



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE



Office for Standards  
in Education

## Selby College

### CONTENTS

---

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

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

[Information about the college](#)

[How effective is the college?](#)

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

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

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

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

[Students' views of the college](#)

[Other information](#)

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

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

[Achievement and standards](#)

[Quality of education and training](#)

[Leadership and management](#)

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

[Science and mathematics](#)

[Engineering](#)

[Business](#)

[Information and communications technology](#)

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

[Health and social care](#)

[Visual, performing arts and media](#)

[Humanities](#)

[English and modern foreign languages](#)

[Literacy and numeracy](#)

[Part D: College data](#)

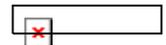
[Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age](#)

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

[Table 3: Retention and achievement](#)

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

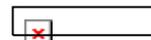
**Basic information about the college**



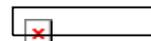
---

Name of college:	Selby College
Type of college:	Tertiary
Principal:	Allan Stewart
Address of college:	Abbot's Road Selby YO8 8AT
Telephone number:	01757 211000
Fax number:	01757 213137
Chair of governors:	Vernon Wells
Unique reference number:	130592
Name of reporting inspector:	Christine Dick HMI
Dates of inspection:	24-28 March 2003

**Part A: Summary**



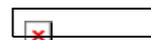
## Information about the college



Selby College was founded as a tertiary college in 1984, on the site of a former secondary school. It is the major provider of post-16 education and training in the Selby area. There are local pockets of high unemployment, as a result of changes in the coal mining and power generation industries. The closure of Selby mine during 2003/04 will affect the 2,000 miners currently employed. The area around Selby is mainly rural. It is within commuting distance of York, Leeds and Doncaster. The college draws most full-time students from five 11 to 16 partner schools and three 11 to 18 schools situated within ten miles of the college. There are two sixth form colleges and two general further education (FE) colleges within travelling distance.

The college has provision in 12 of the 14 areas of learning. In 2000/01, courses in the areas of information and communications technology (ICT), business, and health and social care accounted for just over 50% of full-time equivalent students. In the same year, around 40% of students aged 19 and over were enrolled on ICT courses, 60% of learners were aged 16 to 18 and around 49% of 16 to 18 enrolments were at level 3. At that time, of 7,005 students on college courses, approximately 57% of them were female and around 38% were part time. Less than 2% of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The college offers work-based learning in engineering, business, hairdressing, and health and social care. Most of this provision is in engineering and business. The college was accredited with Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for ICT in October 2002.

## How effective is the college?



Selby College is an effective college. The quality of teaching and the achievements of students are outstanding in science and mathematics, good in five of the ten curriculum areas inspected and satisfactory in the other four areas. The college's key strengths and areas that should be improved are listed below.

### **Key strengths**

- consistently high pass rates on many courses
  
- much good teaching and learning
  
- effective pastoral and academic support
  
- very good use of technology to enhance learning in mathematics, science and ICT

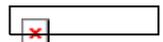
- good provision in community locations effectively widening participation
- effective external partnerships and initiatives
- good student attendance.

***What should be improved***

- progression opportunities in a few curriculum areas
- the range of literacy and numeracy provision
- some aspects of curriculum management
- some poor accommodation
- the management of work-based learning.

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

**Quality of provision in curriculum and occupational areas**



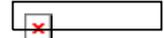
*The table below shows overall judgements about provision in subjects and courses that were inspected. Judgements are based primarily on the quality of teaching, training and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects and courses were inspected. Inspectors make overall judgements on curriculum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

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
------	---

Science and mathematics	<b>Outstanding.</b> Very good teaching and particularly effective use of technology to help students learn. Retention and pass rates are high. Very good student support is provided through teaching, lunchtime revision sessions and by tutors. Course management is good. There is some poor accommodation for science students.
Engineering	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good across most college-based courses and work-based National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The achievement of apprenticeship frameworks, basic engineering and engineering manufacturing (foundation) is poor. Assessment is well planned and rigorous, and many students gain additional qualifications. However, performance reviews for work-based learners are poor and there is some inadequate college-based classroom accommodation.
Business	<b>Good.</b> There are good pass rates on college-based courses. Retention is generally good and improving. The teaching of business studies is effective. However, planning to meet the needs of individual learners is not effective and the management of work-based training is poor.
Information and communications technology	<b>Good.</b> Retention and pass rates are good, and there is much good practical teaching across college and community courses. Learners produce work of a high standard and demonstrate a good understanding of their subject. Assignments are well structured and resources to support learning are used effectively. However, there are ineffective links with industry on full-time courses and progression opportunities for students aged 16 to 18 are poor.
Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass and retention rates are high on most courses, and students have good access to enrichment opportunities. Good practical teaching in hospitality develops students' vocational, personal and key skills. However, there is some ineffective teaching and insufficiently demanding tasks in lessons. The curriculum management is poor.
Health and social care	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates are good and retention is high on many courses. However, pass and retention rates are declining on the national diploma in public services and work-based achievement is unsatisfactory. In most lessons, the teaching and learning is good, and the monitoring and review of students' progress is thorough. Students receive extensive pastoral and academic guidance and support.
Visual, performing arts and media	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates on national diploma and General Certificate of Education Advanced-level (GCE A-level) courses were good in 2002. There is much good teaching, rigorous monitoring of students' progress and good resources. However, there are few links with employers and insufficient rigour in pre-course guidance. A lack of full-time provision at levels 1 and 2 restricts progression to courses at level 3.
Humanities	<b>Good.</b> Pass rates on most courses and retention at GCE A level is good. Most teaching is good or better and there is very good progression to higher education (HE). However, pass rates on GCE Advanced Subsidiary (GCE AS) sociology were poor in 2002 and there is some poor accommodation.
English and modern foreign languages	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Pass rates are high on many courses, but retention fell in 2002. Teaching, learning and the standard of students' work vary considerably across the curriculum area. Improvement strategies have yet to be effective.
Literacy and numeracy	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Most teaching is satisfactory with some very good

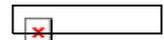
	individual support provided. There is a comprehensive programme of initial assessment and good use of computer-based resources to support learning. However, too much group teaching is not matched to the literacy and numeracy needs of learners and there is ineffective use of individual learning plans. The range of literacy and numeracy provision is insufficient.
--	---

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



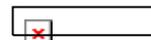
Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and governors provide a clear strategic direction for the college. Work within the community, to widen participation in education, is extensive. Student achievement is high and retention is generally good and improving. There are very productive partnerships with local schools and other organisations. Communication within the college is good. A new management structure was introduced during 2001/02. This new structure has supported improvements in course management. However, the role of some managers is yet to be fully developed. The college's development plan notes actions to achieve strategic objectives and to affect improvements, identified through self-assessment. However, some targets for improvement are not well defined and some key areas were omitted from the 2002/03 plan. Self-assessment is comprehensive, but insufficiently self-critical of the quality of teaching and learning. Staff confidence in the college's management information has improved. However, a few curriculum areas dispute the information held and data for work-based learning are not yet reliable. The college recognises the need to eliminate inaccuracies in the management information that it produces and is developing an action plan to correct them. Governors' monitoring of college performance and actions for improvement are thorough.

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



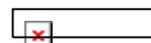
The college's response to educational and social inclusion is satisfactory. It provides education and training for people with a wide range of experience and educational backgrounds. Learning centres based in the community, away from the main college site, encourage participation in FE by attracting new client groups such as adults returning to education. A new nursery is being built in a deprived ward of north Selby in partnership with a local primary school. It will offer courses for single mothers who would not normally have access to education due to lack of childcare facilities. However, there are insufficient opportunities for students to study at levels 1 and 2. Provision for literacy and numeracy is not well developed. The college has produced a race equality policy and action plan, and has made reasonable progress towards its implementation. Effective procedures are in place to support the monitoring of race and equal opportunities issues. The response to The Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act (SENDDA) has been good. Recent staff training has focused on the promotion of race equality in teaching and learning. Students are represented on a cross-college equal opportunities committee. Provision for individual learning support is good. However, learning plans do not always take sufficient account of individual needs. Access to parts of the college for learners with restricted mobility is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection.

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



There are comprehensive arrangements to provide prospective students with information, advice and guidance. Specialist curriculum staff are not always involved in interviews for full-time students, and as a result, some learners are inappropriately placed on courses. Induction arrangements are effective. All full-time students complete an initial assessment to identify their individual learning support needs, but the extent to which these needs, once identified, are met varies between curriculum areas. One-to-one learning support and individual tutorial support from guidance and support tutors are good. Students speak highly of the informal support they receive from their teachers. However, some group tutorials are less effective and students do not always value or benefit from the experience. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. The college has recently appointed an adult guidance worker to improve the support available for part-time and adult learners. Students receive good advice and guidance on progression to employment or to HE.

### **Students' views of the college**



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

#### ***What students like about the college***

- support they receive from the guidance and support tutors
  
- friendly, helpful teachers
  
- useful careers advice
  
- good sports facilities
  
- friendly atmosphere
  
- variety of trips, visits and sporting opportunities
  
- easy access to computers

- good equipment and resources to support their learning
- regular assessment and feedback.

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

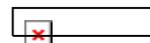
- space and seating in the refectory
- the teaching of key skills
- limited recreational spaces and opportunities outside class
- unreliable public transport
- slow computers in the open learning centre
- poor heating in the mobile classrooms
- quality and availability of books in the library.

**Other information**



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

## Part B: The college as a whole



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

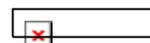


Aspect & learner type	Graded good or better (Grades 1 to 3) %	Graded satisfactory (Grade 4) %	Graded less than satisfactory (Grades 5 to 7) %
Teaching 16-18	69.9	25	5.1
19+ and WBL*	67.6	26.5	5.9
Learning 16-18	68.4	26.5	5.1
19+ and WBL*	70.6	23.5	5.9

*Key: The range of grades includes: Excellent (Grade 1), Very Good (Grade 2), Good (Grade 3), Satisfactory (Grade 4), Unsatisfactory (Grade 5), Poor (Grade 6) and Very Poor (Grade 7).*

*\*work-based learning*

### Achievement and standards



1. The college offers a wide range of subjects and courses for full-time students aged 16 to 18. At the time of the inspection, 57% of students aged 16 to 18 were enrolled on level 3 courses. When the college's aggregated retention and pass rates by level of study and age are compared with the national average for similar colleges over the period 1999 to 2002, the number of students who successfully completed their courses in 2002, showed improvement at most levels of study. The college does not consistently monitor students' progress against prior attainment in all courses. Where this information was available, students generally did well relative to their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) scores at the start of their course.

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

2. In 2001/02, at level 3, overall pass and retention rates were good. Pass rates in GCE A-level science and mathematics, computing, and sports and recreation have been consistently above the national average for the last three years. In 2001/02, the pass rates in GCE A-level mathematics, psychology and geography were 100%. However, pass rates have been unsatisfactory in GCE AS sociology and GCE AS English language and literature.

3. The college also offers national diplomas in early years, media production, fine art, graphic design, fashion and engineering, and the diploma in childcare and education at level 3. Advanced Vocational Certificates of Education (AVCEs) are available in ICT, leisure and tourism, and health and social care. Pass rates on these vocational courses are generally good. However, in 2001/02, pass and retention rates on national diploma public services and retention on national diplomas in fine art and media were poor.

