

Dudley College of Technology

Inspection report

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Grading

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

The descriptors for the four grades are:

- grade 1 – outstanding
- grade 2 – good
- grade 3 – satisfactory
- grade 4 – inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of this inspection, inspectors took account of: the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans; comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body; and where appropriate the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk); reports from the inspectorate annual assessment visits or quality monitoring inspection; and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the last inspection. This inspection focused on the following aspects:

- overall effectiveness of the organisation and its capacity to improve further
- achievement and standards
- quality of provision
- leadership and management
- specialist provision in: health, public services and care; engineering and manufacturing technologies; construction, planning and the built environment; information and communication technology (ICT); leisure, travel and tourism; arts, media and publishing; preparation for life and work; and business, administration and law.

Description of the provider

1. Dudley College of Technology is a large general further education college. It is located at four main sites: The Broadway, Mons Hill Centre, Castle View and Wolverhampton Street. Around two fifths of learners are from Dudley, a quarter from Sandwell and most of the remainder are from other Black Country boroughs and neighbouring cities and counties. In 2007/08, the college has approximately 14,000 learners. Of these, around two thirds are adult learners; just over half are female; and just over a quarter are from minority ethnic groups. The college's work is split equally between learners aged 16 to 18 and adults. The college has around 340 learners aged 14 to 16.
2. The college offers courses in all sector subject areas. The highest number of learners study information and communication technology (ICT); health, public services and care; business, administration and law; preparation for life and work; arts, media and publishing; engineering; construction; and retail. The college provides education and training for apprentices, advanced apprentices, and Train to Gain learners. The college has ICT provision for around 1,270 learners provided through Tektra. Franchised provision accounts for 527 learners.
3. Dudley's population is 305,155. It has a ranking of 109 out of 354 for the highest levels of deprivation in England. Dudley's unemployment rate is just below the national unemployment rate. Some 6% of the local population is from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. In 2007, the percentage of pupils gaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including mathematics and English, in Dudley was 43.6% and in Sandwell was 30.2%, compared with the national average of 46.8%.
4. The college's mission is 'putting learners and our community at the heart of all we do'.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Good: contributory grade 2</i>

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Good: Grade 2
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	Good: Grade 2
Construction, planning and the built environment	Good: Grade 2
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leisure, travel and tourism	Good: Grade 2
Arts, media and publishing	Good: Grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2
Business, administration and law	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. Effectiveness of provision is good. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. College success rates have increased significantly since the previous inspection and are satisfactory. Success rates for learners on work-based learning and Train to Gain programmes are high. The achievement of learners aged 14 to 16 is good. The use of data to assess learners' progress is insufficient and to monitor progression and learners' destinations is ineffective. The standard of learners' work is good.
6. Teaching and learning are good. The majority of lessons offer learners a wide range of activities which challenge and motivate, and include effective use of information learning technology (ILT). Learners, including those on work-based learning programmes, develop skills to a high standard. Provision for learners with additional needs is good. Target setting in some lessons is not effective in meeting the individual needs of learners.
7. The range of courses which meets the needs and interests of learners is good. The college collaborates very effectively with schools and employers. Provision at community venues meets the needs of learners who would not normally access the college well. Work opportunities and enrichment activities for full-time learners aged 16 to 18 are underdeveloped. Education and social inclusion are good.
8. Guidance and support for learners are good. Good initial advice and guidance, supported by good quality literature and information, meet learners' needs well. Additional learning needs are assessed promptly and appropriately, except for learners at the college's community ICT venues. Tutorials are effective and learning plans are comprehensive.
9. Leadership and management are good. Actions to improve success rates and the proportion of good or better teaching and learning have been effective. Data are used effectively to identify areas for improvement and target actions. Not all staff are appraised annually. The self-assessment report is accurate. The standard of accommodation varies between sites but is satisfactory. Governance is good. Equality of opportunity is good. The college provides good value for money.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

10. The college's capacity to improve is good. Since the previous inspection the college's success rates have improved at a rate significantly better than similar colleges. The self-assessment report is accurate in stating strengths and areas for improvement and informs the college development plan well. Quality assurance systems and their effectiveness are good. An improved observation of teaching and learning system links to appraisals well and is supported effectively by extensive staff development. New business planning processes

have strengthened the accountability of managers and staff. Staff confidence in their ability to sustain improvements is high. Leaders set clear targets for improving learners' achievement at both college-wide and curriculum levels. These are monitored closely by senior managers. The college has made consistent improvements to the quality of provision across the majority of its subject areas.

