

## Thanet College

### CONTENTS

---

#### [Basic information about the college](#)

#### [Part A: Summary](#)

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

[Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[How well is the college led and managed?](#)

[To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?](#)

[How well are students and trainees guided and supported?](#)

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

#### [Part B: The college as a whole](#)

[Summary of grades awarded to teaching and learning by inspectors](#)

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

#### [Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas](#)

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Construction](#)

[Engineering](#)

[Business and administration](#)

[Information and communications technology](#)

[Hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism](#)

[Hairdressing and beauty therapy](#)

[Health and social care and public services](#)

[Visual and performing arts](#)

[Humanities and English](#)

[Literacy and numeracy](#)

[Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

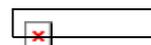
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

[Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2001/02](#)

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

[Table 4: Quality of teaching observed during the inspection by level](#)

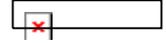
**Basic information about the college**



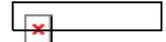
---

Name of college:	Thanet College
Type of college:	Further Education College
Principal:	Geoff Burney
Address of college:	Thanet College Ramsgate Road Broadstairs CT10 1PN
Telephone number:	01843 605040
Fax number:	01843 605013
Chair of governors:	Paul Trumble
Unique reference number:	130728
Name of reporting inspector:	Meena Wood HMI
Dates of inspection:	12-16 May 2003

## Part A: Summary



### Information about the college



Thanet College is a general further education (FE) college situated on the northeast tip of Kent in the East Kent Triangle. Thanet is the second most deprived area in the southeast of England. The unemployment rate is 5% above the national average and the area receives significant funding to assist its regeneration. Eleven wards have the highest levels of deprivation within the Kent and Medway region. Most jobs are in the service sector, with 80% of work in health and social care, public services, wholesale, retail, finance, business, and hospitality and catering. Lack of information and communication technology (ICT) skills among the workforce has been identified as a major factor holding back business expansion. A significant need for literacy and numeracy training has been identified in the area.

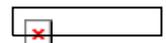
The college is based on a single site near to Broadstairs town centre adjacent to Ramsgate. It has a range of small outreach sites run in partnership with community groups. There are six main outreach sites, of which the largest is Cliftonville Open Learning Resource Centre.

Thanet College is a participating member of the Kent New Technology Initiative in association with five higher education (HE) institutions. The college received Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for its hospitality and catering section.

Work-based learning and distance learning are well developed in the college. The college has developed partnerships with employers and local communities to promote its mission `to provide a broad range of relevant, high quality and cost effective learning opportunities in a supportive and stimulating environment for the community of Thanet and the local area`.

The college enrolled a total of 7,938 part-time and full-time students in 2001/02, of whom 22% were aged 16 to 18 and 78% were adults. Of the total enrolments, 91.3% were white. The largest single minority ethnic group was Chinese, forming 1.4% of the enrolment. The college has expanded the range of provision for adults studying at work and in the community. At the time of inspection the number of students was 6,524.

### How effective is the college?



The quality of teaching and the achievements of students are good in two and satisfactory in nine of the twelve curriculum areas inspected. Provision in construction is unsatisfactory. The quality of assessment and achievement on work-based training and distance-learning programmes is variable between the curriculum areas. The college has been successful in expanding the range of provision for adults studying at work and in the community. However, the number of enrolments is overall slightly in decline. The college's key strengths and the areas to be improved are listed below.

#### **Key strengths**

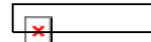
- well-developed and effective partnership arrangements and community links
- responsiveness to employer needs
- good guidance and support for students
- broad curriculum
- management of quality assurance to secure improvement in weak curriculum areas.

***What should be improved***

- the consistency of assessment and achievement on work-based training and distance learning programmes
- insufficient use of literacy, numeracy and key skills in curriculum areas
- challenge in learning for the most able students
- unsystematic management of modern apprenticeship programmes
- enrolment, in those areas where this is declining
- retention and pass rates on level 2 courses.

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

## Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas

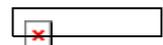


The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum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

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Science and mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching is good in biology and chemistry but there are few challenging lesson activities in weaker lessons. Pass rates for both General Certification of Education Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) mathematics are consistently good, but for GCE AS physics and GCSE science they are below average. Students receive strong subject support from teachers in lessons and in tutorials. There is inadequate quality assurance.
Construction	<b>Unsatisfactory.</b> Management of health and safety practices is poor. Work-based assessment does not enable students to progress beyond satisfactory levels of attainment. Practical teaching is good and makes effective use of self-learning packs to meet individual students' needs. Pass and retention rates on a number of courses are poor. There are no work experience opportunities for full-time students aged 16 to 18.
Engineering	<b>Satisfactory.</b> The majority of teaching and learning are good and well supported by effective use of information technology (IT). Retention rates are improving but there is a declining pass rate on vehicle engineering level 2 and pass rates for modern apprenticeship programmes are low. Progression into employment from National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 performing engineering operations is good.
Business and administration	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass and retention rates vary considerably with poor retention rates on full-time business courses and low achievement of full awards on several advanced courses. Teaching and assessment practices are good though lessons occasionally fail to motivate and interest all students. The broad range of courses promotes progression opportunities and responds particularly well to employees' needs.
Information and communications technology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Courses are planned effectively and students produce a good standard of work. Pass rates on the national diploma course are unsatisfactory. On full-time courses, insufficient use is made of external business links to enhance learning. Good additional support is provided for students, but individual learning plans for full-time students are underdeveloped. The section is well equipped with industry-standard facilities.
Hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism	<b>Good.</b> Teaching and learning are particularly good on catering courses. Specialist resources for hospitality and tourism are excellent. Retention and pass rates on NVQ level 2 food preparation and the diploma in health and fitness are good. Teaching on the NVQ level 2 travel course is unsatisfactory. Travel courses are poorly managed. Management of catering provisions and health and fitness is good.
Hairdressing and beauty	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Work-based learning is unsatisfactory. Teaching and

therapy	learning of practical and theoretical subjects are good, but the procedures for assessment of students' learning in practical contexts are underdeveloped. Opportunities for students to access full-time and part-time courses are good. The integration of learning support and key skills is ineffective. Students make inadequate progress and pass rates for the full framework in work-based learning are poor.
Health and social care	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Most teaching on courses for adults is good, and retention and pass rates are high. Assessment on college-based and work-based courses is satisfactory. Management of the early years courses is good, with vocationally relevant teaching integrated well with work experience. Public services courses are poorly managed. Despite a full range of work-based provision in care, and the NHS apprenticeship scheme, there is no full-time provision.
Visual and performing arts and media	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Retention and pass rates in most subjects are below the average for the sector but show improving trends. Students are not sufficiently challenged in art and design lessons and there is some poor teaching. Teaching in performing arts is stimulating. Assessment in all areas is thorough and students are motivated by the support and encouragement of their teachers.
Humanities and English	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Much of the teaching provides students with sound learning objectives and opportunities to participate. Some teaching lacks variety and the use of ICT is underdeveloped. Pass rates on many courses have improved but GCE AS achievement is poor in several subjects, and recruitment on most courses has declined. Support for students is strong and retention rates on many courses improved in 2002.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Literacy and numeracy courses are well planned and teaching is generally good. Individual and group learning support for literacy and numeracy skills are inadequately integrated across most curriculum areas. A wide range of innovative provision in the community has helped increase participation of new students. Retention and pass rates are satisfactory, but there is insufficient target setting in individual learning plans.
Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	<b>Good.</b> Transition to college and progression opportunities for students are well managed. Most teaching is good. Students are motivated by gaining accreditation, but their progress is difficult to determine because of the lack of detail in individual learning plans. There is some excellent specialist accommodation but learning conditions in some workshops and classrooms are poor. High pass rates on the vocational access certificate reflect good student attainment on vocational and core modules.

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

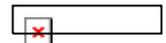


Leadership and management are satisfactory. Since the last inspection by the Further Education Funding Council in 1998, senior management has been successful in preserving the strong financial position of the college, in making improvements to accommodation and equipment, and in expanding the range of courses for adults studying at work and in the community. Governors and senior managers have developed an effective process of strategic planning which reflects the college mission to serve the local community. They have had less success in improving the quality of

significant weaknesses in construction, leisure, travel and public services courses. The provision of modern apprenticeship programmes, although small, has received insufficient attention. The overall management of this area is unsatisfactory. The self-assessment report has not recognised the extent of the weaknesses in the area of work-based learning.

On the basis of overall retention and pass rates and the college's contribution to supporting local economic development and improving participation in education and training, the college offers satisfactory value for money.

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



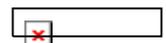
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory.

The college accords high priority to meeting the needs of its local communities and to the social inclusion of students from all backgrounds. It has widened its core programmes to include courses that attract new learners. Productive partnerships with local communities and employers have extended opportunities for learning within the community. Flexible modes of attendance are offered, including distance learning and work-based learning.

Full-time courses are available at all levels in most areas of the curriculum, although there are some significant gaps in vocational provision for students age 16 to 18, for example, in health and social care. Almost 3% of the college's students are from minority ethnic backgrounds compared with 2.3% within the local population. A wide range of student support services is available and the network of support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is strong. The college has developed a comprehensive basic skills strategy that includes literacy, numeracy and English as a second language (ESOL), although there is insufficient staffing to effectively implement it. Basic skills training for all college staff has raised awareness of students' literacy and numeracy needs.

Amendments have been made to the college's equal opportunities policy to meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001. Progress in implementing these amendments is monitored. Facilities for students with restricted mobility are generally satisfactory. In response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the college has produced a race equality policy and action plan and has made some progress in its implementation. Anti-harassment officers have been appointed and retention rates and students' achievements are analysed in relation to equality monitoring data. Activities have yet to have a clear impact on teaching, learning and attainment.

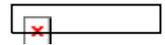
### **How well are students and trainees guided and supported?**



Support and guidance arrangements for students are good. Since the last inspection, the college has introduced a system to identify 'at risk' students at enrolment. It has also increased the provision of additional learning support. A wide range of support, guidance and welfare services is available to full-time and part-time students and trainees. All students, including those who have disabilities, learning difficulties or dyslexia, are well supported. They receive good advice and guidance when they first apply to the college and later when they are enrolled on courses. A satisfactory range of publicity material and resources is available to inform students of the range of courses and services. Induction is carried out well and includes an initial assessment of students' additional learning needs. However, induction into distance learning and work-based programmes is not as well

have increased. However, the support is not effectively integrated in all curriculum areas. All students receive regular tutorials, including group sessions and one-to-one reviews. Not all curriculum areas have effective tutorial arrangements. Retention rates are variable and below national averages on some courses. Individual learning plans are used effectively to set clear targets for students in some curriculum areas, for example, specific targets for how to improve writing skills in literacy. In other areas, however, they are not used so well and target setting is weak. Both the quality of individual learning plans and students' attendance are centrally monitored by senior management but the impact is variable across the college.

### **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***

- relations between staff and students
  
- the support provided by tutors and teachers
  
- the welcoming adult environment
  
- the learning resource centre
  
- flexible study arrangements
  
- fair assessment.

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

- insufficient car parking
  
- some inappropriate and out-of-date library books

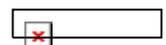
- poor quality of food in café
  
- too many timetable changes
  
- the teaching of key skills.