4. At level 2, the college offers GCSE mathematics and English subjects, first diploma courses in engineering, General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) intermediate in health and social care, and leisure and tourism, NVQ food preparation and cooking, and the certificate in childcare and education. Of the 2,948 enrolments of students aged 16 to 18, 24% are currently enrolled on courses at this level. Pass rates in engineering rose from 50% in 2001 to 100% in 2002. However, pass and retention rates on GNVQ intermediate health and social care are unsatisfactory. Many students are taking GCSE mathematics and English for a second time. The proportion achieving A\* to C grades in GCSE mathematics in 2002 was 25% above the national average. However, only 9% of GCSE English students aged 16 to 18 attained this level. There are low levels of achievement in key skills, with too few students completing final portfolios.

5. Around 12% of all 16 to 18 enrolments are at level 1. The overall pass rate is consistently above the national average and was within the top 25% of colleges of a similar type in 2001. Retention rates have improved during 2001/02.

6. Students develop good technical skills in engineering and ICT. In practical sessions in hospitality and catering, students demonstrate good communication and team-working ability. The level of students' attainment in many lessons is good. Students in science and mathematics demonstrate particularly high standards. In more than 78% of these lessons, levels of attainment are good or better. Many full-time students achieve qualifications in addition to their main courses, including computer aided design, community sports leader award, basic food hygiene and practical craft skills.

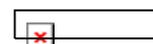
7. Many students leaving the college with level 3 qualifications progress to HE. In 2002, some 82% of full-time students gained HE places. Some of these students came from families with no tradition of continuing in education.

8. The college offers work-based learning in health and social care, hospitality and catering, engineering, business administration, retail, and hair and beauty. The majority of these students are following courses leading to engineering and business awards. Work-based learners in engineering develop good practical skills and successfully complete their NVQ qualifications. However, overall achievement of apprenticeship frameworks across the college is low.

### ***Adult learners***

9. The college has a commitment to widening participation. The number of students on adult courses has risen to over 4,368 in 2003. Most adult students follow courses in ICT, health and social care, and business administration. Data relating to the three years 1999 to 2001 indicate that at level 1 the pass rate was very good, but that retention declined to significantly below the national average. However, college data for 2001/02 record a reversal in this trend and high pass rates have been maintained. At levels 2 and 3, the overall pass and retention rates for 2000/01 were close to the national average, but improved in 2001/02.

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



10. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded by inspectors in 170 sessions. They judged that teaching was good or better in 69.4% of the sessions observed, satisfactory in 25.3% and less than satisfactory in 5.3%. Teaching is best in science and mathematics. In this area of learning, almost 83% of the teaching was judged to be good or very good, and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Inspectors identified much good teaching in engineering, ICT, health and social care, and humanities. In these areas, the proportion of teaching judged to be good or very good was significantly better than the national average for general FE and tertiary colleges.

11. Teachers have established good working relationships with their students and most students

make good progress. The best lessons are well planned, focus on active learning and include consideration of the different needs of individuals in mixed ability groups. In science and mathematics, teachers plan carefully and prepare a range of helpful materials to extend and reinforce learning. In these subjects, ICT is used effectively in enabling learners to explore difficult situations. Practical science activities are well designed to reinforce theory and develop relevant analytical skills. In humanities, teachers manage learning effectively through well-structured tasks and careful questioning. In engineering, teachers make good use of individual work, group exercises, technical assignments and classroom discussion, and are skilled in linking theory to practice. In information technology (IT) workshops, students develop good practical skills using well-produced materials that allow them to progress at a pace appropriate to their individual needs. In visual, performing arts and media, contextual references are well used to encourage learners to develop their own ideas.

12. A few lessons, however, are not well planned and, in aspects of hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, there is too much dull teaching of theory. In the weaker classes in health, social care and public services, teachers fail to maintain students' interest, students become restless and have difficulty concentrating. In English, some teachers have not adjusted their methods to take appropriate account of individual learning needs and there is insufficient development of students' analytical skills. In business, there is inconsistency in the setting of clear learning objectives and, as a result, some students do not fully understand what is being asked of them.

13. There is some variation in the quality and the success of the teaching of key skills. Key skills are mandatory for all students aged 16 to 18 who do not have a GCSE at grade C or above in English or mathematics. On advanced level courses, students are encouraged to study key skills communication at level 3. Specialist key skills advisers spend an hour each week with small groups of students to monitor their progress. Attendance at key skills sessions is monitored by guidance and support tutors. In 2001/02, overall attendance at key skills sessions was 75% and below the college average at the time of inspection. The integration of key skills in hospitality and catering courses is well managed, but arrangements for key skills support in engineering work-based learning courses are unsatisfactory.

14. Since the last inspection, the overall attendance rate on college courses has remained high. In the lessons observed, attendance was 82%. This is above the average of around 76% observed in all inspections of general FE and tertiary colleges in 2002. The highest attendance rate observed was 92% in science and mathematics. Of the ten curriculum areas inspected, seven had attendance rates well above the national average.

15. Teachers are well qualified and knowledgeable about their specialist subjects. The college provides good opportunities for the personal and professional development of staff. However, there are too few staff with basic skills qualifications to support the literacy and numeracy needs of students. In art, there is a well-equipped graphics studio. There are very good resources for the teaching of languages, including three language listening facilities. There is a well-equipped IT learning resource centre. However, monitoring of this facility is not fully effective. Students sometimes spend time on inappropriate activities, preventing other students from using the computers for college work, particularly at break times. The college reviewed its accommodation strategy in 2001/02. There is now a planned programme to replace some old temporary classrooms with a new three-floor classroom block, for completion by September 2004. Funding for the project has been agreed with the LSC. However, currently, some teaching rooms are too small for the number of students, particularly in humanities and in the technology transfer centre for engineering.

16. The college has invested in improving existing accommodation that will not be replaced. The reception area has been relocated and is now bright and welcoming. Students have good facilities including a common room, two refectory areas and a number of pleasant seating areas in the college grounds. A generous budget is allocated to the library and the recently appointed learning resource centre manager is taking steps to improve facilities for the students. However, many of the texts are old and in need of replacement. There are too few resources such as CD ROMs or videos. There are seven outreach centres in the community. These provide accommodation of a high standard. The Busy Bees nursery within the main college grounds supports staff and student childcare needs. Accommodation, in some areas of the college's main site, is inaccessible for those

with restricted mobility. However, alternative arrangements are made for any student with an identified need. Much of this accommodation is being replaced as part of the new building work. Some staff offices are overcrowded.

17. The assessment of students' work is regular, mostly well planned and thorough. Assessment in hospitality, engineering and modern foreign languages is particularly rigorous. Feedback on assessed work is prompt and constructive. Learners are clear about what they need to do and about deadlines for handing in work. Assessment, verification and moderation processes follow awarding body guidelines. External verifiers and moderators are usually positive about college approaches. However, there is some weak assessment practice in accounting programmes. Initial assessment identifies the additional learning support needs of full-time students. Detailed learning support plans are drawn up for individuals. Results are communicated to teachers, and guidance and support tutors. However, teachers do not always use this information effectively to plan all aspects of the learning programme. The college has recently introduced an initial assessment tool for use with part-time and adult learners, which more closely reflects their needs.

18. There are regular, systematic reviews of learners' progress. All learners review their performance with their subject teachers and conclusions inform progress reviews with guidance and support tutors. Predicted grades are used, together with initial assessment results and an analysis of 'risk' factors, such as attendance and punctuality, to agree target grades. However, this is a new initiative and it is not yet effectively applied across all subject areas. Guidance and support tutors have access to performance information from subject and key skills teachers. However, updates on progress against support plans are not formally shared with them. Reports from some subject teachers lack sufficient detail, and targets set in many subject and guidance reviews are too general and insufficiently challenging. The parents, carers and employers of students aged 16 to 18 are regularly informed about their progress. Regular parents' and open evenings are well attended.

19. The college offers courses in 12 areas of learning. However, there is a lack of provision at levels 1 and 2 in some areas; several courses at this level were promoted during 2001/02, but failed to recruit viable numbers. The college has responded by introducing a pathway programme to meet the needs of level 2 students. In curriculum areas, such as visual performing arts and media, ICT and hospitality, this route is not proving successful. The college has good links with two regional universities providing higher level and teacher-training courses. Curriculum planning is effective in most areas and is well informed by market research. Promotional materials are attractive and carefully designed. The college has successfully increased enrolments from 4,500 to 8,500 over a three-year period.

20. Partnerships with local employers and other organisations have helped the college to respond to local and regional needs. The outreach centres are well equipped and effectively meet the needs of students who might not otherwise attend college. These offer IT courses, at times to suit learners, throughout most of the week and at weekends. Much work has been done to provide training for miners made redundant as a result of substantial pit closures in the area. College staff take laptop computers into the community and offer courses in venues such as village halls and primary schools. There are good opportunities for students to participate in enrichment activities. For example, there are male and female football and hockey teams. In addition to their full-time studies, many students take part in community projects such as 'hearing dogs for the deaf,' work with the Salvation Army and in local primary schools. Students have the opportunity to travel to Europe, both through their coursework and through recreational trips organised by the student union. History students have been to Prague and Poland. Travel and tourism students spend three weeks' work placement in resorts in Spain.

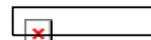
21. Learners are well supported. Appropriate actions have been taken to improve the student support weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. The college has revised its personal tutoring arrangements by appointing a team of specialist guidance and support tutors. These tutors have a high profile within the organisation and are well regarded by learners and teachers. Delivery of the college's tutorial entitlement is now more coherent. However, there is little monitoring of the quality of whole group tutorials. Professional development of tutors has focused on tutoring skills, but has given little emphasis to group sessions. The college has increased the support for part-time learners. There is now an adult guidance worker. Learning support screening and support

entitlement now includes part-time students. The college has recently begun to use its intranet to track, record and communicate information about students. However, reporting channels have yet to be fully established. Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored. Guidance and support tutors have a key role in encouraging good punctuality and attendance. Detailed reports on attendance are available and are used in progress reviews.

22. Information about college programmes is presented in print and on the college website. Published information is comprehensive and easily accessible. Effective links have been established with local schools to support post-16 progression to college. Taster courses are offered in all curriculum areas. The town centre 'New Options' shop provides information, advice and guidance for local residents and for miners and their families affected by coalfield closures. However, the college's approach to full-time students' admission is not always sufficiently rigorous. Specialist curriculum staff are not routinely involved in interviews and a few students are inappropriately placed on courses.

23. Induction prepares full-time learners adequately for their studies. Student handbooks and diaries outline learners' rights and responsibilities. The college has recently adapted its induction programme in response to students' feedback. Individual learning support needs are accurately diagnosed through thorough and comprehensive screening. However, the college does not formally evaluate the impact of the follow-up support provided on student retention and achievement. Support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The college is well equipped to provide specialist resources and equipment, and has close links with local support agencies. Careers advice and guidance, including support for progression to HE is good. Full-time students complete a careers workbook and progress with career planning is closely monitored in reviews. The college has effective partnerships with other providers of advice and guidance.

