch maintenance successfully.

37. Teachers make effective use of the college estate across the range of courses to stimulate learning. All course teams are now based at the farm following considerable investment in both commercial and teaching facilities. There are better opportunities for teachers to work as a team and to link theory and practical teaching. This approach has led to improved learning. Specialist equipment for teaching students on countryside and rural skills courses is insufficient. Aspects of equipment storage represent health and safety risks. Risk assessments are not written to cover specific situations and are not routinely included in planning lessons.

38. There are effective systems to record and monitor students' progress. Assignments are set on a regular basis. Assessment guidelines are clear and include explicit grading criteria which teachers use effectively to assess students' work. Teachers mark students' work well and they provide detailed and constructive feedback which helps them to improve standards. Most assignments effectively develop learning, but some for the national diploma courses are insufficiently challenging. Effective quality assurance systems are used for internal verification of written assignments and routine farm duties. There is little internal verification of practical assessments at college and no internal verification of assessment in the workplace.

39. Low numbers of students on many courses sometimes results in inappropriate grouping of students to make viable groups for teaching. In a few lessons for small groups combined from different courses, poor management of teaching fails to take into account the ability of individual students. As a result, students do not participate fully in lessons and do not learn effectively. Students are often expected to complete the same work and progress at the same rate, regardless of their experience and ability. Less able students, some of whom are enrolled on wrong courses to make groups viable, struggle to complete the work.

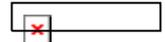
40. Additional learning support available in both theory and practical lessons is effective. In their first lesson on tractor driving, support staff assisted individual students to use instruction manuals to help learning and to ensure all students were actively involved in the lesson. An effective tutorial system monitors and records all aspects of students' progress. Clear individual action plans build on

the analysis of individual needs and this is valued by students. Tutorials are held frequently and information on students' progress is discussed at regular staff meetings and is available on the staff intranet. The quality and effectiveness of tutorials and action planning for work-based students are poor. Few targets for achievement are set and students make slow progress towards achievement.

Leadership and management

41. Leadership of the department is good and staff work well together. Management at course level is in the hands of an academic manager with responsibility for resources and course management in the various subject areas. The manager meets regularly with subject teachers to discuss students' progress and course planning. All teachers are involved in course reviews and self-assessment. However, some course reviews lack effective data analysis and some data are unreliable; consequently, teams do not have an accurate picture of retention and pass rates on some courses. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the development of appropriate teaching strategies for mixed ability groups. Regular meetings with employers ensure an input from industry to course reviews.

Animal care



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- good pass rates on most courses
- excellent resources and accommodation
- effective teaching in theory lessons
- effective tutorial support for full-time students
- good progression rates to employment and HE.

Weaknesses

- ineffective management of work experience
- inadequate assessment of NVQ.

Scope of provision

42. The college offers a wide range of provision in animal management and care from level 1 to level 3. The majority of full-time students are aged 16 to 18. There are 44 students enrolled on full-time diploma and certificate courses at level 2, and 83 students on level 3 diploma courses. All full-time students are enrolled to take additional NVQ units or a full NVQ. However, enrolments for NVQ level 3 are low. Students on the foundation rural skills course include aspects of animal care within their studies. Part-time courses include veterinary nursing certificates available at levels 2 and 3. Nine students are on work-based learning programmes leading to modern apprenticeships.

Achievement and standards

43. Students on full-time courses consistently achieve good results. Retention rates declined in 2000/01, but all students who completed courses passed. Pass rates on most part-time courses are also good, but those for the pre-veterinary nursing certificate are below the national average. Many students achieve above their predicted grades, but some students on the national diploma with higher qualifications on entry, are not performing as well as expected. Progression rates within the FE courses are good: progression to employment and HE is particularly good.

44. Students aged 16 to 18 have thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject. The standard of their theory work is high. Students are confident about their knowledge and understanding and share information effectively through group work. Their lesson notes and records of practical work are well ordered and detailed, and their oral contribution in lessons and written responses to assignments show that their level of attainment is good. Most adult students carry out practical work competently, often working productively in small groups.