### 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

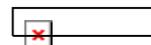


Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	68	21	11
19+ and WBL *	59	38	3
Learning 16-18	65	26	9
19+ and WBL *	55	41	4

*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. Overall, retention and pass rates have improved, and significantly so, between 2000/01 and 2001/02, in particular for adults. There is, however, considerable variation in the performance between curriculum areas and retention and pass rates on some level 2 courses are unsatisfactory. Adult learners perform well on short courses. A slightly higher proportion of good or better teaching was observed at the last inspection in 1998, by the Further Education Funding Council, and the amount of less-than-satisfactory teaching has increased.
2. Most of the schools previously attended by the 16-year-old college entrants have attainment levels that are below the national average. Sixth forms exist in three grammar schools and three non-selective schools. The remaining five non-selective schools serve the 11 to 16 age group. The proportion of pupils in six of these schools that gained five or more A\* to C grades in the GCSE ranged from 4% to 41%, well below the national average of 52% and the Kent average of 54%. The college's highest intake of students aged 16 to 18 was from one of these main feeder schools, which performed above the national and Kent averages, at 55%.
3. There is variation between the achievements of students aged 16 to 18 and adults, between levels and within curriculum areas. Pass rates on GCSE courses, are low. For example, only 46% of the 71 students who completed GCSE English in 2001 achieved grade A\* to C. A marked improvement in achievement occurred in 2002, when 70% of the 40 students who completed the course achieved a grade C or better. The pass rate for hair and beauty NVQ level 1 is 100% but the proportion of students who achieve the framework on the hair and beauty modern apprentice programme is poor. Some achievements are below the national average because students are not able to complete within the specified time frame. Achievements in catering are very good on NVQ food preparation and cooking at level 2 but poor on the NVQ level 3 advanced craft food preparation and cooking course. In engineering, pass rates on several courses vary significantly from year to year. Pass rates are unsatisfactory on NVQ performing manufacturing operations and NVQ vehicle maintenance and repair. However, there were high retention and pass rates for the diploma in health and fitness and excellent pass rates on GCSE mathematics courses in 2002.
4. Senior managers receive regular reports at course level to monitor attendance trends. The average class size during the inspection was below the sector average, at 9, and student attendance, at 73%, was low.
5. No systematic mechanism is used for analysing how much progress students make in relation to their prior attainment. The college uses a value added system for setting and monitoring minimum target grades only for students on GCE AS and A2 programmes. This data shows that, over the last three years, students in most areas have progressed well from GCSE to GCE AS and A2. However, students on GCE A2 geography, history, sociology and chemistry courses and those on GCE AS sociology, English language and literature, geography, physics, chemistry, art and design, and history courses had not made the progress indicated by their GCSE grades. Data on prior attainment is not used to inform target setting for other groups of students. As a consequence, the college is unable to make reliable judgements about the impact of programmes of study, tutorials and additional support on students' achievements.
6. The standards achieved by students in lessons and in their work vary from the excellent to the very weak. Hospitality and catering students have developed a pride in their work and have a sound sense of professional standards. Some students on NVQ level 2 courses prepare highly complex pastry dishes far beyond the level expected. During science and mathematics lessons, adult students are very well motivated and standards of work are high, while students aged 16 to 18 are mostly working to at least satisfactory levels. Mathematics students are able to transfer concepts to practical contexts. In GCE AS mathematics lessons, students can calculate the values of definite integrals using the Trapezium Rule and Simpson's Rule through simplifying the equations. Students

on the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) and Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) national courses in business speak confidently in lessons and demonstrate good research skills.

7. Many administration students successfully use key skills in vocational studies through useful survey activities. However, in adult ICT classes at the college, some students have difficulty recalling simple commands. Students on early years courses demonstrate a high standard of practical and craft skills, in one case through the production of some very striking photographic displays and imaginative anatomical models. In humanities lessons, in some cases, the quality of students' ideas is not matched by their ability to express them clearly and accurately. In many English classes, students speak with confidence and demonstrate successful learning. In literacy lessons, adult students develop skills in spelling and grammar and gain confidence in their speaking and presentation skills. On numeracy courses, they develop skills in calculation and estimation. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, participating in activities that extend their skills and knowledge. However, in some areas, such as hair and beauty, and on work-based learning courses, students do not develop their key skills adequately. In most of the curriculum areas, students' levels of attainment are no better than satisfactory and, in many areas, more able students are not extended sufficiently to develop critical and analytical skills and subject knowledge.

8. Some 255 full-time and part-time students successfully completed level 3 courses and, of these, 62% progressed to HE in 2001/02. There are appropriate opportunities for progression to higher levels of work from most foundation and intermediate courses within the college, and good opportunities for progression from community venues to the college. In 2001/02, 60 students progressed to courses at Canterbury Christ Church University College and around 19% of students attending community-based provision progressed to FE programmes on the main college campus.

9. The college is successful in tracking the progression of its full-time students. In 2001/02, 34% progressed to FE, 19% to HE and 40% to employment.

10. There has been an overall slight decline in enrolments over the three years to 2002/03. The college enrolled a total of 7,938 part-time and full-time students in 2001/02, of whom 1,733 were aged 16 to 18 and 6,205 were adults, in comparison with the figures for 2000/01, when the college had enrolled 8,022 students. At the time of inspection, the number of students was 6,524. The greatest proportion of these students is enrolled on level 2 courses: some 44% of students aged 16 to 18 and 29% of adults. Proportionately more adult students are enrolled on level 3 courses, at 23%, as compared with 18% of students aged 16 to 18. Some 32% of enrolments for students aged 16 to 18 and 29% of adults enrolments are on level 1 courses. From 2000/01 to 2002/03, there was an increase from one-fifth to one-third of total college enrolments for both age groups at level 1. This was in response to the college's widening participation strategy.

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

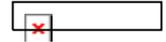
11. Between 1999 and 2002, the achievement of students aged 16 to 18 at level 1 improved to significantly above the national average, at 85%, but retention rates were below or at the national average over the same period. At level 2, both pass and retention rates have been below or at the national average. For instance, the intermediate General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) IT pass and retention rates were below the national average in 2002. At level 3, overall retention rates improved to above the national average, at 82%, in 2002. However, the rate of completion of the framework for some modern apprentices is poor, especially in construction, engineering and hairdressing. In 2001/02, 10% of students aged 16 to 18 achieved key skills qualifications, which is significantly below the national average.

### **Adult learners**

12. Adult students on short courses had an overall pass rate of 87% in 2001/02. Retention and pass rates for adult students on entry level foundation, intermediate and advanced level courses have improved over the last three years and are good and above the national average for 2001/02. At level 1, the pass rate is 81%, at level 2 it is 79% and at level 3 it is 82%. However, achievement

levels are variable within curriculum areas and in work-based learning, particularly for catering. Those on distance learning programmes are slow to complete. The key skills pass rate for adults in 2001/02 was very poor, reaching only 5%.

## Quality of education and training



13. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 211 sessions. Teaching was good or better in 64% of lessons, satisfactory in 29% and less than satisfactory in 7%. Learning was good or better in 64% of lessons, satisfactory in 28% and less than satisfactory in 8%. Some teaching is unsatisfactory in 10 of the 12 curriculum areas inspected. Teaching is very good or excellent in 26% of lessons. The best teaching is in hospitality and catering, science and mathematics, performing arts and on courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Where teaching groups are adult or predominantly adult, teaching is marginally less effective, with 61.5% of such lessons being good or outstanding.

14. The more effective lessons are well planned and learning objectives are clear and understood by students. Relationships between students and teachers are good and students are motivated and committed to learning. During biology lessons teachers motivate students through effective group tasks to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of concepts and processes. In mathematics classes, adults are helped through individual activities to gain confidence in, for instance, substituting values into equations. Business students who are employees are encouraged to apply their prior knowledge to real business situations, and do so with confidence. In catering, theoretical principles are clearly demonstrated through expertly handled practical tasks. Hairdressing and beauty therapy students are taught the underpinning knowledge in imaginative and challenging ways.

15. In counselling classes, multicultural issues are handled sensitively, for instance, through the use of appropriate video material. There are some effective examples of the integration of the teaching of literacy and numeracy on early years and construction courses. Students at all levels are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and make effective use of their time and the learning opportunities offered to them. In the most effective lessons for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learning outcomes are clearly defined and linked to students' individual learning plans. Some lessons are unimaginative and poorly planned. Teachers do not provide sufficient activities to stimulate students' interest in their work and do not check that they are learning. Insufficient attention is given to the needs of students with different abilities and experience. There is little opportunity for discussion, questioning is superficial and only involves a part of the group. Students are unclear about the purpose of the task set.

16. There is much good practical teaching. In construction, students benefit from clear demonstrations of craft skills and individual tuition during practical lessons. Teachers make good use of differentiated practical learning project packs to enable students to work at their own individual pace, in one instance, at different stages of a paint application process. Practical teaching is often set in realistic vocational contexts and real life situations, which helps to motivate students.

17. Teachers rely on their own industrial and commercial experience to add realism to course activities. In the best lessons in computing and IT, teachers help students to think through and often solve their own problems. In engineering, teachers ensure that students understand the theory underpinning practical work and give students good feedback on the quality of their work. Students' understanding of practical work is carefully checked. Practical lessons in science are well planned and students carry out tasks with enthusiasm and confidence.

18. Teachers work well as a team to ensure that commercial standards are applied in the college hairdressing salons and that students' work demonstrates a high standard of practical skills.

19. Key skills for full-time students are underdeveloped. All full-time students at level 2 and above are expected to study key skills. Although the numbers of students successfully completing the key skills tests and portfolios increased in 2002, the overall pass rate on long courses continues to be low, at 10%. The college has appointed key skills champions to help raise achievement levels and has set a target of 18% for 2003. ICT students make good progress on the key skills elements of their courses. In many areas, key skills are not taught as an integral part of the modern apprentice framework, work-based learning and within vocational courses such as hairdressing and beauty therapy and business. Insufficient attention is given to developing and assessing key skills in practical, work-related contexts.

20. Teachers are well qualified. Most staff teaching vocational subjects have relevant industrial and commercial experience and a majority are working towards a recognised teaching qualification. Most support staff and the work-based assessors are also appropriately qualified. Recently, the college has experienced significant difficulties in recruiting staff in some areas, such as public services, catering, and engineering and there are not enough assessors in the workplace for hairdressing, beauty and construction. There has been a lack of continuity and disruption in students' learning, particularly in leisure and tourism, catering and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

21. Classrooms are well maintained and most have projection facilities. Some also have facilities for powerpoint presentation. A new independence centre provides entry-level students with an excellent environment for learning life skills. Students are able to use particularly good specialist resources in science and maths, catering, leisure and tourism, and carpentry. However, resources for hair and beauty and brickwork are not good and this has an adverse effect on students' learning. Some accommodation, for example, in painting and decorating, and brickwork, is cramped and restricts the learning activities that can take place. Hair and beauty salons are shabby and do not replicate commercial standards, whilst classrooms used by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not provide an appropriate learning environment for students. Leaking roofs create a potentially dangerous situation in construction and engineering areas.

22. The college has an excellent learning centre, which attracts around 4,000 users each week. The centre is well equipped with over 100 computers and an audio, video and book library but some of the stock lacks up-to-date commercial relevance. The outreach learning centre at the Cliftonville is well equipped and is valued highly by students.

23. The new intranet and web site are used particularly effectively by students and staff on care, ICT, business and catering courses. Teachers make good use of differentiated practical learning materials. A college champion trains staff to use IT as an aid to learning. All staff development activity arises from the college's strategic priorities or from training needs identified in appraisal and teacher observation. The industrial placement scheme for staff is particularly successful, with 92 placements in the last 18 months.

24. A cross-college system has been developed that has helped standardise internal and external verification and moderation. External verifiers' reports are monitored by the quality improvement section and used to share good practice. However, the quality of internal verification varies across the college. For instance, there is inconsistent internal verification in engineering, and none for internally certificated courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

25. Assessment is satisfactory or better in all curriculum areas. Most procedures comply with awarding body requirements. For example, in visual and performing arts, business and administration, hospitality, catering and sport, and in humanities and English, the quality of assessment is thorough, well planned and regular. Students have a good understanding of how they will be assessed and their overall progress. They are encouraged to evaluate their own performance. There is some good tracking of learning in ICT. Although in most areas there is regular marking of work, with constructive oral and written feedback to students, it does not always inform learning and there are examples of over-generous marking. In literacy and numeracy and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, reviews often lack detail and students are not always sufficiently involved in the assessment process.

