



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards  
in Education

## Hugh Baird College

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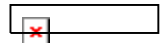
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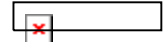
**Basic information about the college**



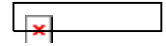
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Name of college:	Hugh Baird College
Type of college:	Tertiary
Principal:	Barry Howarth
Address of college:	Balliol Road Bootle Liverpool L20 7EW
Telephone number:	0151 353 4400
Fax number:	0151 353 4469
Chair of governors:	Colin Appleton
Unique reference number:	130490
Name of reporting inspector:	Robin Goddard HMI
Date of inspection:	10-14 March 2003

## Part A: Summary

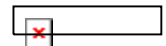


### Information about the college



In practice, the college's broad range of courses make it more like a general further education (FE) college. It offers courses in all of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) 14 areas of learning. It has work-based learners in seven of these areas, with substantial work-based provision in engineering and in hairdressing and beauty therapy. The college operates in a competitive environment. Within a 20-mile radius there are five general FE or tertiary colleges, three sixth form colleges and over 30 schools with sixth form provision. In 2001, the college recruited students from 34 schools in the Sefton and North Liverpool areas. Most of the college's work is located in a number of adjacent buildings close to Bootle town centre. In September 2002, it opened a new sixth form academy building. Courses are also offered in an increasing number of outreach centres. In 2000/01, there were 8,538 enrolments on courses by students aged 16 to 18 and 8,080 enrolments by adults. Of the 2,661 full-time students, around 70% were aged 16 to 19. Of the 4,803 part-time students, around 90% were adults. The number of students has been growing consistently since 1993. In the three years between 1999/2000 and 2001/02, it grew by over 5% each year.

### How effective is the college?



The college provides good teaching and opportunities for learning for most of its students. Provision was judged by inspectors to be good in floristry, engineering, business, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), English and modern foreign languages, provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and literacy; numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). It was satisfactory in the remaining areas of science and mathematics, hospitality, food manufacture, sport, leisure and travel, health social and childcare, visual arts and media, and social science and access to higher education (HE). The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below:

#### **Key strengths**

- a good range of courses with clear progression routes
  
- very good teaching and learning on foundation-level courses
  
- high pass rates on many courses

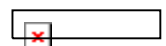
- good general support for students
- a successful strategy for inclusive learning
- much new specialist accommodation and many new resources
- effective use of self-assessment and target setting to drive improvements.

***What should be improved***

- sharing of good practice in teaching and learning
- use of ICT in teaching
- retention rates for adult students
- planning, teaching and assessment of key skills
- use of value added data to set targets for students and monitor their progress.

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**



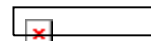
*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how*

range: Outstanding (grade 1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Unsatisfactory (4), Very Poor (5).

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with well-planned lessons and good use of questions to develop theory. Retention and pass rates are satisfactory overall, but there are poor retention rates on General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses and General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) science. There is insufficient use of Information Learning Technology (ILT) to enhance learning in science.
Floristry	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good on full-time courses. Teaching is good and students produce a high standard of work in class and in their portfolios. Good specialist resources are dedicated to floristry and the college only uses high quality flowers for all its practical work. The staff are very supportive of learners and are all well qualified, with good up-to-date experience.
Engineering	<b>Good.</b> There are good pass rates on most courses. Teaching and learning in practical sessions are good. There are good resources in the college and in the workplace. Effective management has led to continual improvement in classroom and workshop teaching and in the quality of work-based training. Some poor internal verification practices do not properly assure the quality of assessment decisions.
Business	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates on most full-time courses are good. Students learn with commitment and enthusiasm. Good resources and effective levels of support aid learning. The curriculum is well managed and there are effective arrangements for planning and quality improvements. Links with employers are under-developed.
Information and communications technology	<b>Good.</b> The college offers a wide range of courses and good progression routes for full-time and part-time students. Pass rates are high on most courses. Information and learning technology (ILT) is used well to support teaching and learning. An enthusiastic teaching team is well led by school and course managers. Teachers readily share good practice and have regular industrial placements to maintain the currency of their skills.
Hospitality, food manufacture, sport, leisure and travel	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are good on most courses. but there are declining retention rates on many courses. Careful attention is given to students' individual learning needs. At advanced level, teaching is insufficiently challenging. Too little use is made of information and learning technology.
Health, social care and child care	<b>Satisfactory.</b> There are good retention rates on most courses. Pass rates are good at intermediate level and high percentages of students achieve high grades on many courses. There is much good teaching at foundation level but, overall, there is a significant minority of poor teaching. Theory and practice are linked well, but students are insufficiently challenged in many classes. Pastoral support is very effective.
Visual arts and media	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates on most art courses are good. There are significant weaknesses in teaching and learning on media courses. Progression between vocational courses at different levels is very good. Good ICT facilities are well used but the opportunities for art students to undertake three-dimensional art work are very limited.
Social science and access to HE	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Much teaching is well suited to the needs of the learners and they participate well in lessons. Good use is made of ILT. Learning environments and resources are good. Retention and pass rates in social sciences have been poor but are improving.

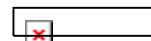
English and modern foreign languages	<b>Good.</b> There is much good teaching, particularly in modern foreign languages. Pass rates are good on many courses, retention rates are satisfactory, and there are good progression routes. Courses at entry level and level 1 are recruiting well and fulfilling local needs. Most students are taught in very attractive, purpose-built accommodation. Poor attendance has an adverse impact on learning and attainment in some courses.
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Good.</b> Most students make good progress and demonstrate significant improvements in confidence. They receive good specialist support where necessary. A good range of community partnerships and locations is used to widen participation. There is insufficient identification and monitoring of individual learning objectives
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	<b>Good.</b> Most teaching is good and some is excellent. Student achievement is very good. The college is systematically implementing a far-reaching strategy for basic skills, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy in vocational programmes. The use and monitoring of individual learning plans is inconsistent and insufficient use is made of ILT.

#### How well is the college led and managed?



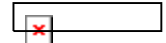
Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors promote a shared sense of purpose and mission. A culture of continuous improvement is supported through open, consultative management and effective target setting. Strategic planning is good and quality assurance procedures are comprehensive. Thorough and frank self-assessment leads to action which achieves improvement. Management information systems are very good. Arrangements for appraisal and staff development are effective but there is insufficient sharing of good practice. The college is very successful in the promotion of equal opportunities and widening participation. Governors are highly committed and focus effectively on learners' achievements. Recent substantial improvements to the accommodation have enhanced the provision. Financial management is sound. The college provides good value for money.

#### To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?



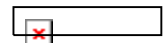
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. It has attached great strategic importance to approaches which widen participation for under-represented groups. These include the provision of innovative and flexible programmes for adults attending outreach centres and high-quality support and teaching for people with mental health problems. The college makes good provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the majority of whom are effectively supported on mainstream courses. Student services also provide very good support for students with additional learning needs. There is good access to all the college buildings for people with limited mobility. Equality of opportunity is well promoted and effectively monitored and students are involved in a competition to raise the profile of this issue. The college is making a very significant contribution to the local targets for improving basic skills through its own 'skills for life' strategy. This is helping to raise the aspirations of adults in the area with low levels of educational achievement, and extend the opportunities available to them.

## How well are students and trainees guided and supported?



The college provides very good support for students. Good impartial advice and guidance are given to prospective students and initial assessment is comprehensive. All full-time students, and most part-time students, attend an induction led by their personal tutor. Very good pastoral support is provided through effective individual tutorials. However, in some less effective group tutorials, the college's tutorial guidelines are inconsistently applied. Attendance is closely monitored. Arrangements for providing additional learning support are well planned and very effective. Students aged 16 to 18 who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated well into mainstream classes. Students have good access to a confidential counselling service. Adult students receive very good support in outreach centres. The college crèche is well used and highly valued by students. College staff work closely with Connexions personal advisers to provide advice on further study and employment opportunities.

## 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***

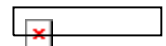
- approachable and motivating teachers
  
- good support, advice and guidance
  
- being treated as adults
  
- the new sixth form building
  
- good behaviour of students in class.

### ***What they feel could be improved***

- the arrangements for key skills

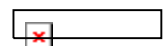
- the range and cost of food in the refectories
- the availability of lockers
- the reliability of the lift in the Balliol Centre.

### Other information



The college inspection report will normally be published 12 working weeks after the formal feedback of the inspection findings to the college. Once published, the college has two months in which to prepare its post-inspection action plan and submit it to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The college's action plan must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors should agree it before it is submitted to the local LSC. The local LSC is responsible for ensuring that, where inspectors have judged there to be unsatisfactory or poor provision in a curriculum area or in leadership and management, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) receives the college's post-inspection action plan within the stipulated two months.

### Part B: The college as a whole



### Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors

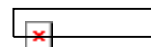
Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	61	29	10
19+ and WBL*	71	21	5
Learning 16-18	59	31	10
19+ and WBL*	69	28	6

*Key: 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 has an even spread of students of different ages and levels of study. A high proportion of them come from areas with a high level of deprivation. Over the past three years, pass rates have been consistently high on most courses at all levels of study. However, over this period, too many students have failed to complete their course. Retention rates have been below average and well below for one year in 2000/01. The college has adopted a wide-ranging retention rate improvement plan to address weak areas of retention. This has had some success. For students aged 16 to 18, the retention rates are now similar to the average for comparable colleges, but they remain below this average for adults.

2. In many areas of the college, students achieve well. In engineering, business and ICT, there are good pass rates on most courses. The standard of students' work in floristry is high. Retention and pass rates are good on most courses in care. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well both on mainstream college courses and on discrete courses for adults. Retention and pass rates are very good on courses in basic skills. However, in some curriculum areas, too few students succeed. There are poor retention rates for GCSE courses in mathematics and science, and in a number of courses in food manufacture and in leisure and tourism, they have declined and remain below average. Pass rates are poor on some social science courses, and on GCE AS courses in art and media.

### **16 to 18 year olds**

3. Retention rates have been below national averages for similar colleges over the three-year period from 1999/2000 to 2000/01 at levels 1 and 2 and around average at level 3. However, college data for 2001/02 indicate a substantial improvement at all levels. They are now around the average at levels 1 and 2 and above average at level 3. They remain low for students aged 16 to 18 on GCSE courses.

4. Overall, pass rates for students aged 16 to 18 are good and have been maintained consistently at a high level. At level 1 they have been at least 19% above the average for similar colleges throughout the past three years. At level 3 it is similar to the rate for all general FE colleges, and above that for those colleges with a high proportion of students from disadvantaged areas. As a result of the good pass rates and improved retention rates, more students aged 16 to 18 starting courses now achieve their intended qualification than do students in other similar colleges.

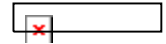
5. Work-based learning programmes are offered in hospitality, sport leisure and travel, hair and beauty, engineering, business, ICT, floristry and construction. Of the 88 modern apprentices, 59 are on advanced modern apprenticeships and 29 are on foundation modern apprenticeships. In the largest area of work-based learning, engineering, the retention rate for the group of learners who began their course in 2000 was 67%. The proportion of learners who have met all the requirements of their modern apprenticeship framework in engineering is satisfactory at around 50%. Of the seven learners who completed their NVQ qualification during 2000 and 2001, six also achieved the key skills qualification.

### **Adult learners**

6. Large numbers of adult students take courses at the main college site and at outreach centres in the community. Most enrol for part-time courses at levels 1 and 2. At these levels, too many adult students fail to complete their course. Retention rates have been consistently below average and in 2000/01 were well below. According to college figures this had improved in 2002, but the rates were still only 77% at level 1 and 74% at level 2. Pass rates for adults at levels 1 and 2 have been good and steadily improving. In 2001, they were 15% above national averages. They were also high at level 3. Retention and pass rates on the access to HE courses have been generally satisfactory.