A sample of retention and pass rates in animal care, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
NVQ animal care	1	No. of starts	25	38	38
		% retention	74	87	67
		% pass rate	100	100	100
First certificate/diploma animal care	2	No. of starts	29	46	30
		% retention	93	87	87
		% pass rate	93	95	100
National certificate animal care	2	No. of starts	11	10	16
		% retention	91	90	75
		% pass rate	90	100	100
NVQ caring for animals	2	No. of starts	45	50	51
		% retention	82	96	71
		% pass rate	63	100	97
Pre-veterinary nursing	2	No. of starts	8	17	16
		% retention	100	82	94
		% pass rate	86	57	60
National diploma animal care	3	No. of starts	38	46	36
		% retention	74	87	86

		% pass rate	100	100	100
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Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

Quality of education and training

45. Most theory lessons are well prepared. Teachers pay close attention to relevant industrial practices and make good use of students' experience in relating theory to practical examples. Teachers make frequent checks to ensure that students understand their work. Students have a positive attitude to study and develop a good rapport with their teachers. However, in some less successful lessons, students have little opportunity to discuss their own ideas and the lessons end without a proper summary of the work covered.

46. All full-time students carry out weekly duties in the animal unit during which they develop some routine animal care skills. Their level of competence is assessed and used as evidence for NVQ levels 1 and 2. However, some teaching of practical lessons is unsatisfactory; sometimes lesson planning fails to ensure that the full range of tasks is covered or does not address the different levels of practical ability within the class. The teaching of some aspects of practical animal management at national diploma level is insufficiently challenging. Some assignments do not use the resources of the animal unit sufficiently to support learning and do not always reflect the required level for the management skills of evaluation and analysis. Students do not develop their practical skills effectively while on work placement.

47. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. All staff have acquired, or are working towards, assessor qualifications. Students value the experience of staff. The animal unit is well designed and easily accessible with an appropriate number and range of animals. The standards of animal welfare are good.

48. Assessment of written work and monitoring of the progress of full-time students are fair and accurate. Students receive constructive feedback to help them to improve their performance. However, assessment practice for NVQ in the workplace is inadequate. There are no formal methods to sample and validate observation and witness testimony from work experience. Assessment is mostly carried out during a four-week period when assessors are available and is not scheduled throughout the year.

49. Tutorial support for full-time and part-time students is effective. Tutorials are used to review students' progress and identify where improvement is required. Tutors also provide impartial advice on career opportunities and progression. Students' needs for additional learning support are assessed early in the course and well-structured support is available. Tutors follow up any students who miss support sessions.

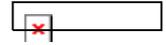
50. Students on work-based learning programmes receive little guidance on portfolio building and are unclear about how well they are progressing towards completion of units and the full award.

Leadership and management

51. The management of the curriculum is satisfactory. The relatively new teaching team works well together to develop effective management processes. Course teams meet frequently to assess students' progress and monitor the quality of provision. The meetings are well recorded, but some identified improvements have not been carried out.

52. The management of work experience is ineffective. Work experience providers are often unaware of their role in training and assessment, and the development of training on work experience is poorly co-ordinated with training in college.

Equine studies



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Strengths

- students well prepared for employment
- good teaching in theory lessons
- good opportunities for students to achieve additional vocational qualifications
- effective tutorial support and guidance
- excellent resources to support teaching
- innovative delivery of stud management.

Weaknesses

- low retention rates on national diploma
- poor management of work experience
- poor assessment practice of NVQ
- weak management of key skills
- insufficient awareness of health and safety

- poor management and achievement of work-based learning.

Scope of provision

53. The college offers a wide range of equine courses. Although there is some part-time provision at level 1, there are no clear progression routes from foundation level to national certificate or first diploma courses. Full-time courses lead to first diploma, national diploma, national certificate and BHS qualifications up to intermediate instructor (BHS II) level. Specialist optional units in stud management are available on the national diploma in horse management. Most of the 126 students on full-time courses are aged 16 to 18. Eight students are on work-based learning programmes leading to modern apprenticeships. All full-time students are enrolled to take additional NVQ units or a full NVQ.

54. Courses offer students good opportunities to progress to employment and HE in equine subjects.

Achievement and standards

55. Students aged 16 to 18 on equine courses achieve satisfactory results. Pass rates on most courses over the last three years are in line with national averages. Retention rates on the national diploma in horse studies over the same period are low, but all the students completing the course passed. Students achieve high standards of practical skills which match industry standards, particularly in riding and stable management. Students acquire further skills and experience when they attend horse shows and specialist clinics. There are insufficient opportunities for students to develop supervisory skills on the diploma course. Progression to employment, FE and HE is good.

56. Additional vocational qualifications are available for all students. Pass rates on BHS qualifications taken as additional awards are low. Achievement on work-based learning programmes is poor. Students' opportunities to achieve are limited, as some employers provide little training, and others are unable to provide sufficient assessment for the level of the programme.

