

Norwich City College of Further and Higher Education

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 students 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; science and mathematics; hospitality and catering; leisure, travel and tourism; independent leisure and living skills; and business, administration and law.

Description of the provider

1. Norwich City College is a large college of further and higher education based close to the city centre. Most of the provision is based at the main campus but the college has a bespoke financial services academy in the city centre and uses several community venues across the city. Its catchment area includes the city and surrounding county of Norfolk. Although the region is one of comparative affluence there are pockets of significant disadvantage. Norwich is the second most deprived district in the eastern region. Two thirds of the city's wards are within the most deprived wards in England. The proportion of pupils who achieve five GCSE grades at A* to C is below the national average.

2. During 2007/08, the college enrolled 8,001 students, just over half of whom studied full time. Over three quarters of full-time students were aged 16 to 18 compared with just under a fifth of adults. Around half of students were female, and 17% of the students had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds was 8%, which was above the proportion of people from these backgrounds in Norwich.
3. The college provides courses in 14 of the 15 sector subject areas as well as a range of work-based learning and Entry to Employment programmes. It is the lead provider in a large Train to Gain consortium. The college works with more than 30 schools to provide courses for students aged 14 to 16.
4. The college is a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for hospitality and catering and for finance and accounting. It leads a collaborative CoVE in computing and networking with two other Norfolk colleges. The college has achieved National Skills Academy status for financial services and is an associate college of the University of East Anglia for its higher education (HE) provision. The college has achieved Training Quality Standard status for its work with employers. Its mission is: 'City College Norwich is an inclusive, accessible college of further and higher education which provides high quality services to the range of diverse communities within the locality and the region which it serves'.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Science and mathematics	Inadequate: Grade 4
Hospitality and catering	Good: Grade 2
Leisure, travel and tourism	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Independent leisure and living skills	Good: Grade 2
Business, administration and law	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the college is satisfactory, in contrast to the college's judgement of good. Achievement and standards are satisfactory with considerable improvement in retention in 2007/08. Success rates are high at level 1 but are low at level 3, especially for younger students. Attendance has been low but secure signs of improvement are evident in 2008/09. Students make satisfactory progress and those with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Work-based learning success rates are above average. Success rates on Train to Gain courses are high.
6. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as are teaching and learning. Teachers use employment contexts well to enhance learning but do not always ensure that their teaching strategies meet all students' learning needs effectively. Assessment is satisfactory. The range of provision, including enrichment activities, to meet students' needs and interests is good. The college is highly responsive to employers' and school pupils' needs and to meeting local and national priorities. Its approach to social and educational inclusion is outstanding, as is its provision for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Support and guidance are good. Targets set in individual learning plans, however, are insufficiently challenging. Initial advice and guidance are good and easily accessible.
7. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strong partnerships are in place to support the achievement of strategic objectives. Equality of opportunity is good. Steady improvement in success rates has taken place. Work-based learning success rates have improved considerably. Action plans have been less successful in other areas such as improving unsatisfactory key skills provision. Quality assurance is satisfactory, although inconsistency in quality of provision across curriculum areas remains. Self-assessment is inaccurate in evaluating the key aspects of the college's provision and is over generous in its judgements. Governance is satisfactory. Students have an influential voice in the college. Accommodation is satisfactory with good specialist resources. Financial management is highly effective. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. The college's capacity to improve is satisfactory. The trend of improvement in students' success rates is steady. Self-assessment lacks a sharp focus and is overly descriptive at whole college level. Most cross-college grades are inaccurate and strengths are over-emphasised in reaching judgements. Some areas for improvement, such as low attendance, were insufficiently highlighted. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory. The college's lesson observation procedure is over generous in assessing the quality of learning. Staff and managers at all levels show a high level of commitment to improvement.

Communication is effective. The college is held in high regard by the local community.

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

9. The college has made satisfactory progress in promoting improvement since the last inspection. The proportion of good or better teaching and learning remains similar. The planning of teaching to meet the needs of individual students remains a key area for improvement, as does the achievement of key skills qualifications. Internal verification of assessment has improved on work-based learning qualifications, and overall success rates on apprenticeship programmes are now above the national average. Success rates vary significantly, however, across the different frameworks offered. The rigour of course review and evaluation has improved, and is now satisfactory.