## Leadership and management



24. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear sense of purpose and the college's mission and strategic aims are well understood by staff. Student achievement is consistently high and retention is generally good and improving. The percentage of good or better teaching has increased since the last inspection. Considerable improvements have been made to the accommodation. Access for students with restricted mobility, which was criticised in the last inspection report, has improved. The college has increased its outreach and community provision, and widened the participation in FE of those traditionally under-represented. It was awarded CoVE recognition for ICT programmes in October 2002.

25. The strategic plan contains clear objectives related to fulfilling the college's mission. The development plan combines actions to achieve strategic objectives with the outcomes of the college's self-assessment and measures identified to affect improvements. The college recognises that it is still at a transitional stage in bringing together these two elements into a fully comprehensive planning and monitoring document. While the content is generally clear and actions and those responsible are identified, some targets are insufficiently specific and rigorous. Also, some key areas for development were omitted from the 2002/03 plan. Nevertheless, it is being used to some good effect by governors, senior managers and curriculum teams as a working document to monitor, evaluate and improve performance. For example, retention in some areas was identified as an issue and a new system for tracking and supporting students' progress was introduced using guidance and support tutors. In-year retention for 2002/03 shows an improvement of 4.4% for students aged 16 to 18.

26. The college was restructured during 2001/02. A deputy principal's role was created to emphasise the college's commitment to continuous improvement. Three directorates were formed to reflect national priorities and focus on meeting the college's strategic objectives associated with students aged 16 to 19, adult students, ICT and 14 to 19 developments. Each of these directorates is

effectively led. Development managers and curriculum co-ordinators support directors. Not all staff have a clear understanding of the distinctive roles of these managers. In some areas of learning, the role of curriculum co-ordinator is yet to be developed and become fully effective. However, many staff proclaim the benefits of the restructuring in reducing divides between general educational and vocational curriculum areas.

27. Curriculum management is generally satisfactory or better. Humanities courses are well managed. In engineering, the management of college programmes is good, although communication between the business development unit and work-based learning provision is not effective. The strategic management of basic skills provision is good. However, the post of basic skills co-ordinator is vacant and this is having a detrimental effect on the development and delivery of the curriculum. In ICT, there is effective co-ordination. In health and social care, course team management is effective. In mathematics and science, day-to-day management of individual courses is good. In English, management is unsatisfactory and fails to impact significantly on improving teaching and learning. In hospitality, sports, leisure and tourism, curriculum management is poor. There is some poor management of work-based learning.

28. The quality assurance system is well established and self-assessment is generally effective. The quality of teaching and learning, and students' achievements are monitored and continuing improvement is pursued. A systematic cycle of classroom observation informs staff appraisal. However, internal lesson observation grades awarded for good or better teaching are more generous than those awarded by inspectors. In literacy and numeracy, there is an effective focus on improving teaching and learning. In art and design, actions for improvement are carefully monitored. In health and social care, evaluation is self-critical. In engineering, the quality assurance of teaching and learning is effective and comprehensive. It includes the observation of teaching in the workplace. In humanities, students' achievements are carefully analysed and clear actions and targets for improvement are set. In hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism, and English, self-assessment is insufficiently rigorous.

29. Lines of communication within the college are good. Directors meet with their co-ordinators and development managers weekly, and the outcomes of meetings are cascaded to curriculum teams. Minutes of senior management team meetings are posted on the college intranet. Staff are encouraged to contribute to the weekly staff bulletin. The college intranet provides staff access to on-line information on student applications, enrolments, retention and achievement. Students' feedback is discussed at a monthly briefing session of the senior management team. Here, issues raised by teaching and other teams are also discussed and actions taken are explained.

30. Staff are enthusiastic about the college 'employee of the month' scheme that recognises exceptional contributions from any member of staff.

31. Both teaching, administrative and support staff value and take full advantage of the wide range of opportunities available for professional development. The recent Teachers' Pay Initiative (TPI) funding is being used to support curriculum development projects, including staff mentoring and the sharing of good practice. Staff appreciate and benefit from the ability to use the college employee development scheme to pursue opportunities to learn either at the college or elsewhere. All staff are appraised annually. Personal targets for improvement are set. These include lesson observation grades as well as student retention and achievement targets. The principal and senior managers' targets are linked to college strategic objectives.

32. Students are represented on the cross-college equal opportunities group. This group actively seeks to respond to race and equality issues identified through monitoring of centrally gathered data. The college's response to SENDDA has been good. Staff have been given training in the implications of the act for support services and teachers. The college has reviewed and strengthened its race equality policy in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act. A clear action plan is being implemented. However, there is little evidence of the promotion of equal opportunities through teaching, except in the areas of health and social care, business and humanities.

33. Until recently, the college made slow progress in improving the quality of management

information. However, a comprehensive student tracking system is now in place and most curriculum managers are using student data more effectively. There is improved confidence in centrally held data. However, a few curriculum areas, in particularly English and business, dispute the validity of the information available. The college recognises the need to improve the accuracy of its management information and an action plan is being developed to do this. The data for work-based learning are still not reliable.

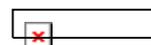
34. The college works productively with a wide range of partners. A partnership arrangement with Kellingley mine secured the setting up of an IT training centre on site, where mine workers access courses on a drop-in basis. A technical training project is disseminating good practice to other colleges. The college is the lead agency in the delivery of ICT Vendor Skills in North Yorkshire and it also leads on the delivery of ICT skills especially designed to meet the needs of the voluntary sector. The college delivers work-based learning at a variety of local firms under franchise arrangements. Several outreach centres are run through successful working partnerships with other organisations, such as Selby District Council.

35. The college has forged very effective links with its partner schools and very productive links with a number of other schools in the region, through its active schools liaison team. Vocational taster sessions and master classes are offered to school pupils. The college is working with four schools and an agricultural college to provide vocational options for some 55 pupils aged 14 to 16. It also works closely with the education authority to help to re-integrate young people into formal education who are receiving education other than at school.

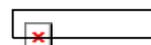
36. The corporation has a clear view of the strategic direction of the college and its mission in the local community. Governors bring a wide range of valuable experience and they regularly participate in training and development events. They are appropriately involved in determining the college's strategic direction. Governors on the college standards committee, which is a sub-committee of the board, monitor and review the college's performance against national averages and report back to the full board. This monitoring is thorough. Governors also undertake an annual review of their own performance and actions for improvement are implemented.

37. Financial management is good. The college produced operating surpluses for the last two years and expects to achieve an operating surplus for 2002/03. Key financial decisions taken by the college are approved by the corporation following a detailed review of financial implications and using the expertise of the governors. The college uses its funds effectively to provide a wide range of courses that meets community needs. A well-monitored process supports curriculum planning and enables staffing and other resources to be allocated on a sound basis.

## Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas



### Science and mathematics



Overall provision in this area is **outstanding (grade 1)**

#### **Strengths**

- very good retention and pass rates on most GCE AS and A-level courses

- good standards of students' work
  
- very good teaching
  
- particularly effective use of ICT in teaching and learning
  
- very good academic and pastoral support.

### ***Weaknesses***

- some poor accommodation for science classes.

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

38. There is a full range of provision in science and mathematics at level 3. The courses offered include GCE AS and A-levels in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and further mathematics. AVCE science is available as a six- or 12-unit course over one or two years. A short and a one-year GCSE mathematics course are also provided, leading to either a November or June examination, and a GCSE evening class in human biology. There is no other level 2 provision.

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

39. Standards attained by students on GCE AS and A-level courses in physics, chemistry and mathematics are very good. Pass rates on these courses last year were significantly higher than the national average. Standards attained on the GCE A-level biology course are good and those on the GCE AS biology course are above the national average. Pass rates on the GCSE mathematics courses have improved and are now well above the national average.

40. Retention rates on all GCE AS and A-level courses are good, and are above the national average. The retention rate on the short GCSE mathematics course is 100%. However, the retention rates on AVCE courses and one-year GCSE mathematics courses are below the national average.

41. Students on the GCSE mathematics course attain standards commensurate with their ability. In both mathematics and science lessons, the quality of work on GCE AS and A-level courses is good or very good. Students demonstrate a good understanding of their work and the majority have a secure grasp of the essential mathematical and scientific concepts. In both science and mathematics, they are able to show that they understand and retain knowledge from previous lessons. Their investigation and practical skills are well developed in science. However, a minority of students are weak on some aspects of work, such as mental arithmetic. Students have a good attitude to learning. They listen well and concentrate on their work.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCSE mathematics	2	No. of starts	126	85	121
		% retention	70	62	71
		% pass rate	32	34	62
GCE A-level physics	3	No. of starts	*	24	15
		% retention	93	83	100
		% pass rate	54	75	100
GCE A-level chemistry	3	No. of starts	34	30	21
		% retention	85	83	95
		% pass rate	93	92	100
GCE A-level biology	3	No. of starts	33	29	*
		% retention	82	90	100
		% pass rate	100	100	93
GCE AS physics	3	No. of starts	**	22	19
		% retention	**	82	94
		% pass rate	**	94	100
GCE AS mathematics	3	No. of starts	**	58	46
		% retention	**	81	96
		% pass rate	**	74	84
GCE A-level mathematics	3	No. of starts	22	48	30
		% retention	95	83	100
		% pass rate	100	100	97

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

\* less than 15 starts

\*\*course not running

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

42. The quality of teaching in science and mathematics is almost always good or very good. Teachers establish good working relationships in the classroom, and this leads to a very effective environment for learning. They are knowledgeable about their subjects and communicate mathematical and scientific ideas well. Their exposition is clear and of a high standard. Lessons are well planned and prepared, with appropriate and helpful learning materials available for students.

43. Teachers plan effectively and use an appropriate range of activities within each lesson. As such, they are able to secure the sustained interest of their students through 90-minute sessions. They maintain a brisk pace of work and, as a result, students make good progress. In all lessons, teachers use questions to check students' understanding, but not all teachers direct these across a sufficiently wide range of students.

44. A notable feature of the teaching in both mathematics and science is the particularly effective use of ICT to help students to learn. For example, in mathematics, effective use was made of an interactive whiteboard in the teaching of linear programming. In one class, students were encouraged to participate by plotting points and drawing lines. The technology was used to verify

their efforts. Encouraging students to use computers to draw curves from particular equations also enhanced the teaching of parametric equations. The technology was helpful in allowing them to cover ground quickly and to explore difficult situations. In a physics lesson, the teacher used a combination of commercial software and additional notes to illustrate the interaction of sub-atomic particles.

45. In both science and mathematics, teachers use practical work very well to reinforce theory. For example, the study of mechanics was enhanced by experimental work and, similarly, work on simulations had been preceded by students using simple practical aids to generate random numbers. These links between theory and practical work help students to reinforce theory and to develop their skills. In one biology lesson, the students were investigating the effects of enzymes on the production of apple juice. In another, they were investigating the effects of different antibiotics on colonies of bacteria. These activities enhance the students' skills of measurement, recording and analysis.

