

Evesham and Malvern Hills College

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- *December 2001 inspection report*
- *April 2003 monitoring inspection report*



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE



OFFICE FOR STANDARDS
IN EDUCATION

Inspection report

Evesham and Malvern Hills College

Date(s) of inspection: 10–14 December 2001

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Basic information about the college

Name of college:	Evesham and Malvern Hills
Type of college:	General Further Education College
Principal:	David Blades
Address of college:	Davies Road Evesham Worcestershire WR11 1LP
Telephone number:	01386 712 600
Fax number:	01386 712 640
Chair of governors:	Terry Hartley
Unique reference number:	130709
Name of reporting inspector:	Sheila Brown HMI
Date(s) of inspection:	10–14 December 2001

Part A: Summary

Information about the college

Evesham College was established as a general further education (FE) college in 1970. In September 2000, the college merged with the Malvern Hills College, an adult education centre. The college serves the two main centres of population in Evesham and Malvern and their surrounding villages. The main campus is close to the town centre of Evesham. In addition to the Malvern Hills base, programmes and courses are also provided at Wallace House, a community centre in Evesham, and at various other locations in the local area. The new 'Laptops in the Community' project is provided in local villages. The college provides a wide range of vocational courses and access courses to FE and higher education (HE) in response to local needs, and in recognition of the availability of courses in neighbouring post-16 institutions. The college's training arm, Vale Training, provides on-site youth and adult training, Lifeskills (Gateway) and New Deal programmes.

Of the 5,928 enrolments in 2000/01, 509 were full time and 5,419 were part time. The percentage of part-time students has increased from 83% in 1999/2000 to 91% in 2000/01, and has grown by 11% since the last inspection in 1997. The ratio of adult students to students aged 16 to 18 is almost 4:1. The college has a bridging programme for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As at 30 September 2001, there were 152 work-based learners managed through Vale Training: 44 at the Malvern site and 108 at Evesham. At Evesham, most of the work-based learners were on engineering programmes, including 61 advanced modern apprenticeships and 17 foundation modern apprenticeships covering horticulture, motor vehicle and mechanical engineering. Other work-based training programmes leading to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are also offered in business and hairdressing at Evesham and Malvern, and in health and social care at Malvern.

The college's aims are to provide high-quality education and training, to promote equal opportunities by developing a 'community where all are treated of equal worth' and to support each student to develop his/her potential and 'aim for highest personal achievement.'

How effective is the college?

The college provides effective teaching and good opportunities for learning for most of its students. The quality of the provision is good in four of the curriculum areas inspected, outstanding in one and satisfactory in three. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. Pass rates are above national averages on many courses and for the college as a whole. Achievement on some work-based learning programmes is, however, very poor. Retention rates on some level 2 and level 3 courses are low, and retention rates for students aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses have been consistently below national averages for three years.

Key strengths

- good pass rates and high standards of work on most courses
- good teaching and effective learning in hairdressing and beauty therapy, leisure and travel, humanities and most foundation programmes
- good range of provision that responds well to local needs
- effective strategies and partnerships to promote social inclusion and widen participation
- extensive and high-quality provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- high-quality support services for students
- good accommodation.

What should be improved

- retention rates on some level 2 and 3 courses
- achievement on, and management of, work-based training programmes
- effectiveness of quality assurance systems
- arrangements for ensuring students benefit fully from learning support
- monitoring and promotion of equal opportunities in the work place.

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
Engineering	Good. Students achieve high standards in motor vehicle and horticultural engineering. Practical training sessions in the college are good. There is frequent and effective use of assessment by direct observation in the workplace. The retention rate for modern apprentices in general engineering is low. Training in the workplace is not adequately planned.
Business and administration	Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates on part-time courses are good. Provision for adult learners on college-based courses is well managed. Students' work is well presented in their portfolios. Learners are well supported. Work-based learning training is poor. Pass rates for modern apprentices are low.
Computing and information and communication technology	Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates are good on computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT) courses, on the diploma in IT and on integrated business technology (IBT) courses. Pass rates are good on the diploma in computing and electronics course. There is good progression to advanced courses and HE. Some teaching does not stretch the more able students. Tutorial support and action planning are unsatisfactory. Attendance is poor. Management of the work in this curriculum area is unsatisfactory.
Sports, leisure and travel	Good. Teaching is good. Students' written work is of a high standard. The vocational focus in teaching and learning is a strength of the provision. Good physical resources and staff expertise contribute significantly to students' learning. Above national average pass rates declined in 2000/01. Retention rates on level 3 courses are unsatisfactory. Target setting and strategies for improving retention and pass rates are inadequate.
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	Good. Teaching and learning are good. Students' practical work is of a high standard. Pass rates on beauty therapy courses are good. There are unsatisfactory retention rates on full-time courses. Work-based learning is poorly managed. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Area	Overall judgements about provision, and comment
Health and social care	<p>Satisfactory. Retention and pass rates are good on college-based courses but very poor for modern apprentices. There are a number of examples of very effective teaching which make clear the links between theory and work-based practice. Tutorial support for full-time students is very good. There is a lack of planned training for work-based learners. Management of provision within Vale Training is ineffective.</p>
Humanities	<p>Good. Retention rates on most courses are good. Many access to HE students progress successfully to HE. Students produce work of a high standard. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Courses meet the needs of the local community. There is good support for individual students. Learning resources at Malvern are inadequate. Arrangements for target setting and progress reviews are inadequate.</p>
Foundation programmes	<p>Outstanding. Retention and pass rates are excellent. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities produce practical and written work of a good standard. The extensive bridging programme and basic skills provision are well managed and are highly effective in meeting students' needs. There is good teaching in a stimulating and highly supportive environment. The quality assurance of the Learning Gateway programme is inadequate.</p>

How well is the college led and managed?

Leadership and management of the college are satisfactory. College managers and governors have set clear aims that are understood by staff. Financial management is sound. However, management activity is not sufficiently focused on raising standards. Students achieve good standards on most courses, but achievement on most work-based learning programmes is unsatisfactory. Retention rates are low on some programmes, particularly for full-time students aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses. The college's quality assurance procedures are not implemented fully in some curriculum areas. The overall quality of teaching and learning has not improved since the last inspection in 1997. The management and quality assurance of work-based learning provided by Vale Training are poor.

To what extent is the college educationally and socially inclusive?

The college has been successful in extending its contacts in local communities and in attracting a wide range of adult learners and students aged 16 to 18. Strategies to promote social inclusion and widen participation have been effective. The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is extensive and provides good opportunities for such students to gain accreditation in a wide range of skills. The 'First Steps' programme enables adults to return to learning with confidence. The 'Laptops in the Community' project is effective in bringing opportunities to learn about information and communication technology (ICT) to rural communities. Courses in business administration for women help them gain valuable skills which improve their chances of gaining employment. The monitoring of equal opportunities in the college has improved since the last inspection. However, the monitoring and promotion of equal opportunities on work-based programmes is weak.

How well are students and trainees guided and supported?

The range of student support services is wide, and their quality is good. The college prospectus, other marketing materials and induction programmes prepare students well. The learning support centre is an excellent facility, used effectively by students of all abilities. The tutorial system is well regarded by staff and most students. All learners have individual learning plans which are developed and monitored as part of the tutorial arrangements. However, implementation of the arrangements for tutorials and learning support is unsatisfactory in some curriculum areas, particularly for part-time students and work-based learners. Individual learning plans for work-based learners are inadequate and monitoring of these is poor. Co-ordination of careers education across the college is unsatisfactory.

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

- induction arrangements
-

-
- teaching and tutorial support
 - accessible staff who treat students with respect
 - support services, particularly the learning centre
 - library, ICT and sports facilities
 - enrichment activities
 - links with HE institutions
 - work placements and the development of work-related skills.

What they feel could be improved

- tutorial arrangements for part-time students
- some theory and key skills teaching
- stock of books at Malvern library
- speed of processing university and college admissions applications
- canteen facilities
- room size for some larger classes
- room temperature control in the ICT centre
- amount of car parking space, especially for crèche parents.

Other information

The college has two months to prepare an action plan in response to the report. It must show what action the college will take to bring about improvements in response to issues raised in the report. The governors must agree the plan and send copies of it to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

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 including WBL* & LG**	63	27	10
Teaching 19+ including WBL* & ND***	67	28	5
Learning 16-18 including WBL* & LG**	69	21	10
Learning 19+ including WBL* & ND***	75	20	5

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*

*** Learning Gateway*

**** New Deal*

Achievement and standards

1. Evesham College provides some academic courses and a wide range of vocational courses for full-time and part-time students. The college has significantly increased its provision for adults and is involved in many community projects to widen participation. In 2000/01, approximately 81% of students were adults enrolled on part-time courses. Few learners undertake General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (GCE A-Level) and the college has now ceased providing any substantial programmes leading to these qualifications. General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) and precursor qualifications are mainly undertaken by students aged 16 to 18. Pass rates on these courses are mostly good. Retention rates are above national averages at level 1, but there are some poor retention rates on programmes at levels 2 and 3. The college also provides a range of programmes leading to NVQs and modern apprenticeships for work-based learners. Pass rates on most of these programmes are poor. Much of the college data made available for the inspection was unreliable, making it difficult to assess overall trends in performance. Further details about students' achievements and the quality of particular courses is given in Part C of this report.