Key strengths

- high success rates on level 1 provision
- good use of employment contexts to support learning
- excellent response to employers' needs
- strong development of the students' voice
- excellent range of programmes for students aged 14 to 16
- outstanding educational and social inclusion
- outstanding provision for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- strong partnerships which support the achievement of strategic objectives
- highly effective financial management.

Areas for improvement

The college should address:

- low success rates on level 3 long courses for students aged 16 to 18
- unsatisfactory key skills provision
- insufficient impact of teaching strategies on meeting students' learning needs
- insufficiently challenging targets for students
- insufficient rigour in self-assessment processes
- inconsistency in the quality of provision across sector subject areas.

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grades:

Train to Gain

Good: grade 2

Students aged 14 to 16

Good: grade 2

10. Achievement and standards are satisfactory, in contrast to the college's judgement of good. Between 2005/06 and 2007/08, the success rate on long courses improved in line with the sector average and is average. Retention rates improved slightly between 2005/06 and 2006/07 and were low, but the overall rate improved significantly in 2007/08, especially for adult students, to be satisfactory. The long course success rate at level 1 is high, especially for students aged 16 to 18. At level 3, this rate is low, especially for students aged 16 to 18 where little improvement has taken place. Long course success rates in the majority of sector subject areas are average. Success rates on short courses are high. Students enjoy their studies and develop a good awareness of health and safety. The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Attendance was low in 2007/08. At the start of 2008/09, however, considerable improvement is evident and attendance is broadly satisfactory.
11. Most students make satisfactory progress compared with their prior attainment. Many make good gains in personal and social development. Those with specific learning needs often make good progress. Progression rates within the college are high from entry level through to level 2. The gap between the success rates of male and female students is closing but some underperformance by male students remains. Students from a few minority ethnic groups under perform, mainly due to low pass rates. Students who receive additional learning support are more successful than those who do not. Success rates on Train to Gain courses are high, although the numbers of students who complete by their planned end date are low. The progression rate for students on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes is high. Pupils aged 14 to 16 achieve well, especially on Young Apprenticeship courses. A high proportion of these pupils progress to full-time courses. Success rates for key skills qualifications have made very little improvement and are low. The rate of successful completion of work-based learning frameworks has improved since 2005/06 at a better rate than that nationally. Both completion rates and timeliness of completion are above average, especially for advanced apprentices.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. The quality of provision is satisfactory which does not match the college's judgement of good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The lesson observation scheme is comprehensive and identifies main strengths and areas for improvement in teaching accurately, together with a good range of development points for each teacher. The grades awarded, however, are over

generous; they place too little emphasis on the appropriateness of learning objectives and the assessment of progress made by students.

13. The quality of teaching and learning varies considerably both within and between sector subject areas. Good teaching is characterised by well planned lessons, matched to students' individual needs and often providing a broad range of stimulating activities. The use of students' employment experience to develop their understanding is a particularly effective feature. Not enough lessons reach this high standard. Although teachers have a good knowledge of students' individual starting points, lessons are not always pitched at the correct level or are sufficiently challenging. Checks on learning often lack a clear focus so that teachers do not have a secure grasp of how much progress individual students make. The college's initiative to address these issues through its 'personalised learning programme' is well considered, but it is too early to assess its impact.
14. Teachers make increasingly effective use of information and learning technology (ILT) in lessons. A virtual learning environment (VLE) is used well to support teaching, the consolidation of work and research. Assessment is rigorous. For work-based students, 'off-the-job' training and learning are satisfactory and complement the increasingly effective training undertaken in the workplace.
15. The college's response to meeting the needs and interests of students is good and excellent for employers. It offers an extensive range of courses with good progression routes from entry level through to higher education. A strong focus on the acquisition of skills which develop students' future economic well-being or improve performance in their current employment is a significant strength. The college is recruiting increasing numbers of students on employment-related programmes, including Train to Gain.
16. The college's highly productive collaboration with local schools has helped it develop a wide range of courses for nearly 1,000 students aged 14 to 16. The college also plays a major role in the development and delivery of new Diploma qualifications. The sixth form centre shares some General Certificate of Education (GCE) AS and A-level provision with local schools. The range of subjects is satisfactory but students are unable to combine academic and vocational courses.
17. Key skills provision does not give sufficient support for the development of students' literacy, numeracy and IT skills. The range of curriculum enrichment activities is excellent. They are well attended and add greatly to students' enjoyment of the college. They also provide students with valuable opportunities to stay healthy and make a positive contribution to the community. Educational and social inclusion is outstanding. An outstanding range of community initiatives, including provision for young parents and young people who exhibit anti-social behaviour, is encouraging increasing numbers of hard-to-reach young people to participate in further education.