Most students who study for a qualification in literacy, numeracy or ESOL complete their courses successfully.

## Quality of education and training



7. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 210 lessons. In 65.2% of these, teaching was good or better and it was less than satisfactory in 7.6%. A high proportion of the better teaching was found on foundation level courses, where 77% of lessons were good or better. Only 59.6% of teaching at advanced level was good or better. The weaker lessons were in advanced vocational courses where students were often not provided with sufficient challenge. Almost all teaching on General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced-level (GCE AS and A-level) courses was at least satisfactory and some was excellent. Teaching for adults was notably better than that for 16 to 18 year olds, with 73% of lessons good or better compared with 61%. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching was in lessons for students aged 16 to 18. A high proportion of teaching is good in engineering, floristry, business, modern foreign languages, and in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. In care, and in hospitality and leisure, too much teaching was either uninspiring or unsatisfactory.

8. Lessons are planned thoroughly using a standard approach adopted across the college. The preferred learning styles of students are identified and incorporated by most teachers in their planning. Some aspects of lesson plans, however, are not implemented adequately in practice. These include the development of key skills and the use of information technology (IT). In many classes, teachers state an intention to develop key skills but do not specify the skills to be developed or evaluate whether they have been successful. IT is used well as an integral part of learning in ICT courses and for practical work in engineering. In most other areas, however, students do not make sufficient use of computers either in classroom activities or as part of independent study.

9. Most students are well motivated and keen to learn. Attendance is similar to national averages at 78%. In the best lessons, questions are used well by teachers to involve all students and to develop and check their understanding. Teachers use a wide variety of teaching methods and make good links between theory and practice. Students learn well through imaginative and enjoyable practical activities. Assignments in the best lessons are designed to allow students to work at their own pace and level. In basic skills and courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learning activities are focused very sharply on meeting individual needs. The poorer lessons fail to engage and stimulate all students and, in some cases, the whole group. Questions are answered by the most able students and others are not sufficiently involved. In a number of lessons, such as some in care, leisure and tourism, and science, the more able students are not sufficiently challenged and become disinterested. On some advanced-level courses, the skills of critical analysis and independent study are not sufficiently developed.

10. The college has a comprehensive accommodation strategy. The Pembroke Centre, a purpose-built technology centre comprising both classrooms and workshops, was completed in 1997. A new building accommodating the sixth form academy was opened in 2002. The college is part way through a substantial refurbishment and development programme for another of its main buildings. Most teaching accommodation is of good standard with well-furnished and equipped classrooms, most of which have networked computers, data projectors and electronic whiteboards. There is good access for learners with physical disabilities across all the main sites. Most of the outreach centres also offer good access, though some have limited teaching technology available.

11. Both students and staff have good access to computers. There is a rolling programme for their replacement and the majority are less than four years old. Computing software is of industry standard. There is a college intranet site for students and staff. The availability of materials and resources on the learners' intranet site differs substantially between the curriculum areas. Some areas hold a wide variety of learning and assessment materials whilst others are limited to schemes

of work. A virtual learning environment is in the early stages of development. The college network is well supported by a team of seven technicians, one of whom is on duty until evening classes have finished. The learning resources centres provide good drop-in access to computers and to a broad range of other learning materials for most subjects.

12. Most staff are well qualified. All full-time and most part-time staff have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications. All full-time staff have a period of industrial updating at least every three years. There is a good system for staff appraisal and development. Staff development activities have a strong focus on improving teaching and learning but the impact of some of these activities has been limited, for example, in the use of ILT. In some teaching areas, there has been high staff turnover.

13. A college policy for the assessment of students' work sets clear standards and outlines good practice. It is implemented well in most curriculum areas, with regular, thorough assessment and timely return of work. Most teachers provide constructive feedback on how work may be improved and in some areas this is very detailed. However, in a minority of areas, feedback is minimal and unhelpful. Good use is made by many teachers of an initial assessment of students' preferred learning styles. The progress of full-time students is carefully monitored through individual reviews within the tutorial programme. It is also thoroughly reviewed at regular intervals during the year as part of a college-wide approach. The college has recently introduced systems to set targets for the achievement of individual students, but they are not yet fully embedded in the work of teachers and personal tutors and it is too early to judge their impact. Good use is made of opportunities to assess work-based learners in the workplace, although in engineering, this assessment is not sufficiently quality assured through internal verification. In general, however, internal verification is used well to ensure that assessment decisions are consistent.

14. The college offers a broad range of courses, reflecting its strong commitment to widening participation. There are very good progression routes for school leavers in most curriculum areas from foundation to advanced level. Through its well-established school liaison programme and the Excellence Challenge initiative, the college works closely with 22 schools across Sefton and North Liverpool. There is also extensive provision for adults. This includes learning opportunities in the local area, delivered in partnership with community groups through 54 outreach centres. The college employs outreach workers to develop these partnerships and to assist in recruiting 'hard to reach' students. Opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy have been substantially expanded. The college is an associate college of the University of Central Lancashire and offers Higher National Diplomas (HND) in six subjects. It is also developing a range of foundation degree programmes with other local HE providers. Equality of access to the curriculum is very good. Students with a wide variety of support needs are encouraged to make use of the most appropriate learning opportunities. Both teachers and specialist support staff work hard to ensure they succeed. Some areas make good use of feedback from employers to shape the curriculum. In other areas, these relationships are not well developed.

15. The college has not developed an effective approach to key skills. Separate sessions to develop these skills are provided as part of the college's response to Curriculum 2000. Although key skills are a compulsory element of most full-time courses, most students were unaware of their purpose or significance and they do not value key skills sessions, some of which are unsatisfactory. In 2001/02 pass rates in external assessments of key skills were low at 30% and attendance was poor. The college has recognised many of these issues and has recently reviewed its key skills policy and procedures. Enrichment activities are limited. The cross-college enrichment programme had only 27 students participating in 2001/02, although this had risen to 165 students by spring in the current year.

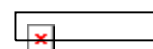
16. Prospective students are provided with good advice and guidance about the college. A college careers guidance team works closely with Connexions personal advisors to give students advice on careers and further study. The financial advice team assists students in obtaining support for travel, equipment and childcare. The college employs a qualified counsellor. The crèche is well used and highly valued by students.

17. An inclusive learning co-ordinator is responsible for the management of learner support and the

implementation of the well-developed inclusive learning strategy. Comprehensive initial assessment leads to the thorough identification of literacy and numeracy support needs and other additional learning needs. The support required is provided through a very good additional learning support system. All students aged 16 to 18 with support needs are integrated into mainstream classes. Some 488 students were receiving additional support at the time of the inspection. The college monitors their progress and the impact of their support very closely. In 2001/02, 91% of supported students achieved their main learning goal and 92% were retained on their course. Academic support workers provide individual support for students in their classes. Personal support is also provided by a team of care assistants. A useful learner support handbook is provided for all teaching staff and there has been an extensive programme of staff development related to inclusive learning. Readability surveys are carried out on course materials and appropriate modifications are made.

18. The tutorial system is well structured. All full-time and most part-time students are allocated a personal tutor. Group tutorials take place on a weekly basis and are supported by a college tutorial handbook, tutorial scheme and careers handbook which set clear guidelines about their content and approach. A weekly tutorial newsletter also acts as a prompt for tutors. However, college guidelines for the group tutorials are applied inconsistently and some are unsatisfactory. Individual tutorials also take place regularly and these are more successful. A team of five senior tutors supports and monitors the work of all personal tutors. Students receive an individual 'right choice' tutorial three weeks after induction. Students who are at risk of leaving early are identified effectively and a college register of such students is drawn up. Last year, over 1,000 individual responses were made to students on the register, around half of them relating to issues of poor attendance. Case conferences are organised and, if appropriate, parents and employers are invited to attend.

## Leadership and management



19. Leadership and management are good. The college benefits from clear and effective leadership from the principal, senior managers and governors. It has responded well to issues raised in the last inspection. Governors and senior managers work well together, demonstrate high levels of commitment to the success of the college and promote a shared vision. Widening participation is given a high priority in setting the college's direction. The strategic plan is comprehensive and is reflected in each department's own detailed development plan.

20. Demanding targets are set by the corporation at course, department and college level. Linked to these targets are comprehensive action plans which are developed by managers in consultation with staff. Performance against targets is rigorously reviewed at monthly quality team reviews, twice yearly management reviews, the annual principal's review and the teaching and learning standards committee. Decisive action has resulted in improvements in many areas. For example, overall retention rates improved in 2001/02 to around the national average for similar colleges for students aged 16 to 18, although they remained below average for adults. Whilst retention rates on some courses have been below national averages, the annual trend on most of these is towards improvement. Pass rates on most courses are consistently good. As a result of this overall position, a high proportion of students starting courses at the college, and particularly students aged 16 to 18, succeed in gaining their qualifications.

21. Quality assurance systems are comprehensive and well established. The college sets itself high standards and has a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Inspectors judged that overall provision in seven of the 12 curriculum areas was good, and in five it was satisfactory. The quality assurance procedures are thorough and effective in identifying areas for action. The rigorous process of self-assessment involves staff at all levels and leads to identified priorities. Evidence is drawn from a range of sources, including reports from external consultants, the outcomes of which are used to validate college judgements. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, rigorous self-assessment resulted in the department being recognised as a centre of excellence by the Hairdressing and Beauty Industry Authority National Training Organisation.

22. All staff are members of quality review teams and attend monthly meetings to review and assess their own performance in relation to the quality framework. Following an annual review, the managers of courses which are performing over or under target are asked to make a presentation to the academic board to explain their performance. The main factors leading to these situations are analysed. Good practice in improving retention and achievement is shared well between staff. The college is effective in regularly collecting the views of students, through surveys and focus groups. Opinions are also regularly sought from parents, employers and community groups and the results inform self-assessment. However, in some cases, students are unaware of the actions which have resulted from their feedback. Arrangements for quality assurance in work-based learning are satisfactory although there is less rigorous application of some internal verification procedures.

23. Curriculum management is effective in most areas. It is good in engineering, business, ICT, basic skills and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the less effective areas, there was inconsistent implementation of college policies and some unsatisfactory tracking of learners' progress. Clear lines of responsibility and accountability support good communications and maintain the focus on learners and the standards that they achieve. Communication with staff in the outreach provision is also good. Regular meetings, team briefings, intranet access, and many cross-college committees provide opportunities for effective consultation by managers. All schools produce student progression maps, which are incorporated into development plans, but variable use is made of this information.

24. The teaching and learning standards committee regularly and rigorously scrutinises college reports and retention and achievement data. A team of 40 trained observers work across the college and each teacher has three unannounced teaching and learning observations annually. A teaching and learning development project provides monitoring and individual support for all newly-qualified teaching staff and for all those staff who receive a satisfactory or poor observation grade. A comprehensive and high quality best practice guide for teaching and learning is provided. However, the profile of internal observation grades was over-generous when compared to the grades of inspectors. Good practice identified through lesson observations is not sufficiently shared with other teachers

25. The quality and accuracy of the management information systems is very good. A good range of timely reports is available to enable teachers and managers to monitor the performance of courses. These data are also used to reveal trends in participation by various groups. Attendance is effectively monitored. The college intranet provides a useful range of information and resources for use by students and staff.

26. Staff development and appraisal are good. New staff benefit from structured, comprehensive induction and mentoring that effectively introduce them to the college and its systems and values. Targets are set for all staff at appraisal and each person has an individual action plan derived from the appraisal process. Appraisers monitor progress against these targets and job descriptions. All staff have access to a rolling programme of appropriate training. In many curriculum areas, the sharing of good practice is under-developed.

