

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

**Chichester
College of Arts,
Science and
Technology**

June 1995

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

THE FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education every four years. The inspectorate also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum and gives advice to FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge and experience in the work they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member who does not work in education and a member of staff from the college being inspected.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are set out in the Council Circular 93/28. During their inspection, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also use a five-point grading scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses. The descriptors for the grades are:

- grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 72/95

CHICHESTER COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SOUTH EAST REGION

Inspected January - March 1995

Summary

Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology in West Sussex is a major provider of further education for the city and its surrounding districts. Enterprising management has resulted in a substantial growth in student numbers over the last four years. The college has shown a strong commitment to the needs of mature students, women returning to work and overseas students. Links with feeder schools, higher education and industry are good. Members of the corporation are committed to the college and bring a wide range of experience and expertise. They play their full part in strategic planning which is well co-ordinated by the senior management team. Good teaching sustains a comprehensive range of courses, including high-quality provision in science, mathematics and programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students' overall performance in examinations is average for the sector. High priority is given to staff development. A student services unit offers good support, particularly in managing students' accommodation. The college estate is attractive and well managed. The college recognises the need to develop further its quality assurance system and base it on reliable data on student retention, examination performance and destinations. The balance between encouraging and controlling developments in the college, and the practice of managing some cross-college functions through curriculum departments, should be reviewed. The college should improve the standard of learning resources, in particular the library, and access to information technology. It should also develop a plan for the replacement of equipment.

The grades awarded as a result of the inspection are given below.

Aspects of cross-college provision		Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision		1
Governance and management		2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support		2
Quality assurance		3
Resources:	staffing	1
	equipment/learning resources	3
	accommodation	2

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics and science	1	Health and social care	2
Construction	3	Hairdressing and beauty	2
Engineering	3	Visual and performing arts	2
Business and professional studies	2	Humanities	2
Office technology and computing	2	Access, teacher/adult education	2
Catering, leisure/travel and tourism	2	Courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	1

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
Summary	
Introduction	1
The college and its aims	2
Responsiveness and range of provision	8
Governance and management	18
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	27
Teaching and the promotion of learning	37
Students' achievements	46
Quality assurance	57
Resources	63
Conclusions and issues	78
Figures	

INTRODUCTION

1 Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology was inspected during the spring term of the academic year 1994-95. The college's enrolment and induction procedures were inspected in the weeks beginning 29 August and 5 September 1994. During the week beginning 9 January 1995 nine full-time and four part-time inspectors spent a total of 40 days on specialist subject inspections. A further specialist inspection took place during the week beginning 30 January when a full-time inspector and a registered part-time inspector spent a total of four days in the college. Inspectors visited 226 classes involving 2,609 students and examined a broad range of work. The inspectors also saw extensive documentation relating to the college and its courses. In the week beginning 27 February 1995, 10 full-time inspectors spent a total of 28 days inspecting aspects of cross-college provision. During the period of the inspection there were meetings with members of the corporation, representatives of the Sussex Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), local industry and commerce, headteachers of local schools, present and former students of the college, parents, college managers and staff.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology was opened in Chichester in 1964, having previously operated as a technical institute in nearby Bognor Regis. Expansion over the last 30 years has established the college as the main provider of vocational education in south-west Sussex. There is a single campus near the centre of the historic city of Chichester. Access by bus and rail is relatively easy and there is adequate on-site car parking. The latest building project, costing £1.6 million has been funded almost entirely from income earned from full-cost courses. It will provide a purpose-built performing arts centre and a new base for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are plans to open a new centre for vocational training in Bognor Regis in September 1995, intended particularly for students unable to travel to Chichester.

3 The district has a population of some 240,000. The college draws its students from a wider area, covering an arc of about 30 miles radius north of the Channel coastline from Worthing up to Horsham and Crawley and round to Portsmouth in south-east Hampshire. South-west Sussex is an area of predominantly small businesses, of which over 93 per cent have less than 25 employees. They have been affected by the recent recession, and, as a consequence, the college's part-time enrolments have fallen. The college is developing new approaches to reverse this trend. The college also recruits nationally and internationally. There are overseas students from more than 50 countries following vocational courses. The cultural diversity of the college's students enriches the educational experience. The college hall of residence provides accommodation for 102 students on campus and this helps attract students from abroad. Over 500 students live with host families in the city.

4 At the time of the inspection there were some 2,970 full-time students and 5,743 part-time and adult education students. In addition, there were 791 students on self-financing courses, of whom 523 were full time. Enrolments by age and level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2. The college exceeded its target of 8 per cent growth in 1993-94 and is confident that it will achieve the national three-year 25 per cent growth target in the first two years after incorporation. The growth has been achieved mainly in full-time provision, and there has been a significant increase in adult participation.

5 The college offers a broad range of vocational and professional courses across all the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) programme areas, including National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1-5 and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs). Courses leading to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the General Certificate of Education advanced supplementary/advanced level (GCE AS/A level) are well established. Foundation programmes and the first years of degree courses of partner universities have been developed successfully. Access to higher education programmes attract growing numbers of students, and vocational courses increasingly provide a full-time route to higher education for 16-19 year olds. Opportunities for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are impressive and growing. Programmes in construction and engineering, which have been hit by the recession, have been maintained as part of the college's commitment to the local community.

6 The college is organised into seven teaching departments: business and computing; care, leisure and sport; engineering and construction technology; food, health, fashion and art; international; music and drama; and science and humanities. These are further subdivided into schools. Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 3. Outside the departmental structure, the admissions and guidance unit is responsible for providing general advice to students and for managing recruitment, and the student services unit provides student support. There are 250 full-time equivalent teachers and 165 full-time equivalent support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents is shown in figure 4. A further 35 full-time equivalent staff are employed directly by self-financing activities.

7 The college's stated mission is to serve the community by providing a comprehensive range of further and continuing education programmes in line with the objectives of the FEFC and the national targets for education and training; providing routes for students to progress from further to higher education or professional training; being responsive to clients' needs; becoming a centre of excellence and innovation in the provision of vocational education and training; and providing equality of opportunity for students and staff.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 Staff are kept abreast of national and local developments in further education. The principal keeps them informed through termly staff gatherings, and the departments and schools hold regular weekly meetings. A joint consultative committee with the recognised trades unions meets regularly. Staff are aware of the expectations for growth placed upon the college by government policy, of the more specific targets enshrined in the national targets for education and training and of the college's responses to these influences.

9 The college has good links with its three 11-16 feeder schools. It is involved with them in parents' evenings and careers events and, towards the end of each summer term, it organises an activity week for pupils in their penultimate year of compulsory schooling to sample the college's courses. The college and the same three schools collaborate in the 'Hipact' scheme to encourage young people from backgrounds with no tradition of entering higher education to go on to university. The college has greater difficulty in communicating with 11-18 schools with which it now finds itself in competition. Parents praised highly the standard of education in the college and its efforts to keep them informed, although some parents who were unable to attend open evenings expressed a wish for more written reports on the progress of their children.