46. The staff in science and mathematics are well qualified and experienced. The teaching resources are good. Extensive and effective use is made of ICT in both science and mathematics lessons to aid learning. The science laboratories are well equipped and are enhanced by appropriate display material, such as posters and students' work. The biology and chemistry laboratories are spacious, but the physics laboratory is cramped. The science accommodation also has a study area with a range of books, periodicals and other reference materials made available for students' use. The mathematics rooms are in temporary buildings. However, they contain interesting display materials, laptops and a good range of software. The library has a sufficient number of textbooks, but insufficient additional books for wider research and some of the stock is in a poor condition.

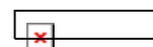
47. In all subjects, there is a good system for the assessment of students' work. Homework is set and marked on a frequent basis and students complete assignments at the end of each topic. In addition, formal tests are used to assess progress. Teachers know their students and their attainments well. The progress of students is reviewed at specific points in their course and this is followed up by written reports, produced twice a year for GCE AS students and once each year at GCE A2. Students' current levels of attainment are recorded, as well as their general attitude and application to their studies. Students self-assess their own progress and staff set targets for improving performance. In mathematics, however, these targets tend to be concerned with students' attitudes more than their specific mathematical needs. Science students are made aware of the specific areas of work they need to target in order to make better progress. There is a system for referring students whose work or attitudes give cause for concern.

48. Students are given effective personal and pastoral support. Academic support is very good, not only as a result of good classroom teaching, but also through lunchtime clinics offering individual and small group guidance from specialist staff.

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

49. Management of individual courses is good. Teachers review their courses each year and action plans are written. These are used to produce a development plan for the mathematics and science area. This in turn informs the overall college development plan. Plans are adequate, but some targets for improvement lack precision and detail. Senior managers make observations of teachers and outcomes are linked to staff appraisal. Curriculum managers are aware of the strengths of the provision. Communications are satisfactory; regular meetings take place and are recorded. Resources are very well deployed.

### **Engineering**



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

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

### ***Strengths***

- very good retention and pass rates on the NVQ performing manufacturing operations course
  
- very good pass rates on first and national diploma courses
  
- good range and achievement of additional qualifications
  
- well-planned and rigorous assessment.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor retention and pass rates on basic and engineering manufacture (foundation) courses
  
- poor development and achievement of key skills
  
- poor performance reviews for work-based students
  
- some inadequate classroom accommodation.

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

50. The college provides a range of full-time, part-time and work-based training programmes. These include first and national diploma courses, computer-aided design courses, basic engineering and NVQs in performing manufacturing operations. Advanced modern apprenticeships and foundation modern apprenticeships are also offered. Work-based students represent 57% of the college engineering provision. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18. There are 91 part-time students, some 65 of these are aged 16 to 18. There are 135 students on the work-based performing manufacturing operations programme and 34 students on apprenticeship programmes.

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

51. Pass rates on most college courses are good. They have exceeded the national benchmark for five of the six main programmes for at least two of the three years from 2000/02. Pass rates are

consistently high for both level 2 and level 3 programmes. However, retention rates are generally lower than the national average, with the exception of performing manufacturing operations programme. Achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks is low, at 13% for the years 2000/01 and 20% for the years 2001/02. Key skills are not well integrated into the occupational area and pass rates are poor. Too few apprenticeship students are fully aware of how they can gain key skills qualifications. However, the NVQ level 2 pass rate for students on these programmes at 83% is good. Students are encouraged to take and achieve a wide range of additional qualifications. These include computer-aided design and relevant industrial qualifications, such as, first aid, fire fighting, coded welding and safety, including manual handling.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
City and Guilds 2010 basic engineering competencies	1	No. of starts	18	5*	9*
		% retention	56	100	67
		% pass rate	40	80	0
First diploma in manufacturing engineering	2	No. of starts	14*	5*	9*
		% retention	57	100	63
		% pass rate	50	100	100
NVQ engineering manufacturing foundation	2	No. of starts	17	16	10*
		% retention	47	67	40
		% pass rate	88	100	50
NVQ performing manufacturing operations	2	No. of starts	**	234	129
		% retention	**	100	94
		% pass rate	**	65	100
National diploma in manufacturing engineering	3	No. of starts	23	20	17
		% retention	63	41	93
		% pass rate	42	86	100
City and Guilds computer-aided design	3	No. of starts	12*	11*	12*
		% retention	67	73	75
		% pass rate	100	50	89

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

\*\* course not running

\* less than 15 starts

***Quality of education and training***

52. The teaching in most sessions is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and they stimulate and motivate their students to learn. Working relationships between teachers and students are good. Individual tuition, group exercises, technical assignments and classroom debate are well used to support learning. Practical and theory sessions are extremely effective in reinforcing and developing skills. For example, in the design and manufacture of a working model of a steam locomotive, students use a variety of engineering skills, such as computer-aided design, mathematics, interpretation of technical drawings, machining and fabrication. A competitive spirit is encouraged between students during the project work. There is rigorous reinforcement of health and safety requirements in practical workshop sessions.

53. Work-based students have good access to a wide range of technical equipment. Employers are very supportive of students' training and development needs, and often reschedule work activities to suit their studies. However, there is limited classroom space available in the college technology centre. This is inadequate when large numbers of students are scheduled to attend on the same day. Work-based students are often cramped in unsuitable accommodation with little or no training aids available. On one occasion, two of the students had to stand outside the classroom, as no suitable desk space was available.

54. Assessment is thorough and rigorous. Both college and work-based assessments are well planned and detailed feedback is given to learners on their performance. Students are fully aware of the assessment requirements and timescales for assessment. Assessments are programmed at appropriate stages in the students' learning and are used effectively to identify further training needs. Frequent marking of students' practical work takes place. However, performance reviews for work-based students are ineffective. Targets are too general and are insufficiently challenging. Action plans are not linked to the qualification evidence or range requirements. Employers and workplace supervisors are not sufficiently involved in performance review. There is inadequate linking of key skills to the workplace evidence produced by students. Workplace- and college-based internal verification is well planned. Documentation is both appropriate and effective in tracking the process. Internal verification is frequent and includes portfolio reviews and observations of assessment.

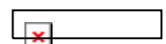
55. The college offers a wide range of courses and qualifications. Courses for employed trainees follow nationally recognised qualifications. These are tailored to particular industry needs, such as mechanical manufacturing and maintenance, general engineering, fabrication and welding, AutoCAD and advanced engineering. Full-time students regularly undertake a range of optional qualifications in addition to their main course of study.

56. Tutorials for full-time students are well planned and implemented. The learners' progress, attitude, aptitude and attendance are routinely discussed. Guidance is offered in a constructive and sensitive manner, and actions are followed up within the agreed timescale. Literacy and numeracy support needs are identified through initial assessment. Teaching staff are routinely informed of individual learning needs. However, they do not always adjust teaching styles to meet these. Employers are regularly informed of learner progress or concerns regarding achievement, attitude, aptitude and attendance. Employers comment positively on the usefulness of the feedback and the support given to them by the college.

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

57. There is effective, but separate, management of college-based and work-based training programmes. Separate course team, co-ordinator and work-based learning meetings are frequently held, to resolve curriculum and resource issues. Records are kept and information routinely disseminated to all staff. However, there is little sharing of information between the work-based and college-based managements. The management information held by the work-based training unit is incomplete and individual students' progress is difficult to track. Management of key skills training for work-based students is poor. Staff development is good and staff can access a wide variety of programmes subsidised by the college. Course teams are involved in the production of the self-assessment report. Regular observations of classroom teaching take place. Constructive feedback is given to teachers. Observations of teaching are extended to work-based learning.

### **Business**



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

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

### **Strengths**

- good pass rates on college-based courses
- good and improving retention
- high standards of students' work
- effective teaching of business studies.

### **Weaknesses**

- ineffective planning to meet the needs of individual learners
- poor management of work-based training.

### **Scope of provision**

58. The college provides full-time courses in business, administration, office skills, and GCE AS and A-level courses in business, economics and accounting at levels 3 and 4. Full-time business studies courses are not offered at levels 1 or 2. There are a wide range of part-time courses, mainly in accounting, management and administration/office skills.

59. The college offers flexible management training to commercial clients supported by distance learning, and work-based visits and assessments. Work-based learners currently account for around 6% of learners. The majority of these learners are employed in local organisations providing them with the opportunity to collect evidence of their developing competence.

### **Achievement and standards**

60. Retention is good. Over the past three years, retention rates have improved and are now above national averages on all courses. Current retention rates are between 70% and 100% on GCE A2 business and A-level accounting courses.

61. Pass rates are high on college-based full-time courses. The pass rate on text processing was 97% in 2002, and most business courses have pass rates in excess of 80%. The GCE A-level business studies pass rate is 100% and has been consistently high over the past three years. GCE A-level accounting also has pass rates of 100%. On full-time business courses, learners consistently achieve higher grades above the national average for colleges of a similar type.

62. Students gain additional qualifications alongside their main qualification, and some combine a mix of vocational and academic courses, such as AVCE business studies and GCE AS economics or accounting. Students' work is of a good standard and is well presented in coursework files.

Students demonstrate a wide variety of skills in their assignments. GCE AS and A-level students analyse and interpret complex source material. Many students use this information very effectively to produce carefully reasoned reports. At this level, other students work with a variety of analytical tools and can apply their learning effectively to real business situations.

63. The average attendance at classes is good at 82%. However, poor punctuality disrupts learning in a few classes.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Text processing stage 1	1	No. of starts	46	81	30
		% retention	96	86	97
		% pass rate	71	53	97
GCE AS business studies	3	No. of starts	**	45	33
		% retention	**	93	70
		% pass rate	**	93	96
GNVQ advanced business	3	No. of starts	27	24	38
		% retention	67	79	79
		% pass rate	83	89	81
GCE A-level accounting	3	No. of starts	14*	12*	10*
		% retention	79	83	100
		% pass rate	36	100	90
GCE A2 business studies	3	No. of starts	25	37	21
		% retention	80	78	100
		% pass rate	95	93	100
NVQ accounting	4	No. of starts	14*	21	11*
		% retention	100	81	91
		% pass rate	50	76	50

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

\*\* Course not running

\* Less than 15 starts

***Quality of education and training***

64. Teaching on many college-based courses is good. In the better lessons, teachers inspire and challenge students to extend and develop their learning. Stimulating and sometimes complex discussions stretch learners in business classes. For example, an AVCE Year 2 group sustained a lively debate linking costs, economies of scale, international competitiveness and the impact of exchange rates on profit margins. In these sessions, a variety of teaching methods is used effectively at a style and pace to suit the group. The aims of the session are clearly linked to assessment criteria and these are reviewed at the end of the class. Teachers have good working relationships with students, and this enhances and supports learning effectively. They are approachable and encourage good attendance. However, planning to meet the needs of individual learners is poor. In too many lessons, teaching does not adequately cater for the range of needs and

abilities in each group. For example, in a small group activity to develop and analyse organisational structure, some learners relied heavily on others to complete the task. In the absence of appropriate extension work, those groups completing the activity first wasted time as they waited for others to finish. In some lessons, students do not fully understand what is being asked of them and, as a result, are not effectively involved or making appropriate contribution.