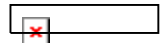
27. Equal opportunities are actively promoted to all members of the college community. There are clear and comprehensive policies, with rigorous monitoring and analysis of data. Individual reports on ethnicity, gender, age and postcodes are presented to the academic board. The college has made an effective response to the Race Relations Amendment Act of 2000. All buildings owned by the college are fully accessible to people with mobility difficulties. Innovative activities, including an annual competition, are in place to promote awareness of equal opportunities. Rigorous analysis of lesson observations by the college found that of the sessions observed, 35% recorded positive and direct activities associated with equal opportunities. However, there is limited monitoring of equal opportunities in the workplace. Effective procedures are established to address complaints and a report is published analysing the nature of all complaints and the actions taken to address them.

28. The corporation performs its strategic role well. Governors have made a very good contribution to the development of the college and all demonstrate high levels of commitment. They are clear about their strategic role and have used their expertise effectively to support the college in areas such as finance and estates management. There is a waiting list to become a governor. Governors

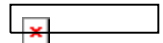
rigorously monitor the performance of the college and their work in supporting quality improvement has been effective. They participate in regular training and review their own performance at corporate level.

29. There is very good financial management and active pursuit of value for money. Managers have made significant efforts to monitor and promote procedures to secure effectiveness and efficiency. Efficiencies have been achieved but there remain some small learner groups, where that provision is perceived to further the mission of the college. The financial position is strong and the college provides good value for money.

### Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



#### Science and mathematics



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

#### **Strengths**

- good teaching on GCE AS and A-level mathematics courses
- good pass rates on AVCE single-award science
- much good lesson planning
- good use of questions to develop students' understanding of theory
- effective workshop support in mathematics.

#### **Weaknesses**

- poor retention rates on GCE AS science and GCSE courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice in teaching and learning

- limited use of ICT to support learning in science
  
- poor attendance on level 2 courses.

**Scope of provision**

30. There is a wide range of science and mathematics courses. Students can choose from GCE AS courses in physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics and further mathematics. GCE A-level chemistry, biology and mathematics are offered. AVCE science is offered as a single-award course over one year, with the possibility of progression to the double award in the second year. GNVQ intermediate science is also offered. There are 42 students studying vocational science courses. Some 224 students of all age groups study GCSE mathematics and there is community and evening provision in this subject. Some students progress to GCSE from City and Guilds numeracy level 1. Access courses and courses for intending teachers are provided in science and mathematics.

**Achievement and standards**

31. Retention rates in mathematics and science have fluctuated over the past three years. In 2002, they were poor on GCE AS science courses. On GCSE courses they have been declining and are now poor. However, they reached 92% in GCE A-level biology and 90% in GCE AS mathematics. Pass rates are generally satisfactory, good in a number of subjects and very good in AVCE science. Many GCE A-level students progress to HE courses.

32. Students show good understanding of important concepts. For example, students on the AVCE course were able to explain clearly how indicator species and oxygen levels could determine the level of pollution in a stream. They then applied their knowledge to plan the research they would carry out on a forthcoming field trip. In mathematics and biology classes, students worked enthusiastically to improve their knowledge. Coursework is satisfactory. The standard of work by students on the access to HE and the course for aspiring teachers is good, both in lessons and assignments.

33. In some lessons, students did not arrive punctually, which hampered progress. Overall attendance was satisfactory. However, attendance on level 2 courses was poor, at 64%, especially in the evening, and in key skills it was very poor, at 30%. In many courses at foundation and intermediate levels, there had been a large number of students who had left by the time of the inspection.

**A sample of retention and pass rates in science and mathematics, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE human biology	2	No. of starts	44	50	70
		% retention	61	56	47
		% pass rate	70	64	84
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	260	214	212
		% retention	65	55	58
		% pass rate	33	32	48
AVCE science (single	3	No. of starts	*	19	18

award)		% retention	*	95	94
		% pass rate	*	61	88
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts	17	24	**
		% retention	82	46	92
		% pass rate	91	82	91
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	**	20	**
		% retention	70	42	78
		% pass rate	50	75	86
GCE AS mathematics	3	No. of starts	*	38	41
		% retention	*	66	90
		% pass rate	*	70	59
GCE AS physics	3	No. of starts	*	**	25
		% retention	*	82	76
		% pass rate	*	78	47

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

\* *did not run*

\*\* *less than 15 starters*

### **Quality of education and training**

34. Teaching is good or better in most lessons. Schemes of work are detailed and used to plan courses to a high standard. Lessons are well planned. Teachers use questions well to develop students' understanding of theory. In all GCE A-level and AS mathematics lessons, the teaching observed was good. In one lively mathematics session, students manipulated Cartesian and trigonometric equations and applied the data to plot circular and elliptical figures. Students then used graph-plotting software to explore the effects on the curves of changes to the functions. Examples were then displayed on the interactive whiteboard and conclusions drawn out by discussion. Teaching was also consistently good in biology, but in some science classes, there was little variety in the teaching approach, relying too much on the teacher talking. In many mathematics and science classes, opportunities were missed to use specialist equipment to illuminate the concepts. In the best lessons, the teacher led students through the argument by skilful and challenging questions. In some poorer classes, students who had completed their task were left to wait for others to catch up.

35. In mathematics, students show a good understanding of basic concepts and are able to apply them. Adults, on a course for aspiring teachers, worked enthusiastically and co-operatively to determine the maximum volume of a box made from a standard-sized piece of card. Having constructed the boxes and calculated their volumes, they demonstrated competent graph plotting and algebraic skills in order to reach their conclusion. They compared their results with the sizes of purchased cereal boxes and discussed costs of box manufacture. Practical skills are well developed in science. In one GNVQ intermediate science class on forensic science, students successfully took fingerprints and then successfully set up microscopes to recognise patterns.

36. Science laboratories and resources are adequate and the support provided by technicians is effective. Insufficient use is made of ILT to enhance learning in science. All laboratories are equipped with networked computers, but no use was seen of these in the classes observed. The science intranet site is underdeveloped and rarely used by students. Attention to health and safety procedures is not consistent. In biology practical work, health and safety procedures were carefully followed, but not all students used protective clothing when doing practical work in chemistry.



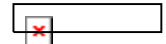
37. An effective workshop provides students with extra support in mathematics. About 150 students a week attend the workshop, either referred by their teacher or voluntarily. It is well staffed and well stocked with learning materials and computers and much appreciated by the students who use it.

38. The quality of assessment practice varies considerably. In GCSE and GCE A-level mathematics and biology classes, teachers apply homework policies consistently, mark work promptly and provide correct solutions with constructive comments. On some other courses, insufficient additional work is set to reinforce the concepts taught. Many students on GCSE courses do not carry out the homework set.

### ***Leadership and management***

39. Leadership and management in science and mathematics are satisfactory. Most staff meet together in monthly, minuted, curriculum quality review team meetings to discuss quality and other issues. At course team level, management of courses in mathematics is good. Teachers work effectively together and courses are well organised. However, not all courses in science are as well managed. The AVCE science and GNVQ intermediate science teams do not have regular course team meetings to discuss course matters and review students' progress. All staff participate in the college classroom observation process which involves unannounced observations from staff from another area. Development needs arising from these visits are followed up well. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. There are few opportunities to observe examples of best practice and little discussion of teaching and learning at course team level.

### **Floristry**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates
  
- much good teaching
  
- high standard of learners' work
  - good specialist resources
  
  - staff with good current industrial experience.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on some courses.

### **Scope of provision**

40. The college runs NVQ floristry courses at intermediate and advanced levels on both a full-time and a part-time basis. It also offers the City and Guilds creative skills programme in floristry and balloon design on a part-time basis. The floristry area provides a City and Guilds creative skills course as part of the college enrichment programme. There are 117 students on full-time and part-time courses. The majority of these are over 19 years old with only 17 students under 19. All the full-time learners are taught key skills in communication and working with number. Most full-time level 2 NVQ learners also take up the option to include the City and Guilds creative skills programme in balloon design in their studies.

### **Achievement and standards**

41. Pass rates on the full time NVQ level 2 course and the City and Guilds creative skills programme are good, but those on part-time NVQ programmes have dropped during 2001/02. Retention rates have declined over the past three years and are now well below national averages on two courses. This was identified during self-assessment and actions have been taken to address it, including immediate contact with students who fail to attend. It is too soon to judge the effectiveness of these actions. Learners' work is of a high standard both in the classroom and in completed portfolios. The practical pieces created during classroom sessions are of a good quality in relation to industry standards. Portfolios are well presented and contain a wide range of strong evidence, including photographs, drawings and samples of materials.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in floristry, 2000 to 2002**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ floristry	2	No. of starts	37	16	25
		% retention	89	38	67
		% pass rate	89	100	94
NVQ floristry (part time)	2	No. of starts	19	15	31
		% retention	100	93	57
		% pass rate	88	83	50
City and Guilds creative skills 7802	2	No. of starts	*	10	35
		% retention	*	50	74
		% pass rate	*	100	96
NVQ floristry	3	No. of starts	15	15	15
		% retention	80	40	62
		% pass rate	100	100	63

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

\* **did not run**

### **Quality of education and training**

42. Most of the teaching is good and none is unsatisfactory. In practical sessions, students work diligently and are well motivated. Demonstrations are well planned. Teachers ensure that lessons allow individual students to learn at a pace and level appropriate to their needs. This is particularly important as students with a wide range of learning needs and experience are included in most

classes. Teachers check the progress of each student regularly in practical sessions. Key skills are developed effectively through vocationally relevant assignments.

43. The college uses exclusively top quality Dutch flowers that are delivered weekly and stored in dedicated cold stores. The college florist shop gives learners a good opportunity for further industrial experience and an opportunity to complete assessments that they are not able to do on their work placements. Although the shop is an educational facility, it is run as nearly as possible to a commercial shop, supplying flower arrangements to the local community. It is well used as a source of flowers by local businesses and is also a member of a national chain of suppliers, enabling learners to take and send orders over the whole country. All staff have relevant occupational qualifications and most part-time teachers have a teaching qualification. Full-time staff keep up to date with occupational practice through regular staff development activities and assessment visits. Part-time teachers work in the industry, one running her own florist shop. Teaching rooms are well equipped and dedicated to floristry.

44. The majority of assessments are carried out in the work place by college staff and are well planned and recorded. At the start of the course, the college agrees with the work placement which assessments it will be possible to carry out in the workplace. Assessments not possible in the workplace take place in the college shop to ensure that all learners cover the whole range. Portfolios and assessment records are reviewed carefully during tutorial sessions and detailed learning and assessment plans are drawn up.

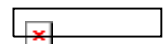
45. Progression up to level 3 is good and all students are aware of the opportunities available. Many start at the college on a short programme and progress through level 2 and on to level 3. The college makes good use of statistics produced by the national training organisation to inform its development plans, reflecting the needs of the local industry. An annual floristry industry day is held to which all the florists in the local area are invited to see what the college has to offer and to discuss their own individual needs.

46. Initial assessment is used well to identify learning and support needs. Two support workers, who are occupationally competent in floristry, support individuals and small groups of learners within classes. There is a timetabled programme of individual tutorials that are used to monitor progress towards qualifications and identify learners' personal support needs. The student advisory service is little used by floristry learners as most difficulties are sorted out through the personal tutors.

### ***Leadership and management***

47. Leadership and management are good. Floristry is part of the school of hospitality, catering, floristry, sport and leisure. The advanced practitioner for floristry reports directly to the head of school. Regular team meetings are held and minuted. Most minutes are published on the college intranet and available to all staff. Action plans are produced to address issues of concern. Members of the floristry team work very closely together. All the staff have adjacent desks in the same office and communication within the team is good. . The area self-assessment report has identified a number of appropriate areas for improvement, particularly retention rates, and these are being addressed.