10 The college has found it difficult to work productively with the Sussex TEC but it is optimistic about the outcome of current talks on joint initiatives. Nonetheless, the TEC has a favourable opinion of the college and the quality of its strategic plan. One initiative that is about to start is the 'Sussex Scholarship' scheme. Under this, full-time students following NVQ level 2 and intermediate GNVQ programmes will be paid an allowance for two weeks' work experience and employers will be encouraged by financial incentives to offer permanent jobs to trainees completing their courses. These jobs will include an entitlement to day-release training towards an advanced qualification.

11 Local employers are whole-hearted in their praise of the work of the college. Some contribute directly to college policy through membership of advisory committees. Others are less clear about ways in which they can influence the college's thinking, other than by informal contacts. The number of advisory committees has diminished, partly because of the decline in day-release provision during the recession and the consequent lessening of employers' interest in the college's courses. However, committees for motor vehicle engineering, catering, and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities continue to meet and are effective. The college has established a commercial unit to provide professional training and consultancy services to commerce and industry. Between September 1993 and February 1995, the unit ran 35 full-cost courses in a relatively narrow range of curriculum areas. These courses have earned £27,000.

12 In the academic year 1995-96, the college is offering 671 programmes ranging from those at level 1 to those at higher national certificate and higher national diploma level, together with some work at degree level. GNVQs are available at intermediate and/or advanced level in art and design, business, health and social care, leisure and tourism, built environment and hospitality and catering. GNVQ engineering is due to start in September 1995. A good range of GCE A levels is taught. Some foundation courses for higher education combine GCE with vocational courses such as the optional course in dissection skills which is available in the medical, dental and veterinary foundation course. Higher national diploma and degree courses are developed with, and franchised from, a number of higher education institutions, including the universities of Brighton, Hertfordshire, Portsmouth and Sussex. Access to higher education courses have developed from one in 1991 to the current offer of six full-time and three part-time programmes. There are 141 enrolments in humanities and social sciences, media studies, jazz studies and science.

13 Students of the college are able to take part in a range of sports and cultural activities. College teams play basketball, football, hockey, netball and rugby. There are evening clubs for badminton, basketball, trampolining and volleyball. There is a well-equipped fitness centre. Students also have access to a nearby leisure centre at special rates. The student common room has facilities for table tennis and pool. It offers satellite television, games and vending machines and is used for lectures on topics of general interest ranging from animal welfare to the workings of national insurance. There is a variety of clubs and societies including a branch of the British Association of Young Scientists, the college choir, the Christian union and the jazz society.

14 Promotional literature is designed in a uniform house style. The college has made marketing the responsibility of all staff, although it recognises that staff need more co-ordinated central support if they are to be effective in this role. The college has a central budget of £15,500 for advertising in this country and the departments provide additional promotional funding from their revenue budgets. The college has decided that investment in market research is not a priority. Nevertheless, it recognises the need for systematic enquiry into the reasons for the fall in part-time enrolments.

15 The college has an equal opportunities policy which is generally understood by staff and students. Attention is drawn to the policy in full-time course brochures and in the college handbook and student charter, though not in the adult education or part-time course brochures. More could be done to promote it, for example, during induction programmes. The procedure for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy is being discussed with staff through the joint consultative committee. There is, nevertheless, a very strong commitment to ensuring that under-represented groups of people are given the chance to study at the college and many recent initiatives address their needs. The college still

caters mainly for the 16-19 age range but now offers considerable opportunities for adults, for women returning to work, for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for overseas students. The governing body decided in 1993 that tuition fees should be waived for all full-time students aged 19 and over. This has helped to attract many mature students and contributed to the growth in, for example, access to higher education courses. Mature students enrolled on full-time further education courses have increased from 212 in 1992-93 to 772 in 1994-95. The number of mature women students has grown over the same period from 108 to 524. This has been achieved not only by offering courses of particular interest to women but also by scheduling classes during school hours with breaks during school holidays, placing carefully-targeted advertisements in the local press and holding informal coffee mornings to encourage potential students to come into the college without committing themselves.

16 The college has established a school of learning support to provide individual learning programmes for 353 students with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities: an increase of 64 over last year's enrolment of 289. These include students with learning needs related to visual and hearing impairment, Down's syndrome, speech loss, physical disability and a range of emotional difficulties. They are introduced into mainstream courses for part or all of their time, wherever this is possible. The college has also established an essential skills unit to meet the needs of any student requiring additional help with numeracy and communication. Pupils who have been permanently excluded from local schools are taught in the college's 'Education Otherwise' unit. As a practical response to the promotion of equality of educational opportunity, this range of activities is outstanding.

17 The international department provides courses in English as a foreign language and language support courses for some 500 overseas students. It arranges visits to theatres, public houses, concerts and sporting events and to other parts of the country such as Bath, Winchester, Oxford, Cambridge and London in order to help students experience the culture of Britain. A well-developed marketing plan envisages further development in the Far East, Middle East, north Africa and Europe, and expansion into South Africa and the United States of America. The marketing plan sets clear and specific targets which the college is confident it can achieve. The department has a marketing budget of £80,000 which includes the cost of participating in marketing missions to over 20 countries.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

18 The corporation board has 18 members including the principal. Ten of its members are from local industry, one represents local community interests and two are college staff. There are three co-opted members, one of whom represents the West Sussex Authority, a representative of the TEC and the principal. All but two of the non-staff governors served before

incorporation. Overall, their length of service ranges from one to 25 years. There is an appropriate committee structure which functions effectively. Committees are well serviced by the college executive and governors are satisfied with the information they receive. Governors use their knowledge and experience to advise senior managers in shaping policy. Minutes of meetings reflect informed debate, and resolutions are recorded clearly and concisely. There is a good relationship between governors and the college executive. Governors praise the work of the senior management team since incorporation. Most governors have informal links to the college's schools and departments which provide them with insights into particular curriculum areas.

19 The strategic planning process is well organised. The current plan was prepared by senior managers and some heads of department in consultation with staff groups, the academic board and the governors. External agencies invited to comment included two TECs, the county council, the district council, the careers service and a local employers' federation. Governors discussed the plan in detail and made a number of changes before approving it. The strategic plan contains an annual operating statement with a list of objectives for senior management and timescales for their achievement which are reviewed systematically. Departmental plans have since been developed to reflect selected aspects of the college plan. However, the links are not direct and these plans vary in structure, rigour and usefulness. The operating plan does not set any objectives for department heads other than the implied imperative to meet their target for student recruitment. The next round of strategic planning, already under way, places a greater emphasis on early contributions from departments and schools. Meetings have taken place between all departments and the senior management team to discuss the development of the curriculum. This approach has been greatly appreciated by staff.