65. There is a good programme of staff development with opportunities for professional updating. Teachers are appropriately qualified and make good use of the range of staff development available to them. Resources in the text processing room are not up to date. IT equipment, such as mouse mats, wrist rests and antiglare screens, is not readily available. The range of textbooks is insufficient and does not support wider reading. Whiteboards are being used as teaching aids, but as overhead project screens they are difficult to read, glare and staining is showing through the overhead transparency slide. Most accommodation is functional, but uninspiring.

66. On college-based courses, assessment and monitoring of progress is good. Students complete an initial assessment to identify their learning needs at the start of their course. However, initial assessment is not used adequately to inform teaching or programmes of work. In work-based learning, planning and monitoring of progress are unsatisfactory. Individual learning plans are often incomplete and targets set lack clarity and definition. The assessment of vocational competence for learners on accounting programmes lacks rigour. For example, for learners on an NVQ management programme, assessment is yet to take place ten months after commencing the course. Internal verification has not effectively addressed these issues. The majority of internal verification is based on assessment of portfolio evidence.

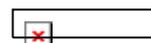
67. An appropriate range of full-time courses is offered at level 3. College timetables allow students to combine AVCE, GCE AS and A-level courses. However, provision for learners at levels 1 and 2 is limited.

68. Students value the guidance and support offered by their teachers and tutors. They speak highly of the range of personal and academic support available to them. For example, one student described how the recent helpful guidance on financial and course-related issues had prevented their early withdrawal from the course.

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

69. Curriculum management responsibility is split between three different curriculum areas. Teams meet separately to discuss course-related issues and there is little opportunity to formally share good practice. All staff make useful contribution to self-assessment. However, management of work-based training is poor. Progress is slow to impact on work-based achievement. Contractual progress review meetings have recently been carried out after a lapse of up to 12 months. They lack rigour and do not adequately involve employers. The achievement of modern apprenticeship frameworks is low. Other than on the NVQ administration programme, there is insufficient quality assurance of work-based training.

### **Information and communications technology**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass and retention rates on most courses

- much good practical teaching
- well-structured and challenging assignments
- good resources to support teaching and learning
- good community provision.

### ***Weaknesses***

- ineffective links with industry and commerce on full-time courses
- poor progression opportunities for full-time students.

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

70. The college offers a wide range of programmes for full-time and part-time courses in ICT. The core provision is on the main college campus with outreach provision in the community covering centres up to 20 miles away. Full-time courses include GCE AS and A-level IT, computing and AVCE. There are three-, six- and 12-unit programmes in AVCE. The majority of learners on these courses are aged 16 to 18. There is no level 1 provision and the courses at level 2 are units of an award. There are seven outreach centres offering courses in e-commerce, web design, A+ computer maintenance and vendor driven programmes. The outreach provision also offers a variety of taster courses for adults, many of whom are returning to education after some time. Overall, there are 283 16 to 18 learners, and 2,617 are adults.

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

71. Recruitment on most courses is growing steadily. With the exception of GCE A-level IT, pass rates are now significantly above the national average. Pass and retention rates on AVCE courses have improved and are now good. On popular short courses, such as Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) and European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) programmes, pass rates are above the national average. On other part-time programmes, retention and pass rates are now typically above the national average.

72. Students speak enthusiastically about their work. Their portfolios are well organised and of a high standard. They develop good investigative skills and are able to use the Internet effectively as a resource to support their learning. Learners are adept at using industry standard packages in web development and publishing.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
CLAIT short	1	No. of starts	831	375	115
		% retention	95	93	83
		% pass rate	71	75	86
ECDL short	2	No. of starts	**	225	50
		% retention	**	72	94
		% pass rate	**	55	100
ECDL (one year)	2	No. of starts	**	184	252
		% retention	**	62	83
		% pass rate	**	87	93
GCE A-level ICT	3	No. of starts	11*	28	22
		% retention	82	68	68
		% pass rate	100	93	68
GCE A-level computing	3	No. of starts	14*	27	12*
		% retention	100	96	96
		% pass rate	93	100	96
AVCE ICT single award	3	No. of starts	**	11*	32
		% retention	**	64	81
		% pass rate	**	41	92

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

\*\* Course not running

\* Less than 15 starts

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

73. Most teaching is good or very good. IT resources are used effectively to teach classes using networked desktop workstations. There is good use of questioning to test learning. Students are able to learn and progress at a pace that suits them using workbooks and project specifications to help them complete assignments. Many of these texts are of a particularly high standard. Tutors provide further explanation and other support through handouts and exercises. Lecture notes are available to students as PowerPoint presentations on their shared area of the network. Practical and assignment sessions provide specific coaching and take account of individual learning needs. These sessions are well planned and valued by learners. Technical language is carefully explained and routinely used to promote technical discussion and extend students' thinking. Teachers offer good advice on assignment content and how to achieve high grades.

74. Specialist resources are good. The learning centre is equipped with desktop PCs attached to the college network. Computer equipment is modern with industry standard software and Internet facilities. Accommodation is well designed and technical support is good. The computers are well used. Students comment on the high standard and attractive learning environments. There are sufficient workstations available for learners and there is also a number of up-to-date PCs available for use in classrooms. However, there is a shortage of licensed workstations for many of the proprietary software packages. Foot rests and wrist rests are not generally available. Some computer rooms are not always tidy. Some classrooms are noisy, particularly in the rooms that are used to house servers for the college network.

75. Assignments are challenging, well structured and designed to stretch students' skills. They represent real work programmes and involve imaginary clients. During the group practical work, tutors intervene using topical and relevant examples to reinforce learning. The assignments are colourful and attractive to students. Feedback on assessed work is good.

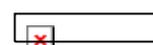
76. The majority of the provision is part time. Courses are tailored to meet the local community and industry demands. Examples of this are the e-commerce course, A+ computer maintenance and many varieties of taster courses. Progression on to further study is high. The colleges outreach strategy has helped to widen participation and to provide access to learning at a time to suit individual needs, for many whom are unable to attend traditional classes and class times. The part-time provision has many industry contacts, particularly small to medium sized businesses, making contributions to course development. However, opportunities to involve industry in full-time courses have not been sufficiently well developed. There is no level 1 full-time provision. Courses at level 2 are units of an award and, as a result, full-time learners with less than five GCSE's have difficulty in finding a course in ICT. The college is aware of these problems and there is a plan to introduce a GNVQ intermediate for IT specialists and an IT-user course next year.

77. Pastoral and learning support is good. All full-time students are initially assessed to identify their additional support needs. However, a number of students do not take advantage of the follow-up support offered. Full-time students value the individual tutorials provided by guidance and support tutors. Initial guidance and induction is good for part-time students taking college courses in outreach centres. However, full-time student admissions do not always involve specialist staff appropriately.

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

78. Overall management of the curriculum area is good. However, there is a tendency to focus on operational issues rather than on longer-term development. At course review meetings, there is discussion of improvement targets, the progress made in securing them and further action to be taken. Staff are well aware of their responsibilities. Issues raised are dealt with promptly and effectively. All staff have appraisals. Staff training needs are identified and follow-up staff development is good.

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



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates and retention rates on most courses
  
- good teaching of practical skills in hospitality
  
- wide range of enrichment opportunities
  
- effective integration of key skills.

### **Weaknesses**

- poor time keeping by teachers and students in many lessons
  
- some ineffective teaching and insufficiently demanding tasks in lessons
  
- poor curriculum management.

### **Scope of provision**

79. The college offers a range of hospitality, sport, leisure and tourism courses. At the time of the inspection, there are 107 full-time students, 38 following hospitality, 36 following sport, and 33 following leisure and tourism courses. Most full-time students are aged 16 to 18, with just a few part-time students over 19. The main qualifications are GCE AS and A2 sport and physical education, national diploma in sport development and fitness, AVCE in leisure and recreation, AVCE in hospitality and catering, AVCE in travel and tourism, GNVQ part 1 leisure and tourism at foundation and intermediate level, NVQ hospitality and catering levels 2 and 3, and foundation accreditation for craft education.

### **Achievement and standards**

80. Retention and pass rates are good on AVCE travel and tourism, GCE A-level sports, games and recreation, NVQ hospitality and catering food preparation and cooking level 2, intermediate food hygiene and community sports leaders award. However, pass rates are poor on NVQ hospitality, and catering food and beverage service. Pass and retention rates are poor on GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism part 1. Overall attendance, at 83%, is good. A range of additional qualifications is offered to students to enhance their learning programmes. Students' work is well presented and of an appropriate standard across all programmes. All work is word-processed and includes diagrams, charts and images to illustrate topics. The application of theory to practice is very good in hospitality.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Community sports leaders award	2	No. of starts	47	35	41
		% retention	72	91	73
		% pass rate	82	91	95
Intermediate food hygiene	2	No. of starts	18	16	20
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	17	100	100
NVQ catering and hospitality (food preparation and cooking)	2	No. of starts	19	11	22
		% retention	74	73	77
		% pass rate	88	83	100

GCE AS sports, games and recreation	3	No. of starts	**	22	17
		% retention	**	91	71
		% pass rate	**	85	83
GCE A-level sports, games and recreation	3	No. of starts	11	20	12
		% retention	73	55	100
		% pass rate	70	82	100
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	3	No. of starts	18	31	21*
		% retention	72	61	86
		% pass rate	64	42	93

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

\*\* Course not running

\* Course replaced with AVCE in Travel and Tourism

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

81. Teaching in practical lessons in hospitality is good. In these classes, students are enthusiastic and well motivated. In one lesson, the students hosted a 'gourmet evening' planned by a student and facilitated by her peers. The evening was successful and received very positive comments from customers. Students work to a good standard, developing communication, leadership and team-working skills. Teachers support and encourage effective learning with thorough and evaluative feedback. However, there is too much poor timekeeping by both teachers and students. Lessons start late and some lessons overrun. This impacts adversely on the learning experience for students and does not reflect the professional standards demanded by the vocational area. There is some ineffective teaching and insufficiently demanding tasks in lessons. Some lessons are not well planned and the time allocated to activities is often inappropriate. In these sessions, students often lose interest and concentration waivers. Teachers do not ensure activities are designed to stretch the more able students or to engage weaker students in learning. The standard of students' work in these lessons is poor. In one lesson, there was unproductive use of time with students spending too long in copying from hand-written overhead transparencies. Teaching groups are small and this impacts on the range of methods available to teachers, especially when students are absent.

82. Most teaching resources are good. The Four Seasons restaurant and kitchen are equipped to reflect current industry standards. The restaurant is open 2 days each week for lunches and in the evening for special events. The in-house travel agency is a branch office of a local travel company. It is staffed three days per week by a qualified travel manager and for the other two days by AVCE travel and tourism students who take enquiries as part of their travel agency operations unit. There is a well-used sports hall and fitness suite open for membership to staff, students and the local community. The library contains a wide range of current texts with multiple copies of set books for the curriculum area. However, there are limited journals, specialist papers and computer-aided resources. There are too few staff in the area of sport, travel and tourism to meet the needs of the courses now being offered. There is a heavy reliance on part-time staff, some of whom do not have the relevant industrial expertise to deliver the specialist units.