2. Most class sizes were small and the overall attendance rates during the inspection were at the national average. However, in hairdressing and beauty therapy and ICT, attendance was low. Students' poor punctuality was insufficiently challenged by some teachers.

16-18 year olds

3. Achievement is good on most courses. The number of students gaining passes in vocational subjects is above the national averages on most courses. Particularly good results are achieved on most GNVQ and national diploma courses. However, retention rates on these courses are below the national average. For example, in 2000/01 on GNVQ advanced business and GNVQ advanced health and social care courses, half the students failed to complete the course. GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism retention rates have not improved significantly, and retention rates for the current year are poor. Retention rates on NVQ level 2 in hairdressing and NVQ level 3 in beauty therapy are also poor. Pass rates on most NVQ programmes for students aged 16 to 18 are good. However, pass rates in business administration NVQ level 2 are poor: only half of those who completed the course achieved the qualification in 2000/01.

4. Attainment is good on most programmes. Detailed business reports produced by Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) first-year students are kept in well-organised portfolios. Students relate theoretical aspects well to practical situations. Beauty therapy students achieve high professional standards. Written work is good for students on leisure and tourism. However, some students on ICT courses were not producing work to the expected standard.

Adult learners

5. Adult learners achieve good results on most courses. Many students produce work of a high standard. Pass rates are above national averages on most courses. Trends over the last two years are particularly good in hairdressing and beauty therapy. However, students do not achieve well on NVQ courses in early years and health and social care. Pass rates on access to HE courses are above national averages and many students gain places in HE. Students undertaking teacher-training courses also do well. Pass rates over the last three years for students studying English as a second language are excellent. Over the last three years students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have achieved 100% pass rates for a range of qualifications on the bridging programme. Business administration courses specifically designed for women help them gain skills that improve their chances of gaining employment. Many programmes for adults help them develop personal skills and increase their confidence and self-esteem.

Work-based learning

6. There are programmes for work-based learners in engineering, health and social care, hairdressing and beauty therapy and business administration. Students do not achieve well on most work-based learning courses. The exception is motor vehicle and horticultural engineering where modern apprentices have achieved well over the last three years. Pass rates are very poor in health and social care and business and administration work-based programmes. General engineering pass rates are also poor and many students have left with no qualifications. Standards of work on most courses are satisfactory. Good work is produced by students following motor vehicle courses. Employers of these students were

particularly impressed with the way they developed the necessary skills and knowledge for the workplace.

Quality of education and training

7. Teaching, learning and attainment were graded in 102 teaching or training sessions. In 92% of these sessions teaching was satisfactory or better. Good or very good teaching was observed in 59%, and in just over 5% of sessions, teaching was excellent. The proportion of teaching that was unsatisfactory was 6%, and in 2% of sessions, teaching was poor. Teaching was consistently good in leisure and travel, hairdressing and beauty therapy, humanities and on most of the foundation programmes. In computing and ICT, health and social care, business and administration and engineering, teaching quality was more variable and ranged from less than satisfactory to excellent. The proportion of unsatisfactory and poor teaching was higher in lessons for students aged 16 to 18 on level 3 courses. The overall quality of teaching across the college has not improved since the 1997 inspection.

8. In the best lessons, teachers planned and prepared well to provide a good range of relevant and challenging learning opportunities that effectively engaged and motivated students. On the access to HE programme, adult learners enjoyed a lively, coherent sequence of activities that improved their memory and increased their understanding of cognitive psychology. Learners on a part-time accounting technicians course benefited from good individual coaching in a lesson where they learned how to apply new knowledge about the use of spreadsheets. Teachers used their good technical skills and up-to-date knowledge to ensure that students linked theoretical ideas and principles to current practice. Full-time students aged 16 to 18 on the AVCE travel and tourism course developed the skills needed to provide guided tours through the evaluation of realistic scenarios and the presentation of their recent practical experiences in Paris. In a health and social care lesson, enthusiastic teaching inspired students, who gained confidence in applying communication theories in the workplace.

9. In many lessons, the learning activities were well matched to the particular needs of the students and provided a high level of challenge that enabled them to make good progress. In an excellent basic skills numeracy session involving students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, sensitive management of their behaviour and appropriate individual coaching ensured that all students participated in the lesson and were able to use their measuring skills in a ranking exercise. In hairdressing, students aged 16 to 18 on the first year of an NVQ programme developed their cutting techniques using a carefully structured series of targets, that trained them effectively towards the standards expected in a commercial salon. Very good resources, including extension materials for the more able students, enabled ICT students to develop their independent learning skills and to respond successfully to the challenges involved in designing a web page. Teachers regularly checked students' understanding through questioning, observation and exercises. Log books with structured tasks and assessment records were used well to monitor and record their progress. Students had a good understanding of their targets for learning and their progress towards these.

10. Teaching was less than satisfactory in only a small number of lessons. Typically in such lessons, the teaching was not planned effectively to promote students' learning. The learning activities did not meet the differing needs of all the students, many of whom were unable to participate in them. Tasks were too difficult and explanations were inadequate with the result that students were unsure of how to proceed with tasks and lacked the confidence to ask questions. The progress of individual students was not adequately assessed and monitored.

11. The provision for work-based training is inadequate and, in some curriculum areas, it is poor. Training is not planned effectively to meet course or qualification requirements and opportunities are missed to enhance and assess students' skills in the workplace. The arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning and the development and assessment of key skills in the workplace are ineffective. Initial assessment, workplace visits to discuss progress, regular reviews of individual learning plans and target setting involving the employer are all significant areas of weakness in the provision.

12. Relationships between teachers and students are very good. Where necessary, teachers manage students' behaviour well and are sensitive to their individual needs. Students value the vocational expertise of teachers and the support that they receive in lessons and tutorials. Mature students returning to learning in humanities, and other adult learners on part-time courses such as business and administration, comment on the help and guidance provided by teachers beyond the classroom.

13. The college's arrangements for the assessment and monitoring of students' progress and their standards of achievement are generally good. Internal verification procedures are appropriate and are mostly effective. Assessment of most students' assignments is well planned and rigorous. Teachers' comments are generally evaluative and helpful in pointing out how students could improve their work in the future. Students understand the assessment requirements for their courses and are well informed about their progress. All full-time students complete a basic skills assessment when they start at the college. In computing and ICT, the initial assessment also identifies students' preferred learning styles and personal development goals. However, the results of initial assessments are not used consistently and effectively to inform individual learning plans and teaching strategies and to encourage students to take up additional learning support. Parents and employers receive annual reports on the progress of students and trainees and parents' evenings are held three times a year.

14. Initial assessment of work-based learners on business and administration and health and social care programmes is poor. The monitoring of their progress towards the targets in their individual learning plans and the recording of review outcomes are inadequate. In engineering work-based programmes, practical assessments conducted at the college are generally appropriate, but those undertaken in the workplace are not well planned. Engineering students miss many opportunities to gather workplace evidence for the assessment of key skills. Some work-based student reviews do not include the employer. Targets are not routinely set to enable students to be clear about what they need to do to improve.

15. Full-time and part-time teaching staff are well qualified. Most have extensive work experience and a recognised teaching qualification. Teachers and students are supported well by technical and administrative staff. Learning support, careers and library staff provide an effective service to meet the varied needs of students. The college promotes professional development through termly development days attended by all full-time and many part-time staff. Financial assistance is available for teachers to attend other approved courses. A team of three mentors has recently been appointed to help improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the college.

16. Overall, the quality of accommodation and facilities on the two main sites of the college is very good. The buildings and grounds provide a very pleasant and well-maintained learning environment. The off-site open access centres are comfortable and welcoming. Most classrooms and workshops are fit for their purpose and many contain interesting displays of students' work. Recent investment at the Malvern site has provided excellent, well-equipped hairdressing and beauty salons, and four spacious classrooms. The Evesham site is fully accessible for students with mobility difficulties and, although there are some access problems at Malvern, suitable arrangements are in place to relocate classes if necessary.

17. Resources to support teaching and learning are very good. Specialist equipment is up to current industrial standards and meets the requirements of the courses. College staff have been successful in obtaining funding and sponsorship for equipment, such as horticultural and motor vehicle machinery, computing and gas training resources. Computing and ICT facilities in the college are good. There is a ratio of one computer to every five full-time equivalent students; laptops are available to promote learning in rural areas. Library facilities are good at Evesham, but are inadequate at the Malvern site. A fully approved and Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) bonded travel agency provides vocational training opportunities and a booking service to staff and students. Good crèche facilities providing full-day and after-school care are provided at Evesham and Malvern as a service to students, staff and external clients.

18. The college provides a broad range of courses from foundation to degree level in response to local employer and community needs. In most subject areas, there are good progression routes for students either within the college or to other local providers. The well-designed college prospectus helps students identify possible routes for their choice of study. Enquiries about courses are routinely monitored to determine the level of interest and their viability. Courses in curriculum areas such as computing and ICT, and engineering, have been adapted or replaced to meet the needs of students and local companies. Effective marketing takes place in local schools, most of whom welcome their close links with the college. The partnership with the local school for students with learning difficulties is good and ensures an effective transition for students into college-based learning.