### **Engineering**



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

**Contributory grade for work-based learning is satisfactory (grade 3)**

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on most courses
- good specialist resources in college and the workplace
- effective teaching in practical lessons
- productive links with industry
- effective leadership and management leading to continual improvement.

### ***Weaknesses***

- missed opportunities to develop key skills
- insufficient reviews of health and safety for work-based learning
- some poor internal verification practices.

### ***Scope of provision***

48. Engineering courses are located in the school of engineering, mathematics and science. There is a broad range of engineering courses from entry level to level 3. The provision includes the GNVQ intermediate and AVCE single awards in engineering, motor vehicle maintenance at NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3, and City and Guilds motorcycle maintenance and repair. The school also offers courses in computer-aided design. There are 293 students aged 16 to 18 and 446 aged 19+ on engineering courses, in addition to those taking short courses. The school has 24 modern apprentices and two new deal clients. Motor vehicle maintenance programmes generally meet the needs of the local garages, but do not include auto electrical/electronics.

### ***Achievement and standards***

49. Retention rates on most courses are satisfactory. Pass rates on most courses are above national averages and well above the averages for colleges of a similar type. Those on the GNVQ intermediate and AVCE single-award courses have been consistently high over the last three years. Pass and retention rates in computer-aided design courses have also been good. On motorcycle courses, pass rates for the full qualification have been low. However, these programmes have included a number of learners who would not usually enter FE and who have achieved partial awards.

50. Retention rates for modern apprenticeship trainees who started their course in 2000 are 67%. Of the 21 who started in 2001, 8 out of the original group of have left the programme early. Achievement of the advanced modern apprenticeship frameworks is satisfactory. Four of the seven trainees from the 1998 intake have achieved the framework and two trainees from that group are still to complete their training.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, 2000 to 2002***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ vehicle maintenance	1	No. of starts	38	39	57
		% retention	76	62	65
		% pass rate	97	79	97
City and Guilds 3991 motor cycle repair and maintenance	1	No. of starts	30	34	45
		% retention	50	62	60
		% pass rate	60	100	52
City and Guilds 4351 computer-aided design	2	No. of starts	109	60	36
		% retention	81	78	89
		% pass rate	90	98	78
GNVQ intermediate engineering	2	No. of starts	16	**	**
		% retention	75	79	67
		% pass rate	100	90	88
NVQ vehicle mechanical and electronic	2	No. of starts	28	19	19
		% retention	64	59	58
		% pass rate	59	100	70
AVCE single award in engineering	3	No. of starts	*	18	**
		% retention	*	83	89
		% pass rate	*	80	100

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

\* did not run

\*\* less than 15 starters

***Quality of education and training***

51. Teaching and learning in practical lessons are good. Learners work carefully, using tools and measuring equipment competently. They show good insights into vehicle systems and their repair. They make good progress and have a good appreciation of health and safety issues. In one lesson, visitors were asked to read the engineering department's code of conduct before entering work areas. ILT is integrated well in practical lessons. For example, in one motorcycle lesson, the teacher had developed a series of short PowerPoint demonstrations of how to dismantle, measure and evaluate motorcycle systems. In motor vehicle maintenance, networked computers were used by learners to look up technical data, research vehicle systems on the Internet, and produce evidence for their NVQ.

52. Lessons plans are detailed and college planning documents are used regularly. Teachers are, however, not always clear about how to make best use of them. For example, opportunities to

develop key skills within the vocational context are missed. They are identified in almost all plans, but these are not implemented as part of the lessons. Similarly, activities are not designed to take account of learners' preferred style. Learning outcomes are clearly identified but they are not generally shared with the learners. In work-based learning, the learners exhibit a good standard of practical skill. Many trainees are working effectively with minimal supervision.

53. In the better theory lessons, good college-built demonstration rigs support the teaching and activities have been developed to make good use of this equipment. For example, in a lesson on automatic transmissions, the teacher developed tasks around a gearbox simulator. Learners had to calculate the various gear ratios, determine the driveline combinations and plan which of the clutches and band brakes had to be applied to engage the gears. Some theory lessons are unsatisfactory and others are often dull and uninspiring. Lessons specifically to develop key skills are poorly attended.

54. The staff team are appropriately qualified and have benefited from recent staff development. Teachers spend at least one week during the summer break undertaking industrial updating.

55. The engineering provision is housed in the recently-built Pembroke Centre. All the facilities are purpose built, and benefit from some excellent design features. The workshops have good service and vehicular access. The welding shop has purpose-built booths, each with modern welding plant and extraction. The learning resource centre is spacious and has a good range of engineering and vehicle texts and software. The workshops and classrooms are spacious, well equipped and furnished.

56. Local employers provide good facilities for modern apprentice training. The college works with 28 garages as training providers. They range from the main dealership to smaller businesses and all can satisfy the full range of experiences required for the relevant NVQ. Trainees are accommodated in a garage near to their home.

57. The assessment procedures follow the college policy, with assignments marked and returned within the agreed time-scale. Assessment of work-based learners includes observational assessments by the college assessor. Garage-generated job cards are also utilised. Internal verification relies too heavily on the checking of completed portfolios and has not identified some poor NVQ assessment practices. Internal verifiers are not monitoring the quality of assessment carried out in the workplace.

58. The curriculum area has recruited a number of learners who have not previously been successfully integrated into FE. Support is effectively identified and provided where it is needed. Many of the support tutors are subject specialists. They work effectively alongside teachers in both theory and practical lessons and learners appreciate the support they receive.

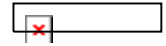
59. Most tutorials deal with issues of attendance, punctuality and general progress. The use of targets and action plans for individual students is underdeveloped. The support for work-based learners is good. Visits are more frequent than contractual demands and often trainees are visited weekly where extra support is necessary. NVQ units have been translated into an easily-understood form to improve guidance for trainees and employers on what evidence is required for each unit. Target dates are clearly stated, but short-term targets need to be more clearly defined.

### ***Leadership and management***

60. The curriculum area is effectively managed and this is leading to continual improvement. Quality assurance arrangements have improved over recent years. Course reviews, quality reviews and school meetings are undertaken regularly, and follow standard college agendas. Self-assessment is rigorous. All staff are regularly observed and appraised and this has identified training and industrial updating needs. Health and safety is actively promoted in all lessons and workshop areas. The college inclusive learning policy is successfully attracting learners with significant support needs. Some aspects of quality assurance are insufficiently rigorous to monitor day-to-day assessment practices, work-based learning reviews and equal opportunities in the work place.

61. The curriculum area has developed productive links with employers and some excellent training opportunities have been developed. Annual health and safety reviews are completed for each garage. However, for work-based learning, interim reviews are not undertaken even when the garage premises or facilities change. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently monitored in the workplace.

## **Business**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on many full-time programmes
  
- students learn with commitment and enthusiasm
  
- good resources to support learning
  
- good support for students
  
- effective curriculum management.

### ***Weaknesses***

- some poor pass rates in NVQ administration courses
  
- underdeveloped links with employers.

### ***Scope of provision***

62. The college offers a range of full-time and part-time courses, providing progression from entry through to level 4. They include GCE AS and A-level, the AVCE in business studies and GNVQ business courses at foundation and intermediate level. Business administration courses include NVQs from levels 1 to 3, word and text processing and there are programmes for legal and medical secretaries. The college also offers supervisory and management courses and Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) accountancy programmes from foundation to technician. Courses in

teacher education include assessor awards, the City and Guilds 7307 and the certificate in education.

63. There are 240 full-time students and a further 180 who study business as part of a wider programme. At the time of inspection there were 350 part-time adult students.

### ***Achievement and standards***

64. Retention and pass rates are good on most full-time courses. In GCE A-level business studies, pass rates have exceeded national averages over the last three years and in 2002, the retention rate on the GCE A level was 97%. Pass rates in GNVQ intermediate improved by 18% in 2002 and are now above the national average with a good proportion of high grades. Pass rates on medical and legal secretaries' courses are good but they are poor in NVQ administration at level 3.

65. In part-time courses, pass rates on the National Examination Board Supervisory Management (NEBSM) certificate and AAT foundation are good. At AAT intermediate level, they have improved and were above the national average in 2002. In word and text processing, retention and pass rates on stage 1 courses are above national average but are low in stages 2 and 3. Retention and pass rates are poor on shorthand courses. In teacher education, pass rates in assessor awards are good but on the City and Guilds 7307 course they are well below the national average.

66. During the inspection, attendance was satisfactory, averaging 82%, and students arrived punctually to their lessons. They learn with commitment and enthusiasm and produce work of a good standard. Many develop confidence and apply skills learned through their course in their workplace.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in business, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	19	19	28
		% retention	63	68	79
		% pass rate	100	62	86
Oxford, Cambridge and RSA word processing stage 2	2	No. of starts	43	54	26
		% retention	86	74	62
		% pass rate	46	34	25
GCE A-level business studies	3	No. of starts	30	54	30
		% retention	70	69	97
		% pass rate	73	78	76
NVQ accounting	3	No. of starts	60	48	54
		% retention	82	79	87
		% pass rate	29	50	57
City and Guilds 7307	3	No. of starts	50	52	55
		% retention	74	83	91
		% pass rate	100	63	68
Legal secretaries' diploma	3	No. of starts	20	16	23
		% retention	90	94	91
		% pass rate	94	100	90



Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

### ***Quality of education and training***

67. Teaching was good or better in some 72% of lessons observed and was satisfactory in almost all others. Teachers prepare thorough schemes of work and detailed lesson plans. They use a variety of teaching and learning methods that stimulate students to learn. Many teachers make good use of group work to enable students to learn from each other and use effective questioning techniques. In a few lessons, teachers didn't encourage all individual students to contribute. There was very good teaching and learning in some supervisory management lessons. In one lesson, students took part in a quality improvement group exercise applied to their own course. They evaluated the processes used and were skilfully encouraged to consider the applications to their own places of work. Students are well motivated and enthusiastic about their learning. Many are successfully acquiring new skills and confidence.

68. A good range of enrichment opportunities is available to enhance learning programmes and some students are using these opportunities to gain additional skills. However, participation and take-up are limited. Full-time AVCE students had their work experience delayed due to an insufficient number of placements. Some students are making good progress with key skills. For example, the Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists medical receptionist students are acquiring useful presentational skills and are successfully attaining their key skills qualification.

69. College procedures in assessment and verification are applied well and there is a good response to issues raised by external reports. Teachers monitor students' progress and give detailed and helpful feedback to students on assessed work. On the legal secretaries diploma course, students' individual learning plans are frequently monitored.

70. Full-time teachers are well qualified and experienced. There is good participation in continuous professional development and a three-year cycle of industrial and commercial updating. Part-time staff introduce useful levels of professional expertise, but many do not hold a teaching qualification. Many classrooms are well equipped with ILT resources including networked computers, Power Point and interactive whiteboards. In some lessons, these resources were used effectively to support learning, for example, in the use of recommended Internet sites to widen research. Teachers make good use of the intranet to maintain schemes of work, assessments and other teaching and learning resources. Students can access resources from the intranet in all subjects. Some teachers are not yet confident in using the full range of ILT equipment and printing facilities are limited for students in some classrooms.

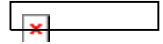
71. Support for students is good. There is effective liaison between teachers and the staff providing learning support to individual students. In a skills for working life session, there was effective planning of respective roles and activities to help students succeed. High standards of behaviour and attendance are set for students aged 16 to 18 and consistently applied. Lateness is challenged effectively. The standards are applied sympathetically and students feel that they are treated as responsible adults. Absence procedures and incentive schemes are successful in encouraging good attendance. Personal tutors provide regular individual and group tutorials for full-time and substantial part-time students. Added value systems have recently been introduced but are not yet fully understood by either students or staff.