83. Key skills are well integrated and effectively support the achievement of vocational units. Assignments are carefully written to reflect work-related situations. However, in sport, the grading criteria are not always included on assignment briefs. There is good practice in assessment on NVQ hospitality and catering qualifications. The students negotiate their assessments and unit certification is used to motivate and encourage them. Assignments are marked with interim grades and returned to students within two weeks. Oral and written feedback enables students to improve their work. They are then given two weeks to improve before a final grade is awarded. Internal verification meets awarding body requirements.

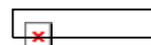
84. A wide range of additional qualifications is available to full-time students. This includes food hygiene and community sports leaders awards. There are opportunities for students to take part in visits overseas and work-experience placements. Hospitality and tourism students visited Amsterdam in the autumn term and are scheduled to visit Ibiza in May. Sport students have been camping in a variety of locations within the United Kingdom to undertake outdoor team-building activities. Hospitality students assisted in entertaining His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, on a recent visit to Selby Abbey. The college has a football development centre for both male and female players. At present, there are 26 students in the academy from all areas of the college.

85. Overall support for students is satisfactory. All students are assessed for their individual support needs at the start of their course. However, students do not always receive timely support when needs are identified. Three students in travel and tourism had only just received support in March, although the first concerns were expressed in the autumn term. In contrast, a student in hospitality receives good support for dyslexia with equipment loaned by the college to support theory classes and individual support to help record evidence and to develop spelling. Regular reviews of students' progress are completed. However, links between academic reviews with subject teachers and reviews with guidance and support tutors are not well established.

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

86. Curriculum management in this area is poor. Issues with deployment and numbers of staff within the area are impacting on teaching and learning. Students in sport had no teacher for one unit for over six weeks early in the term. The curriculum area development plan does not identify actions to address unsatisfactory teaching identified in the recent teaching observations. There is no formal strategy identified within the area to monitor and improve teaching. Regular team meetings are held. However, actions for improvement and their outcomes are not effectively recorded.

### **Health and social care**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- high pass and retention rates on many courses
- good teaching and learning
- thorough monitoring and review of students' progress
- extensive pastoral and academic support of students.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- o poor and declining pass rates on national diploma in public services
- o poor work-based learning achievement.

**Scope of provision**

87. The curriculum area provides courses from foundation level to higher national certificate (HNC). There are 334 students, of whom 120 are aged 16 to 18 years. Full-time courses include the foundation award in caring for children at level 1, and the GNVQ intermediate in health and social care, and certificate in childcare and education at level 2. At level 3, the college offers the AVCE in health and social care, the national diploma in early years, the diploma in childcare and education, and the national diploma in public services. Most of these students are aged 16 to 18 years. Part-time professional practice courses include childminding, playwork and pre-school practice, a part-time national diploma in early years and courses in counselling. Provision in work-based learning is small. NVQs in care at levels 2 and 3 are offered in the workplace for modern apprentices and a small number of adults in care homes, together with a certificate in essential care practice through distance learning.

**Achievement and standards**

88. Pass rates are high and well above the national averages on most courses. The diploma in childcare and education has achieved 100% pass rates for the past three years, and the national diploma 100% for the past two years. Pass rates are well above the national average on the certificate in childcare and education, and the AVCE in health and social care. Pass rates on the AVCE in health and social care have progressively improved over the past three years from 88% in 2000 to 93% in 2002, against a national average of 77%.

89. There are good retention rates on many courses. The certificate in childcare and education has retention rates of 100% and 87% respectively over the past two years against a national average of 76%. Retention rates on the certificate in basic counselling skills have exceeded the national average of 88% over a three-year period. On the GNVQ intermediate level course in health and social care course, however, retention rates are poor. Both retention and pass rates on the national diploma in public services have declined to below the national averages in 2002. Achievement of both the full framework and the NVQs in work-based learning is unsatisfactory.

90. Progression rates to higher-level courses related to employment and to HE are good. The majority of students' work is of a satisfactory or better standard. Students' contributions in lessons are often insightful and perceptive. They willingly use their personal experiences to illustrate the theory being taught and on counselling courses demonstrate good analytical skills. The teaching of key skills is linked to students' vocational study, but in schemes of work and lesson plans the identification of key skills development opportunities is often missing.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GNVQ foundation health and social care	1	No. of starts	14	**	13
		% retention	71	**	85
		% pass rate	90	**	82
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	2	No. of starts	21	9	10
		% retention	90	67	70

		% pass rate	74	67	86
Certificate in childcare and education	2	No. of starts	**	12	15
		% retention	**	100	87
		% pass rate	**	92	92
Certificate in basic counselling skills	2	No. of starts	26	12	14
		% retention	92	100	100
		% pass rate	96	100	86
AVCE in health and social care	3	No. of starts	20	18	19
		% retention	85	61	74
		% pass rate	88	90	93
National diploma in early years	3	No. of starts	9	27	12
		% retention	100	65	92
		% pass rate	78	100	100
National diploma in public services	3	No. of starts	13	17	15
		% retention	69	59	60
		% pass rate	100	90	67
Diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	18	16	13
		% retention	78	100	77
		% pass rate	100	100	100

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

\*\* Course not running

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

91. Teaching is good in the majority of lessons. Teachers use small group work effectively to sustain students' interest and motivation, and to develop their learning more quickly. Skilled use of question and answer increases the depth understanding and ensures the contribution of all students. In many lessons, teachers successfully help students to make links between the theory and practical activities. In one lesson where students were designing moving objects for use on placement, the teacher initially engaged students in identifying how their particular model would contribute to the physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social development of children. Many of the responses from students were perceptive and demonstrated good levels of insight. The teacher's questions helped them to explore their understanding further in evaluating the appropriateness of their design to the ages and stages of children's development. In another lesson, the teacher introduced students to gestalt therapy and immediately engaged their attention with a vivid description of her first encounter with this approach. Students were engrossed by the case studies presented. They asked penetrating questions to clarify their own understanding and confidently shared their own experiences to illustrate their learning. In a minority of unsatisfactory lessons, learning objectives were unclear and students undertook activities with little understanding of their purpose. The students found it difficult to concentrate and were either passive or engaged in distracting behaviour, resulting in little progress made in their learning.

92. Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Part-time teachers make a significant contribution to the quality of students' learning experience. IT facilities for staff are adequate and some are beginning to make use of PowerPoint presentations to enhance their teaching. One or two computers have been established in two of the classrooms and are used by students. Teaching accommodation is generally good with attractive displays of students' work. There is an appropriate

range of learning resources in the library.

93. Assessment is fair and accurate with good and prompt internal moderation on college-based courses. Most assignments contain detailed and constructive comments on how students might improve their grades. The monitoring and review of students' progress, both in terms of personal development and academic progress, are thorough. Guidance and support tutors regularly liaise with teaching staff to ensure that non-academic aspects are included in the formal reviews. Placement progress reviews are thorough and include comments by both supervisors and students. All this information is contained on the college intranet accessible to all staff involved with the student. Progress reviews and planning of assessment on work-based learning is poor and leads to very slow progress by students.

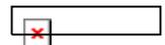
94. Progression opportunities in health and care from foundation to HNC level are good, and include a satisfactory range of part-time provision for adults. Positive links with local agencies ensure the provision of a wide range of good work-placement opportunities. A number of outside speakers with relevant and current professional experience contribute to students' learning.

95. The quality of pastoral and academic support for students is good. Students value highly the support available to them on personal or academic issues. The tutorial system is effective in providing students with a programme relevant to their stage of career progression. Punctuality and attendance are monitored carefully.

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

96. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Course teams are managed effectively and communication is good. However, actions to affect improvements proposed by individual course teams through self-assessment are insufficiently specific. Equality of opportunity is a high priority in both the course content and in the curriculum area's operations. All staff contribute fully to the self-assessment process.

### **Visual, performing arts and media**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on national diploma and GCE A-level courses in 2002
  
- much good teaching
  
- effective monitoring and review of students' progress
  
- good resources to support teaching and learning.

### **Weaknesses**

- poor retention rates
  
- insufficient rigour in pre-course guidance
  
- poor progression opportunities at levels 1 and 2 for full-time students
  
  
- insufficient links with employers and professional practitioners.

### **Scope of provision**

97. The college provides courses at GCE AS and A-level in art, design, textiles, theatre studies and media. Students have opportunities to study national diplomas in media production, fine art, graphic design, fashion and a diploma in foundation studies in art and design. The college offers a HNC in fashion. A range of National Certificate of Further Education (NCFE) practical craft skills courses in textiles, graphic design, video production, costume and ceramics is provided as enrichment and as part of the college's community education programme. There are currently 97 full-time students, of whom 79% are aged 16 to 18.

### **Achievement and standards**

98. There is good achievement in GCE A-level art and design, drama and theatre studies, and at national diploma level in fashion, fine art and graphic design. All have 100% pass rates in 2002 and 53% of students achieved high grades in art and design. Progression rates are very good, with 75% of leavers entering HE, 6% progressing to higher-level courses within FE and 9% gaining employment. Retention rates are poor. In 2000/01 at GCE A level, only 50% of theatre studies and 57% of fine art students completed their course against a national average of 75%. Generally there was poor retention on the national diploma courses in 2001/02.

99. The standard of students' work on level 3 courses is good. Students work in a wide range of media and materials. Sketchbooks show a progressive development and understanding in the use of visual language. Art techniques and research abilities are well developed. Reference is consistently made to contextual study to influence and shape students' ideas. A wide range of 3D work is undertaken from ceramics to model making and sculpture. In fashion and textiles, workbooks contain practical examples and very good reference materials that include fabric types and stitching techniques.

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

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Completion year:</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
NCFE practical craft skills stage 1 (one year)	1	No. of starts	120	85	106
		% retention	87	98	91
		% pass rate	88	95	79

NCFE practical craft skills stage 2 (one year)	2	No. of starts	73	106	69
		% retention	97	98	96
		% pass rate	97	92	71
GCE A-level theatre studies	3	No. of starts	12*	9*	10*
		% retention	83	50	90
		% pass rate	44	67	100
National diploma media production	3	No. of starts	10*	24	23
		% retention	100	71	61
		% pass rate	90	92	89
Diploma in foundation art and design	3	No. of starts	12*	7*	5*
		% retention	92	71	80
		% pass rate	91	80	75
National diploma in fine art	3	No. of starts	**	14*	9*
		% retention	**	50	67
		% pass rate	**	100	100
GCE A-level art studies	3	No. of starts	**	23	15
		% retention	**	57	66
		% pass rate	**	100	100

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

\* Less than 15 starts

\*\* Course not running

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

100. There is much good teaching. Most lessons are thoroughly planned and have clear objectives and outcomes that are shared with students. Most teaching is lively and inspiring, and engages and challenges students to learn. Students work well together exchanging ideas and developing professional language when exploring characterisation. In theatre studies, for example, students read and used role play techniques when exploring texts from *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* to develop their understanding of the theoretical techniques developed by Brecht and Stanislavski. Contextual references are well used by teachers to encourage students to develop their own ideas from the work and influences of professional artists. In one lesson, national diploma graphics students produced a large wall display of images and styles from 1900 to 2000, enhancing their understanding of period design styles. Students receive good written and verbal feedback that helps them improve their techniques.