26. Assessment practice is weak for some work-based students and for those on distance learning programmes. Modern apprentices on accounting and administration courses have too few opportunities to discuss their progress in joint meetings with both the employer and the college assessors. In construction, there is no work-based assessment and in hair and beauty, there are few assessors in salons to support students. However, in business administration there are good flexible arrangements for review and assessment for work-based and distance learning students. There is a lack of rigour in assessment for catering students undertaking distance learning who make slow progress towards their NVQ accreditation. However, on early years and hairdressing courses, the monitoring of students' progress is rigorous. There are too many variations in the assessment of key skills. In many curriculum areas they are not assessed as part of the students' normal coursework.

27. Teachers do not make effective use of value added measurements to assess the impact of teaching on individuals and groups of students. Formative assessment is increasingly being linked to the development of learning plans. Parents and employers are kept informed of the progress of students through termly reports. Employer-sponsored students have a dedicated college contact who advises on progress.

28. By collaborating with partners to widen participation and to respond to the educational and training needs of the region, the college has extended its core programme. A broad range of full-time and part-time course is provided in most curriculum areas. Most courses are vocational, and in most areas meet the needs of both students aged 16 to 18 and adults in the local community. However, there is inadequate full-time vocational provision in health and social care for students aged 16 to 18, which is a significant gap in the context of local work opportunities.

29. Most programmes offer good progression routes within the college. Over 2,000 part-time students attend a range of vocational, literacy, numeracy, ICT and access to HE courses located on the premises of 29 community partners, in college outreach centres, employers' premises and schools. In 2002, 60 students progressed to courses at Canterbury Christ Church University College and around 19% of students attending community-based provision progressed to FE programmes on the main college campus. The college works with formal groups such as the 14 to 16 Increased Flexibility group, the Thanet Basic Skills Partnership, the ESOL pathfinder project and the East Kent Marketing Initiative. Relationships between the partners are good but communication channels are not always effective. As a provider for the basic skills pathfinder project, a wide range of partnership arrangements has been developed. The considerable expansion of provision in community locations has increased enrolments for courses, which include some literacy and numeracy courses, from 241 in 2000, to 1,861 in January 2003.

30. The college has very productive links with employers in business, catering and engineering. Good relations with employers have contributed to the success of work placements, distance learning courses and employment for students. For instance, in 2001/02, over 500 students were recruited to distance learning business programmes. All vocational subjects other than construction provided students with work experience.

31. The college's prospectuses for full-time and part-time students were previously difficult to understand and have been redesigned. The college has developed innovative ways of widening participation of adults through marketing stands in supermarkets, markets and local carnivals.

32. Opportunities for students to take additional qualifications in catering, leisure and tourism are good, but they are insufficient in other areas. Although a wide range of enrichment programmes is offered, it is generally not well attended by students. Many students are unclear about what they are expected to complete within the enrichment programme, and many have little knowledge of the programme.

33. Good school links are available at NVQ level 1. Some 65 students from 4 local schools and a special school attend courses in performing arts, engineering operations, distributive operations and vocational GCSEs in health and social care.

34. A comprehensive range of support services is co-ordinated through the college student services

section. Those for full-time students aged 16 to 18 are well developed, but services are less accessible for part-time adult students and particularly for those at some of the community sites.

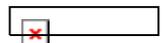
35. The re-location of the admissions team to a more spacious building is planned for later in the year. The college's pre-entry services also include activities with local schools, taster sessions and the 'guidelines' project, which effectively supports progression from community-based learning into the college. Admissions procedures are clear and well documented. Initial assessment takes place during the enrolment process for all full-time students. Entrance criteria for most courses are in line with national norms. Students complete a variety of initial assessments during the admissions process and the results help identify the key skills, literacy, numeracy and learning support needs for all full-time and part-time students on vocational courses and literacy and numeracy students. Despite a significant increase in the number of students identified as needing additional help with literacy and numeracy, a large number are accepted on to vocational and academic courses with literacy and numeracy skills below those required by their course. For literacy and numeracy students and those with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities, initial assessment does not sufficiently diagnose the level of skills. There are wide variations in the quality and take-up of initial assessment by part-time students and by students in community education. Induction is effective, with good documentation, and enables students to settle quickly into their courses at the college. Induction of distance learning and work-based learning for students is underdeveloped and many students are unaware of the various components of the modern apprentice framework.

36. The planning of the tutorial system is effective. All full-time students have a personal tutor, group tutorials and opportunities for individual action planning and/or review of progress. However, in many areas, individual learning plans lack clarity and do not contain sufficient target setting or action planning with students to help them improve the standard of their work or to prevent them from withdrawing from courses. There are variations across the college in understanding the purpose of plans and in how effectively they are used to set short and long-term learning goals. Group tutorials are informative and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop study skills.

37. There is some good subject support, particularly in science and maths, humanities and English. Part-time students have limited opportunities for tutorial support. Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality are inconsistent. There is good support for students with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes a small but effective dyslexia support service and a range of specialist support arrangements for students with hearing, visual and/or physical impairment. The number of student self-referrals for support has increased considerably, from 167 students in 2000/01, to 620 students in the current year. Students receive individual support in the skills centre as well as literacy and numeracy support within vocational areas. However, the integration of literacy and numeracy support into vocational programmes is at an early stage of development and there are wide variations in the quality of this support across the college. In hair and beauty, it is unsatisfactory and in construction, it is good.

38. Students are well supported by their teachers and have access to good careers guidance, welfare advice, and counselling. The services are responsive, well used and effectively organised. They provide educational and careers guidance as well as some welfare sessions within the community.

## **Leadership and management**



39. Since the last inspection, senior management has maintained the strong financial position of the college. Improvements have been made to accommodation and equipment and the range of courses for adults studying at work and in the community has been expanded. Retention and pass rates have improved overall, especially between 2000/01 and 2001/02 and for adult students, though

done to improve the quality of teaching, learning and attainment. Although the provision of modern apprenticeship programmes has been a small element of provision, it has received insufficient attention and students' achievements and the overall co-ordination of this area are unsatisfactory.

40. The process of strategic planning is well managed and it is linked effectively to the production of annual plans, targets and performance indicators. Governors and senior managers have adopted a long-term approach, so that the strategic plan covers a nine-year period with corporate aims for the ensuing three-year period. The plan reflects the strong emphasis of the college mission to serve the local community of Thanet. Annual divisional plans contain performance indicators and specific targets derived from the strategic objectives, and this enables progress to be monitored. The appraisal of all managers is linked closely to the annual plan for their area.

41. Securing sustained improvements to retention rates and students' achievements has been a high priority for management. Despite an improving trend between 1998/99 and 2000/01, performance remained below the national average for comparable colleges in many respects. However, between 2000/01 and 2001/02, retention and pass rates for adult students and for students aged 16 to 18 on level 1 and level 3 courses show a marked improvement, rising to above the national averages. Major improvements have been made to the curriculum, for example, through the introduction of gateway courses to develop students' study and basic skills before they progress to a vocational qualification. Despite these overall improvements, in many of the curriculum areas inspected, retention and pass rates are unsatisfactory, particularly on one-year vocational courses at level 2.

42. The effectiveness of curriculum management varies significantly across the institution. It is satisfactory in hotel and catering, where the college has CoVE status, in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, early years courses and engineering. There are key weaknesses in the management of construction, and leisure and travel. Senior management is aware of the need to improve management skills, particularly in the areas of communication and the management of people. An external consulting group has provided a detailed analysis of management competencies for the senior management team and management training is receiving high levels of attention. Some aspects of cross-curriculum management are also weak. Poor pass rates for key skill qualifications and the modern apprenticeship framework reflect inadequate attention to assessment, student tracking and the integration of key skills. Senior managers recognise these weaknesses and are addressing them.

43. A robust system of quality audit based upon the criteria in the Common Inspection Framework is used to identify weaknesses in curriculum areas. For example, during 2001/02, construction, engineering, childhood studies and care were assessed as unsatisfactory and placed in 'recovery'. Additional resources and support were provided to improve standards of teaching and learning. Progress has been made, particularly in engineering, care and childhood studies. There is a self-critical system of lesson observation, the results of which generally matched those of the inspection. Self-assessment and quality assurance procedures have been successful in informing senior managers about the strengths and weaknesses of particular curriculum areas.

44. There are extensive opportunities for staff development and training. About 80% of teachers have qualifications at the level of certificate of education or post-graduate certificate of education, and others are undergoing in-house training. Approximately 14% of the teaching hours are provided by hourly paid staff supplied by an external agency. The quality of teaching of this group was poorer than that of the staff directly employed by the college. In some curriculum areas, for example, travel and sports, there is too much reliance on these teachers, resulting in a lack of continuity and some disruption to students' learning.

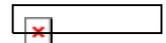
45. Governors, managers and course teams have the necessary statistical reports with which to judge performance over time and against national averages. Some curriculum managers use on-line data on admissions, enrolments, retention, and pass rates very effectively, for example, on health and care courses, where target setting and monitoring are well embedded. In other sections, such as hairdressing and beauty therapy, the process of setting and monitoring targets is not effective. There is inadequate collation of monitoring data on modern apprenticeship programmes.

46. The college has made satisfactory progress with the promotion of equal opportunities. Policies for equal opportunities and race equality are comprehensive and comply with statutory requirements. An equality committee is responsible for monitoring their implementation and one of the college's advanced practitioners serves as the college's equality and diversity co-ordinator. A comprehensive induction programme for members of staff includes training in equal opportunities and cultural awareness. There are systematic procedures for mentoring staff, including those new to the college and others who are judged to be under-performing as a result of lesson observation and appraisal. Promotional materials, admissions procedures and schemes of work are being reviewed to ensure that opportunities to promote equality are used.

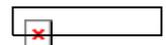
47. Governors are involved systematically in reviewing strategy and in critical scrutiny of financial management. The quality standards committee receives regular reports on retention rates and students' achievements and has also received summaries of the outcomes of quality audit. Governors have agreed the aim of achieving 'grade 2' performance for each curriculum area. Although governors were aware of issues identified through the self-assessment process, they were unaware of the extent of the weaknesses in curriculum areas that were revealed by the inspection. The scrutiny of academic performance is less rigorous than that of finance and resources.

48. Financial management is good. The college is currently in financial category A. Expenditure is carefully monitored and the college has made significant improvements to accommodation and equipment. On the basis of overall retention and pass rates and the college's contribution to supporting economic development and improving participation in education and training, the college offers satisfactory value for money.

### Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



#### Science and mathematics



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

#### **Strengths**

- high GCE AS and GCSE mathematics pass rates
  
- good teaching of biology and chemistry
  
- good range of level 2 mathematics provision
  
- effective subject support for students.

### **Weaknesses**

- low pass rates for GCE AS physics and GCSE science
- not enough challenging activities in weaker lessons
- declining enrolments for science and mathematics
- inadequate quality assurance for science and mathematics.

### **Scope of provision**

49. A range of science and mathematics courses is provided at levels 2 and 3. At GCE AS, there are currently 120 enrolments for biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and statistics courses, and about one-third of that number study for GCE Advanced level (A level). GCSE mathematics has 70 enrolments and there are 36 students enrolled for biological subjects. Most GCE and GCSE classes contain a mixture of students aged 16 to 18 and adults. Part-time mathematics and statistics evening provision is available at GCSE and GCE AS. Access to HE comprises mathematics and statistics and some level 2 science. Students enrolled on other subjects across the college study one or more Open College Network (OCN) level 2 mathematics units, well suited to adult students.

50. Numbers of students almost all science and mathematics courses have declined in recent years, but recruitment to statistics courses is good.

### **Achievement and standards**

51. Pass rates for adult students following access courses in science, mathematics and ICT are high, with good retention rates and high rates of progression to HE. Both GCSE mathematics and OCN level 2 mathematics pass rates are also well above the national average. At GCE A level in 2002, all science subjects except chemistry had very high pass rates. GCE AS results improved in 2002, with good pass rates in chemistry, mathematics and statistics but the GCE AS physics pass rates over the last two years have been well below the national average, with below average retention rates.