20 The senior management team consists of the principal, the vice-principal and three assistant principals. There are job descriptions for all posts within the senior management team. Responsibilities are clearly allocated for estates, finance, administration, personnel and the curriculum. The team has informal meetings once a week and formal meetings once a month. Once a fortnight, members meet the heads of department, the student services manager, the personnel manager and the strategic planner. Heads of department take it in turn to prepare the agenda and chair these meetings. Working groups are often set up to take forward business arising from these meetings. Senior managers encourage heads of department to press ahead with initiatives they bring forward. This practice has contributed to the speedy development of the college, but it has also led to the illogical location of some courses; for example, soft furnishing and interior design is placed within construction. The new structure of meetings is designed to improve co-ordination and avoid the possibility of confusion when heads of department act on their own initiative.

21 Departments are mostly well organised and staff responsibilities are clearly allocated. Each department has a number of schools concerned with specific elements of the curriculum. Most but not all heads of department meet regularly with their heads of school. Most course teams meet regularly. For most departmental and course team meetings, minutes are produced which identify those responsible for taking subsequent action.

22 Before incorporation the college executive decided to strengthen the role of the heads of school to ensure that they had the power to respond quickly to new opportunities and to help develop them as the senior managers of the future. Heads of school meet fortnightly with the assistant principal (curriculum). They report that these meetings have resulted in better communications, better understanding of the college's direction, personal professional development, higher status and a greater ability to influence affairs. They also claim that co-operation between departments and within departments has improved. However, these meetings cut across the traditional departmental line-management arrangements and there has been some confusion in cases where heads of department fail to communicate adequately with their heads of school, or do not wholeheartedly support new arrangements.

23 The academic board meets once a term. It has 28 members, nine of whom are elected. It discusses significant academic issues on the basis of detailed discussion papers contributed by a variety of members. Minutes of meetings give a clear account of the issues raised but they do not adequately distinguish between items for information and items for discussion, decision and subsequent action. On incorporation, the academic board established subcommittees for curriculum, staff development and review, and academic standards. The academic standards committee has never met and its intended role is now filled by a quality council reporting to the corporation board and a quality forum reporting to the senior management team. The college should ensure that these new arrangements do not undermine the capacity of the academic board to fulfil the responsibilities prescribed for it in the articles of government. The recent appointment of a quality manager who is a member of the academic board should help to remedy this. There is no record of the board having considered students' achievements in detail.

24 There are established systems for the preparation of budgets and the distribution of funds. Budgets for departments largely reflect past practice, although further division to schools is increasingly based on student numbers or units of activity. Department heads understand the methodology for the allocation of recurrent funding and part-time staffing, but they are less clear how decisions are made in relation to capital. Current moves towards the costing of individual courses should help to resolve this.

25 The college's computerised management information system is still under development. Financial accounts are available for each meeting of the governors' finance and general purposes committee and for monthly examination by the senior management team. Reporting is less well developed below these levels. The extent to which departments understand and use financial information varies considerably and this has delayed the full delegation of budgets. Other aspects of the management information system are at an early stage of development. There was delay in producing the individual student record because the software company had to convert the data supplied by the FEFC. The system is used by some teaching and support staff to view data, create part-time teaching contracts and produce summary outputs. However, the reporting systems are complex and do not yet meet the needs of most lecturers and support staff. Student data can be interrogated by trained staff. The system holds information on students' retention rates and can now provide information on student achievement and progression in conjunction with individual student records. However, accurate reporting on students' achievements is still underdeveloped. A pilot project to monitor student attendance has been undertaken over the past two years. There are plans for additional hardware, software and staff training to speed the development of a reliable management information system.

26 The college's estimated income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1995 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The college's average level of funding for 1994-95 is £15.92 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £18.17 and the median for all the sector colleges is £19.01 per unit.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

27 The college has considerably developed its guidance and support services over the past two years, establishing a student services unit and inaugurating a personal tutor system from the beginning of this academic year. Policy and operational statements exist for each of the separate components of the service, but there is no policy statement for the whole, defining its aims and objectives, and co-ordinating its parts.

28 Guidance for 16-17 year olds, before entry, is carefully planned. The consortium in which the college is joined with three 11-16 secondary schools and a special school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to get the information they need to make informed decisions. It also ensures that guidance is impartial. The college maintains contacts with pupils in each of the last three years of compulsory schooling. College staff talk with pupils in small groups and attend parents' evenings and careers events. The college also provides an activities week at the end of the summer term which allows prospective students to sample a range of courses and to experience life in a large institution. It has been well attended and effective in helping pupils to make up their minds about the

courses they wish to study. There are also college open days, which are well organised.

29 The central admissions unit plays a vital role in pre-entry guidance. All applications pass through the unit and it is the first point of contact for visitors. Applicants are often referred to other colleges if the right course is not available at Chichester. The unit's work with adults is particularly good. Staff are knowledgeable about the benefits system and can help those on income support. The unit meticulously records enquiries. It has identified gaps in the college's curriculum and new courses have been offered as a result; for example, courses in counselling and courses for women returners.

30 The enrolment of full-time and part-time students is conducted efficiently. Delays are kept to a minimum and opportunities for further guidance are available. Tutors discuss course content and its relevance to the applicants' aspirations. Students are made to feel welcome and are generally satisfied with the arrangements.

31 The induction programme for full-time students is well planned and well managed. Staff present the college as a progressive and successful institution. Induction includes an introduction to the programme of study, the college health and safety policy, the role of the personal tutor, the range of services available from the student services unit and the student association. Course handbooks are also issued to students at this stage. Students consider induction procedures to be efficient and welcoming.

32 Students on foundation and intermediate level courses are tested for basic literacy and numeracy and referred, where appropriate, to the essential skills unit. Those who attend receive expert guidance and many improve their skills, but the unit is operating at full capacity and has a waiting list. This college service is part of the business and computing department. The college should consider expanding it and making it the responsibility of a central unit so that it provides a service for all students. At present, there are many other students in the college whose needs are not assessed and there is some evidence that they also need help. For example, some science and engineering students required additional support in mathematical aspects of their work, which their teachers were unable to give.

33 The personal tutor system, fully described in a handbook for staff, is intended to be the major focus for student guidance and support. Many students value the formal action planning provided in tutorials which gives them the opportunity to set their own learning objectives and assess their own progress. They see it as an aid to study and speak highly of their tutors. Guidance for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for overseas students, and for women returners is of a high standard, but for other students it is much more patchy. Some staff need more training to help them understand procedures fully and to improve their interviewing techniques. The completion of records of achievement is not considered a

priority in a number of schools and departments. The current position is being monitored by the head of student services and researched by two members of staff. The information they collect should help to secure improvements.

34 Advice given to students intending to progress to further or higher education is thorough. The careers adviser and careers officers supplement the guidance given by departments. Students seeking employment are referred to student services wherever a department feels unable to help. Work experience, which is not a course requirement, is not co-ordinated and does not always achieve its purpose.