101. Resources to support teaching and learning are good. The graphics studio is well equipped. Some classrooms have an overhead digital projector enabling teachers to explain software application skills to a whole class. A new media-editing facility enables students to develop filmmaking techniques. There is a well-equipped ceramics area, a photographic darkroom and a range of 3D resources. Some work areas, however, are cramped and lack storage space. The library contains a good book stock for art and design, but is limited for theatre studies and media studies. There are few alternative reference materials such as CD ROMs, videos, DVDs and theatre scripts. Resources for careers and guidance within art, performing arts and media are limited.

102. The monitoring and review of students' progress is rigorous and valued by students. Students

assess their own performance and teachers provide prompt and constructive feedback on their work, detailing how they can improve their grades. A well-developed intranet details entry qualification summaries, predicted grades from initial assessment and current attendance and profiles grades that are used effectively by teachers in their planning. Feedback provided through course tracking sheets allows students to develop action plans on areas for improvement. Staff have very good subject knowledge and industrial experience. There is regular internal and external training. Those teachers without appropriate teaching qualifications are currently in training.

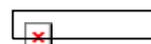
103. Enrolments have declined over a three-year period resulting in low course numbers on some courses. The lack of provision at levels 1 and 2 restricts opportunities for internal progression to courses at level 3. Work experience is limited. A minority of students arrange their own work experience, although teachers do not sufficiently encourage work placement to gain industrial practice. On most courses, there is no planned programme of visiting professionals to contribute to and enhance the students' learning experience. In contrast, fashion students regularly put on local fashion shows and graphics students won a contract to design logos for Selby and District Partnership and Selby Enterprise Forum in 2002.

104. Tutorials are effective and students are well supported by guidance and support tutors. Students value this support. Teachers are aware of the additional support requirements of students. However, there is little effective in-class support for students requiring additional help in developing their literacy skills. Pre-entry advice and guidance to students lacks rigour. Students are sometimes accepted onto level 3 courses without the required number of GCSEs, and, in some cases, without a clear understanding of the course content. This has served to compound retention difficulties as students transfer to other college courses or withdraw.

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

105. The operational management of the area is satisfactory and communication is good. All full-time and part-time staff attend regular team meetings. Meetings are minuted and action points are regularly monitored. Progression opportunities within the course provision at levels 1 and 2 are poor for full-time students. The college is taking action to address recruitment and progression issues. However, these are at an early stage of their development.

## **Humanities**



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

### ***Strengths***

- good pass rates on GCE AS and A-level geography and psychology, and GCE A-level sociology
  
- good retention at GCE A level
  
- very good teaching and learning

- o very good progression to HE.

**Weaknesses**

- o poor pass rates on GCE AS sociology in 2002
- o poor accommodation for psychology and sociology.

**Scope of provision**

106. The provision inspected includes GCE AS and A levels in geography, history, psychology and sociology, and GCE AS politics. Students on these courses are predominantly full-time students aged 16 to 18 taking four subjects in their first year and three GCE A2s plus GCE AS critical thinking in the second year. There is an access to HE provision providing full-time and part-time programmes for students aged 19+ in psychology and sociology alongside subjects from other learning areas. At the time of inspection, there were 95 students in psychology classes, 54 in sociology, 51 in geography, 50 in history and 23 on access humanities programmes. There is one access psychology and one GCE AS history class in the evening, however, these cater for small numbers. There are no level 2 courses.

**Achievement and standards**

107. At GCE A level, psychology, sociology and geography show good retention rates and pass rates at or above national averages, and well above those for similar colleges. GCE A-level history has made continuous improvements in pass rates over the last three years. In 2001/02, there was 100% retention in all humanities GCE A levels. In geography, pass rates also reached 100%. GCE AS critical thinking was introduced as a second-year study last year. It has a good pass rate, but retention in the current year is poor.

108. At GCE AS, retention rates are satisfactory or better in all subjects, and particularly good in history and geography. Pass rates are good or better in history, psychology, geography, and government and politics, but sociology pass rates dipped to well below similar college averages in 2001/02. At GCE AS and A level, the proportion of higher grades in psychology has been consistently very good. In other subjects, the proportion is more variable. Pass rates are good on access to HE courses, but retention is poor.

109. Students arrive at the college with good GCSE scores. However, they tend to achieve what would be expected rather than increasing their scores. Progression to HE is good from all humanities subjects ranging between 85% and 94% for last year's A2 groups.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
GCE AS history	3	No. of starts	**	32	28
		% retention	**	94	96
		% pass rate	**	80	93
GCE AS psychology	3	No. of starts	**	62	48

		% retention	**	89	77
		% pass rate	**	89	92
GCE AS sociology	3	No. of starts	**	43	30
		% retention	**	88	80
		% pass rate	**	84	67
GCE AS geography	3	No. of starts	**	33	25
		% retention	**	97	92
		% pass rate	**	100	96
GCE A-level psychology	3	No. of starts	19	35	35
		% retention	100	71	100
		% pass rate	84	88	97
GCE A-level sociology	3	No. of starts	12	22	26
		% retention	83	82	100
		% pass rate	88	89	96
GCE A-level geography	3	No. of starts	31	28	25
		% retention	77	82	100
		% pass rate	88	87	100

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

\*\* Course not running

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

110. The standard of teaching is good. Clear, well-structured lesson plans focus on student activity and include consideration of issues of differentiation. Learners are well motivated and teaching methods encourage their active involvement. Questions are used effectively to involve students, increase depth of learning, make links with earlier topics and test understanding.

111. Group and individual activities are well chosen and managed. For example, in a geography session on urban mobility, the teacher skilfully managed a lesson starting with whole group questioning to link the topic to earlier work and continued with a quick individual exercise listing ten reasons why someone might want to move out of a city. A full group discussion was followed by a small group exercise, which took the topic further. In psychology, there was deliberate allocation of students to groups in a way that catered for ability level. One group researched the more difficult topic of rational emotional behaviour therapy while those working at a different level tackled biofeedback, which had more links to previous teacher input. In all cases, numbers were given to students to allocate them to groups in a way that appeared random.

112. Staff are well qualified and keep up to date through an effective staff-development programme. Psychology and sociology base rooms are too small for the large GCE AS groups. They become hot and stuffy, and force some students to sit with their backs to others inhibiting discussion and making it difficult for teachers to circulate easily during group and individual work. There are good subject-based stimulus materials on the walls. Effective learning materials include extension materials for more able students and materials for students working at a more basic level. There are no IT resources in classrooms, but students make use of open access IT facilities for research and some class meetings are held in the IT centre. Library stock includes a good range of up-to-date journals and newspapers, and multiple copies of the main textbooks and an adequate range of more specialist subject texts.

113. There is regular and effective assessment of students' work in all subjects. Written work on all programmes is of a good standard though GCE AS and A2 students often fail to include bibliographies in their essay work. Assignment work is usually returned quickly with constructive written and verbal feedback, which indicates ways that the work could be improved and, in the case of history, helps with spelling and grammar. Students have clear target grades which are negotiated with teachers based upon a combination of factors, including GCSE profiles. Subject teachers give effective support to students on assignments. Individual subject reviews are effective in prompting students to reflect on their performance and negotiate appropriate action points for improvement. These are supported by tutor reviews which cover the students' full programmes, as well as personal and career development issues.

114. Programmes effectively meet the needs and interests of current students. However, there is a narrow focus to the range of programmes for adults. There are no level 2 courses and evening provision is scant. The timetable allows mixing of vocational and general education studies, and there has been a growth in the uptake of this opportunity.

115. There are a good range of popular enrichment activities related to students' subject interests including field trips, a visit to Munich and external speakers such as a psychiatrist and occupational therapist.

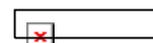
116. GCE AS and A-level students are encouraged to study at least one key skill at level 3. Key skills are effectively integrated into humanities courses. In geography, for example, a risk assessment document, produced for fieldwork activities, contributes to communication key skills. In researching up-to-date information to demonstrate changes in world demography, students generate evidence for IT key skills.

117. Students feel valued and speak highly of the support provided by subject teachers and tutors. The tutorial system for full-time students is well structured and monitored, but is less formal for access students' individual student reviews with general support tutors are well informed and focus on the individual's full programme and personal development issues. The quality of group tutorials is mixed, but students speak very highly of the support for applications to HE.

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

118. Courses are well managed. Staff are enthusiastic and are committed to improving standards. Self-assessment leads to planned action, which is monitored. There are effective systems of appraisal, which result in appropriate targets and provide focus for staff development. The communication flow between college managers and the programme area is effective. However, communication links between the college-based humanities team and staff teaching humanities subjects in outreach centres are not well developed. Staff have an awareness of equal opportunities issues and take advantage of curriculum content such as crime and the rise of fascism to promote these.

### **English and modern foreign languages**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- good pass rate on most courses for students aged 16 to 18 and on adult practical languages courses

- much good teaching and learning in modern foreign languages
- good standard of students' work in modern foreign languages
- good assessment practice in modern foreign languages.

### ***Weaknesses***

- poor pass rates in GCE AS English language and literature, and GCSE English
- poor retention in GCE AS in 2002
- insufficient attention to individual learning needs in English classes
- inadequate quality improvement strategies for English.

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

119. The college offers GCE AS and A-levels in English language, English literature, English language and literature, French and German. GCSE English is offered as a re-sit course at various points throughout the week, mainly for students on vocational courses who wish to improve their grades.

120. A variety of adult part-time classes at beginner and intermediate level is offered in French, Spanish, German and Italian, mainly to adult learners as part-time day or evening classes. Some full-time students attend these sessions. English provision for adults is restricted to GCSE, GCE A level and English within the access to HE course. The adult provision in languages is growing. However, progression from GCE AS to A2 is low.

121. At the time of inspection, the college had 378 enrolments on full-time or part-time courses in English and modern languages. Of these, 200 were students aged 16 to 18. The majority of the teaching is in English; the split between English and modern languages being currently approximately 60:40.

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

122. Pass rates on most courses for students aged 16 to 18 are high. GCE A levels are particularly successful with 100% pass rates in all subjects. There is good achievement of high grades in modern foreign languages. At 97%, pass rates on adults' practical languages courses are also good.

Value added data show that many students make satisfactory progress.

123. However, pass rates on GCSE English and GCE AS English language and literature are poor. The overall achievement of high grades by learners age 16 to 18 in English at GCE AS and A-level is below the national average. In GCSE English, the number of learners aged 16 to 18 who achieved grade C or above was just 9%. In GCE AS English language and literature, where there is 67% retention and 64% pass rate, no students achieved a high grade in 2002 and only 5% of learners achieved a high grade at GCE A level.

124. Retention rates are high in GCE A2 courses, but retention in GCE AS declined substantially in 2002 and are below benchmark data in three courses. Retention on the practical languages course is also low.

125. Students in modern languages are enthusiastic and contribute with confidence to class discussion. In most groups, they make good use of the target language and in one particularly effective Spanish beginners' class they arrived well prepared to contribute and were able to make and appreciate a joke in Spanish.

126. In English, standards in class are variable with many students offering only superficial responses to the teacher's questioning. Teacher expectation and targets set for individual students are low and out of line with their modern foreign language equivalents. In a minority of classes, student behaviour was quite disruptive and learners did not settle to the task in hand.