18. Support and guidance are good. The college has introduced a number of improvements, some very recent, to its support arrangements. Retention and attendance rates have improved and are satisfactory. The college's advice centre is a welcoming and helpful facility. Accurate information is readily available, and staff are effective in their advisory and support roles. Advice and guidance are accurate and valued by students so that very few make incorrect choices and change courses once they have started. Support and guidance are not easily available for those part-time students who attend evening courses.
19. Students benefit from a comprehensive range of support services which are provided on an individual, group, or class basis as necessary. Support for students with ASD is excellent. Specialist resources, including assistive technology, have enabled many students with additional needs to remain at the college and succeed. Careers guidance is well planned with good access to extensive resources. Support for personal issues is good and the college has strong links with a wide range of specialist external agencies. Financial help is available for childcare. Additional learning support is extensive and effective. Tutorials are good, and valued by students. Targets set in individual learning plans, however, are insufficiently challenging. Support for work-based students is good.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Contributory grade:

Equality of opportunity

Good: grade 2

20. Leadership and management are satisfactory, in contrast to the college's judgement of good. The principal and corporation set a clear strategic direction for the college, through which it is successfully addressing both local and national priorities. The college plays a key strategic role in the local community through strong partnerships with schools, employers and community organisations. The senior team encourages innovation. Recent successes include becoming the first college to gain awarding body status, the establishment of the National Skills Academy for Financial Services and a Beacon Award for provision for students with ASD. The level of student engagement in the leadership and management of the college is high. The student union president attends senior management meetings.
21. Success rates have improved steadily since the last inspection and are satisfactory. The impact of a retention strategy in 2007/08 improved previously low retention rates to become satisfactory. Action planning has had a variable impact on quality improvement: attendance has been low for several years and is only just showing signs of improvement; key skills success rates have improved but not to satisfactory levels; and, while work-based learning success rates have improved to above the national average, success rates on some frameworks remain below.
22. The college has developed its quality assurance arrangements since the last inspection and they are satisfactory. Variation in the quality of provision

remains evident, however, and quality assurance arrangements have not yet had sufficient impact in establishing consistency across curriculum areas. Improved lesson observation and course review processes are in place but they are not yet fully reliable in evaluating provision accurately. Inspectors' judgements about the quality of lessons do not match the college's view. Student attendance, progress and performance data are easily accessible to staff, but the rigour with which data are evaluated varies and some evaluations are over generous. Self-assessment is inaccurate, overly descriptive and lacks a sharp focus at whole college level, but is more effective at curriculum level.

23. Teaching staff are well qualified and have access to a good range of staff development opportunities. Staff induction, appraisal and performance management are satisfactory. Communication within the college is effective. Curriculum management is satisfactory.
24. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. The level of commitment to equality of opportunity in the college's strategic plan is high. The curriculum is inclusive of most groups of students and its particular focus on catering for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. The college's approach to educational and social inclusion is outstanding. The college makes an appropriate response to equality and diversity, gender and disability legislation. Participation and performance by different students' groups are monitored adequately. Positive action is taken to challenge discrimination. The promotion of equality and diversity within the curriculum is inconsistent but much is effective. Procedures for safeguarding students meet current requirements.
25. Governors are committed and focus strongly on the students' experience. They provide good levels of challenge to senior managers on some aspects of academic performance, such as success rate targets. Other aspects, such as attendance rates and progress against areas for improvement from the last inspection, have received less challenge. Financial management is strong, and the management of resources is very effective. Accommodation is satisfactory and the quality of specialist resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), is good. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