57. Students produce work which demonstrates good understanding of their subject. Assignments are well researched, clearly written and well presented.

A sample of retention and pass rates in equine studies, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
BHS riding examination	1	No. of starts	83	38	46
		% retention	80	100	98
		% pass rate	21	100	49
First diploma horse studies	2	No. of starts	8	3	9
		% retention	88	0	89
		% pass rate	86	0	88
National certificate management of horses	2	No. of starts	7	7	8
		% retention	86	29	88
		% pass rate	100	100	63

BHS knowledge and care	2	No. of starts	16	32	83
		% retention	*	63	*
		% pass rate	56	60	*
National diploma horse studies	3	No. of starts	51	39	42
		% retention	65	67	64
		% pass rate	100	92	100
BHS riding Examination	3	No. of starts	8	12	15
		% retention	75	100	*
		% pass rate	33	83	*

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

* data unreliable

Quality of education and training

58. The teaching in theory lessons for students aged 16 to 18 on full-time courses is well managed. Lessons are well planned and teachers use an effective range of activities to motivate students and enhance learning. In a theory lesson, the teacher used questioning effectively to develop the subject and to check students' knowledge and understanding. This was supported by the use of creative and detailed learning materials. A strong feature of lessons is the encouragement teachers give students to use appropriate technical terminology accurately. Theory lessons make good links to the practical application and to students' experience. Teachers use group work effectively to involve all the students and develop confidence. Worksheets and handouts used in lessons are good and are used effectively to develop themes and learning.

59. The teaching in some practical lessons is weak. In less effective lessons, the lack of planning and organisation hindered learning, and health and safety issues were not noted and corrected by teachers. In two lessons, a show jumping course in an arena was shared between two jumping lessons. Other lessons took place in an outdoor school in poor weather when shared indoor school space was available.

60. Teaching and assessment of key skills are weak. Some students are not working towards an appropriate level of key skills and some are unaware of the level they should be working towards. Opportunities for evidence of key skills are identified in written assignments, but the tasks are insufficient to ensure appropriate evidence is produced. Assessment of key skills is not linked to practical teaching.

61. Teachers have good vocational qualifications and experience. Specialist equine centre resources are excellent with good classrooms and a purpose-built stud unit on the college farm. The equine yard is well managed with opportunities for students to take an active role in yard activities.

62. The assessment of theory is effective and well linked to course requirements. Good assignment guidelines are used and all course outcomes are covered systematically. Marking of students' work is accurate and internal verification procedures are used effectively. Some assignments are unimaginative and do not require students' investigations to make use of the excellent practical resources. Practical assessments on full-time courses are not well planned and some staff are unfamiliar with assessment procedures. Work-based assessment is not carried out on full-time courses. NVQ assessments are not carried out effectively and staff lack understanding of what is required as evidence. Evidence from work-based activities is rarely used to prove competence. Evidence from the workplace is lacking in NVQ portfolios.

63. The college organises effective taster courses for potential students. These are well attended

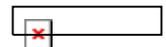
and a high proportion of potential students progress to courses at the college. Students are enthusiastic about their studies and have very good working relationships with teaching and yard staff. Curriculum tutors provide good tutorial support and guidance. Students have good relationships with tutors and value their guidance, much of which is informal. The recording of some tutorials is incomplete and few set challenging and measurable targets. Students are well informed of their progress in written assessments, through tutorials and reports. Work-based students do not receive good support and guidance.

Leadership and management

64. The leadership and management of equine courses are satisfactory. There have been significant changes in responsibility for equine management. A clear management structure is in place, but changes in management responsibility have led to a lack of continuity of leadership. Staff have clear roles and tutorial responsibilities. Course tutors maintain a course log in which key criteria including attendance and retention data are recorded. Staff are involved in the self-assessment process, but there is little emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning in practical lessons.

65. Work experience for full-time students is poorly managed and is not used effectively to support learning. Health and safety at work placements is not checked effectively before students are placed. Work-based learning programmes are poorly managed. There is little co-ordination between teachers, students and employers to ensure that effective training takes place and that students can achieve the NVQ. Some staff show a lack of awareness of equality of opportunity.

Horticulture



Overall provision in this area is **satisfactory (grade 3)**

Contributory grade in work-based learning is unsatisfactory (grade 4)

Strengths

- good pass rates on national diploma courses
- students well supported by employers
- effective tutorial support for full-time students
- wide range of additional qualifications of benefit to students.