35 The student services unit provides support which complements the work of personal tutors. The unit has clear policy guidelines and operational objectives. Its members have worked hard to integrate their services with those of the departments. Services include careers advice, an accommodation and welfare service, liaison with the student association, supervision of the student common room, counselling and the chaplaincy. Each of the sections responsible for these services collects statistical data and produces an annual review, though these reviews are largely descriptive and lack analysis. At the time of the inspection, the college was awaiting the appointment of a new chaplain. Excellent links have been made with external agencies. A joint agreement between the college and the careers service has provided a link careers officer for each department. Counsellors and the college nurse have established effective relationships with the medical services in the city. The welfare officer has good contacts with the grant authorities and advice bureaux for general welfare and financial problems. The accommodation service is excellent and is much appreciated by students. In addition to the hall of residence the college leases 16 houses and maintains a substantial list of private landlords. Each new property is vetted against explicit standards before use.

36 The student association has been revitalised this year by the election of an active president and a committed executive. In addition to organising well-attended social events, they have made significant contributions to the life of the student body. The governors have responded positively to these achievements by agreeing to the appointment of a sabbatical presidency.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

37 In 68 per cent of the sessions inspected, strengths clearly outweighed the weaknesses. The weaknesses outweighed strengths in only 4 per cent of sessions. This profile of grades is above average for colleges inspected in 1993-94. The following table summarises the grades awarded to the teaching sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
Access to higher education		4	2	2	1	0	9
GCE AS/A level		10	14	7	0	1	32
GCSE		3	6	4	1	0	14
GNVQ		5	10	12	2	0	29
NVQ		5	22	15	2	0	44
Basic education		1	2	0	0	0	3
Higher education		1	3	2	0	0	6
Other vocational		16	36	17	2	0	71
Other		1	13	4	0	0	18
Total		46	108	63	8	1	226

38 Staff demonstrate a good command of their subject and many have high academic and/or professional skills. Lessons are generally well planned and their aims are discussed with students. Relationships between staff and students are good and based on mutual respect and high expectations. In the better classes, teachers relate the new content to previous work and vary the pace, method, and activity to sustain students' interest and motivation, even in the longer sessions. Many staff communicate an enthusiasm for their subject, notably in access courses, science and beauty therapy. In classes in science, access courses, performing arts and health and social care, question and answer techniques are used effectively to ensure the participation of students and to check that learning has taken place. In a nursery nursing class on family law, a skilful combination of questioning, written work and discussion enabled the group to take stock of their knowledge before progressing to new material. In other sessions, however, the more able students are allowed to dominate at the expense of the full participation of others. Learning is frequently enhanced by the use of good-quality handouts, for example in office technology and catering, and by the appropriate use of a wide range of audio-visual and other teaching aids in humanities, access courses and beauty therapy. However, in a few sessions teachers talk at length without giving students the opportunity to ask questions, or require students to spend most of their time copying notes from the whiteboard.

39 Theory sessions on many vocational courses are of a high standard. Tutors use equipment in the room or in an adjacent workshop, to give practical illustrations. Demonstration is used effectively in science, beauty therapy, and construction. Practical sessions are generally well organised with due regard for safety. In hairdressing, particularly good teaching emphasises the importance for NVQ assessment of acquiring professional competence. In a catering class, students preparing food for an employers' evening buffet achieved a high commercial standard. In art and design,

part-time staff with current professional expertise effectively complement the work of full-time staff. In performing arts, tutors stress the importance of developing professional standards through public performance. In GNVQ art and design, some students are not given the opportunity for practical work until the second year, and this limits their progress. Much of the work in modern foreign language lessons and in English as a foreign language lessons is conducted in the language being taught.

40 All departments use schemes of work for their courses. The majority of these are well designed and detailed. Aims are clearly defined and the essential topics of the syllabus are outlined. However, there is no common format for these schemes or sharing of good practice between departments. The best examples, notably in science and mathematics, include assessment schemes with deadline dates. In a minority of cases, the schemes of work are little more than lists of topics.

41 There are many good course handbooks, particularly in science, business and professional studies, which provide comprehensive guidance and lists of required reading. Effective use is made of authentic source materials in foreign languages and English as a foreign language. Self-study booklets in information technology are of high quality, but students receive little guidance on how to make best use of them.

42 Departments generally manage assessment effectively. Work is set regularly. Most briefing notes for assignments are carefully prepared and clear. In leisure and sport, a project to organise a professional golf tournament in aid of a charity had all the elements of a good assignment. In health and social care, however, briefing notes are minimal and imprecise. Students' work is adequately marked, usually with constructive criticism, and returned promptly. Teachers sometimes add a helpful oral elaboration to their written comment. Good assessment practice was observed in access course and adult education classes. The use of model examination answers in biology and mathematics is particularly effective in showing students how their work might be improved. In hairdressing, beauty therapy and performing arts, assessment of practical work is well done. Records of students' progress are generally well maintained; good recording practice was observed in catering, construction crafts and business studies. In construction, assessment criteria does not always accord with the course handbook and scheme of work.

43 The college has not done enough to encourage the development of specifically-designed resources which allow students to study independently, and students' use of the central library is low. Some departments have established their own learning-resource centres. Students on reception duty in hairdressing spend long periods doing nothing and would benefit from learning packs with which to occupy their time. In engineering the practice of combining students of different levels into one group creates a difficult teaching situation which could be alleviated if there were suitable learning materials to enable students to

study on their own. Some staff coach individual students in their own time.

44 Teaching for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well planned and staff have a clear understanding of the students' needs and circumstances. Each student has an individual programme. Welfare supporters and classroom assistants are widely used to promote learning. Teachers show real sensitivity to the difficulties of students, yet constantly challenge them to improve and achieve. Students clearly enjoy their work. There is sustained emphasis on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is regularly assessed and records are frequently updated. However, teaching time is sometimes lost by the occasional slow start to lessons and by extended breaks within them. In a few instances, activities do not match the needs or abilities of students. Little homework is set.

45 The average level of attendance for the 226 sessions inspected was 81 per cent. Attendance on access course and teacher education sessions was the highest, at 93 per cent. Attendance levels were over 80 per cent in mathematics and science, engineering, office technology and computing, health and social care, and visual and performing arts. However, attendance in the remaining curriculum areas averaged only 75 per cent. The lowest levels were found in business and professional studies (72 per cent) and in hairdressing and beauty therapy, and humanities (73 per cent). Not all classes started with a full group; at the start of one session only five out of the full group of 14 students were present, increasing to 12 over the next hour. In a few instances, untimetabled mid-afternoon breaks reduced class contact time.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

46 Students enjoy their studies and produce work of an appropriate standard. A balance of practical and theoretical work provides them with the knowledge and skills required to complete their courses satisfactorily. Students work well in groups, acquiring teamwork skills through a variety of activities. Particularly good examples of group work were observed in performing arts, health and social care, music and business courses.

47 Insufficient attention is paid to good English and correct spelling in students' written work. Information technology skills are promoted unevenly across the college. Students showed high levels of computer literacy and practical skills in business studies, engineering, and programmes for students with learning difficulties. In contrast, students' information technology skills were underdeveloped in adult education, teacher education, art and design, construction, and access to higher education courses.