19. The college has been proactive in seeking to widen participation and promote social inclusion on its programmes. The flexible course structure and the provision in local communities successfully attract adults back into learning. Adult learners on the humanities programmes commented on the course structures that allow them to balance study with

employment or childcare responsibilities. The college has forged several successful community partnerships in order to provide more accessible learning opportunities for adult learners. Following a successful bid to the New Opportunities Fund and British Telecom, an innovative Laptops in the Community project offers ICT courses at outreach centres in the community. A young mother achieved a CLAIT qualification through this scheme and is now attending a women into business course at the college. Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. An extensive and well-planned bridging programme enables students to develop a good mixture of accredited personal, social and practical skills to assist them in progressing to FE or into work.

20. Students have access to a good programme of enrichment activities. This includes opportunities to take additional qualifications, to travel abroad and to carry out community work. The innovative provision of the Forest School brings foundation and care students together to participate in outdoor activities, enhancing their awareness of the countryside and developing their understanding of health and safety issues. Visits to Florida, Egypt and France are undertaken by travel and tourism students. Engineering students achieve additional qualifications, for example, in using abrasive wheels and first aid. Many full-time students benefit from work experience during their study time. Students have daytime access during the college year to good leisure facilities for coursework and recreational purposes in both Evesham and Malvern.

21. The range and quality of student support services are good. The prospectus and supporting information are informative and of good quality. General marketing and links with schools are effective. New entrants to the college are well informed and are able to make clear programme choices. Induction is generally thorough and effective, although in some curriculum areas, insufficient attention is given to the promotion of equal opportunities.

22. Skilled and well-motivated staff provide the various components of the student support services. An excellent learning support centre has been established recently in the library area and is used well by students of all abilities. Staff work with tutors to give all full-time and some part-time students an initial assessment. However, the information gained from this assessment is not used effectively in some curriculum areas. Learning support is provided to only half of those students identified as needing it. Efforts continue to improve this level of take up and there are promising plans to pilot partnerships between learning centre staff and tutors, to make referral more effective. However, the fragmented management structure makes co-ordination of the learning support services across the college difficult, particularly for part-time and work-based students.

23. Support and guidance for students on full-time courses are very good. In some curriculum areas, part-time students also receive good support from teachers and tutors. There is particularly good support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Full-time students benefit from a well-structured tutorial system. Each has an individual learning plan. Students' progress is also monitored through termly reviews where targets are agreed. Tutors maintain registers, but do not always respond to persistent absence. Students on part-time and work-based learning programmes are not fully aware of the support services available to them, and their take-up of these services is low. The quality of individual

learning plans, progress reviews, and target setting on work-based programmes in health and social care, business and administration, and in engineering is unsatisfactory. The support provided for learners on these programmes is poor.

24. A range of sources of financial support is clearly publicised and appreciated by students. The crèche and the counselling service are well regarded and extensively used. Careers guidance is satisfactory and links with the careers service are good. The college has an adequate careers library with an emphasis on HE information and a good, though underused, range of careers-related software. The programme of careers education is underdeveloped and lacks coherence across the college. Tutors help students to produce curriculum vitae, and there are some visiting speakers.

Leadership and management

25. Leadership and management of the college are satisfactory. Managers have set clear aims for the college, which are understood by staff. Strategies to widen participation and to promote social inclusion have been successful. Provision is good in four of the areas inspected, outstanding in one and satisfactory in three. Pass rates are above national averages on many courses and for the college as a whole. Retention rates are above national averages at level 1, but there are pockets of poor retention rates at level 2. Retention rates at level 3 for students aged 16 to 18 have been consistently below average for the last three years. However, there has been some improvement in the retention rate at this level in the current year. Pass rates on some work-based learning programmes are very poor. The college has made some progress since the last inspection, but weaknesses remain in the arrangements for quality assurance and in the use of management information systems. The quality of teaching is consistently good in some curriculum areas, but variable in others. The overall quality of teaching across the college has not improved since the 1997 inspection.

26. Governors and managers set a clear direction for the college. There is an established annual cycle of strategic reviews. All staff contribute to the development of the strategic plan. Staff understand the college's main aims and contribute to decisions about the courses to be offered. The merger of Evesham and Malvern Hills colleges in September 2001 was well planned and implemented, and the college has met and exceeded its targets for growth at the Malvern Hills site. Overall, management at course level is good. Teachers understand the simple management structure, the lines of communications and their responsibilities. Communication on the Evesham site is good, but is difficult between Malvern Hills and Evesham College. A new telephone system and intranet are to be installed to alleviate this.

27. The college has successfully developed a range of courses that has contributed to high levels of social inclusion. There is extensive provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college has forged effective partnerships with a range of organisations that have enabled learners to access programmes such as the 'Laptops in the Community' scheme in partnership with Worcestershire County Council. They have also developed a range of outreach activities, such as basic skills programmes, for learners from the travellers' community. The monitoring of equal opportunities has improved since the last inspection. An equal opportunities committee monitors the achievement of equal

opportunities targets in the strategic plan, as well as staff recruitment and students' achievements. The monitoring of equal opportunities on work-based programmes is weak.

28. Quality assurance procedures are not consistently or effectively implemented. Targets for retention and pass rates have been set only in the last year and there is no clear strategy to set targets for retention and pass rates at course level. The monitoring of progress towards the targets that are set lacks rigour. Nearly half of the courses inspected show a decline in retention or pass rates, or large variations from year to year. The college's lesson observation programme has had little overall impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. A sample of lessons is observed in each curriculum area, but there is no systematic approach to ensure that all full-time staff and substantive part-time staff are observed on a regular basis. Reports from these observations are not always used to inform staff performance reviews and identify staff training needs. The college has recently appointed professional mentors, whose role will be to improve the quality of teaching.

29. Management information is not used effectively by curriculum managers to drive up standards. A new management information system has been installed but was not fully operational at the time of the inspection. The data available online to curriculum managers were limited and some staff lacked the confidence to use the data appropriately. Many staff judged that the data did not accurately reflect real retention and pass rates. This weakness was identified in the last inspection and has not yet been adequately dealt with.

30. The college has an established annual self-assessment process that involves staff and governors. The self-assessment reports for curriculum areas are inconsistent in the amount of detail they contain, and the extent to which they pay adequate attention to retention and pass rates, and the quality of teaching and learning. Many of the development plans resulting from self-assessment do not contain clear action points to generate improvement. Inspectors judged three of the grades in the self-assessment report to be over generous.

31. Governors are involved in setting the strategic direction of the college and overseeing the annual revision of the strategic objectives. They monitor the college's financial performance. However, they do not scrutinise data on the college's academic performance in sufficient detail, and rely on the principal to highlight areas of concern. They are insufficiently aware of the areas of poor performance, such as the pass rates on work-based programmes. They are aware of the poor retention rates at level 3, for students aged 16 to 18, but have not monitored the data for 2000/01 to check whether college strategies have led to an improvement. The corporation has not established a quality or standards committee.

32. The management and quality assurance of work-based learning programmes provided by Vale Training are poor. The overall quality of the work-based learning programmes is poor and pass rates on some programmes are very poor. Retention and pass rate targets are not set. Self-assessment reports lack rigour. The links between college-based and work-based provision are ineffective.

33. Financial management is sound. The college has had surpluses in the last two years. There are operating deficits forecast for the next three years. Budget holders in curriculum

areas are allocated budgets based on student numbers. Income and expenditure are closely monitored and controlled by the head of business support services. Senior managers review student numbers on a weekly basis to ensure that budget targets are being met. The college has not carried out benchmarking exercises in order to evaluate whether it is providing good value for money.

Part C: Curriculum and occupational areas

Engineering

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

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

Strengths

- high pass rates in horticultural and motor vehicle engineering
- good practical training sessions at the college
- learners' good practical skills
- good feedback to learners following assessments
- frequent and effective use of assessment by direct observation in the workplace.

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for work-based learners in general engineering
- lack of planned training in the workplace
- failure to accredit prior achievements
- insufficient detail on individual training plans for work-based learners.

Scope of provision

34. The college offers a range of full-time and part-time engineering programmes at foundation, intermediate and advanced level. There are programmes in motor vehicle engineering, horticultural engineering and general engineering, which includes machining, fitting, welding and fabrication. Most of the 71 full-time learners are on motor vehicle programmes. There are 109 part-time learners, of which 83 are on work-based programmes managed by Vale Training. Of the work-based learners, 36 are working on motor vehicle programmes, 33 on horticultural engineering programmes and 14 on general engineering programmes. Horticultural engineering is a specialist programme for service engineers in the agricultural garden machinery industry which recruits nationally. It includes 24 weeks of block-release, off-the-job training over a three-year period.

Achievement and standards

35. The retention and pass rates for the level 1 full-time course have been well above the national average for the past three years. Advanced modern apprenticeships in motor vehicle engineering are usually completed in three years, and the pass rate is good at 59%. Retention rates for motor vehicle apprentices are low. Apprentices in horticultural engineering have an

overall retention rate of 78%. Pass rates for the advanced modern apprenticeship in horticulture engineering are high at 73%. Retention and pass rates in full-time general engineering programmes at the college have been close to national averages over the last three years, although there was a fall in the retention rate on the national diploma course last year. This course has since been discontinued. The retention rate for modern apprentices in general engineering is low. Between 1997 and 2000, a total of 23 general engineering modern apprentices started with Vale Training. Fifteen (65%) of these left the programme without gaining any qualifications.

36. Students demonstrate good practical skills and produce work of an appropriate standard in their workplace. In one training session, a student produced external seam welds in steel plate to a high standard. In an NVQ level 3 motor vehicle engineering session, part-time students used specialist equipment with confidence. In an evening session, motor vehicle level 3 students were completely rebuilding engines, gearboxes and differentials. Students in a key skills session produced appropriate bar and pie charts and carried out calculations accurately.