Weaknesses

- low pass rates for most work-based and adult students

- low and declining retention rates on some programmes in 2001
- insufficient machinery and equipment
- poor management of work-based learning.

Scope of provision

66. The college offers a range of full-time courses, including the national certificate and national diploma in horticulture, with options in landscaping, greenkeeping and garden design. The first diploma in horticulture was discontinued in 2000/01 due to poor recruitment. Work-based learning at NVQ level 1 and modern apprenticeships are also offered in amenity horticulture, including options in sportsturf, greenkeeping and hard landscaping. Most students on these programmes are aged 16 to 18. Part-time provision for adults includes the RHS general and advanced certificates in horticulture and the City and Guilds gardening certificate. The college offers a good range of complementary qualifications on its full-time courses.

67. As a result of low recruitment onto full-time courses in 2001, groups from different courses are taught together. At the time of inspection there were 35 full-time students aged 16 to 18; 29 students over 19; and 46 students on work-based learning.

Achievement and standards

68. A wide range of standards of attainment is evident on horticulture courses. Pass rates vary widely across the curriculum area. Retention rates are generally low and declining. Pass rates for the national diploma are above the national average, but as for all full-time courses, retention rates are low. Retention rates for the adult programmes are consistently high, but pass rates have been low.

69. Adult students make appropriate gains in knowledge and understanding. Most adult students on part-time courses complete their course, but a significant proportion does not choose to take advantage of opportunities to have their achievements accredited. Work-based learners develop a good understanding of horticultural principles and become competent in a range of practical operations.

70. Course files and assessed work show evidence of effort, progress and knowledge. Students speak knowledgeably about their studies. Although many students take longer than average to complete their NVQ courses, the eventual pass rates at levels 1 and 2 are good.

71. Workplace evidence is not used effectively towards NVQ achievement. Assessment practice is good for full-time students with clearly defined criteria for written assignments. The standard of assessment for part-time students is generally satisfactory.

72. There is little accreditation of prior learning to inform the planning of training programmes for individual students. A good range of secondary vocational qualifications is offered. Where students take these qualifications, pass rates are good.

A sample of retention and pass rates in horticulture, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
NVQ amenity and commercial horticulture	1	No. of starts	20	10	13
		% retention	85	100	77
		% pass rate	93	100	70
City and Guilds gardening certificate	1	No. of starts	27	53	8
		% retention	96	98	100
		% pass rate	31	38	10
NVQ amenity horticulture (all options)	2	No. of starts	67	20	59
		% retention	90	40	66
		% pass rate	73	100	77
General examination in horticulture (RHS)	2	No. of starts	12	33	22
		% retention	100	97	45
		% pass rate	58	41	80
National diploma horticulture	3	No. of starts	23	12	12
		% retention	78	*	64
		% pass rate	72	*	100
NVQ amenity horticulture (all options)	3	No. of starts	15	35	30
		% retention	80	91	77
		% pass rate	83	38	43

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

***data not reliable**

Quality of education and training

73. In most lessons, teaching is well planned to meet the needs of students. Teachers use a good mix of activities to introduce new topics and to strengthen earlier learning. They use their commercial experience to good effect to provide practical illustrations and students respond well to this. In the weaker lessons, activities are not set in the context of what has been taught before, and the different tasks are poorly co-ordinated and related. Where groups of students from full-time and part-time programmes are combined for teaching, lesson planning takes little account of the range of ability in a class. Students are often expected to complete the same work and progress at the same rate, regardless of their experience and ability.

74. On part-time courses for adults, teaching is generally well organised and relevant to industry. In the better lessons, teachers invite discussion and handle it well. They use questions and answers effectively to involve students, elicit students' ideas and test their understanding of topics. Students are given plenty of opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. In the poorer lessons, the teaching is dull and undemanding, students spend long periods listening to the teacher and become bored.

75. Students are well supported by their employers who provide them with good training to develop a wide range of practical skills. Teaching on work-based learning programmes is generally sound, but practical lessons frequently fail to reflect commercial speed or practice sufficiently. When the students are in college, teachers do not always effectively link lessons to students' experience at work to develop their understanding of what is being taught. The development of key skills is not linked to the vocational training for the NVQ.

76. Most teachers are suitably qualified and have relevant vocational expertise. Recent staff shortages leading to increased workloads have had a detrimental effect on the overall quality of learning. Machinery and equipment resources are insufficient to support effective learning. Estate resources are underused for practical teaching. There is inadequate use of risk assessments for practical lessons.