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

11. The college has made good progress since the last inspection. It has addressed all areas for improvement identified at the last inspection successfully. Overall long course success rates have improved substantially, at twice the national rate, between 2004/05 and 2006/07. Similarly, success rates for short courses over five weeks have improved significantly in the last three years. The previously inadequate provision in business, administration and law, and health, public services and care is now good. The college has invested significantly in improving teaching and learning. The standards of teaching and learning are good and the range of approaches used is particularly effective. The self-assessment process includes all staff.

Key strengths

- good success rates by work-based learners
- good achievement and progression by learners aged 14 to 16
- good teaching and learning
- good employer links and engagement
- wide range of courses which meets the needs of the local community
- good support for learners
- good leadership, management and governance
- very clear strategic direction
- successful actions by managers to improve achievement and provision for learners
- the promotion of equality of opportunity.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low long course success rates on adult ICT courses at the college's community venues
- ineffective target setting in lessons to meet the needs of individual learners
- insufficient use of data to assess learners' progress
- ineffective use of data to monitor progression and learners' destinations
- underdeveloped provision of work opportunities and enrichment activities for full-time learners aged 16 to 18
- insufficiently timely appraisals for all staff.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grades:

Work-based learning

Good: grade 2

Train to Gain

Good: grade 2

Learners aged 14 to 16

Good: grade 2

12. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. This agrees with the college's self-assessment. Long course success rates have improved significantly between 2004/05 and 2006/07 and the overall success rate has improved to a satisfactory level. Overall long course success rates are better for learners aged 16 to 18 than for adults. Success rates for adults on level 3 courses are higher than those for adults on levels 1 and 2 courses. Although these have improved substantially in the last three years, they are below the national average. This is due largely to the low retention on ICT courses delivered through partner provision at the college's community venues. Measures to address other poorly performing courses at this level have been actioned. Success rates for short programmes have improved significantly and are satisfactory.
13. Work-based learning framework success rates have improved significantly and are good for advanced apprenticeships and for learners on Train to Gain programmes. College data for 2007/08 indicate further improvement, particularly for apprentices where the success rate is currently 70%. Achievement and progression to further training or employment are high for learners aged 14 to 16. Around three quarters of the learners on the youth skills programme for excluded pupils progressed onto other courses at the college in 2007/08. More learners progress into higher education than previously. The monitoring of the progression of learners to other courses within the college and the use of data to report on their destinations is ineffective, other than for learners aged 14 to 16 and those progressing to higher education.
14. Key skills success rates improved significantly between 2004/05 and 2006/07 to well above the low national average. The standard of learners' work seen on inspection is good and is outstanding in art. Learners develop good work-related skills which help them achieve economic well-being. Their approach to health and safety is good.
15. College data at the time of inspection show a significant improvement in retention in 2007/08. This includes retention of learners from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, whose success rates were lower than for learners from white British backgrounds in 2006/07. The use of data to measure the progress learners make, compared with their prior attainment is at an early stage. Attendance is satisfactory. Learners enjoy their learning and training.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

16. The quality of provision is good. This agrees with the college's self-assessment. Teaching and learning are good. At the last inspection, most teaching and learning were often dull and insufficiently challenging. These are no longer issues in the majority of lessons. Most teachers make good use of a particularly effective range of teaching and learning approaches to challenge, motivate and engage the interest of learners to develop skills to a high standard. In work-based learning, college staff and employers provide good training that develops learners' vocational skills to a high level. In the majority of lessons, teaching and learning are characterised by clear introductions, particularly effective use of ILT, good organisation of learning, effective account of individual learning needs and good use of questioning to check understanding. In the less effective lessons, planning is insufficient, teachers do not stimulate the attention of learners and learning does not stretch and extend the ability of the more able. Most assessment of learners' work is fair and accurate. The majority of learners receive good feedback from teachers on how to improve their work.
17. Arrangements for the observation of teaching and learning are comprehensive. All teachers are observed. Most receive detailed and accurate written and verbal feedback. Managers use outcomes from observations promptly to prepare action plans to improve teachers' performance. They analyse the development needs from the observations to provide a substantive programme of staff development covering the different aspects of teaching and learning, particularly those requiring improvement. Established arrangements are in place to ensure observation grades are accurate. There is insufficient observation of training in the workplace provided by employers of Train to Gain learners and of visiting part-time teachers.
18. Provision to meet learners' additional learning needs is good. Systems to identify the additional learning needs are thorough. The uptake of support for those identified with additional learning needs is very high and it has improved substantially since the last inspection. Learners receive support promptly. Those receiving support have success rates slightly above the college average. The college provides a comprehensive range of support for those with additional learning needs. Learners in receipt of support for additional learning needs consider the help they receive is good.
19. The college's response to the needs and interests of learners and employers is good. The college offers a broad range of vocational courses with good progression routes and a clear focus on employability skills. New levels 1 and 2 courses, including foundation programmes, encourage learners to stay in education and achieve economic well-being. The college links with over 600 employers, and recruits significant numbers of learners on employment-related programmes, including Train to Gain. The college researches learners' needs well and works in partnership to address local, regional and national priorities, contributing effectively to local regeneration. Strong links with local secondary schools include taster courses, master classes, student apprenticeships and delivery of vocational courses for learners aged 14 to 16. High quality

recruitment literature and information are appropriate to the needs of learners. The college lacks a comprehensive employer database.