26. The college offers full-time and part-time courses in health, care, childcare and public services from entry to degree level. Courses include first diplomas in health and social care, children's care, learning and development and public services, access to HE programmes in health and nursing, and social work as well as certificate and diploma courses in childcare and education. Approximately 715 students are on full-time courses, 687 of whom are aged 16 to 18. Just over 200 students are on part-time courses, most of whom are adults. Nearly 300 students are on Train to Gain programmes working towards national vocational qualifications (NVQs).

Strengths

- high success rates on level 1 courses
- very effective links between work placement experience and theory
- good partnership work to meet the needs of students and employers.

Areas for improvement

- low retention rates on first diplomas in health and social care and public services
- low success rates in key skills qualifications
- insufficient range of teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students.

Achievement and standards

27. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates on courses at level 1 have improved significantly and are high. Success rates on most other courses have risen to about the national averages. Success rates on a small number of level 2 courses remain below average. Retention rates on adult courses improved in 2007/08 but the rate of improvement has been slower for younger students. Retention rates on first diplomas in health and social care and public services remain low. Success rates on Train to Gain programmes are high. The standard of students' work is satisfactory, with examples of well presented research projects. Most students gain a range of additional qualifications and develop useful occupational skills. The success rate for key skill qualifications has declined markedly and is low, especially so for ICT qualifications.

Quality of provision

28. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, students are actively engaged and contribute well. Teachers reinforce links between theory and industry-related experiences well. The range of teaching and learning

strategies used in many lessons is insufficient to meet the needs of all students. Lesson plans are detailed but the linking of the results of initial assessment to learning activities is insufficient.

29. The range of provision is good. Productive partnership working ensures that the provision meets the needs of students and employers well. Employers identify useful opportunities for skills development in work placements. Work with police and fire services develops clear progression pathways and a range of exciting activities for public service students. Care and childcare students visit a wide range of cultural and religious settings to develop their understanding of relevant issues.
30. Support for students is satisfactory. Tutorials are satisfactory, including valuable one-to-one support for personal issues. Individual learning plans are not used effectively to agree learning targets and monitor progress towards achieving these.

Leadership and management

31. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The impact of actions for improvement is satisfactory but varies across courses and for different groups of students; for example, success rates for male students are considerably lower than for female students. Equality and diversity topics are well embedded in the curriculum and students have a satisfactory understanding of issues relevant to their area of practice. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning have had limited effect. The proportion of good or better teaching has increased slightly in the last two years. Programme managers make limited use of data to plan improvements to the provision. Systems for managing attendance and ensuring the quality of initial advice and guidance show early positive outcomes but are too new to judge their full impact.

Science and mathematics

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

32. Courses are offered at GCE AS and A level in biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, mathematics and further mathematics. Some 244 students are enrolled on GCE AS courses and 94 on GCE A-level courses. Day-time GCSE courses are also offered in psychology, science and mathematics for 271 students. The majority of the students on these courses are full time and aged 16 to 18. Evening courses in GCSE science and mathematics are studied by 88 students who are mainly adults. An access to science course for adults is studied by 65 students.

Strengths

- high retention rates on GCSE courses and a high pass rate on the access to science course
- rigorous procedures for students' target setting
- good support for students.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates in most GCE AS subjects
- poor students' progress in GCE AS chemistry and mathematics
- low attendance
- insufficient range of learning activities to meet the needs of all students
- underdeveloped use of ILT in the classroom.

Achievement and standards

33. Achievement and standards are inadequate. Retention rates on GCSE courses are high. Pass rates on the access to science course have been high for the last three years. Achievement of high grades on GCE A-level courses has improved between 2005/06 and 2007/08 to above the national average. Success rates on GCE AS courses in biology, chemistry, psychology and mathematics are very low. Students on GCE AS chemistry and mathematics courses make poor progress compared with their prior attainment. The standard of work observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. Students showed good analytical skills in the study of respiration and good practical skill in constructing molecular models. Attendance was low in 2007/08 but is showing signs of improvement in 2008/09.