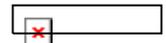
77. Information on courses is clear and easily available to all students. An effective diagnostic test is used for the initial assessment of key skills. However, the results are not used sufficiently to inform the planning of training opportunities for students. Full-time students receive effective tutorial support. Students on work-based learning programmes have a poor awareness of individual learning plans and the significance they play in meeting their training needs. There is poor action planning with part-time students. Actions are not followed up effectively to ensure that students progress. Vocational skills audits are not used to determine students' needs.

Leadership and management

78. Effective management of the curriculum has been difficult with several changes in the last year. New full-time and part-time staff do not always receive sufficient support early enough to plan and develop their teaching. Curriculum management lacks some attention to detail. Regular team meetings take place, but they do not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Health and safety management and awareness amongst staff are poor. Staff do not clearly understand the principles of hazard management.

79. Management of work-based learning is poor. Internal verification does not identify weaknesses and improve the quality of assessments in work-based learning. Key skills training is poorly developed on most courses and students do not understand how to develop evidence for assessment. The co-ordination of on-the-job and off-the-job training is unsatisfactory. Teachers and students have a poor understanding of equality of opportunity.

Sport and leisure



Overall provision in this area is **good (grade 2)**

Strengths

- high pass rates for the national diploma in leisure studies
- good teaching and learning in practical lessons
- excellent specialist accommodation and equipment
- effective links with employers

- well-managed courses
- effective support for students.

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates for NVQ activity leadership
- ineffective development of key skills
- inadequate planning for some theory lessons.

Scope of provision

80. Courses are offered for full-time students aged 16 to 18 at levels 1 to 3. No courses are available for students on a part-time basis. Although a foundation course in leisure and tourism is offered, no students have been enrolled on this course. First diplomas in sports studies and in leisure studies are available at level 2. National diplomas are provided at level 3 in applied science (sports studies) with options in rugby studies, golf studies and sports science and in leisure studies with options in outdoor recreation. Students on the leisure studies national diploma also work towards NVQ level 2 in activity leadership. Key skills are an integral part of all courses. Students also have access to a range of additional level 1 qualifications, such as coaching awards in sailing, basic expedition leadership, health and safety, first aid and self-defence. Recruitment onto full-time sport and leisure courses increased by 50% between 2000 and 2001, from 111 to 166.

Achievement and standards

81. Pass rates on national diploma courses are good. All students who have completed the national diploma in leisure studies since 1999 passed the course. Most students develop the skills of working in teams. Students' practical skills are well developed and there is good attention to technical detail and health and safety. The best assignments show thorough research and the ability to evaluate different viewpoints. Assessment for the NVQ in activity leadership takes place during a period of extended work experience. However, in 2001, no student had achieved the qualification by the end of the course. Some students are close to completing their assessment and teachers have continued to support them. Retention rates have varied over three years. However, most are close to or above the national average.

82. Students' written work and course files are of a high standard. Assignment work is well researched. Teachers provide valuable feedback that reinforces the strengths in students' work and identifies what they need to do to improve grades. Students' career prospects are improved by the achievement of additional qualifications to their main programme.

A sample of retention and pass rates in sport and leisure, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
First diploma leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	12	18	21
		% retention	83	50	71
		% pass rate	90	100	67
Basic expedition leader award	2	No. of starts	35	26	30
		% retention	100	92	90
		% pass rate	97	58	n/a
NVQ activity leadership	2	No. of starts	*	4	42
		% retention	*	100	80
		% pass rate	*	25	0
National diploma leisure studies	3	No. of starts	45	33	37
		% retention	78	76	82
		% pass rate	100	100	100
National diploma science (sports studies)	3	No. of starts	*	6	9
		% retention	*	84	67
		% pass rate	*	80	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001)

* course not offered

Quality of education and training

83. The quality of teaching in practical lessons on all courses is consistently good. Teachers develop and explain topics carefully. Relevant theory is linked to the practical teaching and students apply this well. There is a productive rapport between teachers and students, who respect and value the expertise of the staff. Practical activities are followed by effective evaluation when students reflect on personal and group performance. One effective lesson involved students measuring cardio-vascular activity to produce data for an assessment. Teachers expect and maintain high standards and concentrate on getting the best from their students.

84. Teaching is effective in the majority of theory lessons. Activities undertaken are carefully linked to students' work experience and outdoor activities. The less effective lessons are poorly planned. In some instances, this leads to poor time management, but frequently, teachers do not plan how they will address the needs of individual students to ensure effective learning takes place when teaching large groups. In some lessons, the amount of note taking from projected slides is excessive and students are unable to absorb the teachers' comments or contribute their ideas. The development and assessment of students' key skills are not effective. There is no practice of key skills in vocational lessons and students are unclear about how they are assessed.