A sample of retention and pass rates in engineering, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ foundation engineering	1	No. of starts	9	*	10
		% retention	78	*	70
		% pass rate	100	*	70
Motor vehicle engineering	1	No. of starts	61	87	64
		% retention	87	95	97
		% pass rate	95	90	100
First diploma in engineering	2	No. of starts	6	3	12
		% retention	83	100	75
		% pass rate	60	100	78
Groundcare machinery NVQ	2	No. of starts	4	11	9
		% retention	75	73	89
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
Motor vehicle engineering	2	No. of starts	50	53	17
		% retention	70	68	59
		% pass rate	82	84	100
Motor vehicle engineering	3	No. of starts	6	9	17
		% retention	83	67	59
		% pass rate	100	100	100
National certificate / diploma in engineering	3	No. of starts	23	20	26
		% retention	61	80	50
		% pass rate	86	88	69
Groundcare machinery NVQ	3	No. of starts	10	7	8
		% retention	100	57	63
		% pass rate	100	100	80

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

Quality of education and training

37. Teaching was good or very good in just over half of the teaching and training sessions observed, and was satisfactory in most of the rest. Schemes of work and lesson plans are detailed. Teachers prepare good learning materials at an appropriate level which meet students’ needs. Lessons are clearly set in a vocational context and there are effective links between theory and practical work. For example, in motor vehicle engineering, students worked on practical aspects of a braking system, having just completed the relevant theory. Teachers sometimes illustrate specific teaching points by drawing on the experience of work-based learners. Students’ interest and motivation are maintained throughout most lessons.

38. Practical training sessions are well organised and students receive individual guidance on the set tasks. Workplace supervisors expressed confidence in the practical training undertaken at the college. Teachers are experienced in their specialist vocational areas and their knowledge and guidance are highly valued by students. The specialist resources for horticultural engineering include a wide and representative range of equipment found in the workplace. Work-based students benefit from the opportunity to work in the college workshops on equipment that they do not have in their own workplace. Motor vehicle students are able to obtain an additional qualification in diagnostic testing. In one

motor vehicle workshop, the bodywork on some vehicles is in a poor condition and is a potential hazard to students.

39. Assessment and monitoring of students' progress are generally satisfactory. Assignment briefs specify the assessment criteria clearly. Students' work is rigorously marked and most teachers give sufficient written and verbal feedback, which is both critical and encouraging to the student. Modern apprentices in motor vehicle engineering are assessed by direct observation of their performance in the workplace. Assessors use these opportunities to question apprentices and to provide additional guidance. The assessors report on a wide range of competences reducing the amount of work apprentices have to do in producing their own portfolio evidence. The college assessor also carries out assessments by direct observation of horticultural engineering apprentices during visits to the workplace. Other evidence of workplace competence relies on trainees' written reports of work done, with a supporting signature from a workplace supervisor. In some cases, supervisors are not asked to provide an evaluation of the specific work done by the trainee, making the written report inadequate as a source of evidence.

40. The training of modern apprentices in the workplace is not adequately planned to meet the requirements of the relevant NVQ or key skills qualification. The work of most apprentices is focused on meeting the production requirements of their employer. Many workplace supervisors are not sufficiently involved in apprentices' progress reviews. During these reviews, training plans are not developed and apprentices are not set clear targets for the competences that they should achieve in the workplace. Most of the assessment of modern apprentices' key skills is done through assignment work at the college. Workplace supervisors are not well informed about the key skills requirements of the modern apprenticeship framework and insufficient use is made of the opportunities to assess key skills in the workplace.

41. Individual training plans for work-based learners are insufficiently detailed and are not systematically updated as learners progress. The target date for the achievement of each NVQ unit is often given as the end date of the entire programme. Initial assessment is inadequate. The take-up of additional learning support and the progress made by learners are not recorded. Some learners have gained qualifications in key skills prior to joining college programmes. Arrangements to ensure that credit is given for such previous achievements are not implemented systematically and learners express concern that they are asked to repeat work that they have already done.

Leadership and management

42. Leadership and management of engineering are satisfactory. Staff in the engineering sections of the college have well-defined roles. Many have responsibility for course management. Curriculum managers have been responsive to changes made by external bodies. Staff have established effective working relations with employers and this has resulted in the development of some good resources in motor vehicle and horticultural engineering. However, communication between Vale Training staff and staff in the engineering section is unsatisfactory. Managers of the two areas do not have ready access to current and accurate data on the progress of individual work-based learners.

43. The quality assurance of programmes and courses is satisfactory. Each course is subject to an annual review and there are action plans to improve areas of poor performance. However, the self-assessment report failed to identify many of the weaknesses in work-based learning. Work-based learners are not sufficiently aware of equal opportunities issues, particularly in relation to possible discrimination and harassment, and do not fully understand their rights and responsibilities. An initial check is made that each employer has an equal opportunities statement, but there is no routine monitoring to ensure that the statement is implemented in the workplace.

Business and administration

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

Strengths

- good retention and pass rates on part-time courses
- well-presented portfolios containing work of a good standard
- good range of work-related qualifications
- effective arrangements for recording and monitoring students' progress on some courses
- good support for individual students.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory retention and pass rates on GNVQ business courses
- poor work-based training
- poor pass rates for modern apprenticeships.

Scope of provision

44. The business and administration studies courses are taught at Malvern and Evesham. Work-based learning is managed by Vale Training. Currently 107 students are on full-time and part-time courses. There are 17 learners on work-based learning programmes. Programmes including the AVCE in business and NVQ levels 2 and 3 in administration are offered as college courses, and as part of work-based training. Accounting courses are available from level 2 to level 4. Enrolments are increasing on part-time day and evening accounting technician courses and, in particular, on business courses for women. Enrolments on the AVCE business and NVQ administration courses are small and declining. Various modes of study are available to suit the needs of part-time students. Most administration programmes can be started at various times throughout the year. Modern apprenticeship programmes in administration and accounting are available through Vale Training.

Achievement and standards

45. Retention and pass rates are good for all accounting technician part-time day and evening courses at levels 2 and 3. The retention rate at level 4 is also good and the pass rate is similar to the national average. Retention rates on NVQ administration courses are good, but pass rates have declined over the last two years. In 2000/01, only half of those who completed the course achieved the qualification. The retention rate on the AVCE in business is below the national average and the pass rate is poor. Only 50% of students who completed the course achieved the qualification. There are poor pass rates for foundation modern apprentices and advanced modern apprentices on work-based administration and accounting

programmes. Since 1998, no trainee has achieved the full modern apprenticeship at Evesham. In 1999/2000, six trainees achieved an NVQ at level 3, but did not achieve the mandatory key skills qualification. At Malvern, three of the six trainees completed their foundation modern apprenticeships for the year 1999/2000.

46. College-based students produce work of a high standard. NVQ accounting and administration and AVCE students keep well-organised portfolios that provide evidence of appropriate competence, knowledge and understanding. The practical experience gained on the business programme for women and on the accounting technician courses at all levels, prepares students well for employment. Students work independently and with confidence. Those work-based trainees who complete portfolios do so to a satisfactory standard.

A sample of retention and pass rates in business and administration, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
Accounting technician NVQ	2	No. of starts	12	16	12
		% retention	100	78	83
		% pass rate	50	54	70
Administration NVQ	2	No. of starts	***	*6	26**
		% retention	***	100	85**
		% pass rate	***	83	50**
Accounting technician NVQ	3	No. of starts	7	10	*18
		% retention	100	70	89
		% pass rate	14	71	62
GNVQ business	3	No. of starts	14	10	9
		% retention	62	50	50
		% pass rate	100	80	60
Administration NVQ	3	No. of starts	*21	*13	5**
		% retention	100	85	100**
		% pass rate	71	64	100**

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
Accounting technician NVQ	4	No. of starts	***	*11	*11
		% retention	***	100	91
		% pass rate	***	80	50

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

* unreliable data

** college data

*** course did not run

Quality of education and training

47. Teaching was good or better in 55% of the sessions observed, and was satisfactory in most of the rest. The quality of teaching in lessons for adult learners on part-time courses was better than in those for students aged 16 to 18. In planning their lessons, teachers use their technical knowledge and expertise well. They use and adapt training manuals and work projects effectively. Schemes of work for college-based courses are thorough and meet course and qualification requirements. Appropriate teaching methods are used, including case studies and problem-solving activities. In most lessons, teachers use students' own workplace experience to illustrate concepts and promote group discussion. Close attention is paid to the needs of individual students, and relevant references are made to the industrial experience of teachers and students. Lessons are closely related to examination requirements. Teachers monitor students' assignments carefully and provide constructive feedback on assessed work. Students work productively and acquire a good range of practical skills that they apply effectively. Students on all courses participated enthusiastically in class discussions and activities.

48. The courses offered are well matched to the needs of students. In particular, the women into business courses cater for women who wish to gain recognised qualifications in computing, book-keeping and business and secretarial procedures. Additional qualifications can be achieved in setting up a small business, audio and legal processing, and text processing. The courses are well structured and enable students to acquire the skills necessary to gain employment in an office environment.

49. Students are well supported on all courses. Teachers are approachable and are willing to give time to students outside formal teaching time. For example, they help adult learners to practise computer techniques. Adult and part-time learners find this approach particularly helpful and have gained self-assurance and confidence as a result. Teachers provide advice and guidance to students with personal concerns and difficulties, which has enabled them to continue with their studies.