### ***Leadership and management***

72. A strong quality improvement and planning process is informed by regular programme team meetings and the school's quality review teams. There is a clear development plan for the school. Targets and milestones are regularly monitored. Staff understand and share the main priorities for the area. Targets for retention and achievement rates in every course are set by senior managers and are regularly monitored by course teams. Self-assessment is accurate. Staff work collaboratively and new and part-time staff are well supported.

73. Links with employers are underdeveloped. The area has recently begun to use the college business centre to establish networks with employers, but they are at an early stage. There is presently little participation by employers in the design and delivery of the curriculum and opportunities for work-based assessment are limited.

### **Information and communications technology**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass rates on most courses
  
- wide range of courses and progression routes for full-time and part-time students
  
- thorough tracking of students' progress
  
- good use of ILT to support teaching and learning
  
- good staff development practice
  
- effective management of the provision.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on some courses
  
- inadequate resources for specialised courses.

#### ***Scope of provision***

74. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in computing and ICT at various levels ranging from basic computer literacy to HE programmes. There are full-time courses leading to GNVQ

qualifications in IT at foundation and intermediate levels, an AVCE in ICT and a HNC in computing. GCE AS and A level courses in ICT and GCE AS in computing form part of the college's full-time GCE A-level provision. Part-time programmes include entry-level introductory courses in computing with progression opportunities via computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), CLAIT Plus, European Computer Driving License (ECDL), a national certificate in computing and a variety of other courses through to a higher national certificate in computing. All of these programmes are offered at the college's main site. Others, mainly entry level and level 1 courses, are available at outreach sites in the surrounding community.

### ***Achievement and standards***

75. In recent years, pass rates on most courses have been consistently at or above the national average. Particularly good pass rates have been obtained on the GNVQ foundation and intermediate IT courses, the AVCE in IT, the City and Guilds 7261 IT certificate and CLAIT courses, some pass rates being over 20% above the national averages. The GCE AS ICT course has had poor and declining pass rates over the same period. Retention rates on the GNVQ intermediate, the AVCE IT and the NVQ level 2 in using IT courses are good. However, they are unsatisfactory on the GCE AS course, the City and Guilds 7261 programme and the ECDL short course. College data for the current GCE AS course indicate some improvement.

76. Standards are at least satisfactory for all students and good for many. During practical sessions, students give each other mutual support and also develop the skills necessary to work on their own. Most students are well motivated and become engrossed in the interesting tasks set for them by their teachers. Most portfolios of work are well presented and reach a standard appropriate to the level of their course. In some cases, extension work beyond the scope of the syllabus is completed by the more able students to maintain their interest and stretch their abilities. Adults learn to use technology with confidence during evening classes and often return to college to study a higher-level course.

77. Several new systems have been launched concerning value added data, absence and punctuality, but it is too early to fully evaluate their effects. Punctuality during the inspection was good and attendance was 85%. Attendance has been satisfactory since the start of the academic year.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in information and communications technology, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
CLAIT	1	No. of starts	498	477	298
		% retention	76	64	78
		% pass rate	88	90	79
GNVQ foundation IT	1	No. of starts	21	27	29
		% retention	62	78	79
		% pass rate	69	86	87
City and Guilds 7261 IT certificate	1	No. of starts	34	31	15
		% retention	71	81	47
		% pass rate	96	84	86
Integrated business technology stage II	2	No. of starts	192	250	186
		% retention	80	72	84
		% pass rate	75	67	73
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	38	39	59

		% retention	87	79	86
		% pass rate	88	81	71
AVCE IT (one year)	3	No. of starts	*	51	67
		% retention	*	68	88
		% pass rate	*	71	67
GCSE AS IT/computing	3	No. of starts	*	47	53
		% retention	*	70	64
		% pass rate	*	61	47

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

**\* did not run**

### **Quality of education and training**

78. In most lessons, teachers plan and implement a range of interesting and demanding activities and display sound vocational knowledge. They make good use of the presentation aids that are available, such as data projectors, interactive whiteboards and mimio whiteboards. Lessons are supported by good course notes, which, along with exercises and assignment briefs, are stored on an intranet which the students access frequently. Assignments are usually designed to enable students to work at their own pace. This allows teachers to give extra support to those who find the work more challenging. Teachers give useful advice during practical sessions and carefully monitor the progress of all the students. Full-time students undertake relevant work experience to support their career aspirations. Most students are confident in working independently using the Internet, the intranet, course notes and library books. The more able students make very good use of the software packages available. The relationship between teachers and students is very good and makes an important contribution to learning.

79. All computer rooms are equipped with modern networked computers and printers, which are renewed every few years. They are well decorated, with suitable wall displays. However, some specialised resources for multimedia students, such as scanners, colour printers, zip-drives, and CD-burners, are not readily available. Students find the library facilities helpful, with good stocks of relevant books. Outreach sites are supplied from the main college with workbooks, assessment material and, in some cases, laptops and most of the teachers attend monthly meetings

80. A schedule of assessments is given to students early in the course. Any work produced is quickly marked and returned with useful comments. Individual learning plans are widely used. They contain targets and progress logs completed by the students and verified by the teacher, feedback sheets, handouts and students' completed work. Progress is carefully recorded and monitored. A robust internal verification process is adhered to by all course teams and assessment practices meet all the awarding bodies' requirements.

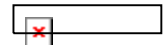
81. Key skills portfolios are created from computing coursework. Separate lessons, which students find helpful, are also provided for portfolio building and examination preparation. Good progression opportunities for full-time and part-time students are well used. Links with employers for work experience are good.

82. All full-time students take an initial assessment during induction and the results of these tests are used to identify which level of key skill they will study and whether any additional support is required in literacy and numeracy. The weekly group tutorial system is satisfactory and there is good support for individual students where progress and personal issues are discussed.

### **Leadership and management**

83. A motivated and committed staff is effectively managed at programme area level. Staff are located in a large airy office, each teacher having their own workspace, storage facilities and networked computer. All facets of administration are held on a staff intranet. Staff meet regularly for quality reviews, to monitor the progress of courses, to agree targets and to review actions. Teachers share good practice, knowledge and expertise willingly with each other and a general atmosphere of good humour and sense of purpose prevails. Annual appraisals identify staff development needs and, in addition to these, staff go on work placements every three years to keep their skills and knowledge current. Appropriate strategies have been adopted to address key weaknesses, such as the equipment for specialised courses, and to combat poor retention rates on some courses.

### **Hospitality, food manufacture, sport, leisure and travel**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on most courses
  
- good standards of students' work at foundation and intermediate levels
  
- careful attention to students' individual learning styles
  
- good support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- declining retention rates on many courses
  
- insufficiently challenging teaching at advanced level
  
- lack of integration of ILT in both practical and theory sessions
  
- some poor curriculum management.

### **Scope of provision**

84. The college offers a range of provision from entry to advanced level in hospitality and catering, travel, tourism, leisure and sport. There are 318 full-time and 142 part-time students. In hospitality and catering, courses are available at NVQ levels 1 to 3 on a full-time or part-time basis. At level 3, these include a restaurant supervision course and an advanced professional certificate. GNVQ leisure and tourism courses are offered for full-time study at foundation and intermediate levels. AVCE courses are also available in leisure and recreation and travel and tourism. The HND course is taught in tourism and hospitality. There are sports studies courses from NVQ level 1 to HND, and courses in preparation for the uniformed services. Work-based provision within catering and hospitality is limited.

### **Achievement and standards**

85. Retention rates are good on sport and recreation level 1 and GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism courses. However, there are poor retention rates on the NVQ level 1 catering course and declining retention rates on many courses. Strategies to improve retention rates have had limited impact. Pass rates are generally above national averages, and in some cases, they are well above. There are high pass rates in sport and recreation level 1, NVQ catering and hospitality level 2, GNVQ foundation, and intermediate leisure and tourism. Retention rates on AVCE travel and tourism are poor, and pass rates were poor in 2001.

86. The standard of students' work is good at foundation and intermediate levels. On catering courses, students demonstrate an appropriate standard of technical skills in the kitchen and the restaurant. They have good social skills when dealing with customers, and students generally work well together. Students on sports courses at levels 1 and 2 consistently demonstrate high levels of performance and skills. There is a range of additional qualifications available to students, but pass rates on these are low.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in Hospitality, food manufacture, sport, leisure and travel , 2000 to 2002**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ catering and hospitality (pre/serve food)	1	No. of starts	46	36	47
		% retention	76	67	68
		% pass rate	89	88	81
NVQ sport and recreation	1	No. of starts	22	34	32
		% retention	59	62	69
		% pass rate	92	100	91
NVQ sport and recreation	2	No. of starts	41	29	35
		% retention	76	79	77
		% pass rate	100	91	93
NVQ catering and hospitality (general)	2	No. of starts	29	34	26
		% retention	79	94	65
		% pass rate	100	91	94
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	32	25	26
		% retention	88	80	81
		% pass rate	86	100	71
AVCE travel and	3	No. of starts	*	35	37

tourism (single award)	% retention	*	71	64
	% pass rate	*	32	57

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

*\* did not run*

### ***Quality of education and training***

87. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, with clear planning and delivery that includes a range of teaching methods. In catering and hospitality, good account is taken of the learning needs of individual students and their preferred learning styles. Good links are made between practical and theory work on these courses. Key skills lessons are well taught. Opportunities to develop these skills are identified in schemes of work and lesson plans. Assignments are relevant and link well to the vocational curriculum.

88. On advanced-level courses, some teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to develop skills of research, evaluation and analysis. Assignments do not always allow students sufficient opportunity to achieve higher grades. This weakness had been identified by external verifiers but had not been addressed at the time of the inspection. In some lessons, there is a slow pace and insufficient challenge for more able students, which result in them becoming bored. Classrooms are well resourced with computers and teaching technology. However, ILT is seldom used in lessons. The good, realistic work environments include a restaurant, travel shop and fitness club.

89. The majority of students' portfolios are well organised and up-to-date. The standard of written work is generally satisfactory. The feedback provided by teachers on marked work in leisure, tourism and sports courses is constructive and enables students to make good progress. However, misspellings are commonly left uncorrected. In catering and hospitality, insufficient feedback is sometimes provided. Good assessment opportunities are provided for full-time NVQ students. Assessment and monitoring of full-time students' progress is effective. Criteria for assessment are clear, and shared with students. Procedures for internal verification are thorough. Effective action plans have been drawn up for issues raised through external verification.

90. Staff development to support teaching at levels 1 and 2 has been effective. At level 3, however, weaknesses persist. The library stock is dated and is not well used by students. A relevant stock of texts is kept in the base room and this facility is used for reference during theoretical sessions. Work-based provision does not fully reflect the breadth or scale of local employment opportunities. There is a lack of employer involvement in training, assessment and review of students' progress.

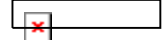
91. Students receive effective initial advice and guidance. Full-time and part-time students complete a comprehensive diagnostic assessment that identifies both learning support requirements and individual learning styles. The monitoring of attendance is good and tutors follow up on non-attendance promptly. A twice-yearly formal report is provided to the parents of full-time students aged 16 to 18. Further contacts are made by phone as appropriate. Learners benefit from very good pastoral support which they value highly.

### ***Leadership and management***

92. There is good teamwork but also some poor curriculum management in this area. At the time of the inspection, some important weaknesses in teaching and learning had not been identified. There is insufficient sharing of good practice. Contingency planning for long term sickness and staff replacement is poor. One group of catering and hospitality students undertook a diagnostic assessment in key skills half way through their course because a tutor had left and no records of the work in progress or the original test results were available. Students did not know what level of key skills they should be studying towards. Application of tutorial policies and procedures is variable. In the good tutorials observed, effective tracking of students' progress and target setting were evident.