52. Attendance at lessons is slightly below average, but punctuality is good. During lessons, adult students are very well motivated, and standards of work are high, whilst students aged 16 to 18 are mostly working to at least satisfactory levels. Students have appropriate science practical skills: for example, students on the BTEC national certificate science course can construct suitable electrical circuits to measure the internal resistance of a battery. Statistics students are able to use a range of formulae to carry out statistical tests, and are confident in their analysis of the results.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	133	95	64

		% retention	69	73	84
		% pass rate	57	59	72
GCSE science	2	No. of starts	29	35	38
		% retention	62	71	79
		% pass rate	44	36	30
GCE AS biology	3	No. of starts	*	29	25
		% retention	*	79	80
		% pass rate	*	91	65
GCE AS chemistry	3	No. of starts	*	21	15
		% retention	*	90	60
		% pass rate	*	58	89
GCE AS physics	3	No. of starts	*	22	15
		% retention	*	77	73
		% pass rate	*	41	55
GCE AS mathematics	3	No. of starts	*	37	26
		% retention	*	81	85
		% pass rate	*	69	73

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

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

53. Standards of teaching and learning in science are good, with much good teaching in biology and chemistry. In mathematics and statistics teaching is mainly satisfactory or better, but includes both unsatisfactory and outstanding. Software programmes for mathematics and statistics and web sites for chemistry and physics enhance students' independent learning and confidence in ICT skills. However, there is currently little use of ICT in physics. Some mathematics assignments are imaginatively designed, using statistical methods in the context of the purchase of a personal computer and investigations on the price and taste of coffee. Biology teachers make very good use of overhead projector transparencies and use group-work tasks to good effect to consolidate ideas. For instance, students developed a good understanding of photosynthesis through the establishment of a tomato growing business. Where teaching is less effective, tasks are not planned for the varying abilities of students and there are insufficient checks on learning. Students were bored in physics and mathematics revision classes where the whole lesson was spent completing past examination papers. Application of number key skills is integrated into all courses, but the effectiveness of the students' learning has not yet been assessed. Students show great commitment to their studies and persevere even when they find work difficult. For example, adults who had previously found mathematics difficult were able, through individual help, to gain confidence in substituting values into equations.

54. Science and mathematics teachers are well qualified and have benefited from recent professional development, especially in mathematics and biology. They are well supported by experienced technicians. Laboratories and teaching classrooms for mathematics are appropriately equipped. There is very little mathematics display, other than posters related to GCSE topics.

55. Internal verification on vocational and access courses is satisfactory. There is regular assessment of students' progress. Students on access and some mathematics courses are given effective guidance on the quality of their work and improvements needed, but in other cases marking has insufficient comments. There is no monitoring of the amount of homework set. Appropriate reports are provided for parents and employers.

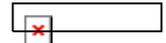
56. Good co-operation with a local pharmaceutical company provides effective support for biology teaching, through industrial visits, and the day release BTEC national certificate science course was developed as a joint initiative. Visiting speakers, for example, to support teaching on genetic fingerprinting, have contributed to the teaching of biology. However there have been few extra curricular activities for mathematics and other science subjects.

57. Diagnosis of students' additional support needs leads to good subject support within lessons. Tutorials are well planned. Students value the help they receive from teachers. However, teachers are not sufficiently trained to develop the language skills of international students.

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

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with a clear direction and good framework for management at course level. However, quality assurance procedures are inadequate, as they do not identify specific mathematics and science issues including the monitoring of assessment, and marking and planning to cover absent teachers. Little use is made of sharing of good practice in teaching and learning. Self-assessment identifies important issues, such as the decline in enrolments. This lacks rigour and there is a lack of supporting evidence and effective action planning.

### **Construction**



Overall provision in this area is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

### ***Strengths***

- good and improving retention and pass rates on NVQ level 2 courses
  
- good practical teaching
  
- effective use of self-learning packs to support students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention and pass rates on the NVQ level 2 brickwork course
  
- very poor pass rates on the intermediate construction certificate
  
- no work experience available to full-time students aged 16 to 18

- absence of assessment of learning in the workplace
- poor implementation of health and safety practices
- ineffective management of the curriculum.

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

59. The college provides a small range of full-time, part-time and work-based construction craft courses from foundation to advanced level. The crafts include bricklaying, wood occupations and painting and decorating. At the time of the inspection, there were 260 students, of whom nearly half were aged 16 to 18. Approximately 45% of the students are on level 1 programmes, 20% on level 2 and 10% on level 3. Some 66 students undertake work-based programmes, of whom 2 are on apprentice framework programmes. In addition, 30 school pupils from 5 feeder schools attend construction courses on a weekly basis.

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

60. Retention and pass rates over the last three-year period are satisfactory but lack consistency. On NVQ level 1 courses, retention and pass rates are inconsistent and below the national average. On NVQ level 2 courses, these rates are improving and are above the national average. The interior design course retention rate is below the national average. Only 5% of the 31 students on the intermediate construction craft certificate course achieved an award. Key skills qualifications at level 1 have been successfully completed by 21 work-based learners, which represents a high pass rate of 84%.

61. The standards of students' work in practical workshop lessons overall meets course requirements. Trainees' practical skills, in the workplace, are to industrial standards. For example, students' work on stud partition, timber flooring and brickwork was produced to accurate tolerances and finish levels. However, inadequate work-based assessment does not enable students to progress beyond satisfactory levels of attainment. On the interior decorating courses, students' portfolios were of a good standard that incorporated techniques such as airbrush, sponge effects and stencil preparation based on a room conversion project.

62. Attendance during the inspection week was low, at 63%. A sample of retention and pass rates in construction, 2000 to 2002

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ various occupations	1	No. of starts	53	64	32
		% retention	75	63	72
		% pass rate	60	45	65
NVQ various occupations	2	No. of starts	90	112	29
		% retention	68	70	93

		% pass rate	62	65	96
Interior design and decorative techniques	2	No. of starts	*	31	41
		% retention	*	77	64
		% pass rate	*	67	70
NVQ bricklaying (two year)	2	No. of starts	20	31	*
		% retention	40	55	*
		% pass rate	50	18	*
NVQ various occupations	3	No. of starts	13	16	*
		% retention	92	94	*
		% pass rate	100	80	*

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

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

63. In half of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good or outstanding. Lesson plans are generally well organised, with clear outcomes. In the better lessons, teaching is delivered in an industrial context with realistic examples. Craft students' knowledge and skills are developed through the use of knowledge packs capable of supporting students of varying abilities. For instance, a group of six students applying specialist paint finishes were each able to work at different stages of the application process. In the poorer lessons, learning activities are inappropriately planned to meet individual students' needs. In one lesson, the teaching plan was ineffective and students were unable to demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of brickwork bonding techniques. In some of the theory lessons, the pace is too slow for the more able students, with insufficient challenge and extension activities.

64. Teachers are vocationally well qualified and have industrial experience. The specialist accommodation is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient space in craft workshops, which are littered with debris from dismantled brickwork walling. In the brickwork workshop, practical models are sometimes damaged by students and students' work is dismantled. In the wood occupations workshop, access ways are blocked by clamped doorframes or tool racks. A damaged workshop roof leaks water near power supplies. Power tools are excessively noisy owing to the acoustics in the workshop. Trowel occupation tools are not cleaned and are stored inappropriately.

65. Construction sites used by work-based learners are appropriate. They adopt correct safety procedures and range from small house extensions to a three-storey-high flat conversion project.

66. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress at the college are satisfactory. Some assessors' feedback to students is helpful, but other feedback contains insufficient guidance on areas to be improved. All students' progress, including that of work-based learners, is monitored carefully with unit tracking sheets.

67. Work-based training is satisfactorily co-ordinated but assessment practice is inadequate. Employer links have been improved with the placement of 50 college-trained work-based recorders who assist students in building up their portfolios of evidence. However, there is no internal verification or work-based assessment on site, to validate the assessment process and the authenticity of students' evidence.

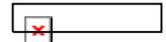
68. Limited enrichment opportunities are available to students, although some have attended a national building exhibition and some decorative technique students have completed supervised project work in the local community.

69. Support and guidance for students are good. All full-time students and work-based learners are given diagnostic tests to assess and identify learning needs. This year, 30 students receive additional support, either individually or in sessions that effectively combine literacy and numeracy skills with the craft subjects. In one session, students developed appropriate skills on estimating linear measurements. Whilst there is satisfactory planning of tutorial programmes, individual learning plans are inadequate and lack detailed action planning.

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

70. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. In October 2001, the college developed a recovery plan to address the weaknesses. The new management structure has improved communications within the small team, but there has been a lack of rigour in staff appraisals over the last 18 months. Schemes of work, lesson planning and an internal verification policy have been introduced but have yet to impact on improvements in students' learning. The self-assessment report is not sufficiently critical and the poor retention and pass rates on some courses have not been adequately addressed. Safety and safe working practices are inadequately implemented. There is a lack of work experience placements for full-time students aged 16 to 18. Work-based assessment and internal verification practices lack rigour and undermine students' attainment. Insufficient curriculum planning limits opportunities for student progression. However, the interior design course has given 30 female students an opportunity to access a predominantly male-dominated curriculum area.

## **Engineering**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good monitoring and support of individual students
  
- good progress into employment from NVQ level 2 performing engineering operations
  
- effective use of computerised learning materials in vehicle engineering
  
- good quality teaching.

### ***Weaknesses***

- declining pass rate on vehicle engineering level 2 course

- o lack of achievements on modern apprenticeship programmes
  
- o inconsistent internal verification.

**Scope of provision**

71. The college provides a small range of full-time and part-time courses. Programmes are developed in response to local demands, and range from entry level to level 2 in manufacturing, mechanical, electronic and vehicle engineering. The college has limited level 3 provision. School link courses are provided as 'taster' courses for local schools. NVQ programmes are offered in performing manufacturing operations, performing engineering operations, vehicle maintenance and repair, engineering design, personal computer maintenance and repair and electronics. Currently, 47 students are on full-time courses, 38 on part-time and 32 on the modern apprentice programme. The Thanet engineering training initiative is very popular with students and employers and provides a supply of trained operatives at NVQ level 2 for local employers. Short courses on grinding wheel regulations are provided for industry.

**Achievement and standards**

72. Pass rates have fallen significantly on the vehicle engineering NVQ level 2 programme, from 75% in 1999/2000, to 25% in 2001/02, compared with a national average of 42%. On performing manufacturing operations NVQ level 1, the pass rate is also declining. Retention rates have been increasing over the last two years and are consistently good on the City and Guilds engineering design programme. No students have completed the modern apprenticeship framework.

73. Students work well independently and support each other. The standard of work reached in practical lessons is good. Students' practical skills enable them to work competently with tools. Most students undertaking laboratory work use test equipment with confidence. For example, they are able to build electronic circuits with a minimum of help. Adults demonstrate greater motivation and the standard of their work is better.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
National diploma in engineering	3	No. of starts	22	*	27
		% retention	25	*	87
		% pass rate	40	*	95
National certificate in engineering	3	No. of starts	15	21	*
		% retention	47	62	*
		% pass rate	43	83	*
NVQ performing engineering operations	2	No. of starts	17	15	21
		% retention	94	60	76
		% pass rate	69	56	88
City and Guilds engineering design	2	No. of starts	16	*	23
		% retention	81	*	87

		% pass rate	77	*	70
--	--	-------------	----	---	----

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

\* fewer than 15 students enrolled

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

74. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in most lessons. Individual students' needs and end-of-lesson evaluations are used to inform detailed lesson planning and schemes of work. The plans provide automatic tracking of students' progress and identify opportunities for gathering evidence on the development of key skills, which are integrated into the programme. In a well-structured lesson, groups of students worked effectively together and demonstrated problem solving skills at suitable levels to identify faults in computers, re-assemble components and carry out a final test for functionality. Good use is made of supporting notes and log sheets to record results. In an engineering science class, students reinforced and extended each other's learning through testing the frictional resistance of different material surfaces to establish the co-efficient of friction. In the poorer lessons, the pace is often slow and the work set does not always match the needs of all the students. In a key skills lesson on interview and job applications, staff used a range of visual aids, word search and timed tasks to add interest and to develop and extend learning. Constructive feedback from teachers during tasks enables students to make significant improvements in most lessons.