Quality of provision

34. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers plan activities to meet the learning needs of all students. They provide challenging work for the more able and extra support for less able students. Schemes of work and lesson plans show opportunities for work on extension material but are often ineffectively implemented. The use of ILT is underdeveloped with little

interactive application. Work is set regularly, marked and returned with appropriate comments for improvement.

35. The range of provision to meet students' needs is satisfactory. There is no vocational provision. Students take part in subject conferences, progression to HE events, maths inspiration, health education and ecology field trips. Accommodation is adequate with well equipped science laboratories and preparation areas and specialist base rooms for mathematics and psychology. The science laboratories and mathematics rooms lack information and communication technology resources for students' use. Teachers are well qualified and up-to-date in their subject knowledge. Technical support is good.
36. Guidance and support have recently improved and are good. Students receiving additional learning support achieve well. The setting of targets for improvement is now rigorous and forms an effective part of progress reviews and links well to individual learning plans.

Leadership and management

37. Leadership and management are inadequate. Standards have declined and only very recently has the quality of provision improved as a result of significant changes made in the management of the area. There are signs that standards in the classroom are improving; the numbers of 'at risk' students have decreased and projected grades have risen this year compared with the same time last year. It is too early to judge the effect of these changes on students' performance. Lesson observations identify appropriate action points but they do not always make judgements on the degree of learning or the standard reached by students. Staff development is appropriate in addressing areas for improvement. The self-assessment report is accurate. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Hospitality and catering

Good: Grade 2

Context

38. The college offers full-time and part-time courses from entry to degree level. Students work towards NVQs, first and national certificates, foundation degrees, degrees and other vocational qualifications. Of the 232 college-based students, 191 are aged 16 to 18, 150 are men, and 179 are full time. The number of work-based and Train to Gain students is 79 and the number aged 14 to 16 is 108.

Strengths

- high success rates on professional cookery courses
- high standard of students' hospitality and catering skills
- good teaching and learning
- extremely responsive range of provision.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on the NVQ for multi-skills in hospitality services and food and drink service at level 2 provision
- low success rates on key skills qualifications.

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement and standards are good. Long course success rates are high, particularly on professional cookery courses. Success rates on the NVQ hospitality multi-skills and the food and drink service at level 2 courses are low and declining. The success rate for key skills qualifications has increased but is low. The work-based learning success rate has increased markedly to a satisfactory level and the Train to Gain success rate is high.
40. Students make good progress to achieve skills of a high standard. Front-of-house students' social and team work skills and professional cookery students' culinary competence are good. A few students do not work in an organised manner. Most students' written work is good. Students enjoy their studies. A small minority is disruptive in lessons. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

41. Teaching and learning are good. Carefully planned learning takes effective account of students' different learning needs. Most teachers provide lessons which develop students' skills to a high level. Learning relates successfully to current industry practice. Employers often visit the college to provide talks and demonstrations. Students regularly visit the workplace to see good practice. Occasionally, teachers simplify the production of dishes so that students do not develop the speed and skills which industry requires. The use of ILT is effective. Assessment is accurate and fair. Most feedback is thorough and helps students improve their work.

42. The responsiveness to the needs of students and employers is outstanding. The very good range of provision, including courses tailored to the specific needs of employers, is particularly relevant to the industry. Staff encourage recruitment of students who have faced substantial challenges in their lives. Local industry links are extremely strong.
43. Support for students is good. Pre-enrolment guidance and induction settle students into their courses well. Personal support is good. A range of useful tutorial activities includes close monitoring of students' performance. Guidance on progression to employment and to further education is effective.

Leadership and management

44. Leadership and management are good. Managers' particularly effective focus on improvement has maintained provision at a high standard and increased success rates. Self-assessment is thorough. Resources, including ILT, are good. Equality of opportunity is good. Adapted accommodation and equipment for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very good. The curriculum includes food cultures and diets from different ethnic backgrounds and menus include dishes from a range of ethnic sources.