50. Most students have a very good understanding of their own progress. They are clear about course objectives and their individual learning goals. They are also aware of which units or modules they are working towards, and how and when assessments will take place.

In lessons for accounting technicians, achievements are recorded in individual files. This provides teachers and students with a useful overview of the quality of students' work and the achievement of the required competencies.

51. Learning on work-based programmes is not well managed. Individual learning plans are not always updated to include records of reviews. The current accounting technician foundation modern apprentices, some of whom started their course in July 2001, have not been visited in the workplace to check on their progress and discuss learning goals. Initial assessment is not undertaken systematically and additional learning support requirements are not recorded on individual learning plans.

Leadership and management

52. The business courses provided in the college are managed effectively. The staff work well as a team. Course team meetings take place regularly and are well minuted. Appropriate action points are recorded. Course programmes, particularly those for adult learners, are well planned. Students' progress is monitored well through regular reviews and tutorials.

53. Targets are set at course level for recruitment, retention and achievement. Despite the targets, no effective strategy has been devised to improve retention and pass rates on the course leading to the AVCE in business. The self-assessment report failed to identify the poor management of the modern apprenticeship programmes and some of the issues in the action plan have not yet been addressed.

Computing and information and communication technology

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

Strengths

- good retention rates on part-time courses
- good pass rate on the national diploma in computing and electronics
- good progression to advanced courses and HE
- well-structured lessons
- effective response to meeting local employer and community needs.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory management of the provision across the college curriculum area
- insufficient challenge for the more able students
- ineffective tutorial support and action planning
- poor attendance.

Scope of provision

54. The college provides a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in ICT at various levels, including HE programmes. Technical and general computer courses are available during the day and in the evening. There are full-time courses leading to the AVCE, national diploma and certificate, CLAIT and IBT qualifications at levels 2 and 3. Part-time provision includes a computer hardware technician course, a computer-aided design course and a range of City and Guilds modules in computing. Most courses are managed by the computing and business administration sections of the college. There are 144 full-time students and approximately 1,800 part-time students. There are three New Deal clients studying on the full-time education and training option.

Achievement and standards

55. Retention and pass rates on CLAIT, diploma in IT, and IBT courses are above national averages. Students achieve well on the national diploma course and retention rates are satisfactory. Retention and pass rates on the first diploma course have been poor, and the course is no longer offered. There are well-planned and effectively promoted opportunities for full-time students to gain extra qualifications. On one of the CLAIT courses, students achieved an average of three additional qualifications. Many students continue on to advanced courses and HE.

56. The college was unable to provide achievement data relating to many of the students who completed courses in this curriculum area. Inaccuracies were found in the data provided. As a result, it is not possible to comment on overall trends in performance over the last three years.

57. In lessons, most students attain satisfactory and sometimes high standards in their computing and ICT skills. They work independently and produce good coursework. They develop good Internet skills and use them effectively. A few students use inefficient techniques and their practical skills and speed of working are not developed to the level found in the workplace. Attendance is poor. The average attendance during the inspection was 66%.

A sample of retention and pass rates in computing and information technology, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
CLAIT (short course)	1	No. of starts	148	130	117
		% retention	95	87	90
		% pass rate	87*	86*	97*
CLAIT (1/2 year)	1	No. of starts	212	146	138
		% retention	83	90	86*
		% pass rate	74*	76*	95*
First diploma in computing and electronics	2	No. of starts	13	15	11
		% retention	85	87	45
		% pass rate	73	62	**
Diploma in IT (short course)	2	No. of starts	55	47	48
		% retention	93	89	94*
		% pass rate	100*	100*	**
IBT	2	No. of starts	33	33	59
		% retention	94	97	85
		% pass rate	58*	53	69*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
National diploma in engineering (computing and electronics) (two year course)	3	No. of starts	14	16	25
		% retention	96	69	68
		% pass rate	100	100	**
IBT (short course)	3	No. of starts	33	32	34
		% retention	79	88	94
		% pass rate	80*	80*	88*

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

* unreliable data

** incomplete data, some returns not received from awarding body

Quality of education and training

58. Teaching was good or better in 57% of the lessons observed and satisfactory in most of the rest. Lessons are well structured and most are carefully planned to cover all the requirements of the qualification. Teachers use appropriate teaching methods to ensure that students develop the skills to work independently in computer workshops. They introduce new concepts with well-planned and useful exercises. Some learning materials did not provide sufficient challenge for some students and additional exercises for the more able students were not available. Regular assignments and good written feedback from teachers enable students to make good progress. Students’ self-discipline and concentration are good.

59. With their tutors, students complete comprehensive individual learning plans. These are informed by a rigorous initial assessment and include students’ additional learning and personal development goals. The plans identify each student’s learning style. Subsequent use of the plans is ineffective. Some students do not take up the additional support that has been identified. Termly tutorials are unsatisfactory and fail to review progress towards the additional learning and personal development goals. Action plans are inadequate and do not assist learners to achieve. Learning materials take insufficient account of the identified preferred learning styles.

60. The college has developed an effective initiative to widen participation. The ‘laptops in the community’ courses have been developed jointly with Worcestershire County Council. Some 420 students have enrolled on these courses in 20 rural locations. Progression to advanced courses and HE is promoted effectively in college marketing material, and by teachers in lessons and tutorials.

61. Specialist resources are good. There is a wide range of computer hardware for students to practise on. Computer equipment is modern and has industrial standard software and Internet facilities. In the specialist IT centre, a teacher or technician is always available

to help students. However, the constant distraction from other classes and students passing through the room, affects the concentration of students who are working on their own. Not all rooms are air-conditioned and some are unacceptably hot and stuffy.

Leadership and management

62. Overall management of this curriculum area lacks coherence and is unsatisfactory. There is ineffective management of course delivery across the college. The collection and analysis of data on pass and retention rates are poor and are inadequate to inform teaching and learning strategies. There is insufficient analysis of attendance and punctuality. Major assignments for full-time students are poorly timetabled. Students are overloaded with work towards the end of term. Procedures for quality assurance and target setting to secure improvement are inadequate. There are no arrangements to share good practice or materials between teachers working in different sections of the college.

Sports, leisure and travel

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

Strengths

- good standard of students' written work
- good teaching
- effective use of professional practitioners
- high quality resources
- extensive enrichment activities and access to additional qualifications.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory retention rates on level 3 programmes
- ineffective target setting and strategies to improve retention and pass rates.

Scope of provision

63. The college provides sport, leisure and travel courses at levels 2 and 3 for full-time students. There is no part-time or work-based learning provision. The courses lead to GNVQ intermediate in leisure and tourism, AVCE in travel and tourism, and AVCE in leisure and recreation. There are 61 students aged 16 to 18. Twelve students are working towards level 2 qualifications, and 49 towards level 3 qualifications, of whom 30 are on the leisure course and 19 are on the travel and tourism course.

Achievement and standards

64. Pass rates have varied from year to year, but are broadly in line with national averages. Pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate course in leisure and tourism were above the national average in 1998/99, and significantly above in 1999/2000 at 92%, compared with the national average of 76%. In 2000/01, the pass rates fell to 75%. Similarly, on the GNVQ advanced course in leisure and tourism, the pass rate was above average in 1998/99, well above average in 1999/2000, and fell in 2000/01. Retention rates have been unsatisfactory on level 3 programmes for the last three years. At the time of inspection, retention rates on the AVCE courses in travel and tourism and leisure and recreation were low, at 47% and 59% respectively.

65. Most students produce good written work. Assignments and portfolios of evidence are well presented and neat. Portfolios contain a wide range of work that is carefully linked to the requirements of the relevant qualification and are appropriately detailed and vocationally relevant. In a number of assignments, there is good use of colour photography

and ICT. Students on sports-related courses understand the link between theory and its practical application. Students are confident and highly motivated. In formal presentations, they demonstrated good skills in research, presentation and group work, and were very enthusiastic about their studies. A few students are late for lessons at the start of the college day.

A sample of retention and pass rates in sports, leisure and travel, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	2	No. of starts	10	16	11
		% retention	90	81	73
		% pass rate	78	92	75*
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	3	No. of starts	14	29	28
		% retention	57	69	75
		% pass rate	86	95	80*

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

*college data

Quality of education and training

66. Teaching is good: 80% of lessons were graded at good or better and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In the best lessons, careful account is taken of the learning requirements of students and a variety of appropriate teaching methods is used. Teaching is linked effectively to industrial practice, providing students with learning that is relevant to their future employment. In a travel and tourism lesson, the teacher effectively used ICT and computer-based exercises on airline reservation systems to demonstrate research skills. Assessment is well organised and internal verification is effective. Assignment briefs are well planned and vocationally relevant. Tasks are clear and students are aware of the standard required to achieve a pass, merit or distinction. Assessment is fair and accurate and is carried out regularly. Reports from the external verifier praise the high quality of assignments and the rigour of the assessment process.

67. Students are given opportunities to undertake work experience as part of their courses and to go on educational visits in the UK and overseas, including ambitious trips to Egypt and Florida. Year 2 travel and tourism students act as tour guides for students with learning difficulties on excursions. Many take additional qualifications including the travel agency and sports coaching awards.