48 The college's management information systems are not yet able to provide staff with accurate and timely data on students' examination results, particularly for vocational courses and destinations. Since September 1994 a member of the teaching staff has been partially seconded

to work on improving the systems. Although, as a result, statistics have been produced for the majority of curriculum areas, the information is still incomplete and it is impossible to form a coherent picture of the college's achievements.

49 In 1994, the college offered 21 GCSE level subjects. Of the 539 student entries, 51 per cent were awarded grades A-C. This is close to the provisional national average for general further education colleges of about 50 per cent. In some subjects, students achieved results above national averages: these included English literature, geography, music, Spanish and computer studies. Subjects in which results fell below the national averages included English language, mathematics, chemistry, physics, psychology, business studies and accounting.

50 Full-time students aged 16-18, entered for fewer than two GCE AS or A level subjects in 1994, achieved an average point score per entry of 3.5. On this performance measure, this places the college in the middle third of further education colleges based on the tables published by the Department for Education. For students of the same age taking two or more GCE AS or A levels, the average point score per candidate was 13.2. The overall pass rates for GCE A level subjects have been good, ranging from 79 per cent to 83 per cent over the period 1992-1994. This places the college in the top 10 of general further education colleges on this performance measure. In 1994, the best results were in statistics and practical music; every 16-18 year old student entered was awarded a pass at grades A-C. Close behind, there were pass rates at grades A-E of 100 per cent in communication studies, 98 per cent in biology and 96 per cent in chemistry. Students achieved less well in mathematics (pure and statistics) (72 per cent), sociology (61 per cent), Spanish (60 per cent), business studies (68 per cent), and art and design (50 per cent).

51 Retention rates on GCSE and GCE AS or GCE A level courses have worsened over the last four years. For GCSE courses the retention rate fell from 93 per cent in 1991 to 63 per cent in 1994. The retention rate for GCE A level courses has been more consistent, falling from 86 to 83 per cent over the same period, but for some individual GCE A level subjects the decline has been much more marked. For example, between 1991 and 1994 the retention rate fell from 100 per cent to 75 per cent in business studies, and from 100 per cent to 53 per cent in economics. Some other subjects have had consistently poor retention rates; for example, film studies has varied between 55 per cent to a low of 40 per cent in 1994, and sociology has fluctuated between 65 per cent (1991) and 52 per cent (1994). In 1994, only two subjects achieved 90 per cent or better retention rates and five had rates less than 50 per cent.

52 Auditing the examination results for vocational courses was difficult because of incomplete and sometimes inconsistent data. In business the results varied, for example, between pass rates of 100 per cent on the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) course in quality control, and 21 per cent of enrolments on the GNVQ intermediate course. In the higher

national certificate in business information technology, 73 per cent of those enrolled gained the qualification. An improving pattern was seen in the higher national certificate in computer studies, where the success of those enrolled has increased from 75 per cent in 1993 to 86 per cent in 1994. However, the opposite applies to the first diploma in information technology applications which has seen a fall from 92 per cent in 1993 to 61 per cent this year.

53 Of students enrolled on the foundation course in music, which includes GCE A levels, 83 per cent passed their examinations. Sixty-eight per cent of those enrolled for the national diploma in popular music gained the qualification. Students on the drama foundation course, taken with GCE A levels, were less successful, with only 50 per cent gaining the qualification. Students on the first diploma and the national diploma in performing arts achieved better examination results; over 80 per cent passed.

54 Hair and beauty therapy students achieved good results in the NVQ level 2 qualifications, and there were pass rates of over 80 per cent for the last three years on the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) beauty therapy course. There was a good pass rate of 80 per cent on the national diploma in hospitality and catering, but first diploma students were less successful; 65 per cent achieved a pass. Results in health and social care were generally good. The BTEC national diploma in social care and the intermediate GNVQ in health and social care had pass rates of 79 and 71 per cent, respectively.

55 The results for construction and engineering courses were varied. Of students on the first diploma course in building studies 67 per cent achieved a qualification. In electronics, pass rates on the first diploma have fallen over the last three years from 67 per cent to 47 per cent and on the national diploma from 53 per cent to 35 per cent. Pass rates on the national certificate in motor vehicle engineering improved from 56 per cent in 1993 to 71 per cent in 1994. Students studying for the higher national certificate in electronics achieved pass rates of 90 per cent in 1993 and 81 per cent in 1994.

56 The collection of data on the destinations of students completing courses is incomplete. In the areas of catering, music, access to higher education, GCE A levels, health and social care and hairdressing and beauty therapy, good rates of entry to employment were reported, and 375 students entered higher education. A notable achievement was that one student from the college was the first student in the country from an access to higher education course to gain a place at Cambridge University. During 1994, several students achieved notable successes in national competitions and awards. Five music and drama students gained places at prestigious music colleges, including scholarships for study of the guitar at the Royal College of Music. A construction student was named as the country's top painting and decorating candidate after achieving three distinctions in C&G craft certificate examinations.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

57 The college's first quality assurance system, introduced in 1991, was superseded by a new system which is still at an early stage of development. There is recognition among senior managers that a central system is essential and that a gradual approach will be needed to win acceptance by all staff. The college has developed a clear quality policy and an ambitious implementation strategy. The initiative is being carried forward by a group of enthusiastic staff who act as school and departmental representatives on the two key committees formed to further the college's quality developments: the quality council and the quality forum. Proposals for quality improvement projects are encouraged, although the process for taking issues to the quality forum is informal.

58 A new review and evaluation exercise was undertaken in all curriculum areas for the first time in the summer of 1994. Guidelines were given for the conduct and reporting of the review but they were not consistently followed. In some areas the review took account of students' examination and retention rates, but it was rare for them to be submitted to the kind of critical analysis needed to reveal trends. In other cases, data were unavailable or rudimentary. Some action plans for remedying shortcomings were clear and consistent with the guidelines. Others summarised the results of student questionnaires, but made no proposals for meeting criticisms. Few review reports took stock of progress in relation to the previous year's action plan. Student examination performance was not discussed at any college committee.

59 Students' views are sought about the quality of their courses. In most areas, students are members of course teams and value the opportunity to give their views. The questionnaires used to canvass student opinion often vary in content and frequency of use within a single department. No attempt has been made to compare and evaluate practice with a view to producing a standard set of questionnaires which would obtain students' views in a systematic and reliable way. Students are not usually informed of the results of the questionnaires they complete. A notable exception is the questionnaire for students resident in the college hall of residence, where the responses have led to prompt remedial action. This might be taken as a model for other college areas. Quality standards are being devised for student services, although students are not involved in the process. Performance indicators and measurable standards have yet to be established.

60 The college charter is contained in the college handbook. It was drawn up after consultation with teacher and student representatives. Students are aware of the charter and understand the complaints procedure. The charter makes little reference to measurable standards and the college is to review this omission. Students perceive that the document says more about their responsibilities and the college's expectations of them than about the level of service it should provide to them.