20. Since the last inspection the college has improved the programme of enrichment activities to a satisfactory level. While learners in some curriculum areas have a range of enrichment activities to complement their studies and undertake work experience this is not so in other areas.
21. The college's approach to social and educational inclusion is good. College managers are proactive in local and regional partnerships to encourage underrepresented learners into education and training and enable them to progress. Partnerships with employers encourage the further development of basic skills effectively.
22. Guidance and support are good. Good initial advice and guidance help learners choose appropriate courses. The college offers a comprehensive range of support services at the Broadway Campus and a satisfactory level of entitlement at other campuses. Since the last inspection, additional support is resourced better. The language, literacy and numeracy skills of learners on full-time or substantial part-time programmes are assessed, except for the numeracy skills of most ICT learners based at community venues. In some community venues, guidance is undertaken by tutors, not trained guidance staff, and progression literature is not available routinely.
23. Pastoral and academic support for learners have improved and learners speak highly of the support they receive. Work-based learners, including those on Train to Gain programmes, enjoy flexible delivery of support in the workplace, including for additional learning needs. Individual learning plans are comprehensive, although targets agreed in tutorials do not focus sufficiently on knowledge and skills. A range of strategies has improved retention, including better identification of learners at risk of non-completion, closer monitoring of attendance and twice yearly reviews. The role of the senior tutor is now well established and is having a positive impact on retention and the quality of tutorials.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Contributory grade:

Equality of opportunity

Good: grade 2

24. Leadership and management are good. This judgement differs from the college's self-assessment of satisfactory. Governors, college leaders and senior managers provide a very clear strategic direction, which places learners and their success, at the forefront of all activities. Leaders promote high expectations for both staff and learners. Staff morale is high. Curriculum and work-based learning management are good.
25. Governance is good. Governors took decisive and effective action to address leadership inadequacies after the last inspection. They are well informed and have a good awareness of learners' performance and the quality of teaching

and learning. They challenge senior managers effectively. Governors have established useful links with sector subject areas.

26. The college has a clear and effective framework of accountability and performance management. Succinct performance indicators are linked to managers' personal objectives and are monitored regularly through the operational development plan. A newly devised business planning process links course targets with financial forecasting, providing a powerful tool for course planning and performance management. Good use is made of accurate management information to support the curriculum planning process.
27. The college's quality improvement arrangements are effective. Overall success rates have improved significantly since the last inspection. Improved management information and stakeholder surveys inform a rigorous self-assessment process. The teaching and learning observation system is much improved and links well to personal action plans, which include the sharing of good practice. Quality improvement is supported well by good staff development. Appraisal procedures, though well established, do not involve all staff annually.
28. The college's approach to equality of opportunity is good. The college monitors and analyses the performance of different groups well and takes appropriate actions to remedy concerns. The college has continued to improve the physical accessibility of its sites and makes reasonable arrangements for learners with mobility difficulties where sites or rooms are not accessible. Effective staff development in equality and diversity is provided for staff and governors. Equality of opportunity is celebrated well throughout the college. The college has appropriate arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults. It meets the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. However, the college is only at the early stages of developing race equality impact assessments.
29. Accommodation and the range of specialist resources are satisfactory. Financial management is effective. Managers communicate well with budget holders and governors. Given the improvement in the quality of provision and in the retention of learners in 2007/08, the college provides good value for money.

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care

Good: Grade 2

Context

30. The college offers full-time and part-time courses at levels 1 to 3 in health and social care, childcare and public services. Of the 1,748 learners currently enrolled, 1,272 are adults, 429 are aged 16 to 18 and 47 are aged 14 to 16. There are 404 learners following full-time courses and 1,344 following part-time courses. In total, 155 learners are on long courses at level 1, 1,015 at level 2 and 458 at level 3.

Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- much good teaching and learning
- clear and constructive feedback to learners on their progress
- highly effective initial advice and guidance
- good curriculum leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- declining and low success rates on the first diploma in public services and the diploma in childcare and education
- insufficient common room facilities for learners.