Leisure, travel and tourism

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

45. The college offers full-time courses in sports studies from levels 2 to 4 and in travel and tourism from levels 1 to 4. Approximately 250 students are on sports courses and 130 on travel and tourism courses. Most students are aged 16 to 18. About 50 students aged 14 to 16 study at the college. Sport students can study an additional qualification in fitness instructing. In travel and tourism, students study additional qualifications in airfares and ticketing, air cabin crew and team leading.

Strengths

- high success rates on first diploma in travel and tourism, certificate in air cabin crew and diploma in sports massage therapy courses
- very effective integration of ILT in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates on first diploma in sport, national certificate in travel and tourism and key skills qualifications
- insufficiently challenging targets for students.

Achievement and standards

46. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates, while improving, vary considerably and are below the national average for long courses. Success rates are high on the first diploma in travel and tourism, certificate in air cabin crew and diploma in sports massage therapy courses, but they are low on the first diploma in sport, national certificate in travel and tourism and key skills qualifications. The proportion of high grades achieved is low. The standard of students' work is satisfactory. Assignments are well presented and show sound knowledge of industry's standards and practice. Students' progression between levels of study is high.

Quality of provision

47. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most students enjoy their lessons. The best lessons are planned thoroughly and incorporate a variety of learning activities. The integration of ILT into lessons is very effective. This includes motivating and exciting presentations and the use of relevant and fun video clips to illustrate topics, as well as interactive activities. Students demonstrate good theoretical knowledge in sports studies lessons. Travel and tourism students develop confidence, teamwork skills and industry knowledge through good curriculum enhancement. Students in sports studies undertake additional qualifications, such as in fitness instructing to enhance their employability.
48. The range of provision is satisfactory. Industry links are satisfactory. These are being developed further in sport through productive work with local

organisations, Young Apprenticeships and outdoor education programmes to support the offer of wider opportunities for students. In travel and tourism, links with industry support educational visits and work placements.

49. Support and guidance are satisfactory. Individual learning plans link effectively into teaching and learning and are used to monitor progress, identify support needs and set targets. Targets set by teachers have a low level of challenge and do not promote high aspirations amongst students.

Leadership and management

50. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Course management is thorough for the majority of programmes. Data are used more effectively than previously. Strategies are being introduced to improve the provision and are beginning to prove successful. It is too early to judge the full impact of these actions. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Specialist resources are good. Classrooms are small and this reduces the quality of students' experience in some lessons. The self-assessment report is accurate but strengths are overstated.

Independent living and leisure skills

Good: Grade 2

Context

51. Courses at pre-entry, entry and level 1 are offered for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for vulnerable young people and adults. The provision operates throughout the college and from a range of community venues. There are six full-time courses. Most of the 202 students, mainly aged 16 to 18, attend full time but the curriculum accommodates some part-time students. A specific programme for students with ASD provides a core programme whilst offering supported access to a range of higher level courses.

Strengths

- high success rates
- very good development of employability skills
- outstanding provision for learners with ASD
- excellent use of real life, practical contexts to develop learning
- very effective partnerships.

Areas for improvement

- underdeveloped use of learning targets in the workplace
- insufficient use of data to drive improvements
- inadequate individualised risk assessments for students accessing external work placements.

Achievement and standards

52. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates on many courses are high. Students with ASD make very good progress over a wide range of programmes from entry level to advanced level. They have become student mentors, spoken at conferences and presented on local radio. Students develop high levels of employability skills through a range of very innovative projects. They run a number of successful enterprise businesses, including a community-based café and a floristry enterprise, developing skills to industry standards. Students' acquisition of nationally recognised qualifications for skill development is not fully maximised. Progression to employment is high.

Quality of provision

53. Teaching and learning are good. Excellent use is made of real life, practical contexts to develop learning. In the best lessons, activities are well planned and build on previous skills and knowledge. Skills for life and personal targets are developed well within the context of each lesson. In the few, less successful lessons, whole group teaching strategies and ineffective deployment of learning support staff result in students being inactive for considerable periods of time. Staff working with students with ASD are very skilled. The learning environments are excellent.