In the unsatisfactory tutorials, little evaluation of progress and limited target setting occurred.

## Health, social care and child care



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

### **Strengths**

- good teaching on foundation courses
  
- good retention rates on most courses
  
- good pass rates on intermediate courses
  
- good progression to higher-level courses.

### **Weaknesses**

- many lessons with insufficient challenge for all students
  
- limited use of ILT
  
- insufficient sharing of good practice.

### **Scope of provision**

93. The college offers a range of full-time courses from level 1 to level 3 in health and social care and in early years. At foundation level, 40 students take courses in caring for young children and the GNVQ foundation course in health and social care. At intermediate level, 52 students follow courses leading to the certificate in childcare and GNVQ intermediate course in health and social care. At advanced level, the diploma in childcare, diploma in early years and AVCE in health and social care have 156 students. Around 50 students also study for the intermediate and advanced-level qualifications on a part-time basis. Other part-time courses include counselling at introductory, intermediate certificate and diploma levels with 158 students. Short courses offered include introduction to child minding, positive parenting and first aid.



### **Achievement and standards**

94. There are high pass rates on many health and social care courses, including foundation, intermediate and advanced GNVQ. The pass rates on childcare courses at intermediate and advanced levels are good but below average at foundation level. Retention rates are very good on advanced-level courses, and mostly good at intermediate and foundation levels. The foundation GNVQ and childcare certificate have a high proportion of students achieving high grades. However, the foundation childcare courses have a low proportion reaching these standards. Key skills attainment for students in this area has shown a marked improvement in 2001/02 compared with previous years and is now generally satisfactory.

95. Standards achieved in students' assignments are satisfactory with a significant amount of work at a high level for the relevant course. Students' display work shows a high standard of practical skills which are well linked to theory. A student-generated, interactive display for National No Smoking Day demonstrated a good range of practical skills, multi-cultural awareness and an appropriate link to the theory of health promotion. In the best classes, students were able to discuss complex theories, such as social construction in child development, with confidence, using correct terminology and applying their work experience in a considered and analytical way.

96. Attendance overall was satisfactory at 77% during the inspection week, but there was poor attendance at enrichment sessions and some key skill lessons. The college has a number of incentive schemes to tackle attendance issues, such as awarding vouchers and certificates, which appear to be yielding some success.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in Health, social care and child care , 2000 to 2002**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GNVQ foundation health and social care	1	No. of starts	17	20	16
		% retention	76	55	67
		% pass rate	69	91	80
CACHE caring for young children	1	No. of starts	21	*	16
		% retention	62	57	79
		% pass rate	92	75	73
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	53	51	56
		% retention	72	61	77
		% pass rate	92	84	72
CACHE certificate	2	No. of starts	15	20	20
		% retention	80	80	95
		% pass rate	92	73	89
Intermediate counselling skills	2	No. of starts	46	37	34
		% retention	86	78	94
		% pass rate	89	93	91
GNVQ advanced/AVCE in health and social care	3	No. of starts	34	40	21
		% retention	82	78	86
		% pass rate	100	100	72
National diploma caring	3	No. of starts	21	25	15

nursing/early years		% pass rate	89	90	100
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Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

**\* less than 15 starters**

### **Quality of education and training**

97. There is much satisfactory teaching which successfully develops links between theory and practice. Handouts are of good quality. A third of the lessons observed were very good, with teachers using a variety of teaching methods and fully involving all students. In these lessons, individual learning needs were met and students responded enthusiastically. Teaching on the foundation courses is very good. More generally, although schemes of work and lesson plans are detailed, they are not always adhered to in, for example, the development of key skills or addressing preferred learning styles. There is insufficient sharing of good practice and, as a result, too many lessons fall well short of the standards reached by the best. In weaker lessons, there is insufficient challenge for individual students and sometimes the whole class. Students in these lessons are not encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Opportunities to develop issues such as equal opportunities are missed. A significant minority of lessons lack pace and a clear focus for learning. The use of ILT is limited and little reference is made to websites for research. There is a good level of learning support but it is not always fully focussed on meeting the individual's needs. There is little rigorous use of individual target setting.

98. The staff are well qualified with appropriate academic and vocational qualifications in, for example, social work, nursing, midwifery and early years. Regular industrial updating, good staff development opportunities, and a mentoring system are valued by the staff. There has been a large turnover of staff and many new staff are early in their teaching careers. This has led to some disruption. Classrooms are new and the learning resource centre has a satisfactory book and periodical stock but the intranet is underdeveloped. There are computers in many classrooms and computer suites are readily accessible for students.

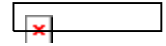
99. Good European links are used well to enrich the curriculum. Activities have included a visit to Poland and Auschwitz related to the psychology and theories of discrimination, a Barcelona visit to review childcare practices, and a visiting lecturer from Germany exploring comparative educational practices particularly in special needs education. A good range of additional qualifications is available to full-time students, particularly a care package incorporating first aid, counselling, manual handling and food hygiene. Arrangements for the assessment of students' work are good. Assignments are thoroughly marked with good constructive feedback. Internal verification is effective and the reports of external verifiers are satisfactory. There are few work-related courses.

100. The pastoral support of students is very good and highly valued by the students. Students undertake early diagnostic assessments leading to placement on an appropriate course and provision of support where necessary. Students progress well through college courses and to higher-level provision. For example, in 2002, 89% of AVCE students progressed to HE to study courses including nursing, law and midwifery. Nine of 11 foundation students progressed to intermediate courses within the department.

### **Leadership and management**

101. The management of programme and course delivery is satisfactory. Regular team meetings are held and decisions are acted upon, and tracked at the monthly quality review meetings. Staff feel well involved in the self-assessment reports. The problems of managing the rapid turnover of staff and loss of experienced staff have restricted further development of course provision. The course files are well organised but some staff are not clear about the implementation of some aspects of the lesson plans, such as key skills and the use of ILT. There are limited external links.

## Visual arts and media



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

### ***Strengths***

- good retention rates on most art and design courses
  
- very good teaching in photography
  
- high quality ICT resources are well used for art and design
  
- good progression through vocational courses.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on GCE AS courses
  
- some poor teaching on media courses
  
- insufficient resources for three-dimensional work in art and design.

### ***Scope of provision***

102. Most courses are located in specialist accommodation on the main college campus. These include GCE AS courses in media, art and graphics, AVCE courses in art and media and a diploma in foundation studies. Vocational courses include GNVQ foundation and intermediate in art and design and part-time courses in photography. There is also a range of open college accredited courses delivered to adults as part of the college's extensive outreach provision. There are 250 enrolments during the current academic year.

### ***Achievement and standards***

103. Retention rates on most courses are above national averages. Both retention and pass rates on the foundation diploma have remained consistently high over the last three years. However, retention rates on GCE AS media and art courses have declined in 2001/02 to well below national averages. Pass rates on intermediate and AVCE art and design courses have improved significantly

and are now well above national averages. However, in 2001/02, there was a serious decline in pass rates for GCE AS media, AVCE media and City and Guilds photography courses, which are now well below national averages. The percentage of high grades achieved across most courses is low with the exception of GNVQ foundation and intermediate art.

104. The standard of practical artwork is satisfactory but lacking in breadth and scale. Three-dimensional work is of poor quality. The standard of work achieved in photography is good and students value their lessons highly. Practical media production is under-developed and limited use has been made of the new technology available. Internal progression routes between courses are well defined and progression is very good at intermediate level in art and media where, last year, 90% of students successfully progressed to AVCE courses.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in visual arts and media, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
City and Guilds photography (part 1)	1	No. of starts	39	46	51
		% retention	51	83	90
		% pass rate	55	58	22
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	No. of starts	11	18	13
		% retention	64	73	77
		% pass rate	29	64	90
GCE AS media	3	No. of starts	*	25	20
		% retention	*	88	70
		% pass rate	*	0	71
GCE AS art and design	3	No. of starts	*	18	22
		% retention	*	78	59
		% pass rate	*	54	67
AVCE media	3	No. of starts	*	19	15
		% retention	*	63	87
		% pass rate	*	75	38
Foundation diploma	3	No. of starts	27	24	31
		% retention	96	88	97
		% pass rate	100	100	97

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

\* did not run

***Quality of education and training***

105. Teachers plan their lessons well. Most of the teaching in art is good. In one GNVQ intermediate art class, key skills were successfully integrated into an assignment on designing a magazine cover. However, some lessons concentrated on a narrow range of skills and material handling and failed to present students with sufficiently stimulating challenges. For example, too many lessons involved students in working from uninspiring still life installations. Students studying art in community outreach centres were very positive about their individual skill progression and the high level of tutors' support. Teaching in photography is very good and students are presented with a well-planned mix of theoretical and practical activities. One lesson was particularly effective in dealing with the physical properties of film stock through a combination of group work and individual

investigation. Lessons in media theory fail to engage all learners and insufficient checks are made on their understanding of new concepts.

106. All staff have appropriate subject-related qualifications, but a substantial number, including recent appointments, have yet to achieve teaching qualifications. The college is supporting these through a fast-track teaching and learning mentoring system involving advanced practitioners. Accommodation for art and design is currently being refurbished. Art studios are poorly maintained with insufficient resources for three-dimensional aspects of the curriculum. For example, student work on the foundation diploma course is restricted to low standard small-scale ceramic tiles and mixed media maquettes contributing to a narrow diagnostic experience. There are high quality ICT facilities, equipped with a good range of up-to-date software and peripherals, housed in a specialist room. Photography facilities are good.

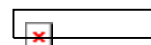
107. Review and assessment of students' work are accurate and undertaken at regular intervals. However, some fail to give sufficient advice on how to improve performance and most do not make sufficient reference to students' individual learning plans. There are some effective tutorials. In one session, a GNVQ foundation level group successfully produced their own photographic storyboards as an aid to dealing with issues of bullying.

108. The range of courses provides good opportunities for student progression. Students benefit from guidance through a planned progression week at the end of March. The department also offers a range of non-accredited enrichment activities for students. In one class, a group of foundation-level students were engaged in an activity that explored emotions through the use of colour. The area actively integrates students with learning difficulties and learning support workers were present in 40% of the observed sessions. In one AVCE art lesson, a support worker successfully helped a student to make progress through his expertise with specialist computer software.

### ***Leadership and management***

109. There are very good quality systems to monitor students' performance, which is documented in course and quality team meeting minutes. The school has a comprehensive development plan, which includes strategies for improvement based upon a college-wide course review system. However, at the time of the inspection, mid-year retention rates are broadly in line with those of the previous years' outcomes and there is little evidence that initiatives to improve retention rates have been effective. The staff team has undergone significant changes in the last year and this has contributed to limited teamwork and sharing of good practice.

### **Social science and access to HE**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good teaching on access programmes
  
- effective use of new technologies to support learning
  
- good learning environments and curriculum resources in social science.

### **Weaknesses**

- low pass rates in GCE A-level psychology and GCE AS sociology
  
- poor retention rates on psychology courses
  
- poor attendance and punctuality for many GCE A-level, GCE AS and GCSE classes.

### **Scope of provision**

110. The college offers GCE AS and A-level, and GCSE courses in psychology, and sociology and GCE AS in government and politics. For adults returning to study in order to take a degree, there is also an access to HE programme, which includes a wide range of options in criminology, psychology, applied psychology, history and social studies. There are 43 GCE A-level, 149 GCE AS and 29 GCSE students, the majority of whom are aged 16 to 18. Many students take GCE AS courses in social sciences specifically to broaden their main GCE A-level or AVCE programmes. There are 67 adult students on the access to HE programme, the majority of whom are full time. There is also a GCE AS psychology class for adults.