68. The quality of learning is greatly enhanced by accommodation and staff experience. All staff have relevant industrial experience. Two part-time staff are currently working as

tour guides and travel agents, and bring their knowledge of best practice in the travel and tourism industry into the classroom. The good accommodation includes an ABTA-bonded operational travel agency. There is a dedicated suite of rooms with teaching materials on hand. There is an excellent public sports facility very close to the college used by students for both coursework, recreation and enrichment activities. The library offers an extensive range of services to leisure, sport and travel students. These include a good range of books and periodical, lists of relevant web pages, CD-ROMs and videos.

Leadership and management

69. Day-to-day management of courses is satisfactory. There is regular and effective communication between the section manager and course managers. The staff work well as a team. Course team meetings take place regularly and action plans are recorded. Students' progress is reviewed and monitored. Physical resources and budgets are managed effectively.

70. Aspects of quality assurance and strategies to secure improvement are unsatisfactory. There has been a history of low pass and retention rates on a number of courses. The action that managers have taken to address this weakness has not been effective. Arrangements for setting targets for retention and pass rates are inadequate. The self-assessment report identified the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, but did not fully acknowledge the lack of success in improving pass and retention rates.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

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

Strengths

- high standard of students' practical work
- good retention rates on short programmes
- good pass rates on beauty therapy courses
- good teaching
- well-planned and effective tutorial programme
- extensive enrichment programme.

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory retention rates on full-time courses
- poor management of work-based training programmes
- unsatisfactory attendance
- poor take-up of learning support for some students.

Scope of provision

71. Full-time, part-time and work-based programmes in hairdressing and beauty therapy are provided in Evesham and Malvern. Courses leading to NVQs at levels 2 and 3 are provided in addition to a diploma in anatomy and physiology. A range of courses leads to qualifications in complementary therapies, including Indian massage, aromatherapy, reflexology and crystal healing. There are 42 full-time, 22 part-time college-based and 17 work-based trainees in hairdressing. There are 29 full-time and 103 part-time students undertaking courses in beauty therapy. The majority of hairdressing and beauty therapy students are aged 16 to 18 and they attend college for up to 21 hours each week. The college also provides a flexible hairdressing programme that caters for students over the age of 19 years, who attend college on two nights each week. Students can enrol at the beginning of each term. Work-based trainees attend college one day a week for training and assessment, and are visited in the workplace. There are no full-time courses leading to NVQs at levels 1 or 3 in hairdressing.

Achievement and standards

72. The pass rates for college-based NVQ students in hair dressing and beauty therapy are above the national averages. Retention rates on NVQ level 2 hairdressing and NVQ level 3 beauty therapy courses are unsatisfactory. Pass rates and retention rates on beauty therapy,

complementary programmes and short courses are particularly good. Extensive enrichment programmes are available for all students. Many make use of these and gain additional qualifications to enhance their career prospects.

73. In beauty therapy and hairdressing sessions, students demonstrate high standards of commercial competence and improve their skills in communication. In a beauty therapy session, students applied the theory of body massage effectively and used the techniques they had learned confidently. Part-time NVQ students worked independently in a commercial salon and increased their understanding of colour selection. Students' work is well organised and portfolios are of a good standard. The average attendance in the sessions observed was low at 60%.

A sample of retention and pass rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
NVQ hairdressing	2	No. of starts	29	31	21
		% retention	34	61	66
		% pass rate	90	88	85
Salon hygiene hairdressing	2	No. of starts	*	8	15
		% retention	*	100	100
		% pass rate	*	25	67
Aromatherapy diploma	3	No. of starts	*	7	10
		% retention	*	60	86
		% pass rate	*	100	100
Diploma in reflexology	3	No. of starts	*	14	14
		% retention	*	64	100
		% pass rate	*	89	100
Body massage	3	No. of starts	17	13	16
		% retention	59	77	88
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
NVQ beauty therapy	3	No. of starts	*	12	20
		% retention	*	100	75
		% pass rate	*	83	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

* course did not run

Quality of education and training

74. Teaching was good or very good in 80% of the hairdressing and beauty therapy sessions observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In well-structured practical lessons, teachers use a range of effective teaching and learning methods. Teaching is appropriately challenging. Well-timed activities motivate students and retain their interest. In a beauty therapy practical lesson on facial massage, students drew the bone structure on each other's faces, guided effectively by the prepared handout. Students felt this gave them confidence and helped them to remember the names of the facial bones. The teacher provided advice and encouragement and carefully monitored the students' work. Competent demonstrations of hair dressing and beauty therapy techniques develop students' awareness of the high standards required by the industry. Students' progress is checked and assessed at frequent intervals. In a practical hairdressing evening class, teaching was planned well to allow a group of students of mixed ability to work at their own pace in a relaxed, purposeful and confident manner. Some of the teaching materials for beauty therapy are of a high standard and contain good illustrations. Some materials used to teach the theoretical aspects of hairdressing are less effective.

75. Work-based learning is poorly managed. Training and assessment in the workplace are not well planned. A student working towards an NVQ that included ladies hair styling, was placed in a gents hairdressing salon. There is no formal monitoring of students' progress towards the requirements of specific units of the NVQ or aspects of key skills. Work on key skills is not an integral part of the training leading to the NVQ. In 2000/01, students were not taught or assessed for any key skills as part of the modern apprenticeships. Formal assessment is not carried out in the workplace. The only advanced modern apprentice has not received any training in the theoretical aspects of the qualification or in key skills.

76. The college has adopted a flexible approach to enrolment which allows part-time mature students who have family commitments to enrol at the beginning of any term. However, monitoring of their progress is inadequate. There is some good practice in the recording of formative assessment in both hairdressing and beauty therapy, but overall the monitoring of students' progress is inconsistent and inadequate.

77. The hairdressing and beauty therapy salons at Malvern were purpose built to a high standard. The hairdressing salons are spacious and well equipped, although some furniture in the salon at Evesham is in poor condition. Sterilising equipment is insufficient to ensure that

students observe good practice in health and safety. In a beauty therapy session, there was not enough equipment for all students to take part when practising electrical body massage techniques.

78. The tutorial programme is well planned and effective. Students are set realistic targets and their progress towards them is monitored effectively during tutorials. Part-time students in particular value this approach. Students undertake a diagnostic assessment at the start of the course and where appropriate they are offered additional learning support and help with study skills. Too few students take up these additional learning support opportunities.

Leadership and management

79. The overall management of the section is satisfactory. However, aspects of quality assurance are weak. College procedures for setting targets for retention and pass rates have not been implemented. The self-assessment report identified the weaknesses in retention and pass rates, but the resultant action plans do not contain sufficient detail to be effective. Systems set up to co-ordinate aspects of learning are insufficiently monitored for consistency.

Health and social care

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

Contributory grade in work-based training is **unsatisfactory (grade 4)**

Strengths

- good retention and pass rates on most college based courses
- good progression rates
- a number of examples of very effective teaching
- good links between theory and practice
- good accommodation at the Evesham site
- broad range of courses
- innovative enrichment activities
- effective tutorial support for full-time students.

Weaknesses

- very poor retention and pass rates for modern apprentices
- poor pass rate for NVQs
- lack of planned training for work-based learners
- poor development of key skills
- poor initial assessment for part-time and work-based learners
- insufficient monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- poor progress reviews for work-based learners
- ineffective management of provision within Vale Training.

Scope of provision

80. The college offers a broad range of health and social care courses from foundation to degree level. The courses meet the needs of industry and provide good progression routes for students. There are arrangements to enable part-time students to attend college at times which suit their personal and work commitments. The college works with a range of agencies to widen participation. In conjunction with the Early Year Development and Childcare Partnership, the college provides a range of pre-school practice programmes for

pre-school workers in nearby towns, such as Ross-on-Wye and Worcester. Short courses in manual handling and first aid are also offered on employer’s premises. There are work-based training programmes leading to NVQs at levels 2 and 3 in care, and early years care and education. Full-time students have opportunities to take additional qualifications and enrichment activities. Work-based training is managed through a separate section of the college and offers modern apprenticeships in care and early years to approximately 30 learners.

Achievement and standards

81. Pass rates for most college-based courses were well above national averages in 2000/01. Retention rates on most programmes are also well above national averages, with 100% retention rates on the foundation programme. However, retention rates on the advanced health and social care diploma course are below the national average at 50%. Both retention and pass rates on part-time and short courses are good. Pass rates on NVQ programmes are well below national averages. Retention rates on these programmes are satisfactory, although some learners remain on the programme beyond the normal time for completion. Retention and pass rates for modern apprenticeships are very poor. Only 5 of the 132 who started the training programme in the last 4 years achieved all the aspects of the framework.

82. In lessons, students’ work in care and early years meets course requirements. In a GNVQ foundation health and social care session, students defined disability coherently and demonstrated good oral communication skills. Students used the knowledge gained about the importance of physical activity to produce useful and well-presented leaflets.