54. The range of provision is very good and is outstanding for students with ASD. Very effective internal liaison enables students to access provision in all areas of the college and promotes good progression. Very good external partnerships with a range of stakeholders result in excellent opportunities for students to develop skills, to progress, and to gain employment. Work placement learning targets, however, are insufficiently linked to students' main programmes and are underdeveloped. Generic risk assessments undertaken for placements do not take sufficient account of individual students' learning and support needs; nor is this information adequately shared with employers. Assessment is effective.
55. Support and guidance are good. Entry guidance is effective and good individual support is provided during lessons. One-to-one tutorials are adequate, although the learning targets set are not always measurable. Students participate in a broad range of successful enrichment activities. They successfully defended a 5-a-side football title, whilst others entered a garden in the Royal Norfolk Show and won a bronze medal.

Leadership and management

56. Leadership and management are good. Managers have high aspirations and improvements are evident. This highly inclusive provision promotes equality of opportunity well. The self-assessment report recognises many of the strengths but does not identify all the areas for improvement. Information on retention, achievement and success is available for accredited programmes but the interpretation of these data is over generous. The accountability of managers has increased but few specific and measurable targets to drive further improvement have been agreed. The lesson observation system does not give an accurate view of the quality of teaching, since not all teachers are observed. Some self-assessment judgements are over optimistic.

Business, administration and law

Good: Grade 2

Context

57. Approximately 250 students, the majority aged 16 to 18, follow full-time vocational courses in business and administration at levels 1, 2 or 3, and a further 200 students take GCE AS or A levels in business studies and law. Another 250 students, mainly adults, follow part-time courses at levels 2, 3 and 4, mostly on day-release basis. Work-based learning programmes have 37 apprentices in accounting and over 100 Train to Gain learners. All part-time courses and full-time level 3 courses take place within the college's national skills academy for financial services in the city centre.

Strengths

- high success rates on level 2 and short courses and in work-based learning
- good planning and management of learning
- outstanding learning environment for business-related courses
- excellent range of provision to meet students' needs.

Areas for improvement

- low success rates and low achievement of high grades on several level 3 vocational courses
- underdeveloped use of questioning by teachers to consolidate learning and provide sufficient challenge to each learner
- uneven provision of curriculum enrichment.

Achievement and standards

58. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates have improved steadily and are high at level 2. At level 3, however, success rates on several courses are low and fewer students than average achieve high grades on national diploma courses. Success rates are high for apprentices, Train to Gain learners and on short courses. The proportion of students achieving high grades has improved in GCE A-level business studies and pass rates are high in GCE AS and A-level law. Students generally achieve at or slightly below expectation. The standard of students' work is mostly satisfactory on full-time courses and often good on professional courses.

Quality of provision

59. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons demonstrate good planning and management of students' learning and progress. Regular workshops, introduced in response to students' feedback, enable students to progress well with their assignment work. In the best workshops, teachers review students' targets closely and support students energetically to ensure that good progress is made. The use of questioning within lessons to provide the appropriate challenge to each student and to consolidate learning, however, is

underdeveloped. Assessment is good. The financial services academy provides an outstanding learning environment with first class ILT facilities. Accommodation and resources at the main college are satisfactory.

60. The college provides an outstanding range of courses to meet the needs of students, including several different entry points at levels 1 and 2 and a wide range of short courses. A broad range of professional courses is provided on a cost-recovery basis. Curriculum enrichment, including work experience, is well developed on some full-time courses but barely evident on others. Some students are disappointed at the limited links they experience with the real business world.
61. Support for students is good. Group tutorials provide a relevant programme of activities. The use of target setting within individual learning plans helps students keep on track. This process, however, does not always provide students with sufficient guidance on how to achieve their personal and skills development targets. Additional learning support is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are good. Strategies to improve retention and achievement have helped to raise success rates. Thorough implementation of the quality assurance framework leads to clear improvements in provision. Lesson observations provide comprehensive and rigorous evaluations and subsequent developmental activity helps teachers improve their skills further. Take-up of staff development is strong. The monitoring and development of curriculum enrichment, vocational updating by teachers and the promotion of equality and diversity are insufficient. The self-assessment report provides a self-critical and accurate evaluation.