### **Achievement and standards**

111. Pass rates on the access course are in line with the national average. Retention rates over the past three years have been satisfactory. Retention and pass rates on social science courses have been inconsistent over this period and sometimes poor. In sociology, there are mixed retention patterns. At GCE A level, the retention rate for the new qualification was good in 2002 at 95%, but on GCE AS programmes it has declined and is now below the national average. Pass rates in GCE AS sociology are poor at around 55%, although at GCE A level they are satisfactory. The retention rate in GCE AS government and politics is above national averages and pass rates have improved to above the average of similar colleges in 2002.

112. The retention rate in psychology is poor. At GCSE it is well below the national average for similar colleges. At GCE AS it was at the level of similar college averages in 2001 but has since declined. In GCE A-level psychology, the retention rates have been generally around the average for colleges with a similar intake for the two-year course. A one-year course with lower retention rates has now been discontinued. Pass rates in psychology have generally been around the average for similar colleges in GCE AS and GCSE, but at GCE A level they are poor.

113. The college has recently adopted a value added analysis system which suggests that in GCE AS psychology and government and politics, students performed slightly better than expected from their GCSE profile but that at GCE A-level psychology and sociology they under-performed.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in social science and access to HE, 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE psychology	2	No. of starts	31	29	43

		% retention	58	17	44
		% pass rate	72	100	68
GCE AS psychology	3	No. of starts	*	71	91
		% retention	*	76	68
		% pass rate	*	59	79
GCE AS government and politics	3	No. of starts	*	***	15
		% retention	*	90	93
		% pass rate	*	56	79
GCE AS sociology	3	No. of starts	*	59	55
		% retention	*	81	73
		% pass rate	*	56	55
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	46**	49**	22
		% retention	74	63	95
		% pass rate	91	87	71
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	68**	56**	18
		% retention	60	63	83
		% pass rate	60	61	60
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	96	91	75
		% retention	74	70	65
		% pass rate	72	92	90

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

*\*did not run*

*\*\* combined one and two year programmes*

*\*\*\* less than 15 starters*

### **Quality of education and training**

114. There is much good teaching. In two thirds of the lessons observed, it was good or better. These included all the lessons for the access to HE course. In these lessons in particular, there was good classroom management. Teachers skilfully involved students in discussion and most sessions included small-group work which incorporated well-planned tasks. Questions are often used effectively to involve, motivate, build concepts and test progress. In a sociology lesson, students were given colour-coded cards with questions which they asked each other in pairs. The teacher used this common experience to involve the whole group in defining and discussing a whole variety of different types of questionnaire items.

115. PowerPoint displays and interactive whiteboards were used in many lessons to enhance teacher presentation. The intranet is being developed and is already an effective resource in sociology and psychology where it contains schemes of work, assignment dates, exercises and PowerPoint presentations. Students who had missed earlier sessions picked up handouts from this facility. Internet searches were effectively used for student research in a number of lessons, with clear prompts which ensured that students did not waste time in fruitless surfing. Teachers make effective use of simple resources, for example, in a sociology class where the students reviewed most of the current day's newspapers to identify examples of deviance, crime careers and deviance

amplification.

116. The preferred learning styles of students are analysed and lesson plans include suitable reference to the use of these different styles. However, poor attendance and punctuality for some classes limits the ability of students to make progress. During the inspection, attendance for GCE and GCSE classes was only 67% and in psychology it was around 50%. Many students arrive late and this disrupts the class. Assessment and monitoring of students' work is satisfactory. The timely feedback is constructive, helps students improve and builds confidence.

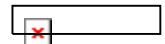
117. Staff are suitably qualified and supported through induction and staff development programmes. The focus of staff development for teachers in this area has been on teaching and learning. Aspects of these development activities have been applied well to improve teaching. Training on the use of ILT and effective group work has been particularly successful. There has been a great deal of staff turnover in psychology during the past two years and this has had an adverse effect on the success of students in the subject. Of the two core staff providing psychology, one has been in post for a year and the other joined in September.

118. The library is well resourced with social science journals and books including multiple copies of the major textbooks. All students have personal textbooks but in psychology, some students did not receive them until late in their programme. Good use is made of the social science courses as part of the college's Curriculum 2000 strategy. However, there is little social science provision at level 2 or in the outreach centres. Students on the access to HE programme value highly the supportive route to higher study which the course provides.

### ***Leadership and management***

119. Leadership and management of social science and access courses are satisfactory. The subjects inspected span three schools in the college. Some staff and many students work across the different schools, but common tutorial, meeting and quality systems help to ensure that this does not disadvantage students. The enthusiasm of staff helps alleviate communication problems that can arise in timetabling of formal meetings across schools and in teams which include part-time teachers. There has been a clear focus on staff development for teaching and learning and on the improvement of retention rates. In both these areas, there is evidence of improvement this year. Staff meetings are held regularly but the records of some meetings do not identify specific action points to ensure their completion. Teachers feel involved in the self-assessment process and see it as a positive contribution to improvement.

## **English and modern foreign languages**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good teaching in the target language in French and Spanish
  
- good pass rates on most courses
  
- effective strategies for inclusive learning



- good co-ordination of modern foreign languages courses.

### **Weaknesses**

- individual learning needs insufficiently addressed in English
- under-developed use of ICT in teaching
- poor attendance at some classes.

### **Scope of provision**

120. English, French and Spanish are offered at GCSE, and GCE AS and GCE A level. There is also a literature access to HE course, and expanding provision of entry level and level 1 beginners Spanish and French open college courses. Most courses for full-time students take place in the new sixth form academy, but many modern foreign language courses for adults are taught in outreach centres in the community. The number of students taking GCE AS in English and Spanish has been increasing.

### **Achievement and standards**

121. For all GCE AS and GCE A-level courses there are good pass rates. Some results are outstanding. In 2002, both GCE AS English and GCE AS French had pass rates which were 15% above the national averages for similar colleges. Value added data also suggest that students are achieving the results which would be expected in relation to their starting points in these subjects. Retention rates on GCE AS Spanish and GCE A-level English courses are good. For most other courses, they are satisfactory but for GCSE English they are poor. Students on the Merseyside Open College Network scheme for Spanish and French are making good progress and have their achievements recognised regularly through a unit accreditation scheme.

122. Overall, the standards of work observed in lessons were good, and written coursework reached a very good standard through the careful drafting process. This was particularly so in the GCE A-level English language and literature course, which is heavily weighted towards the development of students' writing skills. The use of critical language and evaluative vocabulary was, however, less well developed in some classes. In modern languages classes at all levels, the target language was used frequently. Students' attainment and confidence in speaking and listening developed well as a result. Students on the access literature course demonstrated good skills in detailed textual analysis and awareness of features of genre.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in English and modern foreign languages , 2000 to 2002**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE English language	2	No. of starts	224	181	168
		% retention	64	54	59

		% pass rate	64	59	51
GCSE Spanish	2	No. of starts	28	25	15
		% retention	67	75	67
		% pass rate	50	38	50
GCE AS English literature and language	3	No. of starts	*	52	92
		% retention	*	63	73
		% pass rate	*	88	93
GCE AS Spanish	3	No. of starts	*	18	16
		% retention	*	65	94
		% pass rate	*	73	73
GCE A-level English literature and language	3	No. of starts	52	57	29
		% retention	71	54	97
		% pass rate	82	93	93

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

\* *did not run*

### **Quality of education and training**

123. There is much good teaching, particularly in modern languages classes. Teachers use a variety of approaches to ensure that students make progress in all four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in each lesson. They successfully encourage students of all ages, abilities and experience to participate. In a beginners' Spanish class, correct pronunciation was positively reinforced. This was supported by written representation of pronunciation in English and rhythmic tapping out of syllables by the whole class and individuals. Some small group sizes permit effective individual attention. Good reference books and dictionaries are readily available for the students.

124. The modern languages team has developed a consistent approach to teaching and learning, which is established in all lessons. In English, such consistency was not observed and the sharing of good practice is more limited. In the best classes students of all abilities are fully involved through imaginative activities and good classroom management. In an advanced French class students revised the previous module's vocabulary through a Block-buster game. In an English access class with students of varying abilities, the teacher skilfully ensured that all contributions were valued and used to extend the textual analysis in process. Other English lessons were dominated too much by the teacher and lacked sufficient pace and challenge. Insufficient attention was paid to students' individual learning needs.

125. Most staff are well qualified and experienced in their specialist area. Many modern foreign language teachers are very proficient bilingual speakers. Most teachers benefit from professional development, which has been planned following lesson observations, performance management discussions and new developments in courses being taught.

126. Attendance rates were poor during the inspection and a scheme to promote good attendance has recently been introduced. One teacher's strategy to say farewell to individual students and welcome their attendance the next week seemed to be positively influencing their commitment.

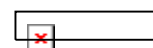
127. Most classrooms have displays of students' work, which are actively referred to in lessons by staff. For full-time students, teaching accommodation with new interactive ICT facilities is very good. Teachers are not yet making full use of the ICT equipment as part of their teaching. Accommodation in the outreach centres is satisfactory. Teachers use teaching strategies suitable to the venues.

128. There are very good systems for assessment and development of oral work in modern foreign languages and for assessing and recording progress in the Open College modern languages system. The monitoring and assessment of coursework were also good in English. There were some excellent examples of an active policy on inclusiveness for adults with learning difficulties. In one foreign language class, when a student had a seizure, staff skilfully provided appropriate attention and his learning was resumed as soon as he had recovered.

### ***Leadership and management***

129. The modern foreign languages staff are effectively co-ordinated to ensure a consistent approach in their use of resources, their teaching and learning strategies and their support for students. Accommodation is well managed and attractive to learners. The English section does not focus sufficiently on the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. High standards have been maintained on advanced-level English courses. However, effective action has not been taken to improve retention rates on the GCSE English course, which have remained low for several years. Schemes of work and lesson plans are in place in all subjects, but there is little concerted attention to the meeting of individual needs. The use of targets for the achievement of individual students is under-developed.

### **Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good achievement by most students
  
- strong improvements in students' confidence
  
- a good range of community partnerships to widen participation
  
- good specialist support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient use of ICT in lessons
  
- insufficient use and monitoring of individual learning objectives

### **Scope of provision**

130. The college offers a range of learning opportunities for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through the Learning to Work programme. This offers externally accredited courses and programmes of personal and skills development linked to goals in individual learning plans. There are currently 33 full-time and 42 part-time students studying at entry level and six students studying at pre-entry level. All the students are over the age of 19.

131. The college also works collaboratively with a range of partner organisations to offer significant outreach classes in a range of community centres. In addition, students from a number of day centres come into college to complete appropriate elements of the Learning to Work programme. There are currently 179 outreach students enrolled. Work-based training in literacy, numeracy and ICT is also offered through a national company which employs significant numbers of employees with a learning difficulty and/or disability. All students aged 16 to 18 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are integrated with support into appropriate cross-college programmes of study.

### **Achievement and standards**

132. Pass rates for students on externally accredited courses are good. 100% pass rates have been achieved on the majority of courses and all are above national averages where these are available. For example, the rate for the one-year Skills Power Certificate was above the national average in both 2000/01 and 2001/02 and the two-year Skills Power Certificate has had 100% pass rates for the past three years. Retention rates on National Skills Profile units are below the national average. This reflects the areas of severe disadvantage from which many of these learners are drawn. Current retention data on the Learning to Work programme indicate some improvement.