75. Members of staff are vocationally qualified and many are new to teaching. General workshop facilities in practical mechanical and vehicle engineering workshops are suitably equipped with a range of welding and fabrication equipment and computer-controlled training machines. However, the roof adjacent to the engineering workshop leaks on to electrical equipment. Students enjoy and make extensive use of learning software, although the use of information and learning technology (ILT) is inconsistent. Most students have access to learning materials on the intranet and are able to use these effectively to access tutor notes missed through absence. Students also have weekly opportunities to work under supervision in a realistic garage environment on customer vehicle servicing. Resources are good. The electronics laboratory and the computer-aided design room are well equipped. Work-based learners have access to a wide range of good resources where they work.

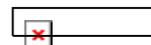
76. Initial assessment is effective in identifying additional learning needs leading to satisfactory support for students.

77. Links with industry and local schools are effective. The Thanet engineering training initiative operates over 20 weeks with students spending 1 day each week in a different local company. On completion of the NVQ at level 2, most students enter employment. Advanced modern apprentices are visited monthly in the workplace. Most companies have their own work-based assessors who are involved in the reviews, but these are not effective in enabling students to make improvements. Although the visits are regular, there is a lack of vocational target setting and monitoring to support completion of framework units.

### **Leadership and management**

78. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with progress in some areas. For instance, the curriculum review has led to a more coherent provision. For instance, students have opportunities to progress to level 3 at Canterbury College from the level 1 and 2 courses and work-based learning. There is insufficient progress in quality assurance arrangements, with examples of inconsistent and poor internal verification practice identified by external verifiers. Course teams and the section head regularly monitor students' progress and annual course reviews inform action planning. The self-assessment report is comprehensive but does not include some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors.

## **Business and administration**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on level 2 administration and accounting courses
  
- flexible study arrangements for work-based learning
  
- good assessment practices.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on full-time business courses
  
- few students achieve full awards on advanced level NVQ courses
  
- insufficient integration of work and college activities for modern apprentices.

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

79. Full-time courses include GNVQ intermediate business, AVCE business, GCE AS business, secretarial diplomas and office skills courses, with 120 students, mostly aged 16 to 18. Modern apprentice programmes in administration and accounting have 22 apprentices. A wide choice of part-time courses exists for adults from foundation to professional and management levels. There are flexible NVQ programmes, such as office skills, accounting and supervisory programmes, which can be studied by students in employment.

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

80. On full-time business courses, retention rates have mostly been below the national average for the past three years. On NVQ accounting technician levels 3 and 4, retention rates are good, but most students fail to achieve full NVQ awards within the registered time scale. Although pass rates for the individual accounting examinations and assessed assignments are very high, students are not adequately supported to complete other essential parts of the overall Association of Accountancy Technicians (AAT) qualifications, such as health and safety. All students completing GCE A-level and BTEC national diploma courses in business studies in 2002 gained a full award, and framework

achievements of modern apprentices in administration are also improving. However, accounting trainees fail to complete the key skills requirement of the framework. Many employees who enrol on distance learning courses fail to submit complete portfolios for assessment.

81. Project work on management courses is of a very high standard, and relates significantly to employment experiences. Students on the AVCE and BTEC national courses in business speak confidently in lessons and demonstrate good research skills. Many administration students have successfully integrated key skills into vocational studies through useful survey activities and demonstrate good communication and ICT skills.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ administration	2	No. of starts	29	27	33
		% retention	83	86	88
		% pass rate	79	90	97
NVQ accounting	2	No. of starts	33	32	30
		% retention	82	75	73
		% pass rate	85	75	95
GNVQ intermediate business	2	No. of starts	17	16	*
		% retention	88	63	*
		% pass rate	67	70	*
National Examination Board for Supervisors and Managers introductory certificate in management	2	No. of starts	81	72	72
		% retention	95	100	100
		% pass rate	96	92	94
National diploma in business and finance	3	No. of starts	40	37	22
		% retention	68	76	55
		% pass rate	78	75	100
NVQ accounting	3	No. of starts	23	33	40
		% retention	96	76	97
		% pass rate	27	20	49

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

82. Most teaching is satisfactory or good. Lessons are consistently well planned. Many are thoughtfully designed to support students' revision needs, with helpful handouts to consolidate learning. In one accounts session, covering ratio analysis, tasks were effectively sequenced to give students ample practice in listening, recalling knowledge and applying techniques in different financial situations. Full-time business courses integrate company visits and work experience successfully to provide good links between theory and practice. Many teachers use examples from their own commercial and management experience to stimulate discussion. For example, a lively lesson included group work where secretarial students identified errors through proofreading examination texts and participated enthusiastically in discussion before the teacher skilfully led them to more complex tasks. In the less successful lessons, teachers do not encourage students to

express their views and do not allow students adequate opportunity to develop confidence in their critical thinking skills. Some students are not sufficiently motivated and adopt a passive approach to learning.

83. Modern apprentices have insufficient opportunities to discuss their progress and many have not fully understood the various components of the framework. Arrangements to visit students in the workplace are inconsistently applied. Teachers do not adequately integrate theory and work skills into the learning materials and activities.

84. The overall standard of accommodation is good, with interesting displays that relate well to subjects. A small office workshop provides a text processing and office service for staff, and offers good practice for secretarial and administration students. The secretarial IT suite is well designed to facilitate group and practical work. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced in their subject areas and regularly attend professional updating events.

85. Assessment practices are good. Marked work is returned promptly with constructive comments for improvement and careful checking of the use of English. Marking criteria are clearly expressed and internal verification procedures are thorough. Assignment schedules are used to ensure appropriately sequenced assessment activities.

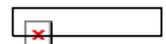
86. A variety of courses in customer and financial services and office telecommunications meet the training needs of employees. These are studied through distance learning with tutorial support in the workplace. NVQ programmes closely match employee's work responsibilities and respond flexibly to working schedules. Assessments take place on ferry sailings and students can start most programmes at any time of year.

87. Students aged 16 to 18 receive good pre-course information and guidance, but information for part-time students is less readily available. Tutorials offer satisfactory support to students, although the clarity and rigour of progress reviews and individual learning plans vary. Systems to track progress and attainment are underdeveloped. Many students successfully progress to higher or complementary levels of study. In 2002, approximately half of those completing the BTEC national diploma progressed to HE. Secretarial and business students have been successful in obtaining local employment, some as a result of their college work placements.

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

88. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Most course teams review course performance regularly against agreed targets. Some ineffective curriculum planning has resulted in less-than-efficient marketing and timetabling of courses. For instance, there is insufficient time for the accounting technicians to complete all course requirements. Recent changes of staff and increased sickness absence have resulted in slow progress on key areas for improvement.

### **Information and communications technology**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good standard of students' work

- effective course planning
  
- very good specialist teaching resources
  
- good additional support for students.

### ***Weaknesses***

- unsatisfactory retention on national diploma course
  
- insufficient challenge in learning activities
  
- inadequate individual learning plans for students
  
- insufficient use of external business links.

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

89. There is a satisfactory range of full-time and part-time adult courses including a GCE AS computing course, an AVCE ICT course, a national diploma course for IT practitioners and a GNVQ intermediate IT course aimed at students aged 16 to 18. Flexible, basic IT courses are offered in community locations. These are aimed at adult returners, particularly those with learning support needs, and cater for 500 students. This range offers progression from computing for absolute beginners through to level 1 qualifications. Part-time evening courses at the college site are offered in new computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), CLAIT plus and the European computer driving licence (ECDL). A small number of NVQ courses in IT at levels 2 and 3 is offered as work-based learning for specific employers. A course in computer systems maintenance had insufficient take up this year. There are approximately 145 full-time students, the majority of whom are students aged 16 to 18, with 275 part-time adult students and work-based learners.

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

90. Retention and pass rates on most courses are satisfactory. Retention rates on the national diploma have been below the national average and the pass rate on the GNVQ intermediate course was unsatisfactory in 2000 and 2002. The standard of students' work is good and students are well motivated. Full-time students' assignment work demonstrates good subject understanding and complex software skills. During the inspection, AVCE students showed good application and effective team working skills on a complex network installation assignment. In a minority of adult ICT classes in the college, students have difficulty recalling simple commands. Progression by adult students to the college from community classes is good. Full-time students have a good rate of

progression to related HE courses and in 2000/01, approximately 50% of successful students took up HE places.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
CLAIT	1	No. of starts*	536	631	474
		% retention	65	80	88
		% pass rate	45	64	67
Internet technologies	1	No. of starts	**	51	29
		% retention	**	86	83
		% pass rate	**	21	67
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	No. of starts	32	37	34
		% retention	81	97	76
		% pass rate	35	63	54
NVQ using IT	2	No. of starts	68	15	***
		% retention	75	80	***
		% pass rate	71	83	***
National diploma in IT applications	3	No. of starts	43	51	34
		% retention	60	61	62
		% pass rate	77	45	94
GCE AS Computing	3	No. of starts**	**	33	17
		% retention	**	61	82
		% pass rate	**	30	71

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

\* total number of students on this programme across a range of attendance patterns

\*\* course did not run

\*\*\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

***Quality of education and training***

91. Course planning is effective. Schemes of work are comprehensive and are informed by key skills and health and safety requirements. In the better lessons, students, guided by the teacher, extend their thinking and develop skills in research and analysis. In a national diploma class, students planning the implementation of a stock control system were encouraged through individual tasks, detailed questioning and discussion to analyse the requirements and the best-fit solution. In some classes, there is insufficient challenge in the activities to meet the needs of more able students. Some students do not make good use of their time or are unclear about the purpose of tasks set. Good learning support materials on the units of study are on the college network and are used effectively by students and teachers in lessons.

92. Key skills evidence is gathered from the vocational units of study through set assignment work or additional vocational tasks. Whilst some full-time students have a short period of work experience during their course, for others, this is arranged at the end of their two-year course after all assessment has taken place. The latter are unable to use the experience in their coursework. Links with the computing industry are insufficient and there are few study visits or visiting speakers.

Teachers rely heavily on their knowledge and experience to add realism to the course activities.

93. There are very good specialist teaching resources. These include college-produced learning packs, which are attractive and easy to use for beginner community ICT classes. All computing teaching rooms are well equipped with data projectors for presentation and demonstration purposes. An excellent hardware and network laboratory enables students to gain practical experience in building, testing and configuring modern personal computers.

94. Accommodation is generally good, although some rooms are cramped. There are also open-access facilities, which do not meet the same standards as classroom. Equipment and technician support for this facility is unavailable. However, there is good technician support for the computing suites and laboratories. Members of staff are well qualified, with good subject knowledge, although some staff needing professional development have not been well supported by the college.

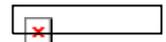
95. Assessment is satisfactory and meets the needs of awarding bodies. Teachers give regular, constructive feedback to students on their assignment work and a system is in place for double marking to ensure standards are maintained on assignments. An effective tracking system for students' assessed work is used to monitor students' progress.

96. Good additional support including classroom assistance for deaf students and dyslexia support is provided. Action planning of learning for students is insufficient in tutorials. It is not sufficiently detailed to enable students to progress.

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

97. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good communication and formal opportunities to share good practice are having a positive impact on retention and student performance. Course reviews are informed by the college student surveys and by course teams' surveys to gather course-specific information. These are detailed and result in action plans for improvement, which are monitored by the curriculum manager. Tracking of students' achievements and retention rates are good on full-time courses, although these do not link with the college management information system. However, the monitoring of quality assurance on the franchise programme is weak. There is little contact with employers or actions to identify employer needs.