Achievement and standards

31. Learners' achievement is good. In 2006/07, success rates on most courses are well above the latest national average. Many had significantly improved. The standard of learners' work on national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses is particularly high. However, success rates on the first diploma in public services and the diploma in childcare and education are consistently low.

Quality of provision

32. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well planned. There is a wide variety of teaching and learning activities that includes appropriate links to the vocational area. Lessons are managed well and learners are engaged fully. Good attention is paid to learners' differing needs; for example, extension work is set for higher attaining learners. Attendance in a few lessons is low. Small group sizes in a minority of courses sometimes has an adverse impact on learning. Assessment of learners is thorough. They receive good feedback on their progress in lessons. Marked work includes useful written feedback commentaries. NVQ learners receive very thorough feedback following assessments.

33. The college responds well to learners' educational and training needs. Links with employers are well coordinated. Work placements are well managed. All

learners are involved in enrichment activities. Work-based learners receive frequent visits at times to suit their work patterns. Employers speak well of the provision, though there is no level 4 course to support progression for managers.

34. Guidance and support for learners are good. Attention is paid to ensuring that learners have a clear understanding of the course demands. Entry requirements are rigorous and all learners, including NVQ work-based learners, undergo initial assessment prior to being placed on courses.

Leadership and management

35. Curriculum leadership and management are good. Managers have taken successful steps to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to improve success rates. Most of the weaknesses identified in the last full inspection are now strengths. Staff feel well informed, valued and supported. Good team work is promoted through frequent meetings at course and divisional levels. Extensive support for course teams in sharing good practice has improved teaching and learning. Staff have good access to course information data. These undergo better monitoring at curriculum level and are accurate.
36. Classrooms are well equipped and displays of learners' work are presented well. The Castle View site does not have a lift or common room.

Engineering and manufacturing technologies

Good: Grade 2

Context

37. Full-time and part-time provision are available from entry level to level 4. Courses are offered in the mechanical, electrical, electronic and motor vehicle areas. There are 171 full-time and 178 part-time learners in engineering, and 69 full-time and 26 part-time learners on motor vehicle courses. Around a half of engineering learners and a quarter of motor vehicle learners are adults. Approximately 400 learners are on work-based learning programmes. About 100 learners aged 14 to 16 attend courses in engineering.

Strengths

- high success rates on motor vehicle courses
- much good teaching and learning
- good resources in engineering
- good range of provision
- good target setting and review for individual learners
- highly effective management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on national certificate and diploma courses
- insufficient provision of modern vehicles.

Achievement and standards

38. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates have improved significantly from well below the national average to around the national average in 2006/07. The improvement was particularly good for adults. Success rates are high on motor vehicle courses, Train to Gain programmes and advanced apprenticeships. Success rates on national certificate and diploma courses are low. The standard of learners' written and practical work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

39. The quality of provision is good, as is much of the teaching and learning. Some teaching is outstanding. Recent measures to improve teaching and learning have been very effective. Teachers make very good use of ILT. Most lessons are well planned and include a variety of teaching strategies. Lessons which focus on revision or the development of portfolios towards the end of a course are less effective.
40. Most classrooms provide a satisfactory learning environment and there is a high number of computers available to learners.
41. Assessment is satisfactory. Learners' assignments are marked promptly and accurately and most learners receive good feedback to help them improve.

42. The extent to which programmes meet the needs of learners is good. The college offers a wide range of full-, part-time and work-based learning courses providing well established progression routes. The college also delivers qualifications for other training providers and short courses for local industry.
43. Guidance and support for learners are good. The initial assessment of learners is thorough and results are used well to plan individual programmes. Clear targets are agreed with learners and these are reviewed robustly and regularly. Learners are clear about their targets and how well they are progressing. Tutors provide good support and guidance, and the support for those with additional learning needs is good.

Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are good. Managers set a clear direction and have made significant improvements in achievement and in the quality of teaching and learning. Self-assessment is accurate. Communication is good and staff meetings have a very sharp focus on improving standards. Data are used effectively to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement. The views of learners are sought through effective focus groups. Equality and diversity are monitored and promoted appropriately.
45. The college has good resources in engineering. New machines have been installed in the engineering workshop and learners have good access to tools and equipment. The availability of modern vehicles is insufficient.

Construction, planning and the built environment

Good: Grade 2

Context

46. The college offers full-time, part-time and evening courses at levels 1 to 4. These include wood and trowel occupations, mechanical services, electrical installation and technician studies. There are also short bespoke courses for the gas, electrical and water industries. Of the 826 enrolments, 572 are adults, 545 are part-time, 27 are female, 161 are from minority ethnic groups, and 34 are aged 14 to 16. The college has 140 work-based learners.