85. Courses in sport, outdoor recreation and leisure are supported by excellent facilities and equipment. A spacious and well-equipped sports hall is marked out for a range of activities. Cardio-vascular and weight rooms are extensively equipped. There are outside pitches for rugby, football, cricket; a nine-hole pitch and putt course; a golf driving range; and a floodlit all-weather pitch for hockey, netball and soccer. In the summer, students have the use of an outdoor heated swimming pool. The college has extensive use of a well-equipped local authority water park for canoeing and sailing. Teachers are well supported by technician staff who also co-ordinate a range of activities and sporting fixtures.

86. Staff maintain strong and effective links with employers and the local community. The college works closely with two commercial outdoor pursuit and leisure organisations who provide well-planned work placements in Great Britain and in France. The teaching of sports science is given relevance through links with a leading professional rugby union club. A vocational panel of employers meets termly and provides guidance on course content.

87. During induction, team-building activities help students to settle in quickly. Additional learning support needs are identified at an early stage and a positive approach is taken to discuss individual students' needs. The emphasis is placed on how support will help students improve their grades. All students felt they were well supported and valued. There are regular individual tutorials when progress is monitored. Students receive termly written reports on their progress. Three students with particular disabilities are supported through individual programmes that provide them with additional time to complete assessments. They participate extensively in practical activities and have gained in confidence and self-esteem while studying at the college.

Leadership and management

88. Courses are managed effectively and efficiently. There is a good team spirit amongst all staff. Course teams work well together to plan, develop and teach courses which meet the needs of students. Communication is good and there are regular meetings. Minutes are recorded and action points are consistently followed through. Well-maintained course logs ensure useful information on students is readily available. Course handbooks are comprehensive, clearly written and provide students with detailed information about their courses. Assessment of vocational subjects is well managed. Internal validation through the college learning and assessment group ensures students clearly understand what is required from them to achieve particular grades. Course reviews identify areas for improvement, but they place insufficient emphasis on the use of data to monitor attendance, retention and achievement.

Part D: College data

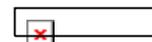
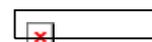


Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age



Level	16-18 %	19+ %
1	46	33
2	30	27
3	24	36
4/5	0	4
Other	0	0
Total	100	100

Source: Provided by the college in 2001

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments %
Agriculture and countryside	205	50	17
Animal care	266	80	23
Equine studies	299	126	29
Horticulture	114	100	14
Sport and leisure	192	51	16
Total	1,076	407	100

Source: Provided by the college in 2001

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	2000/ 01
		1	Starters excluding transfers	280	579	718	259
	Retention rate (%)	83	89	89	88	96	83
	National average (%)	88	88	*	83	84	*
	Pass rate (%)	75	79	87	43	80	74
	National average (%)	66	69	*	69	65	*
2	Starters excluding transfers	381	255	477	129	300	277
	Retention rate (%)	84	84	87	86	94	80
	National average (%)	85	84	*	79	82	*
	Pass rate (%)	70	79	89	67	71	76
	National average (%)	79	77	*	78	75	*
3	Starters excluding transfers	281	290	379	109	164	373
	Retention rate (%)	82	87	85	73	90	84
	National average (%)	81	83	*	81	83	*
	Pass rate (%)	90	84	95	64	88	88
	National average (%)	86	81	*	73	67	*
4/5	Starters excluding transfers	30	18	0	69	25	44

Retention rate (%)	93	100	**	94	72	82
National average (%)	*	*	*	81	81	*
Pass rate (%)	**	100	**	73	100	67
National average (%)	*	*	*	77	80	*

Note: Summary of retention and achievement for the last three years by age and level of course, compared against national averages for colleges of the same type (that is General FE and tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges).

* data not available

** numbers too low to provide a valid calculation

Sources of information:

1. National averages: Benchmarking Data (1998/99) to (1999/2000): Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, The Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.

2. College rates for 1998/99 - 1999/2000: Benchmarking Data (1998/99) to (1999/2000): Retention and Achievement Rates, produced by the Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.

3. College rates for (2000) to (2001): provided by the college in spring 2001.

Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	60	30	10	40
Level 2 (intermediate)	65	23	12	26
Level 1 (foundation)	80	20	0	5
Other sessions	27	73	0	15
Totals	57	35	8	86

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