### **Hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- exceptionally high standard of practical work and food production in catering
  
- good teaching and learning on hospitality and catering courses
  
- good retention and pass rates for food preparation and cooking level 2 and diploma in health and fitness courses

- o very good practical resources for hospitality and catering
- o wide range of additional qualifications achieved by full-time students.

**Weaknesses**

- o unsatisfactory pass rates on NVQ level 3 advanced craft in catering
- o slow progress by distance learning catering students
- o poorly planned and taught theory classes in sport, leisure and travel
- o poor management of leisure and travel section.

**Scope of provision**

98. The college provides a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in catering, hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. Hospitality and catering courses include food preparation and cooking at levels 1 to 3 and a national and higher national diploma in catering management. There is also a non-accredited community education programme. Leisure and tourism courses include GNVQ at levels 1 and 2, AVCE travel and tourism, Engineering and Marine Training Authority (EMTA) air cabin crew and NVQ level 2 travel services. The sports full-time programme consists of the diploma in health and fitness and the central YMCA personal trainer award. Additional qualifications for full-time students include bakery level 2, intermediate food hygiene, body and sports massage, welcome host and airfares and ticketing. There are 202 full-time and part-time students on hospitality and catering courses with 198 catering students studying in the workplace. A further 52 students are following travel courses and 68 are studying health and fitness.

**Achievement and standards**

99. Retention and pass rates are good on food preparation and cooking level 2 and the diploma in health and fitness rate is at or above the national average. The pass rate for NVQ level 3 advanced craft food preparation and cooking has been significantly below the national average for in the three years to 2001/02.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
NVQ food preparation	1	No. of starts	60	56	58

and cooking (one year)		% retention	88	87	78
		% pass rate	88	86	78
NVQ travel services	2	No. of starts	33	27	29
		% retention	79	78	59
		% pass rate	96	57	82
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	19	*	31
		% retention	37	*	71
		% pass rate	86	*	32
NVQ food preparation and cooking (two year)	2	No. of starts	40	33	36
		% retention	70	68	72
		% pass rate	76	77	93
Diploma in health and fitness	3	No. of starts	26	29	30
		% retention	77	90	83
		% pass rate	90	92	88
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	3	No. of starts	16	18	*
		% retention	81	50	*
		% pass rate	62	78	*
NVQ advanced craft food preparation and cooking	3	No. of starts	22	16	*
		% retention	86	88	*
		% pass rate	84	64	*

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

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

100. Practical and theory sessions in catering are well taught, with detailed lesson plans and schemes of work. Tutors help students to develop a pride in their work and instil sound professional standards. In one class, the teacher gave a skilled demonstration of meat-boning skills with a strong emphasis on hygiene and safety. In another class, students were taught to cook and present classical French dishes in successful collaboration with French students on an exchange visit at the college. On leisure and tourism courses, the standard of teaching is good in some classes. For instance, in one travel lesson, artefacts such as bones and jewellery were used effectively to stimulate discussion about the use of handicrafts to aid regeneration. However, in unsatisfactory lessons, teaching does not take account of students' learning needs. Many of the travel students' expectations are not matched by the quality of the teaching and learning on courses. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the vocational skills needed for employment in the travel industry and students are insufficiently challenged.

101. Specialist resources for travel and fitness provide realistic work environments for students' assessments and are of a good quality including a simulated aircraft cabin and a well-equipped and up-to-date travel shop. The multi-gym area is well equipped, although rather cramped, but there are no outdoor sports facilities. In hospitality and catering practical lessons, teachers make effective use of high-quality handouts and in-house recipe books. Students have access to a good range of modern industrial equipment such as combi-ovens and blast freezers and chillers. Catering teachers are well qualified and regularly update their skills in industry using their knowledge to enhance students' learning. The learning resource centre has a wide range of modern recipe books and periodicals which inspire students. However, students in the workplace do not have such good

access to learning materials.

102. Teachers give constructive commentary on coursework, with correction of grammatical and subject-specific errors. A wide range of health and fitness assessments in line with industry standards challenge and enthuse students to apply the theory to the practical environment. However, NVQ level 2 catering students undertaking learning in the workplace on board continental ferries are making slow progress in their achievements through lack of rigour in assessment.

103. Partnerships with employers are good. For instance, one employer supports a cookery competition for school children. Other employers act as guest speakers, facilitate student visits to their organisation, or provide training materials. Students in catering are inspired by visits from past students who have made a successful career in the industry.

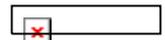
104. Students' additional learning needs in literacy and numeracy are well supported by tutors in the kitchens, restaurant and classroom. Catering students studying in the workplace are not so well supported. The identification and take up of individual student learning support in sport, leisure and travel is excellent. One student with severe dyslexia has successfully completed the gym instructors' award. Catering tutorials provide good tracking of student progress.

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

105. Curriculum management for the full-time and part-time catering provision and health and fitness is good. However, the good practice in catering is not extended to learning in the workplace. The college is a CoVE in hospitality and catering and the wide range of facilities, such as the restaurant and coffee shop, are used effectively. The management of leisure and travel programmes is weak and a lack of strategy to address staff absence has resulted in significant disruptions to student s' learning.

106. The self-assessment report has not sufficiently addressed all the weaknesses identified by inspectors.

### **Hairdressing and beauty therapy**



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

Contributory grade for work-based learning is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on one-year courses
  
- high standards of practical skills development
  
- imaginative and challenging teaching of theory subjects

- effective raising of vocational standards.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor achievement of full framework for modern apprentices
- insufficient testing of theoretical knowledge in practical lessons
- ineffective integration of key skills and learning support
- poor target setting at team level to ensure improvements
- ineffective management of work-based learning.

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

107. Full-time and part-time courses are available in hairdressing, beauty and complementary therapies. There is a broad range of provision and qualifications at levels 1, 2 and 3, together with an established City and Guilds level 1 modern apprentice programme. A variety of attendance patterns are available and students' timetables can be customised to suit individual needs. There are currently 140 full-time students and 163 part-time students. Of the full-time students, 48 are on hairdressing, 37 are on beauty therapy, 23 are on combined hairdressing and beauty therapy and 32 are on holistic therapy courses. Some 93% of full-time hairdressing students, 91% of those on the combined hairdressing and beauty courses and 51% of full-time beauty therapy students are aged between 16 and 18. All holistic therapy students and most part-time students are adults. There are 21 trainees studying hairdressing on the modern apprenticeship programme. They are based in salons and attend college on a day-release basis, every fortnight.

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

108. Pass rates on one-year courses are good. Some are significantly above the national average. The pass rates for two-year courses are lower, as students do not complete within the planned time scale and more than 15% of students continue beyond the end date for the courses. Retention rates on most courses are around the national average, except for part-time complementary therapy courses, which are slightly below the national average.

109. Students attain a good standard of professional competence and demonstrate high standards of practical skills in the college salons. The professional conduct of complementary therapy students is of a very high standard. Attendance patterns across all courses are erratic, ranging from outstanding to poor. Adults have better attendance patterns than students aged 16 to 18. During the inspection, average attendance was 71% and below the national average for the sector.

***A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NVQ hairdressing (one year)	1	No. of starts	29	27	22
		% retention	83	85	77
		% pass rate	92	100	100
NVQ hairdressing (one year)	2	No. of starts	61	22	29
		% retention	87	77	79
		% pass rate	63	94	74
NVQ hairdressing (two years)	2	No. of starts	47	39	50
		% retention	72	64	68
		% pass rate	6	79	50
NVQ beauty therapy (one year)	2	No. of starts	24	26	24
		% retention	79	85	83
		% pass rate	95	82	95
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	15	21	16
		% retention	73	62	88
		% pass rate	44	62	85
Body massage	3	No. of starts	35	52	39
		% retention	80	71	74
		% pass rate	89	89	93

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

***Quality of education and training***

110. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and students produce work of a commercial standard. In the best practical lessons, well-matched allocations of clients enable students to develop a range of skills. The tasks allocated challenge and extend the students on an individual basis, so that the most able students carry out an increasing range of complex client treatments, whilst the less able are given fewer and less complex tasks.

111. As a result, students are able to work at a pace that helps them develop confidence alongside skills. Teaching of theory subjects is imaginative and challenging and this clearly engages and motivates students. For example, in a science lesson, beauty therapy students recalled prior learning by demonstrating the actions of a range of anatomical movements through a game of charades, which made the learning fun and interactive. Students make good progress in theoretical lessons and teaching strategies are matched to individual learning needs and preferred learning styles. There is insufficient testing of knowledge in practical contexts. Students have few opportunities to consolidate theoretical learning within the practical salon environment. For example, students attending a body massage practical lesson demonstrated high standards of practical ability but there was insufficient testing of their basic anatomical knowledge.

112. The standard of the reception area and salon accommodation is inadequate and does not meet industrial standards. Members of staff are well qualified and experienced in the relevant vocational areas and some have recent industrial experience.

113. The integration of learning support is ineffective. In one theory lesson, for example, the learning support was poorly planned and isolated the students concerned from their peers. Planning and

staffing to support students' literacy and numeracy needs in practical work is ineffective. Key skills are poorly integrated within the vocational work. Lesson planning does not accommodate the teaching and assessment of key skills in theory or practical lessons.

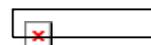
114. Assessment is well developed and there are planned assessment opportunities within the salons. Work-based learners have limited opportunities for assessment and few of the external hairdressing salons have Training and Development Lead Body qualified assessors. Action planning and tracking of students' progress is well planned. However, work-based learning is less effective and a high proportion of students do not complete within the pre-determined course timescale.

115. Timetables are carefully planned to accommodate adult students with childcare responsibilities. There are good work experience opportunities. Students benefit from employment opportunities arising from the work placements.

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

116. The management of the college-based provision is satisfactory. The recent appointments of a curriculum manager and an advanced practitioner are beginning to have a positive effect on some quality issues. Teachers ensure that commercial standards are applied in the salons. However, the management of the work-based learning provision is ineffective. Achievement of the modern apprenticeship full framework is poor. The weaknesses highlighted at the last inspection have not been adequately addressed. Target setting by teams is insufficiently rigorous. Action planning has been ineffective in producing consistent and measurable improvements in standards.

### **Health and social care and public services**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- much-improved retention and pass rates
- good vocationally linked teaching in early years
- rigorous assessment
- good management in early years programmes.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient management of learning in weak lessons

- o inadequate range of vocational full-time health and social care courses for students aged 16 to 19
- o poor management of public services courses.

### **Scope of provision**

117. The college offers the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) courses at levels 1 and 2 and the national diploma in early years at level 3. Other full-time courses include the national diploma in public services and access to social and health care. In total, there are 174 students on these full-time courses. There are no full-time courses for students aged 16 to 19 in health and social care. Part-time provision includes counselling courses, with a total of 71 students. There is a range of NVQs in care and childcare, with 211 students enrolled at levels 2, 3 and 4. A range of short courses includes first aid, child minding practice, advanced practice in working with babies, certificate in care practice and Aids Care Education and Training courses.

### **Achievement and standards**

118. Retention and pass rates have improved on all courses. Retention rates on level 3 childcare courses were above the national average in 2002 and on the national diploma in early years the rate was 100%. On the access to social and health care course, retention and pass rates have improved significantly, to 100% in 2002. Pass and retention rates are excellent on counselling courses and NVQs in care and early years. Retention rates on CACHE courses have declined to below the national average at both level 2 and level 3. Overall attendance is satisfactory, although during inspection week it was only 74%.