Strengths

- high success rates in plumbing and electrical installation
- good standard of learners' work
- much good teaching and learning
- the wide range of enrichment activities
- good leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on NVQ level 2 trowel and wood occupations
- slow progress to improve apprentices' timely framework completion rates.

Achievement and standards

47. Learners' achievement is satisfactory. Success rates on most courses have improved since the last inspection to around the national average. The success rates on plumbing and electrical installation courses are high. However, for the small number of learners on the NVQ level 2 in trowel and wood occupations, success rates are well below the national average. Current retention data indicate that further improvements in retention are being achieved. The overall success rates for work-based learners are above the national average but the timely framework completion rate for apprentices is low.
48. The quality of learners' written and practical work is good. Learners' portfolios are well organised and include a good range of appropriate evidence. Learners develop good technical knowledge and vocational skills, and produce work to an acceptable industrial standard.

Quality of provision

49. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan lessons well, set clear objectives and use a wide range of teaching activities to motivate learners. In many lessons, learning is enlivened by the effective use of ILT. The teaching of key skills is delivered in a vocational context and engages learners well. The promotion and monitoring of health and safety in the workshops are thorough. Teachers do not always extend the knowledge of the most able learners nor do they provide them with more challenging tasks. Assessment is satisfactory.

50. The range of provision is good. The college responds well to meeting the needs of learners and employers. Bespoke courses are developed to update the skills of employees in the local industries. The range of enrichment activities is good. Construction learners visited India to help build accommodation for the homeless.
51. Support and guidance for learners are good. Effective initial guidance enables learners to be placed on appropriate level courses. The assessment of additional learning needs is prompt and support helps learners to achieve. Learners are well supported in lessons and in the workplace. Recording and target setting in tutorials are effective.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are good. Curriculum managers set challenging targets to improve quality and achieve objectives. Strategies that have been put in place to secure improvements are working; for example, two programmes have been restructured to enable learners to cope better with the demands of assessment. College data indicate retention rates have improved. The self-assessment report is accurate. Teaching and learning are not sufficiently well evaluated. There is too much emphasis on the lesson grade profile and insufficient focus on the outcome of observations. Equality and diversity are monitored effectively. The management of construction work-based learning is good.

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

53. Full-time and part-time courses in ICT include entry level 3 information technology (IT), IT users, European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), level 2 ITQ (NVQ course for IT users), first diploma, General Certificate of Education (GCE) advanced level applied ICT and computing. During 2007/08, 2,214 learners started courses, of these 214 are aged 16 to 18, 2,000 are adults, 198 are full-time, 2,016 are part-time, 1,144 are male, 1,070 are female and 482 are from black and minority ethnic groups. The ITQ course constitutes about 40% of the provision as does the proportion of full-time courses.

Strengths

- high success rates on level 1 courses
- flexible and convenient provision at ITQ centres and the IT centre for learners with disabilities
- good provision of additional support for learners aged 16 to 18 and for learners with disabilities located at the college's IT centre at 'Ideal for All'.

Areas for improvement

- low success rate on the ITQ course
- insufficient initial assessment, advice and guidance at ITQ centres
- insufficient quality improvement planning.

Achievement and standards

54. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. On level 1 courses, success rates are high and well above the national average. Success rates on level 3 courses have improved and are now at or just above the national average. However, the success rate on the level 2 ITQ course is well below the national average. Retention, whilst improving, is low on this programme. Skills development is particularly good for learners on the IT levels 2 and 3 practitioner courses and for those attending the centre for learners with disabilities. Learners' work is generally well presented and organised and the standard is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

55. The quality of provision is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In good lessons, a variety of activities engages learners well and effective use of group work develops confidence and team working skills. In less effective lessons, teachers do not highlight key learning points or check learning sufficiently. Work is marked accurately and the standard of assessment and feedback is satisfactory. Learners' reviews are much improved in frequency and quality since the last inspection.

56. The needs and interests of employers and learners are met well through a wide range of courses. Learners can progress to higher education at the college. The opening hours and flexible delivery methods used at ITQ centres provide good access for learners seeking to improve employment prospects. A centre for disabled learners is particularly effective in preparing them for work.
57. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory overall. Full-time learners and disabled learners at the college's IT centre at 'Ideal for All' have thorough initial assessment and are given support which helps them succeed. Full-time learners receive appropriate additional help outside lessons from teachers or through online course materials. However, the initial assessment and guidance for the ITQ learners are insufficient. Numeracy needs are not assessed and some learners are enrolled on courses at an inappropriate level.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Progress has been made in raising success rates and in improving the quality of teaching for learners aged 16 to 18. Management actions have improved low retention on adult courses. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced, and most assessors have gained appropriate qualifications since the last inspection. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and the report is accurate. However, quality processes and improvement plans lack detail and specific targets.