127. In GCSE English, attendance was below the college and sector norm at 73% overall. In other aspects of the curriculum area, attendance and punctuality is good at 80%.

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

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	2000	2001	2002
Practical languages	1	No. of starts	**	81	99
		% retention	**	58	60
		% pass rate	**	77	97
GCSE English	2	No. of starts	104	83	70
		% retention	73	71	74
		% pass rate	78	31	27
GCE AS English literature	3	No. of starts	**	20	25
		% retention	**	90	88
		% pass rate	**	94	95
GCE AS English language and literature	3	No. of starts	**	35	21
		% retention	**	86	67
		% pass rate	**	80	64
GCE A-level English language	3	No. of starts	35	36	17
		% retention	74	81	100
		% pass rate	95	86	100
GCE A-level English literature	3	No. of starts	27	33	12
		% retention	89	73	100
		% pass rate	90	100	100
GCE AS English	3	No. of starts	**	32	31

language		% retention	**	91	77
		% pass rate	**	86	88
GCE AS German	3	No. of starts	**	13	8
		% retention	**	85	88
		% pass rate	**	100	29
GCE A-level French	3	No. of starts	11	12	9
		% retention	100	89	100
		% pass rate	100	100	100

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

\*\* Course not running

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

128. In the best sessions, classes are well planned with clear objectives and lead to good progress in learning. In modern foreign languages, learners undertake a wide variety of practical tasks to stimulate effective use of vocabulary. Teachers establish good working relationships and this increases the confidence of their learners. They show enthusiasm for their subject area and demonstrate sound knowledge, expertise and, in some sessions, good technical management of discussion.

129. However, in English, much teaching relies heavily on question and answer techniques and teachers tend to talk too much. Learners do not prepare effectively for classes. As a result, there are low levels of student participation in too many sessions. In a number of English classes, the pace was slow and learners were set inappropriately passive tasks for too long, such as reading and preparing text. There is limited use of group work and some group work seen was poorly managed. The task was not clear to the learners who failed to focus effectively. The team-working skills of learners are underdeveloped. Some learning objectives in sessions are over ambitious or vague and are therefore difficult to achieve.

130. In English classes, there is little attempt to address the different needs of students. Teachers fail to differentiate effectively between the needs of learners across the range of ability. The most able students are not always challenged to extend and develop their skills. Before starting their courses, students are advised by specialist English staff. Learners following a more general programme are advised to study GCE AS or A-level English language and literature if they do not consider themselves English specialists. However there is little evidence of a significantly different approach to teaching, nor different advice given in the course handbook when compared to English language.

131. In class, learners are well supported by useful handouts produced by subject specialists. Learners appreciate the glossary of terms, produced by teachers, to support studies in English language. Access to IT and learning resources outside the classroom is good. Appropriate research tasks are set in many classes. Equipment for modern languages learning is good. The college has recently invested in a new computerised language laboratory. Staff development for this new laboratory has taken place, but development of new teaching strategies is still at an early stage. There is no classroom-based information learning technology in English.

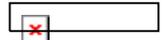
132. Feedback to learners on written work is mostly effective and students' files are well monitored. There is good tracking of learners' progress and action planning for improvement in the majority of courses, with evidence of students redoing the work and making improvements. Teachers mark students' work appropriately and offer helpful feedback on how to improve in modern languages. They draw attention to both grammatical and spelling errors. There are good cross-moderation procedures to support part-time staff in the standardisation of their assessment practice. However,

there is no clear marking policy across the whole team in English, and some learners are unclear about what they need to do to improve their grades. Students are very appreciative of individual support they receive from their lecturers outside of class time.

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

133. The modern languages curriculum is effectively organised, but there are inadequate quality improvement strategies in English. Although some of the weaknesses have been identified over a number of years, the development plan and course reviews fail to identify effective strategies to improve teaching and learning, and to increase the attainment of high grades. Best practice is not routinely shared across the curriculum area. There are very good levels of support for part-time language teachers, but these have not fully impacted on teaching quality. For example, there was less use of the target language by part-time staff.

### **Literacy and numeracy**



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

#### ***Strengths***

- much good individual teaching
  
- comprehensive initial assessment
  
- good use of computer-based resources.

#### ***Weaknesses***

- poor planning to meet literacy and numeracy needs in mainstream classes
  
- ineffective use of individual learning plans
  
- insufficient range of provision.

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

134. The college offers a small number of discrete literacy and numeracy courses. In addition, students on any courses are offered support with literacy and numeracy if they need it. There are

currently 169 students on vocational courses receiving effective learning support during lessons or on an individual basis. Literacy and numeracy teachers aim to help students achieve their vocational qualification or a key skills qualification.

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

135. The college does not have a wide range of accredited courses in literacy and numeracy. As a consequence, the number of students entered for externally accredited awards are too low to make meaningful comparisons with national pass rates. Many students successfully meet their individual learning targets, but do not achieve a formal qualification.

136. There is good initial assessment of the literacy and numeracy needs of students aged 16 to 18. The college uses a screening test to accurately measure students' levels of literacy and numeracy attainment against national standards. Further diagnostic assessments are used to identify specific gaps in the students' skills. The results of assessments are recorded on individual learning plans and made available on the college intranet.

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

137. Most teaching is satisfactory or better. Very good individual teaching takes place in discrete literacy and numeracy classes where the learners have individual learning programmes devised to meet varying abilities and needs. Students are proud of their efforts and keen to show and discuss their work. In individual support sessions, teachers focus on literacy and numeracy skills, and teach learners effective strategies that enable them to make progress. Particularly good literacy and numeracy individual teaching occurs in IT key skills groups where teachers and support workers work together to develop students' confidence and enhance study skills. Teachers leading sessions and those providing learner support are friendly and encouraging, and their relationships with learners are good. They use effective and sensitive strategies to manage some challenging behaviour and motivate students who sometimes see these sessions as unimportant.

138. However, subject teachers rarely differentiate materials or teaching techniques for students who have literacy and numeracy needs. They rely too heavily upon support workers to explain and correct students' work. For example, when a student from a vocational group with an identified literacy need spelt a series of words incorrectly, the teacher corrected the work and asked the student to do the work again. This was not recorded or used as the basis for setting learning targets for further literacy skills development. Teachers and support workers in classes do not prepare adapted vocational learning materials, and rarely use literacy and numeracy materials, such as personal spelling lists or tables charts. Often such materials have been prepared in individual support sessions, but are not used in vocational classes.

139. Skills developed, techniques recommended and progress made by individual students are not recorded in sufficient detail on learning plans. Information is not effectively communicated between individual support teachers, classroom support workers or subject staff. Too many learning plans contain generic statements such as "improve spelling" or "get some help with numeracy". In some support sessions, literacy and numeracy activities are not linked to activities carried out in vocational areas. For example, in a group session, the calculation of averages was explained, but the example used was to calculate the average shoe size of people in the room rather than relate the activity to the students' secretarial coursework. As such, students have difficulty seeing the relevance of literacy and numeracy support to their main programme of study and view it as an unnecessary chore. Most entry-level students do not have their progress in literacy and numeracy formally recognised or celebrated.

140. Much of the individual or group teaching of literacy and numeracy takes place in the college library area or in an open-plan computer workshop. For some students receiving individual support there is insufficient privacy. Two group sessions often take place at the same time in the workshop area. A small screen is used to separate groups. The noise levels generated in the workshop are distracting. For example, in one session, a teacher asked a question that was answered by a student from another group who shouted the answer across the room. The door to the workshop was left

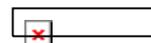
open and the noise from the corridor also disrupted teaching. Computer-based resources are well used to add interest and variety in literacy and numeracy classes. In the best teaching, teachers make good use of materials that they have prepared using real life examples or examples of work taken from the vocational areas. In the less successful sessions, teachers use textbooks or focus inappropriately on whole group sessions.

141. There is very little discrete literacy and numeracy provision available in the college, despite its location in one of the most deprived wards in the district. Some projects have been run to set up community and workplace courses, but these projects are either in their early stages of development or have not been sustained or substantial. The majority of students receiving support with literacy and numeracy are working towards a key skills qualification, although for some, particularly those diagnosed at entry level, this is inappropriate. There is no college provision of English for speakers of other languages. Previous classes have been discontinued due to staffing or funding difficulties.

### **Leadership and management**

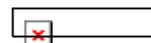
142. Overall management of the area is effective. The basic skills strategy and development plan focus on improving teaching, learning and achievement. Good use has been made of the Basic Skills Quality Initiative to evaluate strengths and weaknesses. Some recommendations have already been put in place, for example awareness raising sessions for staff on the topic of the core curriculum and new targets for levels of staff development and qualifications. However, the post of basic skills co-ordinator was vacant at the time of the inspection. The college has been unsuccessful in appointing a suitable person to this post for over a year. This has implications for the overall capacity for development within the area of learning.

## **Part D: College data**



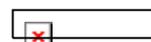
**Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age**

<b>Level</b>	<b>16-18</b>	<b>19+</b>
<b>1</b>	11	35
<b>2</b>	30	41
<b>3</b>	42	7
<b>4/5</b>	0	1
<b>Other</b>	17	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>



*Source: Provided by the college in spring 2003*

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



Curriculum area	16-18	19+	Total
	No.	No.	Enrolments %
Science and mathematics	577	91	5
Land-based provision	0	0	0
Construction	0	10	0
Engineering, technology and manufacture	103	781	6
Business administration, management and professional	408	996	9
Information and communication technology	874	3,445	29
Retailing, customer service and transportation	0	114	1
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	289	1,192	10
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	174	108	2
Health, social care and public services	280	1,642	13
Visual and performing arts and media	229	240	3
Humanities	1,200	137	9
English, languages and communication	874	196	7
Foundation programmes	141	708	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,149</b>	<b>9,660</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: Retention and achievement**

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1999	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
		<b>1</b>	Starters excluding transfers	467	261	202	541
	Retention rate	83	70	79	82	70	52
	National average	80	80	79	78	78	78
	Pass rate	79	74	77	83	77	85
	National average	59	65	68	60	66	68
<b>2</b>	Starters excluding transfers	788	612	588	515	454	1,274
	Retention rate	79	72	76	80	82	77

	National average	76	76	76	79	79	78
	Pass rate	76	70	86	78	75	73
	National average	65	66	69	62	65	69
<b>3</b>	Starters excluding transfers	953	924	1,620	356	459	274
	Retention rate	83	82	84	82	80	74
	National average	75	76	77	78	78	78
	Pass rate	85	79	85	80	62	72
	National average	72	74	76	62	66	69
<b>4/5</b>	Starters excluding transfers	4	0	0	57	56	35
	Retention rate	*	*	*	*	*	*
	National average	83	79	82	84	81	84
	Pass rate	*	*	*	70	77	68
	National average	64	66	55	56	56	53

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

*Sources of information:*

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

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

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

*\* Too few students to provide a valid calculation.*

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3 (advanced)	71.8	22.7	5.5	110
Level 2 (intermediate)	65.7	25.7	8.6	35
Level 1 (foundation)	63.2	36.8	0	19
Other sessions	66.7	33.3	0	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>25.3</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>170</b>

---

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

Office for  
Standards  
in Education