119. Displays of students' work in early years demonstrate a high standard of practical skills appropriately linked with theory. For example, striking photographic displays of care students cooking multicultural dishes illustrate links to different world religions. Another display illustrates human body systems with a variety of textures and materials to demonstrate child development theory.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care and public services, 2000 to 2002**

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
CACHE certificate	2	No. of starts	25	19	28
		% retention	72	84	64
		% pass rate	67	50	78
NVQ care	2	No. of starts	58	155	37
		% retention	81	62	77
		% pass rate	79	88	95
Certificate in counselling skills	3	No. of starts	24	31	32
		% retention	79	81	81
		% pass rate	100	96	100

Access to social and health care	3	No. of starts	38	38	23
		% retention	66	74	100
		% pass rate	84	100	100
NVQ early years and education	3	No. of starts	*	54	28
		% retention	*	70	75
		% pass rate	*	78	83

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

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

120. Most teaching in early years is good. It is vocationally relevant and good practical resources are used effectively to enhance learning. For instance, students enthusiastically planned a new outdoor play area through relevant research on theories and policies in child development. Multicultural issues and diversity are particularly well addressed on early years and counselling courses. For example, in a lesson on cultural issues in counselling, effective use was made of video material on arranged marriages in Asian communities. Most of the teaching on the access courses is challenging and addresses students' individual learning needs. Students make apt references to their work experiences to contextualise the theory.

121. In weak lessons, there is insufficient management of the learning. Students distract the teacher as the tasks set are too easy or too difficult and do not motivate all the students in the class. Learning materials appropriate to students' needs are not provided.

122. Key skills are effectively integrated and in a number of lively and challenging lessons the students were developing a wide range of additional skills such as decision-making and listening skills through structured debates and group activities. A range of methods, including distance learning and workshops, is used to support the teaching of basic knowledge for NVQs.

123. The childcare centre provides a good environment and includes practical rooms, ICT resources and specialist books. Teachers are well qualified and help students gain useful insights into the care occupations through reference to their own employment experiences.

124. Assessment is rigorous on all courses, with careful marking of work and detailed feedback. Work-based learning is carefully monitored and there are good opportunities for assessment at times to suit students. Internal verification is mostly rigorous but lack of staffing has led to some significant delays.

125. There is no full-time provision for students aged 16 to 18 in health and social care. This is not meeting the needs of young people and employers in the locality.

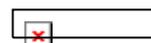
126. A number of additional qualifications are available, including first aid, paediatric first aid and food hygiene. Enrichment programmes are offered to provide students with a broader knowledge of their subject. Students appreciate visits to Legoland and fire fighting and army establishments. Access courses in social and health care offer training opportunities into midwifery, nursing and social work with an excellent progression record.

127. Most students are assessed to identify the level of support needed and receive effective support on most courses. In early years, there is a structured tutorial system for full-time students. However, there is limited use of individual learning plans and minimal target setting. Work-based learners are regularly visited and there are drop-in sessions for further support, including the provision of a free crèche facility. Induction for all students, including part-time and work-based learners, is good.

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

128. Management of the early years programme, access and counselling courses is strong and effective. The teams work well together and there has been a strong emphasis on monitoring retention rates and achievements. Course reviews and self-assessment are carried out carefully. However, management of public services courses is poor. There is a lack of strategy to deal with the issues of disruption to learning including postponement of courses and delays in internal verification owing to staff absence.

### **Visual and performing arts**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- consistently high pass rates on art and design and film studies courses
  
- good research skills demonstrated by art and design students
  
- strong academic and personal support for students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention rates on art and design, performing arts and popular music courses
  
- lack of challenge in teaching and learning on art and design courses
  
- unsatisfactory teaching in a few lessons.

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

129. The college offers a range of full-time provision in visual and performing arts, including art and design, media, popular music and performing arts. Art and design courses are available from levels 1 to 3 and include access to art and design and foundation studies in art and design. GCE AS courses in art and design, performing arts and film studies are offered to complement full-time courses. There is very limited part-time provision in photography and a franchised dance class. At the time of inspection there were 73 full-time and 29 part-time students. Some 40% of students are aged 19 or over.

### **Achievement and standards**

130. There are consistently good pass rates on GNVQ intermediate art and design, access to art and design and GCE AS film studies. Retention rates are poor, especially on GNVQ intermediate art and design, first diploma in performing arts and national diploma in popular music, but all are showing an improving trend. Overall, student attendance is at the national average of 76%. Most students are punctual for their lessons.

131. Art and design students demonstrate well-researched work, but some are insufficiently critical about the quality and content of their work. Performing arts students display thoughtful and perceptive responses to issues and questions raised in discussions. Music and media students produce practical work to a good standard in music and film production.

132. Progression is satisfactory, with 50% of level 3 students progressing to HE between 2000/01 and 2001/02.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GCE AS film and video production	3	No. of starts	*	23	32
		% retention	*	70	81
		% pass rate	*	88	92
National diploma in performing arts	3	No. of starts	25	**	24
		% retention	76	**	67
		% pass rate	74	**	88
National diploma in popular music	3	No. of starts	*	18	20
		% retention	*	56	60
		% pass rate	*	80	92

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

\* course did not run

\*\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

133. Teaching and learning in performing arts is very good. Teachers effectively link learning objectives to the evaluation of students' learning during lessons. They discuss ideas and progress carefully with each student and guide them without being prescriptive. Students are lively and confident and make good use of their prior knowledge. In a national diploma class, students related their historical understanding of scenes in the Bacchae to enhance their technical understanding of staging in a Greek amphitheatre. Students displayed a good understanding of character analysis. Both courses give students valuable opportunities to develop and test their performance skills in front of an audience.

134. One first-year national diploma student has directed a film that had been included at the Kent Film Festival. Music students' project work for a TV programme's theme music has been entered for a national competition.

135. Some teaching and learning in art and design is weak. In one class, students were unable to identify the formal elements of visual language without considerable prompting by the teacher. In group work, there is a lack of effective questioning to check students' understanding. In one class, students watching a landscape photography video had little awareness of the purpose and learning objectives of the activity. However, teachers give good one-to-one guidance and direction in practical lessons, displaying an understanding of the students and their capabilities.

136. Staff are well qualified and some are still actively engaged in work in the industry, particularly in media. This experience is used successfully to make students' learning more interesting. Accommodation for all courses is adequate, but in some areas it looks shabby. Music students have good computer facilities and separate soundproofed rehearsal facilities away from the main buildings. The library facilities include a reasonable range of art-based books and access to industry-standard computers. Students are encouraged to use workshops and studios outside of their lessons.

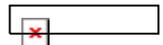
137. Assessment and internal verification are effective. Written feedback is given, though this is not always legible and sometimes not constructive. Teachers make good use of information on students' needs and their learning styles and individual learning plans are used effectively for action planning. Good strategies noted in the individual learning plan for managing one student's anxiety attacks were observed during a lesson.

138. Tutorial support is very good and students value the guidance and encouragement that they receive from their tutors on both course-related and personal issues.

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

139. Management of the area is satisfactory, but insufficient attention is given to sharing good practice in teaching and to addressing the weaknesses in the provision, particularly in the area of art and design. Every course team has completed a self-assessment report, but many of these do not provide data to support judgements. Course files are well organised and course teams meet to review students' progress and plan for improvement. Appraisal systems link to staff development and help identify professional development requirements for staff.

## **Humanities and English**



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

### ***Strengths***

- much confident and purposeful teaching
  
- improving pass and retention rates on access, GCE A-level and GCSE courses
  
- strong support for individual students
  
- good accommodation and resources to support learning.

### ***Weaknesses***

- low pass rates on some GCE AS courses

- lack of variety in some teaching
  
- declining numbers on most courses
  
- insufficient use of ICT in teaching and learning.

### **Scope of provision**

140. Full-time and part-time level 2 and level 3 courses in English, history, law, psychology and sociology are provided, and also access to humanities and social science as well some key skills communications classes. English and humanities form part of the academic studies department. There are 347 full-time enrolments and 93 part-time students on these courses. Some 183 students are adults.

### **Achievement and standards**

141. On access and most GCE A-level and GCSE courses students achieve well. Pass rates were significantly above national average for English language and literature and sociology at GCE A2, psychology at GCSE and GCE A2, and on the access course in 2002. Pass rates at GCE AS in 2002 were significantly below the national average for law, history and English language and literature. Overall, 2002 results indicate that GCE AS and A-level history and GCE AS English language and literature students did not achieve the grades predicted by their GCSE results. Retention rates have improved considerably over three years and were above the national average in 2002. Progression to HE is good, especially from access courses. In 2002, 15 of the 16 students who completed the course went on to degree courses.

142. Much students' work is well presented and shows an ability to adapt and shape their knowledge and understanding to the tasks set. In some cases, the quality of ideas is not matched by their ability to express them clearly and accurately. In many classes observed, students spoke with confidence and demonstrated successful learning. In one access class, students communicated well during group activities, demonstrating considerable skill in identifying and resolving problems.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
GCSE English language	2	No. of starts	105	72	55
		% retention	62	74	73
		% pass rate	52	49	65
Access to HE (humanities)	3	No. of starts	44	29	25
		% retention	68	55	60
		% pass rate	66	68	93
GCE A-level history	3	No. of starts	40	40	*
		% retention	62	67	*

		% pass rate	40	41	*
GCE A-level law	3	No. of starts	45	39	*
		% retention	58	71	*
		% pass rate	42	52	*
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	71	36	25
		% retention	56	47	80
		% pass rate	57	76	95
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	66	42	31
		% retention	56	62	97
		% pass rate	59	89	97
GCSE psychology	3	No. of starts	52	56	21
		% retention	31	38	63
		% pass rate	61	33	75
GCE A-level English language and literature (two year)	3	No. of starts	46	32	15
		% retention	57	53	93
		% pass rate	54	65	100
GCE AS English language and literature	3	No. of starts	**	34	45
		% retention	**	74	84
		% pass rate	**	80	50

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

\*\* course did not run

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

143. Much teaching is well planned with clear learning objectives. These are usually shared with students. In many classes, teachers make good use of students' different learning styles. In an access class, students considered the importance of Nazi propaganda in Germany. The teacher sensitively and skilfully facilitated a lively discussion building on one German student's family experiences of that period. In revision classes, students were encouraged to review their learning actively, sometimes working in groups or pairs. In a GCE A-level sociology class, each group successfully conducted a brief survey of different brands of potato crisps and produced an evaluation whilst noting the application of evaluative techniques. They showed good teamworking skills. On most courses, teachers set stimulating tasks. For example, students on the GCSE English course were inspired to develop a good understanding of the play and to produce some powerful and imaginative writing whilst writing a letter from Macbeth to Lady Macbeth.

144. Some teaching fails to provide varied and stimulating learning, with teachers talking too much and students unable to concentrate effectively for long periods during the lesson.

145. Teachers set work regularly and assess it promptly with clear written guidance to students indicating the level achieved and suggesting improvements. However, on a minority of courses, the teachers' comments are too brief and display inconsistencies in marking standards. This makes it difficult for students to compare progress across a range of courses.

146. Teachers use a variety of resources to help students learn. In a GCE AS English class, students increased their analytical skills and understanding of sophisticated language through good

use of strikingly contrasting passages. In many classes, teachers use the whiteboard or overhead projectors effectively to summarise the key elements of learning. However, the use of ICT in learning is inadequate in this area. Students are able to access course information on the college intranet, but do not have access to learning materials.

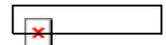
147. Some subject base rooms have attractive displays of students' recent work, and posters relating to current learning. The open learning centre has a good range of books, video and audiotapes. New teachers are supported by a very effective mentoring programme, which includes detailed and practical comments on their teaching.

148. Teachers are aware of the needs of individual students and are able to provide effective additional help. Course tutors receive good feedback from additional support teachers on individual students' progress and this is monitored through tutorials. Support for dyslexic students is particularly good. Progress in recent work is measured against the target grades predicted by GCSE results. Tutorials, available to most part-time students, create valuable opportunities for guidance. However, in many cases, there is insufficient action planning and target setting for learning. The OCN's introductory elements of GCE AS courses have improved opportunities for students' study skills.