Leisure, travel and tourism

Good: Grade 2

Context

59. The college offers courses in sport, exercise and fitness and travel and tourism, from levels 1 to 3. There are 261 full-time learners in this area and 185 part-time adult learners. Just under a half of the learners are male and a quarter are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. There are 90 learners at level 1, 221 at level 2 and 235 at level 3. There are currently 115 learners training and competing in eight sports.

Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- good teaching and learning
- good course enrichment
- highly effective support for learners
- very effective leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on the advanced level sport and physical education course
- insufficient challenge to meet the needs of more able learners
- insufficiently detailed target setting for individual learners.

Achievement and standards

60. Learners' achievement is good. Success rates on most full-time first and national diploma courses are high. Success rates on most part-time and additional courses are good. Success rates for advanced level sport and physical education are below the national average.
61. Learner's practical skills are good. Many of the sports academy learners are involved in local and county competitive sport. Progression rates on full-time courses are good. Learners' written work is good. Learners coach and instruct confidently. The monitoring of learners' progress is effective. Retention has improved. Learners enjoy their lessons. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Quality of provision

62. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned well with a good variety of assessment activities. Practical sessions are managed well. Health and safety aspects are stressed and checked effectively. Constructive feedback from staff helps learners to improve their work. Teachers do not always challenge the more able to develop their own ideas. Learners are confident in the use of ILT. Sports learners utilise well produced online resources effectively.
63. The range of courses offered and sporting enrichment opportunities are good. Good partnerships exist between the college, local schools and employers.

Travel and tourism learners develop good commercial expertise through a college travel shop linked with a local travel agency. Travel and tourism resources feature a realistic simulation of a commercial airline passenger cabin providing learners with realistic role-play exercises.

64. Guidance and support for learners are good. Literacy, numeracy and other needs of learners are assessed accurately at interview and learners receive good learning support. Learners value the support they receive from all staff. Learning support is very effective and course tutors contribute to learners' success by careful monitoring and tracking. Learners' individual targets are insufficiently detailed. The college provides a caring and supportive learning environment.

Leadership and management

65. Leadership and management are good. The clear focus on raising standards through comprehensive course review procedures produces significant improvements. Lesson observation reports show an improvement in the proportion of good or better teaching and learning. Quality assurance of teaching and learning is effective and self-assessment is accurate. Managers use data effectively to monitor learners and identify those at risk of leaving their courses. Staff are well qualified and most have recent commercial experience providing learners with relevant industry knowledge. Mentors provide effective support for new staff.

Arts, media and publishing

Good: Grade 2

Context

66. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in art and design, music, performing arts and media at levels 1 to 4. These include: national diplomas in art and design, graphics and fashion and textiles; a national diploma in music theatre; part-time craft provision in textiles and glass. There are 1,228 learners, of whom 509 are aged 16 to 18 and studying mainly on full-time courses.

Strengths

- high success rates on the professional diploma in glass course
- very high standard of learners' work
- very good teaching and learning
- good support for learners
- good curriculum leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on national diplomas in performing arts and graphics
- insufficient rigour in aspects of quality assurance.

Achievement and standards

67. Learners' achievement is good. Overall success rates have risen considerably in the last three years. The professional diploma in glass course success rate is significantly above the national average. Success rates on national diplomas in graphics, music practice and drama are low.
68. Standards of learners' work are very high. Theatre design learners have recently won a prestigious national award, and the ambitious media and dance production of '1984' displays advanced dance techniques and good video installation skills. Glass sculptures are of the highest quality. Learners are keen and support each other well. Attendance is high.

Quality of provision

69. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are very good with consistently effective lesson planning, good use of target setting to encourage learners to be self-critical and challenging tasks. Learners develop very good skills; for example, following a rehearsal for 'Godspell', learners demonstrated a very clear understanding of acting techniques. In another lesson, learners showed a good understanding of how artists work in the community in addition to developing their skills in glass installation.
70. Assessment is accurate and includes detailed written feedback of good quality. Action planning is particularly effective. Many learners are encouraged to become partners in the assessment process.

71. Curriculum development is good and meets the needs of learners well. Progression to higher level courses is increasing and success rates are improving. New courses started in 2005/06 continue to recruit well.
72. Guidance and support are good. Identified additional learning needs are met quickly and individual learning plans contain regular reports on progress and targets. Extensive support is given to learners at risk of leaving their courses. All learners receive free art and photographic materials.