61 The college's self-assessment report is in the main a self-critical document which identifies strengths and weaknesses. It has sections under each of the headings in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Most sections contain a realistic assessment of the current situation, and the college's views generally accord with those of the inspectors. The students' achievement section identified most issues noted by inspectors but did not identify the lack of reliable data provided centrally on examination results and student retention as a weakness.

62 The college has a well-developed and well-resourced professional review and development system. Staff have annual review interviews with their managers and follow a clear procedure for applying for staff development to meet any needs identified. Staff development is related to the strategic plan. The funding for staff development is approximately 1.25 per cent of the college's budget. Activities are at present evaluated from the participants' points of view, but their value also needs to be judged by the contribution they make to improvement of the institution's performance. There is scope for stronger links between staff development and the emerging quality system. The induction programme for teaching and support staff is comprehensive and effective. It includes the acquisition of teaching qualifications for new teachers and Training and Development Lead Body qualifications for staff who work on vocational programmes.

RESOURCES

Staffing

63 There are 250 full-time equivalent teaching staff, of whom 154 are on full-time contracts. Of 165 full-time equivalent support staff, 121 are employed full time. There are more women than men on the teaching and support staff, but the senior management team is wholly male. Out of seven curriculum heads of departments, one is a woman. Thirty-four per cent of the teaching is undertaken by part-time staff, who make a valuable contribution to the work of the college. Teaching for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities relies heavily on part-time staff.

64 Staffing levels are appropriately determined as part of the strategic planning process. A timetable audit, carried out annually in November and February, ensures the efficient use of lecturers' time. Additional posts are sought through bidding. The college routinely measures the staff to student ratio. It is currently 1:16.8, compared with 1:12.2 in 1989-90.

65 The personnel office provides a professional service and works closely with the personnel committee of the corporation. The personnel manual sets out the various policies and procedures applicable to lecturing and support staff. All managers have undergone training in the application of procedures. The college does not monitor staff for gender, ethnicity or disability and is still developing its policy on sexual harassment. The college has sought to remove any divide between lecturers and support

staff through the application of common policies and a single professional review and development system.

66 Lecturers are well qualified and appropriately experienced for the work they do. Many have recent industrial and commercial experience. Sixty-seven per cent of the full-time and associate lecturers hold a first or higher degree, or an equivalent qualification. The remainder are appropriately qualified. The majority of lecturers have teaching qualifications and those who do not are expected to acquire them. There have been many opportunities for lecturers to acquire Training and Development Lead Body awards as assessors or verifiers, but in a number of curriculum areas staff have been slow to take advantage of these opportunities. Support staff are appropriately skilled. The ratio of support staff to teaching staff in the college as a whole is 1:1.5. In health and caring, access courses, and hairdressing and beauty, the level of support staffing is low. There is no technician support for evening classes in hairdressing. In science, music and drama, secretarial support is inadequate. The college should review support in these areas.

Equipment/learning resources

67 The college has an adequate range of equipment to support the courses offered, particularly in engineering, construction, business studies, catering and basic education. Although an equipment replacement policy is an objective in the strategic plan, as yet it has not been produced. Nevertheless, the college plans to make a significant contribution to the purchase of additional equipment from the profits of its self-financing activities. Overhead projectors are available in most classrooms and are maintained by a college audio-visual aids technician. The college has a reprographics team able to design and produce high-quality printed documents, teaching notes and overhead transparencies. This is a good resource which could be used more extensively.

68 Although computing is under the direction of the head of computer services, some departments and schools buy and install machines without reference to him. This has led to the unco-ordinated growth of some computing facilities. Software for computers used by support staff, such as the college information service and the college engineer, have also been bought without reference to the central unit. There are about 500 computers of a modern standard in the college but the exact number is not documented.

69 There is no common policy for access to computers. Some departments, including engineering and business studies, provide open access for students outside timetabled periods but this practice is not consistent across the college. Many students have no access to computers outside classes to wordprocess their assignments. The problem is made worse by greatly increased demand as a result of the 25 per cent growth in student numbers in the last two years.

70 The college library, which is located on the side of the main campus, is poor and many students do not use it. The library has 34,700 books but many are old and outdated. The range of books in many curriculum areas is small. A number of departments and schools have developed their own small libraries. The library budget has been increased by 100 per cent over the last two years which has raised resources to a level more appropriate for a college of this size. There is an attractive display of periodicals at the entrance but, beyond this, the book shelves rise close to the low ceiling to give the library a gloomy appearance. There are 46 study places in the library and 57 in the area above. The study area is always supervised by library staff. The library is open from 08.45 to 19.00.

Accommodation

71 The college operates on a single site of 7.6 hectares close to the city centre. It is an attractive campus with wide lawns. The river Lavant flows through the site and the grounds include three football pitches. When the college opened, there was a two-storey administration block and one three-storey teaching block. Two further flat-roofed teaching blocks were added in 1969 and 1975. Other buildings in a variety of styles have also been added, including a gymnasium, the music block, the engineering and construction workshops, the multi-skills workshop, the library and student centre. The buildings are planned as a series of blocks leading off a long corridor. The college reception area projects a good image to visitors. The college also uses accommodation in the adjacent Chichester Theological College.

72 The vice-principal is responsible for buildings and estates. A uniform system of allocating teaching accommodation was introduced in 1993. The college is developing effective timetabling systems and has carried out teaching space audits in each of the last three years. These show 43 per cent space utilisation of its accommodation. The frequency of use is generally good but occupancy could be improved.

73 There is a detailed accommodation strategy. A hall of residence was built in 1989, providing high-quality study bedrooms for 102 students. A major £1.6 million building development, funded by the college, will be used for performing arts and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

74 A full condition survey of the buildings was carried out in 1993 and a maintenance programme was prepared. This is used to prioritise replacement and repair. In addition, the college engineer has a computer-based maintenance programme developed from his knowledge of the site. In 1993-94, the maintenance budget was £157,000. The programme is monitored by the buildings and estates working group, chaired by the vice-principal.

75 Many areas have been refurbished. Changes in the use of accommodation have been made from time to time and most departments' rooms are conveniently grouped. Four wooden huts have been upgraded to provide a nursery unit and a fitness centre. The gymnasium is small. The kitchen of the Options restaurant is crowded and needs improvement.

76 Efforts have been made to make all parts of the campus accessible for students with restricted mobility. There is good provision of ramps and lifts. However, there is no access for physically disabled people to the hall, one major teaching block, the gymnasium, the first floor of the music block and the first floor of the multi-skills building.