133. All full-time and part-time students undertake a comprehensive initial screening and diagnostic assessment during the first few weeks of their programme. This leads to clear individual learning plans with long and short-term goals and targets for each vocational area of study. All students work towards the goals identified in their individual learning plans. External accreditation of learning progress and non-accredited personal and skills development is applied as appropriate. A number of the students received progress prizes at a recent awards ceremony held by a national company.

134. Learning to Work has a range of vocational options including floristry, retail business administration and woodwork. Students undertake work experience where appropriate. For example, a group of students recently completed a placement at the Inland Revenue. Students' progress from outreach provision to main site programmes and a number of students have progressed on to a range of NVQ level 1 programmes.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities , 2000 to 2002**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Skills power certificate (one year)	E	No. of starts	*	74	20
		% retention	*	78	85
		% pass rate	*	98	94
Skills power certificate (two year)	E	No. of starts	36	19	41
		% retention	80	58	83
		% pass rate	100	100	100
National skills profile personal skills	E	No. of starts	*	*	27
		% retention	*	*	81
		% pass rate	*	*	100

National skills profile communication (outreach)	E	No. of starts	*	*	43
		% retention	*	*	76
		% pass rate	*	*	100
National skills profile numeracy (outreach)	E	No. of starts	*	*	17
		% retention	*	*	87
		% pass rate	*	*	100

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

**\* course not running**

### ***Quality of education and training***

135. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. In the better lessons, teachers use the interests and experiences of the students to set the learning content. For example, in an ICT lesson, the exercises to be word-processed were linked to local football teams, cathedrals and leisure developments. In an individual learning-support session, the exercises and worksheets designed by the teacher were linked to the student's catering course. In a numeracy class, local timetables and student journeys were used to examine 12 and 24-hour clocks. All of these approaches increased motivation and resulted in a high level of learning. Some teaching of students with profound and complex learning needs is less successful. Some lesson activities and concepts are outside the range of experience and understanding of the students. For example, some students had no understanding of the concept of writing a cheque. Some resources lack sensory stimulation or interest and provide no visual clue for the topic being discussed. For example, monochrome pictures of the four seasons were used.

136. Schemes of work have been produced at all entry levels and lesson plans are completed to the agreed college standards. Each student has clear vocational goals and targets. However, lesson plans do not link sufficiently to the learning goals specified in the students' individual learning plans. Information from these plans is not used effectively to identify and set individual learning objectives within lesson activities. Students' progress is monitored regularly through individual reviews and case conferences but the recording of individual students' progress is not always consistent and small progress steps towards identified targets for students are not always recorded.

137. Students have good access to college IT facilities but there are no computers in classrooms. This restricts learning opportunities and the consolidation of learning. No use is made of appropriate web sites and specialist software. Staff have a strong commitment to inclusive learning and this is reflected in the supportive, adult learning environment they have created. Students value the learning experience and speak positively and clearly of their gains in confidence which enable them to continue learning and personal development. One student, who was typical, said; 'I know I'll never get a cap and gown but I could get an NVQ and that means just as much to me.'

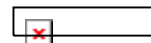
138. Students are well supported in their studies. All full-time and part-time students have weekly tutorials. A good range of specialist resources is provided to ensure full access to the curriculum for any student. Levels of support staffing in class, both in discrete and cross-college provision are good, and there is sensitive provision for individual care arrangements.

### ***Leadership and management***

139. Courses are well managed. There is a strong and committed staff team and communication is good, both within the college and across the outreach provision. Most staff have, or are working towards, a teaching qualification. Although few staff have specialist qualifications for teaching students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, eight are completing a certificate in education which includes a significant inclusive learning element. Self-assessment is comprehensive and well established. All staff have an annual appraisal which results in the setting of clear development

targets. There is good access to staff development opportunities and staff undertake regular professional updating.

## Literacy, numeracy and ESOL



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

### **Strengths**

very good and retention and pass rates

- much excellent teaching
  
- a successful strategy for basic skills development
  
- strong partnerships with community organisations.

### **Weaknesses**

- some ineffective teaching in vocational areas
  
- insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

### **Scope of provision**

140. The college offers a range of literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills courses for adults on a part-time basis. Classes take place at the main college site, at outreach centres within the community, through programmes in partnership with the Sefton family literacy initiative and through a franchise arrangement. The proportion of basic skills learners from areas with a high level of disadvantage is very high at 79%. Basic skills classes are provided to all full-time foundation-level students on vocational courses. English and mathematics workshops provide basic skills support to students on all programme levels, both by referral from teachers and on a drop-in basis. At the time of inspection there were 815 enrolments on basic skills programmes.

### **Achievement and standards**

141. Retention and pass rates are good on all courses. They have improved over the past three years to levels which are well above national benchmarks. Pass rates on the Wordpower and short ESOL courses have been consistently at or well above national averages over the past three years. Progression from level 1 to level 2 courses is good; 50% of learners progressed last year from level

1 numeracy to GCSE mathematics.

142. Students' oral and written work is of a good standard. Most part-time adult students have well-organised folders of their work, showing good progress. Initial diagnostic assessment is carried out against the new national core curriculum standards, and individual learning plans with clear learning and personal goals are developed. Students make good progress in reaching the targets contained within these plans and achieving external qualifications as appropriate.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in Literacy, numeracy and ESOL , 2000 to 2002***

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Wordpower	1	No. of starts	69	34	49
		% retention	75	59	90
		% pass rate	65	95	100
Numberpower	1	No. of starts	27	**	28
		% retention	85	83	79
		% pass rate	59	0	100
ESOL (short)	1	No. of starts	64	36	30
		% retention	61	64	100
		% pass rate	70	61	73
Spoken English for speakers of other languages (short)	2	No. of starts	*	39	45
		% retention	*	92	98
		% pass rate	*	91	75

Source: ISR (2000 and 2001), college (2002)

***\*did not run***

***\*\* less than 15 starters***

***Quality of education and training***

143. There is much excellent teaching, particularly for students on primary basic skills courses. The best lessons have a clear sense of purpose and incorporate a variety of well-paced learning activities. Teachers plan their lessons to address the learning styles of their students and provide learning resources and demanding learning activities to meet varying abilities. In an ESOL lesson, students worked enthusiastically to learn and demonstrate the correct use of prepositions. Learning was reinforced effectively by a good mix of speaking, listening, reading and writing activities. A refresher mathematics evening class used a mental mathematics game to stimulate learners and to help them share learning. Students felt comfortable and confident in talking about numbers and could explain concepts to each other. ESOL classes make good use of local issues and topics relevant to students' lives. A separate class is offered to ESOL students on the Internet and via e-mail, but there is little routine use of ILT in primary basic skills, even in classrooms where computers are readily available.

144. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy classes for full-time level 1 vocational students is variable and some is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, learning is effectively linked to the vocational area and lessons are planned to meet individual needs. In others, however, teachers give little consideration to the varied range of abilities within the group and do not plan activities which challenge and extend individual learning.

145. All basic skills teachers are familiar with the core curricula and have specialist teaching qualifications. The college has well-developed plans for training vocational lecturers in basic skills teaching. The team of full-time and part-time lecturers regularly participates in staff development and observe each other's lessons to share good practice. Accommodation is generally very good and students with limited mobility have good physical access to classes. The collection of classrooms designated the Skills for Life Centre is well equipped and offers a comfortable working environment for adults, including areas of low comfortable seating for discussion activities or social purposes. Franchised provision offers up-to-date computers for student use. Accommodation in the parents' room of a local primary school is too cramped and poorly equipped.

146. Clear diagnostic assessment procedures for basic skills students lead to advice and guidance about appropriate courses. Some 80% of full-time students referred for basic skills support attend the English and mathematics workshops. Assessment of students' progress is recorded in their individual learning plans. Most reviews are undertaken regularly but some do not involve the student sufficiently in assessing their own progress against the targets set. Students receive good oral feedback on their performance in lessons.

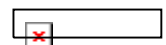
147. The wide range of outreach and family literacy classes in the community has attracted increased enrolments and helped the college both to exceed its own target and to contribute significantly to the Sefton-wide target for primary basic skills. Teaching is designed to meet the needs of the individual and supports students in reaching their learning goals. A very successful ESOL Women's Group is well attended and offers a friendly, safe and comfortable environment for beginner ESOL students.

148. Although part-time Skills for Life students do not follow the college tutorial curriculum, their teachers take on the role of personal tutor. Many primary basic skills students are from disadvantaged backgrounds, including asylum seekers. Students feel that tutors are approachable and that they can talk in confidence about personal issues as well as get support and guidance on their learning plans and goals.

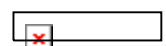
### ***Leadership and management***

149. Curriculum leadership, co-ordination and management are good. The college's director of participation is a champion for basic skills development. She has provided effective leadership in developing the strategy and securing support from senior managers and governors. The development plan has a clear set of action points which are thoroughly monitored. The college has carefully piloted the teaching of basic skills by vocational lecturers on level 1 courses in order to assess its effectiveness. The impact on retention and achievement rates was measured and the resulting improvement in retention rates was used to inform policy. The college is aware of remaining inconsistencies in the teaching of basic skills in vocational areas and is taking steps to address these. Teachers in the basic skills team are observed teaching as part of the college's quality assurance procedures. There are well-documented course files, with clear identification of issues in the self-assessment report and actions taken to address them.

## **Part D: College data**



**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age**





<b>Level</b>	<b>16-18</b>	<b>19+</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1</b>	29	35
<b>2</b>	33	31
<b>3</b>	35	19
<b>4/5</b>	0	1
<b>Other</b>	3	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in spring 2003

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age**

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>16-18</b>	<b>19+</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Enrolments</b>
			<b>%</b>
Science and mathematics	1438	856	12
Land-based provision	25	105	1
Construction	371	275	3
Engineering, technology and manufacture	341	434	4
Business administration, management and professional	457	730	6
Information and communication technology	1585	1201	15
Retailing, customer service and transportation	32	9	0
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	507	232	4
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	372	379	4
Health, social care and public services	816	703	8
Visual and performing arts and media	282	441	4
Humanities	1067	873	10
English, languages and communication	1541	478	11
Foundation programmes	1468	1588	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,302</b>	<b>8,304</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in spring 2003

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		2000	2001	2002	2000	2001	2002
<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	574	635	1375	1535	1640	1434
	Retention rate	68	73	76	73	69	77
	National average	76	77	77	77	78	81
	Pass rate	86	90	80	75	81	83
	National average	73	71	68	68	68	71
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1103	1219	1349	1452	1324	1404
	Retention rate	70	64	73	73	68	74
	National average	76	76	77	77	78	77
	Pass rate	84	74	74	78	80	81
	National average	74	71	70	70	69	68
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	1051	2190	1598	1396	1227	1162
	Retention rate	76	67	81	76	69	75
	National average	75	78	81	76	74	78
	Pass rate	83	72	73	70	81	81
	National average	81	76	73	75	76	74
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	*	1	5	13	45	42
	Retention rate	*	0	40	62	62	74
	National average	*	80	*	86	78	80
	Pass rate	*	*	50	33	39	23
	National average	*	*	*	62	58	59

*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/tertiary colleges or sixth form colleges)*

*\* data unavailable.*

*Sources of information:*

*1. National averages: Benchmarking Data 1997/98 to 1999/2000: Retention and Achievement Rates in Further Education Colleges in England, Learning and Skills Council, September 2002.*

*2. College rates for 1997/8-1998/9: Benchmarking Data 1997/98 to 1999/2000: Retention and Achievement Rates, produced by the Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.*

3. College rates for 1999/2000: provided by the college in spring 2001.

**Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level**

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No. of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	60	32	8	94
Level 2 (intermediate)	62	29	9	58
Level 1 (foundation)	84	16	0	25
Other sessions	74	20	6	31
<b>Totals</b>	65	27	8	208

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