Leadership and management

73. Leadership and management are good. Strategies for sharing good practice are effective and help to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Staff development, focusing on teaching and learning, is effective. Increased use of data by curriculum area leaders is effective in identifying learners at risk of leaving their courses and in improving retention. Course review and evaluation lack rigour. Key performance data are not routinely analysed in detail. Self-assessment is robust and accurate. Areas for improvement are identified and actions to address these are implemented well.

Preparation for life and work

Good: Grade 2

Context

74. The college offers provision in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), literacy and numeracy, foundation studies from pre-entry level to level 2 and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Key skills and additional learning support are available across the college. Accredited awards in literacy, numeracy, ESOL and life skills are available. Programmes include vocational tasters, work preparation courses and school link courses. Of the 2,200 enrolments, 1,500 are full-time, 750 are aged 16 to 18, 740 are from black and minority ethnic groups and 130 are aged 14 to 16.

Strengths

- high ESOL success rates
- good progression of learners
- wide range of courses
- very effective support
- good management actions to secure improvements.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient lesson activities to meet individual learners' needs
- underdeveloped individual target setting to help learners improve
- insufficient focus on learning in internal lesson observations.

Achievement and standards

75. Achievement and standards are good. Since the last inspection overall success rates have improved significantly. Success rates are high on ESOL courses and for a significant number of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners' development of self-confidence is good. Those previously excluded from education or with low prior achievement progress well on to higher level courses or into employment. All learners develop useful work-related skills and an increased awareness of health and safety. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities acquire good travel training skills which improve their self-reliance and independence. Attendance rates are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the more effective lessons the wide variety of activities keeps learners on task. Good support is provided by teachers and support staff. They know the requirements of individual learners well and are flexible and responsive to their needs. In the less effective lessons, teaching is over directive and does not take into account individual learners' targets sufficiently.
77. All learners benefit from the good range of courses with clear progression routes onto higher level qualifications. The wide range of work experience

placements provides realistic learning opportunities. Many learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities participate in the varied enrichment activities. Good use is made of community links to promote inclusion.

78. Support for learners is very effective. The levels of support for learners with additional learning needs are high. Small group and individual support for literacy and numeracy are good and help learners to progress through their courses. Individual work programmes provide opportunities for learners to improve wider study skills. Although target setting has improved, not all targets are specific, measurable or give sufficient focus on improving learners' personal development.

Leadership and management

79. Leadership and management are good. Managers' actions to secure improvements are good. Success rates have improved significantly and meetings are held regularly to evaluate and monitor learners' performance. Quality assurance processes are comprehensive. However, internal lesson observations focus too much on teaching and not enough on learning. Self-assessment is broadly accurate and identifies most areas for improvement successfully. Links with external agencies and schools are effective. The promotion of equal opportunities is good.

Business, administration and law

Good: Grade 2

Context

80. Full-time and part-time courses are available from levels 1 to 4. Provision includes accounts, administration, business, law, management and professional studies. Learners can work towards NVQs, first and national diplomas, AS and A levels and professional qualifications. Of the 1,587 enrolments, 1,217 are part-time, 1,289 are adults, 958 are female, 417 are from black and minority ethnic groups and 12 are aged 14 to 16. There are 140 work-based learners.

Strengths

- high success rates on most courses
- much good teaching and learning
- good leadership and management.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on a minority of courses
- insufficient work experience on full-time programmes.

Achievement and standards

81. Learners' achievement is good. Success rates for the majority of learners are high but on a minority of courses success rates are low. Success rates for learners on work-based programmes are very high. Retention rates have improved considerably. The standard of learners' assessed work is good and most attend regularly, are punctual and enjoy their learning. Learners gain a good range of business-related skills which they apply to their learning and development.

Quality of provision

82. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives designed to meet the needs of learners of different abilities. Teachers engage their learners successfully in lesson activities and provide them with an interesting and challenging range of tasks. In the best lessons, teaching succeeds in motivating learners to achieve. Most tutors make good use of ILT in lessons. Assessments are well planned. Learners' work is marked promptly and teachers provide good and timely feedback which helps learners improve. Full-time level 2 business studies learners are given the opportunity to have work experience in college departments but there is no work experience available for full-time level 3 learners.

83. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is good and the curriculum enables good progression opportunities. The range of flexible courses to meet the needs of employers and learners is wide. Learners

participate in a good college enrichment programme and local businesses have contributed support to individual programmes.

84. Guidance and support for learners is good. Individual learning plans contain challenging but achievable targets that are negotiated with learners. Teachers and personal tutors respond to learners' individual needs well and provide effective advice on how to improve performance. Monitoring of learners' progress towards targets is good and valued by learners. Attendance at tutorials is good.