77 The refectory has a seating capacity of 362. It forms a pleasant environment and is open throughout the day and evening, offering either counter or vending service. There are also vending machines in the student centre, built in 1990, which houses student support offices and a large, well-furnished and decorated common room. The campus is cleaned regularly and shows little sign of vandalism.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

78 The strengths of the college are:

- good teaching
- enterprising management which has succeeded in substantially increasing enrolments
- the comprehensive range of courses
- the quality of staff and their professional development
- the encouragement of staff initiative by senior management
- the high-quality provision in science and mathematics and courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- the strong commitment to the needs of mature students, women returning to study and overseas students
- good student services, particularly the impressive accommodation service
- the good college environment and estate management.

79 If it is to continue to improve its quality of provision and its standard of achievement the college should:

- review management practice to ensure more co-ordinated control of developments in the college
- review its practice of managing some cross-college functions, such as learning support, through curriculum departments
- collect reliable data on student retention rates and examination performance

-
- continue the rapid development and implementation of a quality assurance system
 - improve the standard of learning resources, particularly computing and the library
 - adopt a planned scheme for the replacement of equipment.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)

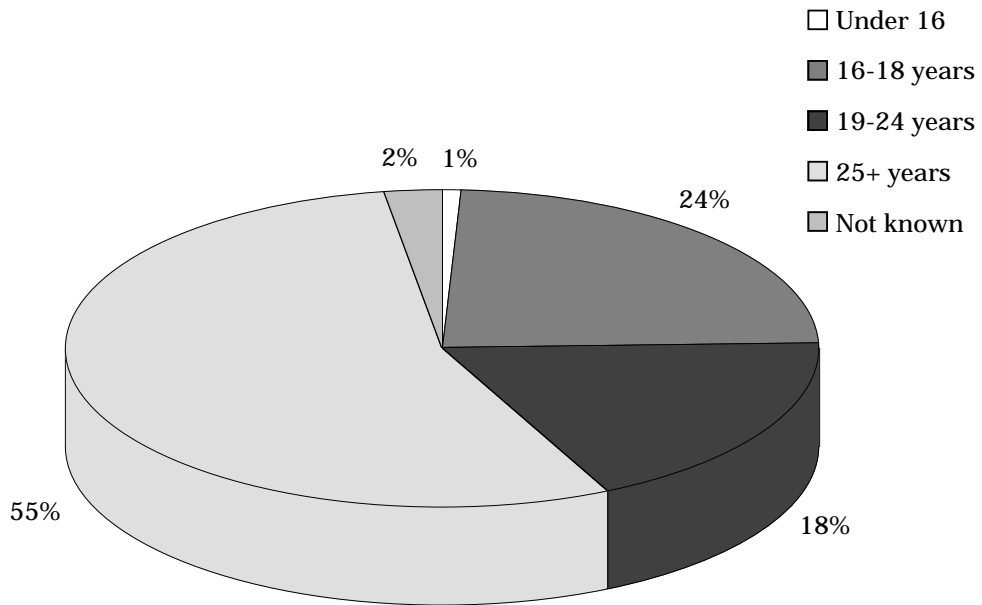
 - 5 Estimated income (for 12 months to July 1995)

 - 6 Estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)

Note: the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.

Figure 1

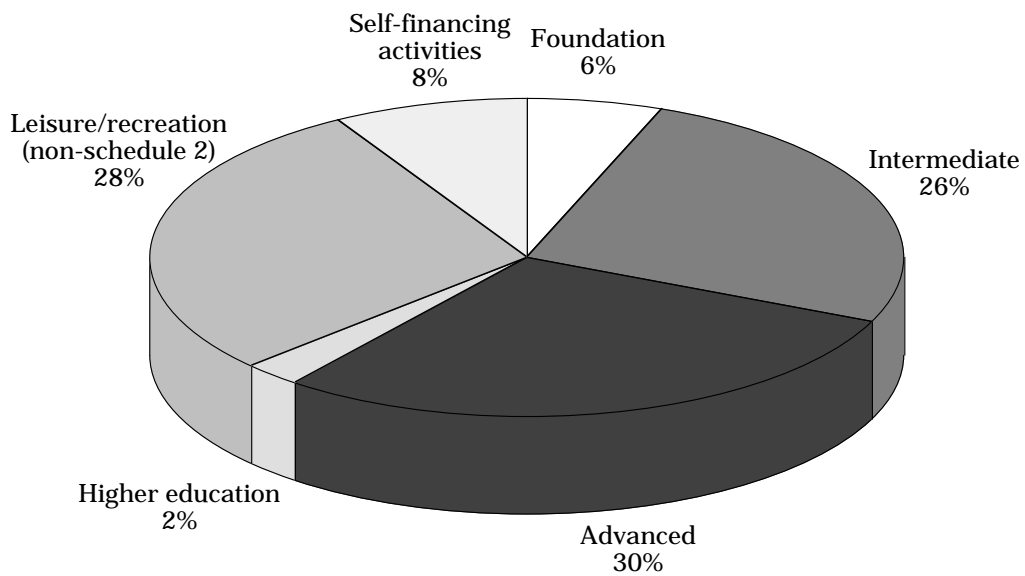
Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)



Enrolments: 9,504

Figure 2

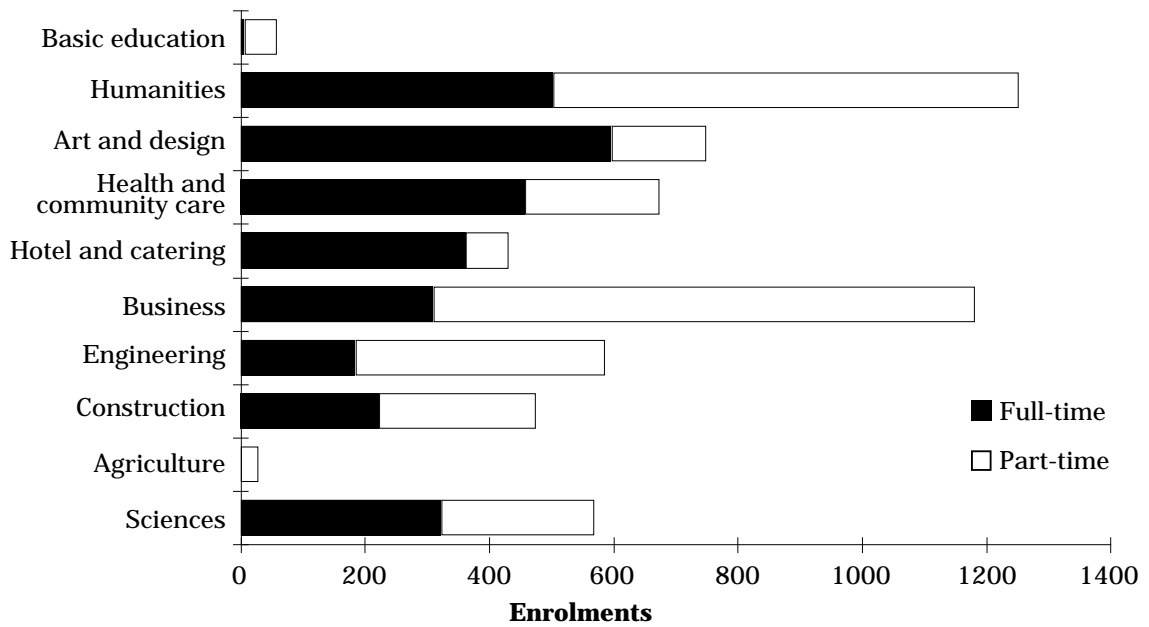
Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)