A sample of retention and pass rates in health and social care, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
GNVQ foundation health and social care	1	No. of starts	2	6	5
		% retention	0	100	100
		% pass rate	0	100	0*
First diploma in caring	2	No. of starts	15	16	13
		% retention	73	94	100
		% pass rate	100	100	92
NVQ early years care and education	2/3	No. of starts	**	28	21
		% retention	**	61	71
		% pass rate	**	53	0*

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
NVQ care	2/3	No. of starts	13	128	16
		% retention	31	68	71
		% pass rate	0	39	0*
GNVQ advanced health and social care	3	No. of starts	15	16	16
		% retention	73	94	50
		% pass rate	100	100	90
Diploma in childcare and education	3	No. of starts	29	28	28
		% retention	79	71	89
		% pass rate	96	100	100
Diploma in playgroup practice	3	No. of starts	48	52	30
		% retention	85	96	97
		% pass rate	100	100	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

*learners are still on the course

** course did not run

Quality of education and training

83. The quality of teaching in health and social care was good or better in 43% of the sessions observed. Some excellent and some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Where teaching was excellent, teachers have a good rapport with learners, who were motivated and inspired. They demonstrated thorough knowledge of their subject and used a variety of effective teaching methods to help learners understand the connections between theory and work place practice. Some sessions were dull; students were not stretched or helped to develop independent learning skills. Almost half of the learners on NVQ programmes receive little planned training, either on-the-job or off-the-job. Key skills are poorly developed. Individual learning plans contain insufficient detail and are not used effectively.

84. Students at the Evesham site benefit from good accommodation. Student groups have their own well-equipped base rooms for which they are responsible. They have access to, and make good use of, a wide range of relevant, specialist equipment. The attractive, well-stocked library includes some children's books. There are multiple copies of more popular texts, but some out-of-date publications remain on the shelves for too long.

Encouraged by the friendly attitudes of staff, students make good and frequent use of the equipment in the comfortable and well-equipped learning centre. In contrast, the learning support facilities at the Malvern site are poor. Although all learners are entitled to use resources at Evesham, work-based learners are infrequent visitors.

85. College-based assessment is good. Learners are given a clear idea of the standards required by the awarding bodies. Assignment briefs are helpful and specify clear performance criteria. Staff provide prompt written and verbal feedback to learners on their performance. Carefully maintained records their indicate progress. Work-based assessment is poorly organised. Internal verification is unnecessarily extensive and does not contribute positively to students' learning. Although employers are informed about assessment in the workplace, they are not involved in the process. Nor are they involved in students' review meetings. Initial assessment programmes take place on entry to college, but this is not well organised for work-based learners. There is inadequate and insufficient support for these students to develop key skills and effective study skills.

86. The college provides a broad range of courses from foundation to degree level and learners are able to progress within this qualification framework. The rate of progression into jobs is good and work-based learners are often promoted to senior positions in their workplace. Teachers are innovative and flexible in their programme design, which successfully meets a wide range of students' needs. The 'Forest School' project provides an exciting enrichment activity for many students who gain qualifications as 'Forest leaders'. The recent appointment of a development worker demonstrates the college's commitment to serving the local community and to the dissemination of good practice.

87. All full-time students receive very good tutorial support. They comment positively on the commitment and sensitivity of their tutors. All college-based learners experience an effective induction programme. Careers guidance is not well organised and some students remain unclear and confused about their career options on leaving college. Work-based learners do not all receive the same standard of induction and are not familiar with the resources available in the college. Some trainees do not have reviews at the prescribed 12-weekly intervals. Policies to promote equality of opportunity are not fully effective. Students and some staff are unclear about equal opportunities issues. The proportion of men on childcare programmes is growing, but their recruitment is not viewed as a priority.

Leadership and management

88. Leadership and management are satisfactory at section level and good at course level. Course managers are enthusiastic and committed to improving and developing courses in line with new initiatives. Communications within the section are good. The regular section meetings have detailed minutes. In these, students causing concern are identified and appropriate action is taken. Systems to record, monitor and review students' punctuality and attendance are inaccurate and inconsistent.

89. Aspects of quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Course reviews are regular and detailed, but the self-assessment report is insufficiently self-critical. Target setting is not well developed. Insufficient consideration is given to the cost effectiveness of timetabling

arrangements, small classes and room usage. The poor management of Vale Training impacts negatively on much of the work-based training. Poor quality assurance and communication systems fail to support the needs of learners and employers. Weaknesses in the provision of work-based training including low retention and pass rates are not being dealt with adequately. There is insufficient co-ordination between the college department and Vale Training. Inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities and health and safety in the workplace expose students to unnecessary risks.

Humanities

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

Strengths

- good retention rates on most courses
- high standards of work produced by students
- good of teaching and effective learning
- effective support and encouragement for individual students
- flexible and inclusive provision which meets the wider needs of the local community.

Weaknesses

- inadequate target setting and progress reviews
- inadequate learning resources at Malvern.

Scope of provision

90. The college provides a range of daytime and evening courses at the Evesham and Malvern sites. The provision includes English language and literature, history and psychology, leading to GCSE qualifications and available through the 'First Steps' programme for adults returning to learning. More specialist courses such as English as a foreign language (EFL), British sign language and teacher training are also provided. Many courses are offered at different levels, such as the access to HE courses that provide progression from intermediate level to the early stages of university programmes. The teacher-training courses are at three general levels and in a number of specialist fields, such as a course for teachers of learners with specific learning difficulties. The majority of these courses are modular. All the students on all the courses inspected were adult learners.

Achievement and standards

91. Pass and retention rates on the British sign language course are consistently high and significantly above the national average. Pass rates on the access to HE course have improved and are good. Many students successfully continue on to HE. In recent years, students have achieved 100% pass rates in teacher training and on other specialised courses, such as the certificate for teachers of learners with specific learning difficulties. In 2000/01, the pass rate in GCSE psychology was poor. The retention rate on many courses is higher than the national average.

92. Much of the work produced by students is very good. Assignments are well researched and documented, and portfolios are of high standard. In the best lessons, students refined their ideas and expressed themselves in increasingly sophisticated language. In a literary studies session on the access to HE programme, students developed their ability to

produce a critical analysis of the differences between poetry and prose. On the advanced certificate EFL course, students were able to distinguish between the subtle nuances of English adjectives and became more confident in their usage. Adult learners returning to education gain in confidence and feel comfortable with both the theoretical and practical aspects of their studies.

A sample of retention and pass rates in humanities, 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
British Sign Language	1	No. of starts	19	12	13
		% retention	74	83	85
		% pass rate	77	88	82
Certificate in specific learning difficulties	1	No. of starts	37	33	20
		% retention	97	100	92
		% pass rate	96	100	66
GCSE psychology	2	No. of starts	11	10	11
		% retention	45	60	91
		% pass rate	60	100	40
Access to HE	3	No. of starts	27	15	28
		% retention	85	87	78
		% pass rate	91	67	91
Teacher training	3	No. of starts	10	12	19
		% retention	100	100	86
		% pass rate	100	100	89

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

Quality of education and training

93. Teaching was good or better in just over 70% of the sessions observed. Well-qualified and experienced teachers organise and prepare thoroughly for lessons. They use detailed schemes of work and lesson plans. Lessons are presented logically and coherently.

Teachers use a good, and at times very imaginative, range of teaching methods. Dull and boring lessons are rare and students respond with high levels of interest and commitment.

94. Teachers use learning resources effectively and encourage students to draw on their own experience. In a lesson on public health, students began by discussing their own primary resources, such as family history documents, and so brought an added dimension of interest to their work. Teaching accommodation is good, but there are few displays of subject-related material. Humanities resources in the Malvern Hills site library are inadequate.

95. Relationships between staff and students are good. Students comment that teachers are supportive and make themselves available to offer advice and guidance during tutorial and informally at other times. Adult learners who have recently returned to education, comment particularly on the sensitive and patient approach adopted by staff. Teachers provide clear guidelines about what is expected from students in their work and help them to achieve their targets. Teachers assess students' progress regularly and provide feedback, both in the classroom and through constructive comments on homework and work in portfolios. There is an emphasis on supporting the individual learner that is being strengthened with the increasing use and monitoring of individual learning plans. On a minority of courses, the recording of students' progress is ineffective.

96. The humanities section offers a broad-based programme of courses that meets the needs of adult learners effectively. The modular course structure makes it easier for learners to study at times that suit them. A mature part-time student commented that this flexibility helped him to return to education while maintaining his employment. Several adult learners commented that the modular structure was helpful in allowing them to manage their studies and childcare arrangements with the minimum of disruption.

Leadership and management

97. Management at course level is good. Subject team leaders show vision and ensure that courses are well run and meet the requirements of the college's corporate strategy and those of external awarding bodies. Positive and effective action has been taken to improve the recent poor pass rates in GCSE psychology. Leadership and management of the section are less effective. Whilst morale is high and individual courses have a strong identity, the section as a whole lacks coherence. There is no systematic target setting or progress review across the section. This has led to some inconsistent recording and monitoring of information.

Foundation programmes

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

Strengths

- excellent retention and pass rates
- good standard of practical and written work produced by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- good teaching
- wide range of accredited courses
- good basic skills provision
- effective management
- effective projects for widening participation.

Weaknesses

- inadequate quality assurance of the Learning Gateway.

Scope of provision

98. The provision covers the bridging programme for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, basic skills, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and the Learning Gateway. The largest programme is the bridging programme with 313 students enrolled. There are 260 students on adult basic education programmes, which are mainly taught at the open access centres in Wallace House and at Malvern. There are eight learners on the Learning Gateway, based at Wallace House. The aim of the bridging programme is to provide a flexible programme of learning to enable progression from school to college and on to work and independence. Basic skills education and support are provided for students, through the open access centres or on an outreach basis. ESOL courses are run in open access centres in the daytime and evening. The Learning Gateway programme is designed for young people aged 16 to 17 who have left school and are experiencing difficulties in finding work, keeping a job or entering education or training.