Leadership and management

85. Curriculum management is good. Learners' performance is monitored effectively. Communication with staff is good and meetings are held regularly. Teachers are involved fully in developing the provision. They have a good understanding of the self-assessment process and make good use of course reviews to improve provision. Self-assessment is accurate. The restructuring of the department was well managed following the last inspection and staff are motivated and enthusiastic about new developments. The opportunities for staff development are good and appraisal practice is well established. Teaching observations provide an accurate assessment and identify development needs well.

Learners' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

		16-19				19+			
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
1 Long	04/05	1337	55	65	-10	5606	41	62	-21
	05/06	1543	63	69	-6	6077	50	65	-15
	06/07	1356	70	-	-	2039	63	-	-
GNVQs	04/05	87	67	68	-1	2	100	64	36
	05/06	55	82	72	10	2	50	-	-
	06/07	35	89	-	-	1	100	-	-
NVQs	04/05	122	65	68	-3	128	58	66	-8
	05/06	136	68	72	-4	259	77	74	3
	06/07	101	89	-	-	131	81	-	-
Other	04/05	1128	53	64	-11	5476	41	62	-21
	05/06	1352	61	69	-8	5816	48	65	-17
	06/07	1220	68	-	-	1907	61	-	-

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

		16-19				19+			
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
2 Long	04/05	1250	56	61	-5	4357	49	60	-11
	05/06	1577	60	66	-6	4644	52	66	-14
	06/07	1486	71	-	-	5765	64	-	-
GCSEs	04/05	252	66	64	2	224	61	63	-2
	05/06	217	63	68	-5	301	49	67	-18
	06/07	145	71	-	-	281	58	-	-
GNVQs	04/05	136	63	67	-4	11	45	75	-30
	05/06	78	62	69	-7	2	100	68	32
	06/07	84	77	-	-	6	67	-	-
NVQs	04/05	188	60	57	3	1276	49	60	-11
	05/06	194	55	65	-10	1130	46	67	-21
	06/07	215	53	-	-	2692	61	-	-
Other	04/05	674	49	61	-12	2846	48	59	-11
	05/06	1088	60	66	-6	3211	54	65	-11
	06/07	1042	74	-	-	2786	68	-	-

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2005 to 2007, compared to the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-19				19+			
		Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff	Starts - Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	Diff
3 Long	04/05	2391	61	68	-7	2531	44	58	-14
	05/06	2023	61	70	-9	2449	47	63	-16
	06/07	1918	71	-	-	2099	67	-	-
A/A2 Levels	04/05	590	81	86	-5	106	73	69	4
	05/06	453	79	87	-8	105	70	72	-2
	06/07	417	89	-	-	109	82	-	-
AS Levels	04/05	1093	55	66	-11	230	41	52	-11
	05/06	866	56	67	-11	226	38	55	-17
	06/07	706	64	-	-	176	49	-	-
GNVQs	04/05	205	56	61	-5	62	47	54	-7
	05/06	71	72	66	6	76	45	57	-12
	06/07	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NVQs	04/05	42	48	63	-15	621	49	56	-7
	05/06	28	75	71	4	470	44	63	-19
	06/07	30	67	-	-	607	71	-	-
Other	04/05	461	54	60	-6	1512	41	59	-18
	05/06	605	52	65	-13	1572	47	64	-17
	06/07	752	68	-	-	1028	69	-	-

Table 4

Success rates on work-based learning programmes managed by the college 2005 to 2007.

a) Overall success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2004/05	Apprenticeship	252	28%	38%	42%	50%
	Advanced	89	26%	24%	51%	48%
2005/06	Apprenticeship	218	51%	53%	57%	58%
	Advanced	72	53%	44%	63%	54%
2006/07	Apprenticeship	141	56%	61%	57%	65%
	Advanced	52	69%	58%	71%	64%

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

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

b) Timely success rate

End Year	Apprenticeship Programme	Number of Learners *	College Framework rate **	National rate **	College NVQ rate **	National rate **
2004/05	Apprenticeship	240	20%	22%	23%	29%
	Advanced	66	23%	21%	30%	31%
2005/06	Apprenticeship	177	29%	34%	31%	38%
	Advanced	64	39%	27%	46%	34%
2006/07	Apprenticeship	144	45%	44%	47%	47%
	Advanced	55	65%	37%	67%	43%

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

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

Table 5

Success rates on work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes managed by the provider/college 2006 to 2007.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**
Train to Gain ***	2006/07	overall	314	81
		timely	-	-

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

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

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