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

149. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Weaknesses are identified through self-assessment and quality reviews. Over the last two years, successful efforts have been made to improve pass and retention rates, by improving teaching and support for students. However, there is no strategy for addressing poor attendance, declining enrolments and insufficient sharing of good practice.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good progression and significant increase in community enrolments
  
- responsive lesson planning
  
- challenging teaching in discrete and community classes.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- insufficient staffing and expertise to meet student demand
  
- inadequate integration of literacy and numeracy support in vocational areas

- inconsistent target setting in individual learning plans.

### **Scope of provision**

150. Literacy and numeracy courses are offered at pre-entry and entry level, level 1 and level 2 at the college. Some 665 students receive individual support and 132 students are on courses where literacy and numeracy skills are integrated into vocational areas. Community-based courses offer literacy and numeracy skills integrated into an imaginative range of activities, such as art, cooking, sports, and ICT to attract new and reluctant learners. These have enrolled 1,869 students this year, together with 24 students enrolled on literacy and numeracy courses.

### **Achievement and standards**

151. Retention rates on discrete literacy and numeracy courses are good, with a rate of 84% in 2002. For students taking word and numberpower entry level qualifications, retention rates have been excellent at 93% and 100%, respectively. This qualification is now replaced with national literacy and numeracy qualifications. Students on non-accredited discrete courses make satisfactory progress in developing writing and calculation skills and many gain confidence in presentation skills. Whilst most students in community-based provision have chosen not to pursue the nationally recognised qualifications, progression is good, with about 190 students joining college programmes in 2002/03.

152. Students receiving support on vocational courses develop a range of literacy skills leading to some marked improvements in their writing.

### **A sample of retention and pass rates in literacy and numeracy, 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 3793 communication skills wordpower (one year)	Entry	No. of starts	19	20	15
		% retention	86	95	93
		% pass rate	25	74	93
City and Guilds 3794 numeracy skills numberpower (one year)	Entry	No. of starts	23	*	15
		% retention	70	*	100
		% pass rate	43	*	100
City and Guilds 3793 communication skills wordpower (one year)	1	No. of starts	27	15	*
		% retention	85	87	*
		% pass rate	64	100	*
City and Guilds 3794 numeracy skills numberpower (one year)	1	No. of starts	26	16	*
		% retention	85	87	*
		% pass rate	59	92	*

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

\* fewer than 15 starters enrolled

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

153. The teaching of literacy and numeracy, particularly for adults, is challenging and teachers have high expectations of their students. On an adult returners course, students have studied Shakespearian plays and show good understanding in discussions and written work. Students participate in role plays and games to increase their confidence and many are encouraged to describe their own learning. In one session, a practical task using Lego developed listening and speaking skills as students worked in groups to understand instructions and to explain them to others in the group. In another session, students in pairs practised sentence structure and sequencing of written text through mixing and matching activities. In the most effective lessons, they take responsibility for deciding future activities. In literacy and numeracy in vocational areas, there is some effective teaching and learning. For example, on a childcare course where students are working towards CACHE qualifications, the teacher and the support assistant effectively plan, integrate and evaluate literacy and numeracy support.

154. Lesson planning is responsive to students' needs and they develop skills such as working in a team and communicating with others. Learning targets are linked to initial assessment and a learning styles assessment.

155. Many responses to community needs are innovative. For example, the sports course enables young people to increase their personal, literacy and numeracy skills in activities such as skateboarding. A range of weekend courses includes art, ICT, childcare courses to attract young parents, and practical bricklaying and cookery courses in venues that are convenient and welcoming. All learning on these courses is cross-referenced to national curriculum standards for literacy and numeracy.

156. Most teaching staff are appropriately trained but some are inexperienced and are completing teaching qualifications. All learning support assistants have an initial qualification in teaching literacy or numeracy. Many teaching resources are out of date and these are currently being reviewed. Many teachers devise their own high quality teaching materials, but these are not available on the college intranet. There are insufficient dictionaries and class readers and some poor ICT equipment in community locations.

157. Initial assessment is not sufficiently diagnostic to identify precise learning targets. This impacts adversely on the individual learning plans. These do not always give adequate information to allow progress on discrete programmes to be measured and to identify the level of detail of literacy and numeracy support needed by those on vocational courses. Individual learning support reviews lack rigour. Targets set are insufficiently focused and are not always shared with student. However, students have regular progress reviews.

158. There is insufficient staffing and inadequate integration of literacy and numeracy support in vocational areas to meet students' needs in most areas, although there has been some effective support in early years, construction and catering. In many cases, vocational staff fail to take sufficient account of literacy and numeracy needs in students' reviews and planning of lessons.

159. In some sessions, the needs of literacy and numeracy students with disabilities are poorly managed. For example, a hearing impaired student was inappropriately seated in the classroom and had to ask frequently for explanations, which disrupted the lesson.

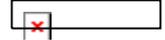
160. Students on college courses have access to clear advice but students in community venues find this more difficult.

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

161. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good links have been established with employers and community organisations to attract new students. Teaching observations are rigorous, though some teachers in community provision have never been observed. There are no reliable measures to judge the effectiveness of initial assessment and of literacy and numeracy support in vocational programmes. There have been disruptions to summer school courses and course timetabling owing to insufficient staffing.

162. The self-assessment report accurately identifies most weaknesses that inspectors found though it underestimates their impact on students.

### **Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- much good teaching
  
- excellent speech therapy support integrated into courses
  
- local partnerships which facilitate transition to college
  
- very good support for students
  
- well-managed courses.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- students are insufficiently challenged in some lessons
  
- lack of detail and consistency in individual learning plans
  
- low retention rates on NVQ courses.

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

163. The college is a major provider of full-time and part-time courses for young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and caters for around 350 students with a wide range of learning and support needs. Three courses, namely towards independence, life skills and world of work, are designed for young people needing the skills and confidence to live more independent

lives and these attract some 36 students. The college also provides a vocational access course for 32 young people with learning difficulties and an academic vocational skills course for 35 students who left early or did not achieve well at school. There are NVQ courses in horticulture, retail and animal care that cater for a total of 26 students. An extensive part-time programme is provided for adults with learning difficulties, which has 180 students studying at the main college site and a further 70 students studying in day centres or community homes. There are good link programmes with local schools and a local residential college for deaf students.

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

164. Achievement of external accreditation is good on the vocational access certificate course. All students successfully completed at least two vocational modules and one core module in 2001/02. However, retention rates vary between the courses, ranging from 100% on the vocational access course to below the national average on the national skills profile. On the NVQ level 1 course in animal care in 2002, the retention rate was 50%.

165. The standard of work in lessons and in the students' files is satisfactory or better. For example, a very good video and course booklet were created by students in a media class to inform prospective students about the course.

166. Attendance was low in some classes during the inspection. Students progress well between courses in the curriculum area and to other courses in the college.

### ***A sample of retention and pass rates in students with learning difficulties, 2000 to 2002***

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
National skills profile	Entry	No. of starts	17	27	27
		% retention	88	78	74
		% pass rate	93	76	*
Vocational access certificate	Entry	No. of starts	19	24	23
		% retention	84	71	100
		% pass rate	94	*	100

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

\* data unavailable

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

167. Most teaching is good. The more successful lessons are well structured with a variety of activities and opportunities for learning. Relationships between staff and students are excellent and help motivate students to study effectively. Some good learning materials are used in lessons. For example, in a cookery class, a student was able to follow a recipe independently because it had been put into words and pictures on a handout. In most lessons, teaching activities are planned well but learning outcomes for the group and for individual students are not clearly identified. Small numbers of students in some classes limit the range of teaching strategies that can be successfully employed. Students in most classes are enthusiastic and participate confidently in group and individual activities.

168. In poorer lessons, too much attention is given to completing activities and insufficient emphasis is placed on learning outcomes for students.

169. The Independence Training Centre provides excellent facilities for students to practise cleaning and cooking skills. The student centre café provides a good real work environment for students to

practise retail and catering skills. There is, however, some poor accommodation and a lack of appropriate teaching resources in some classrooms and workshops. Staff are well qualified and share a strong sense of professionalism.

170. Partnerships are well developed with schools, a specialist college, the Connexions service, the health service and social services. This results in good transition arrangements for students moving on to college courses. For example, a young person with learning difficulties and challenging behaviour progressed from being a customer in the student-run café to working in the café and subsequently to enrolment on a full-time course at the college. Liaison with parents and carers is good. Students' success is celebrated and recently included a very successful prize-giving event for adult students.

171. Most full-time and some part-time students attend well-organised residentials that help them gain confidence and independence. Effective work experience placements supported 140 students learning on their courses this year. One student won an award from his work placement employer for customer care skills.

172. The information in both the full-time and the part-time prospectuses is clear and accurate. A range of strategies is used to help students find the right course, for example, the 'try a course week' for part-time adult students, which was well organised and successful. Students were very appreciative of the week's activities.

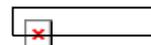
173. Assessment of skills for college-certified courses lacks rigour and is not consistent. Some opportunities to develop and accredit students' literacy and numeracy skills are missed, for instance, on the NVQ courses.

174. Good initial assessment arrangements lead to appropriate provision of additional support for students. There is also an innovative and effective arrangement with the health authority, which provides good support for students from a speech therapist and a community health nurse. The support materials and detailed learning targets for communication skills produced collaboratively by the speech therapist and member of college staff are excellent and well integrated. Tutorial support is very good and students spoke very highly of the help they had received. Targets set in individual learning plans are not detailed and not reviewed frequently enough to track students' progress.

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

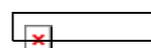
175. Courses in the curriculum area are well organised and managed. Leadership is effective and staff work well as team. The self-assessment report accurately evaluates the provision and there are appropriate action plans in place to address weaknesses such as low attendance. There are effective course team meetings and good communication between staff. There is some inaccurate recording of student data on the management information system and insufficient analysis of the data to resolve the problems.

## **Part D: College data**



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

Level	16-18	19+
-------	-------	-----



<b>1</b>	32	29
<b>2</b>	44	29
<b>3</b>	18	23
<b>4/5</b>	0	0
<b>Other</b>	6	18
<b>Total *</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2003

\* figures have been rounded and may not total 100%

**Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age 2001/02**

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>16-18 No.</b>	<b>19+ No.</b>	<b>Total Enrolments %</b>
Science and mathematics	875	1,495	13
Land-based provision	27	88	1
Construction	127	117	1
Engineering, technology and manufacture	106	216	2
Business administration, management and professional	444	2,048	14
Information and communication technology	864	1,544	14
Retailing, customer service and transportation	67	291	2
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	776	1,235	11
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	186	228	2
Health, social care and public services	398	1,239	9
Visual and performing arts and media	213	160	2
Humanities	449	878	7
English, languages and communication	741	286	6
Foundation programmes	1,423	1,160	15
Other	11	92	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,707</b>	<b>11,077</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: provided by the college in 2003

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
1	Starters excluding transfers	609	729	635	721	957	1,065
	Retention rate (%)	74	75	79	76	67	72
	National average (%)	80	80	79	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	54	62	71	43	66	69
	National average (%)	59	65	68	60	66	68
2	Starters excluding transfers	1,569	1,260	1,123	1,452	1,745	1,811
	Retention rate (%)	76	74	77	74	68	70
	National average (%)	76	76	76	79	79	78
	Pass rate (%)	57	68	65	59	66	67
	National average (%)	65	66	69	62	65	69
3	Starters excluding transfers	835	844	1,122	1,280	1,698	1,790
	Retention rate (%)	71	59	70	77	75	71
	National average (%)	75	76	77	78	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	65	68	69	68	62	73
	National average (%)	72	74	76	62	66	69

*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).*

*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)	68	23	9	79
Level 2 (intermediate)	56	36	8	72
Level 1 (foundation)	60	27	13	30
Other sessions	77	23	0	30
<b>Totals</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>211</b>

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2003. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Inspection reports are available on the Ofsted web site ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

Office for  
Standards  
in Education