Enrolments: 9,504

Figure 3

Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

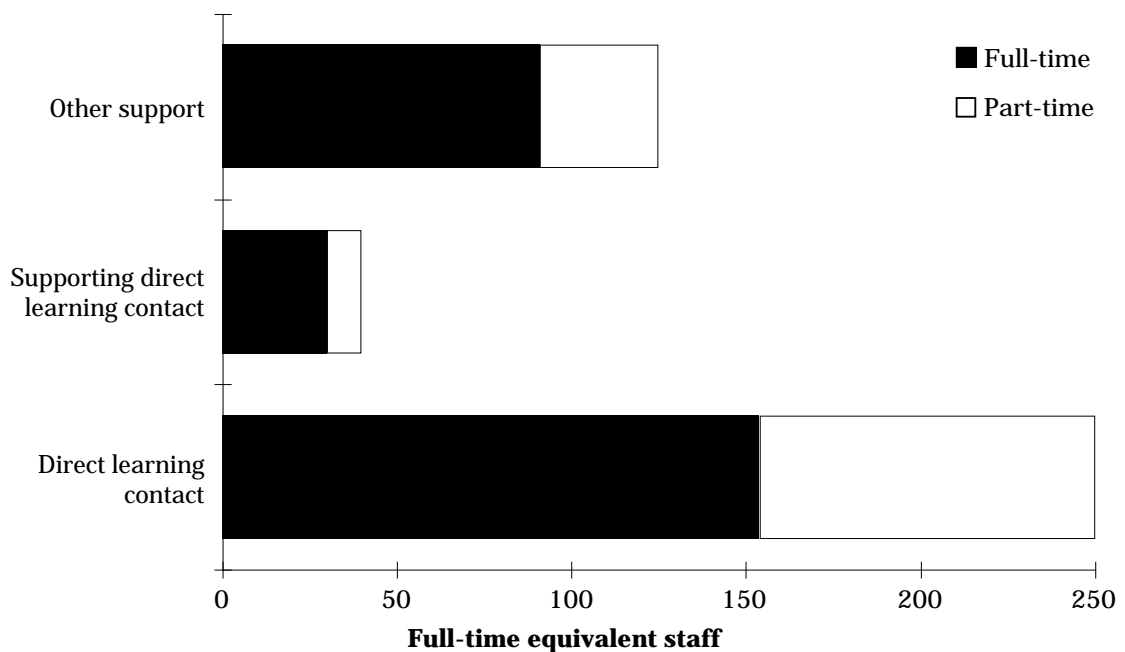


Enrolments: 6,008

Note: this chart excludes 2,705 non-schedule 2 enrolments and 791 students on self-financing activities.

Figure 4

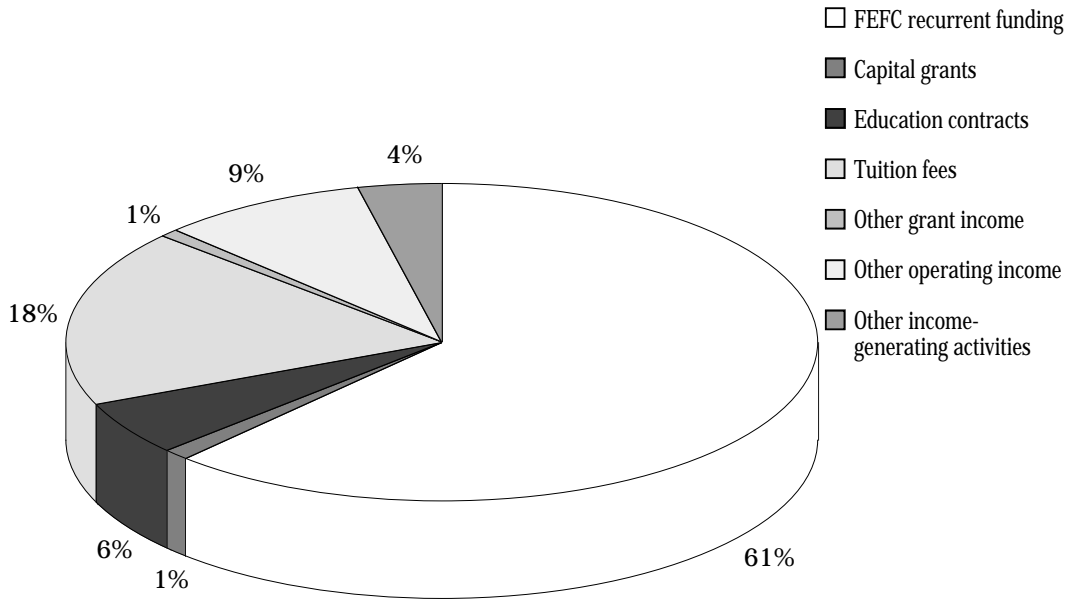
Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)



Full-time equivalent staff: 415

Figure 5

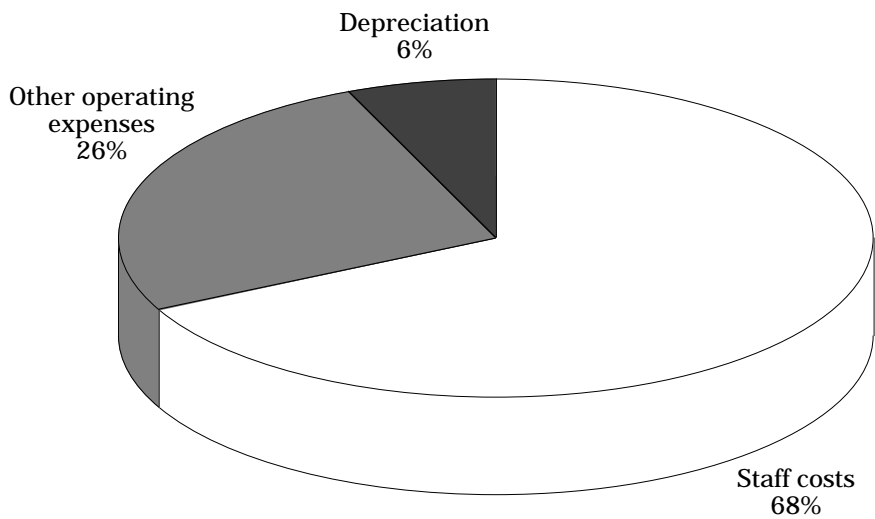
Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: estimated income (for 12 months to July 1995)



Estimated income: £12,610,000

Figure 6

Chichester College of Arts, Science and Technology: estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)



Estimated expenditure: £12,575,000

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