Achievement and standards

99. The pass and retention rates are excellent for basic literacy, the bridging programme and ESOL. This level of achievement has been consistently maintained for the last three years. Students undertake a wide range of practical and classroom-based activities and the work produced is of a high standard. Students on the bridging programme show a high level of understanding in most lessons, and demonstrate good practical skills such as hand-eye co-ordination, dexterity and colour sense. They display confident use of kitchen equipment, knives, woodworking tools and art equipment. In a session preparing for the Christmas party,

students followed instructions carefully and produced excellent cakes. In a multi-skills session, a student was able to explain in detail how he had constructed a clock. Students are able to recall learning from previous lessons and relate this to their current work. Written work is very good and is kept in neat, well-organised folders.

100. Achievement on the Learning Gateway is poor. Just over half of the trainees do not progress on to employment, training or further education. Some of the work produced by trainees is not of a good standard.

A sample of retention and pass rates in foundation programmes 1999 to 2001

Qualification	Level	Completion year:	1999	2000	2001
Basic literacy (short)	Entry/ foundation	No. of starts	361	245	262
		% retention	100	100	99
		% pass rate	100	100	99
Basic literacy (long)	Entry/ foundation	No. of starts	427	439	430
		% retention	100	100	100
		% pass rate	100	100	97
Bridging programme	Entry/ foundation	No. of starts	125	335	305
		% retention	97	94	96
		% pass rate	100	100	100
ESOL	*	No. of starts	27	45	50
		% retention	100	100	88
		% pass rate	96	100	100

Source: ISR (1999 and 2000), college (2001).

* no level specified

Quality of education and training

101. There is much good teaching on most programmes. In just over 70% of the sessions observed, the quality of teaching was good or better. Many of the well-qualified staff have basic skills teaching qualifications and some have extensive experience in industry as well as education. They show dedication, commitment and great pride in their work. Teaching strategies are effective in facilitating learning and successfully stimulate and engage students of all ages and abilities. Teachers use a range of appropriate methods such a group and

individual work and role-play. Formal teaching is generally well executed. Teachers achieve a good balance between being supportive and managing the learning environment. They apply firm discipline when necessary. In an excellent basic skills numeracy session, students' behaviour and enthusiasm were sensitively managed to allow everyone to participate with the result that all students completed the task. There is very effective individual coaching, both by the teachers and support tutors. Teachers encourage students to work out problems for themselves. IT is used effectively. Students have easy access to computers to produce text, charts and graphs for their folders and acquire valuable computer skills. Teachers provide good feedback to students to encourage them to improve the presentation of their work on the computer. In the very few sessions that were less than satisfactory, teaching and learning were not sufficiently well planned and students gained little from the session.

102. Varied menus of activities timetabled throughout the week provide the basis for a well-rounded learning experience for students on the Bridging programme. There is a strong emphasis on personal and social development as well as building knowledge and skills in literacy numeracy, creative skills, IT, woodworking skills, healthy living, job search skills, cooking and learning about the environment. Students have ample opportunities to develop self-confidence, social awareness, verbal articulation, and good timekeeping and communication skills. The skills and knowledge acquired are accredited through an extensive range of qualifications. Assessment is continuous and progress is monitored regularly with reviews taking place twice a term. Students can take examinations throughout the year.

103. Basic skills teaching is well managed and executed. The college has recently been awarded the 'Basic Skills Q mark'. The open access centres at Wallace House and Malvern Hills college are warm, welcoming and provide a good learning environment. Students make steady progress towards their learning goals. Both centres have a good range of resources and there is a high level of individual support and tutoring on demand. Students comment on the quality of support that they receive from the tutors and support workers, who are unobtrusive but responsive to their needs. For example, students bring in forms or official documents that they need help with and this is converted into a learning experience.

104. Students on the Bridging programme receive a comprehensive induction and initial assessment which establishes the most appropriate starting point for building an individual programme of learning. Students are carefully matched to activities, courses and tasks to enable them to settle in quickly and to learn in an environment where they can develop their knowledge and skills at a pace that suits them. Each student has a personal tutor who deals with their pastoral needs. Problems are identified sensitively and resolved quickly. Tutors and managers meet fortnightly to discuss students' progress. There are also many informal discussions throughout the week. Adjustments are made to students' timetables if there is concern about the rate of progress being made.

105. There is some poor training on the Learning Gateway and trainees' time on the programme is not always productive. Trainees are often unsure about their learning plans or goals and are not clear whether they are making progress or not.

Leadership and management

106. The Bridging programme is very well planned, managed and organised. Managers and teachers successfully provide flexible, individual programmes of learning within a structured timetable resulting in excellent standards of achievement. A complex timetable has been constructed to cater for the large number of students on the Bridging programme. There are strong links with local schools and other partners. Groups of students from local special schools attend the college as part of the schools' links programme prior to joining the college. Managers proactively and successfully market the basic skills and ESOL provision. There are very well established links with the local press resulting in regular newspaper articles on students' achievements. Imaginative projects have been initiated with local employers to teach basic skills in the workplace. The quality of training on the Learning Gateway is not monitored or evaluated.

Part D: College data
Table 1: Enrolments by level of study and age

Level	16–18 %	19+ %
1	23.8	9.8
2	23.9	10.7
3	16.6	8.2
4/5	0	0.6
Other	35.7	70.7
Total	100	100

Source: Provided by the college in autumn 2001.

Table 2: Enrolments by curriculum area and age

Curriculum area	16–18 No.	19+ No.	Total Enrolments %
Science	342	755	10.8
Agriculture	27	12	0.4
Construction	5	316	3.2
Engineering	291	524	8.1
Business	112	3,144	32.1
Hotel and catering	205	720	9.1
Health and community care	287	1,094	13.6
Art and design	14	180	1.9
Humanities	307	650	9.4
Basic education	97	1,064	11.4
Total	1,687	8,459	100

Source: Provided by the college in autumn 2001.

Table 3: Retention and achievement

Level (Long Courses)	Retention and pass rate	Completion year					
		16-18			19+		
		1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000	1997/ 98	1998/ 99	1999/ 2000
1	Starters excluding transfers	174	195	246	494	450	441
	Retention rate (%)	91	92	93	83	84	91
	National average (%)	81	80	80	80	78	79
	Pass rate (%)	59	87	81	82	86	83
	National average (%)	59	62	66	62	63	69
2	Starters excluding transfers	262	271	378	541	656	983
	Retention rate (%)	82	77	80	79	79	83
	National average (%)	76	76	77	79	78	78
	Pass rate (%)	77	78	76	72	86	80
	National average (%)	63	67	68	66	65	68
3	Starters excluding transfers	173	152	191	549	446	765
	Retention rate (%)	69	74	70	81	77	85
	National average (%)	77	77	77	79	79	79
	Pass rate (%)	85	82	82	79	74	86
	National average (%)	71	72	73	64	65	69
4	Starters excluding transfers	0	2	0	26	68	56
	Retention rate (%)	*	*	*	77	87	98
	National average (%)	83	83	80	84	84	81
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	*	92	97	100
	National average (%)	64	65	70	58	61	60

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, The Further Education Funding Council, September 2000.*
- 2. College rates for 1997/9-1998/99: 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.*

** data not applicable*

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

Courses	Teaching judged to be:			No of sessions observed
	Good or better %	Satisfactory %	Less than satisfactory %	
Level 3(advanced)	68	23	9	47
Level 2 (intermediate)	63	34	3	32
Level 1 (foundation)	50	42	8	12
Other sessions	73	9	18	11
Totals	65	27	8	102

MONITORING INSPECTION OF EVESHAM AND MALVERN HILLS COLLEGE

Published May 2003

Outcome of monitoring inspection

The work-based-learning provision in health and social care is now **satisfactory**.

Background

Evesham and Malvern Hills College was inspected in December 2001. Inspectors from the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) carried out the inspection under Section 62 of the Learning and Skills Act. The quality of provision was found to be satisfactory in all curriculum areas inspected, except in work-based-learning (WBL) in health and social care.

Ofsted and ALI have particular duties in relation to colleges where their inspection report indicates that individual curriculum areas are unsatisfactory or very weak or that leadership and management are unsatisfactory or weak. Where a college has been judged to have less than satisfactory provision in any curriculum area, or less than satisfactory leadership and management, Ofsted or the ALI will visit the college to carry out monitoring inspections of any unsatisfactory curriculum areas and of leadership and management, where applicable.

As a result of monitoring inspections, inspectors may judge that the curriculum area or areas, or leadership and management are satisfactory and that no further visits are required. Such a judgement is likely to be made between 12 and 24 months after the initial inspection. A short report outlining the improvements made will be published on the Ofsted website alongside the original report. If, after approximately 24 months, the college has not made sufficient progress to justify a judgement that the curriculum area(s) or leadership and management are satisfactory, the original grades for the areas that continue to be unsatisfactory will remain on the college's record until the next full inspection. Ofsted will inform the local LSC that provision remains unsatisfactory and why.

Monitoring inspections

In accordance with the above procedures, monitoring inspections of WBL in health and social took place on 17 and 18 September 2002, and 29 and 30 April 2003.

Health and Social Care

Inspectors noted during the April 2003 visit that WBL provision in this area of learning was no longer being offered by the college and that the college has no plans to offer it in the near future. Re-grading of the provision cannot be undertaken and no further visits to monitor work-based-learning will be undertaken.