Students' achievement

Table 1

Success rates on mainstream level 1 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
1 Long	05/06	837	68	69	-1	620	68	65	3
	06/07	1219	73	74	-1	673	70	70	0
	07/08*	1272	84	N/A		621	76	N/A	
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	15	87	73	14	0			
	06/07	15	93	72	21	0			
	07/08*	0				0			
NVQs	05/06	82	77	72	5	0			
	06/07	65	55	75	-20	0			
	07/08*	60	75	N/A		0		N/A	
Other	05/06	740	67	69	-2	618	68	65	3
	06/07	1139	74	74	0	669	70	70	0
	07/08*	1212	84	N/A		601	77	N/A	

* college data

Table 2

Success rates on mainstream level 2 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
2 Long	05/06	2229	71	66	5	953	66	66	0
	06/07	2358	71	70	1	799	64	69	-5
	07/08*	2569	73	N/A		746	72	N/A	
GCSEs	05/06	524	72	68	4	157	66	67	-1
	06/07	447	79	71	8	150	69	70	-1
	07/08*	607	74	N/A		82	73	N/A	
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	64	72	69	3	0			
	06/07	0				0			
	07/08*	0				0			
NVQs	05/06	388	62	65	-3	285	75	68	7
	06/07	493	66	68	-2	277	63	69	-6
	07/08*	340	65	N/A		240	75	N/A	
Other	05/06	1253	73	66	7	510	60	65	-5
	06/07	1418	71	70	1	372	62	69	-7
	07/08*	1616	74	N/A		424	69	N/A	

* college data

Table 3

Success rates on mainstream level 3 qualifications, by qualification type, expected end year and age, 2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for colleges of a similar type.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	16-18				19+			
		Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>	Starts – Transfers	College Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
3 Long	05/06	2849	68	71	-3	1285	61	64	-3
	06/07	2875	70	73	-3	1142	68	68	0
	07/08*	2863	70	N/A		925	73	N/A	
A/A2 Levels	05/06	528	83	87	-4	90	76	72	4
	06/07	628	82	87	-5	84	64	76	-12
	07/08*	478	88	N/A		103	79	N/A	
AS Levels	05/06	1262	64	67	-3	71	51	55	-4
	06/07	1181	64	69	-5	91	56	59	-3
	07/08*	1163	64	N/A		85	61	N/A	
GNVQs and precursors	05/06	114	71	66	5	21	48	57	-9
	06/07	0				0			
	07/08*	0				0			
NVQs	05/06	123	58	71	-13	226	69	63	6
	06/07	96	69	74	-5	291	67	69	-2
	07/08*	102	75	N/A		154	77	N/A	
Other	05/06	822	65	65	0	877	59	64	-5
	06/07	970	68	70	-2	676	71	69	2
	07/08*	1075	68	N/A		583	72	N/A	

* college data

Table 4

Success rates on work-based apprenticeship programmes managed by the college 2006 to 2008.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	College NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	College framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	05/06	overall	75	57	53	43	44
		timely	94	38	34	20	27
	06/07	overall	88	67	64	57	58
		timely	93	47	43	39	37
	07/08	overall	62	79	69	71	64
		timely	66	56	47	50	42
Apprenticeships	05/06	overall	191	68	58	61	52
		timely	210	56	38	50	34
	06/07	overall	129	74	65	67	61
		timely	93	59	47	51	44
	07/08	overall	140	68	67	67	64
		timely	146	61	51	60	48

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

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

Success rates on work-based Train to Gain NVQ programmes managed by the college 2007 to 2009.

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	College NVQ rate**
Train to Gain NVQ	2006/07	overall	20	0%
		timely	5	80%
	2007/08	overall	110	83%
		timely	141	49%
	2008/09 (3 months)	overall	64	86%
		timely	50	34%

* 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'

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the college 2006 to 2008

End Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate* (%)	Progression rate** (%)
2005/06	76	53%	51%
2006/07	69	94%	93%
2007/08	119	79%	88%

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms of learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period