Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton

***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 the 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.

CONTENTS

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.*

By June 1996, some 329 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 329 colleges are shown in the following table.

College grade profiles 1993-96

Activity	Inspection grades				
	1	2	3	4	5
Programme area	9%	59%	29%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	14%	50%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	12%	54%	30%	4%	<1%

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 60/97

DERBY TERTIARY COLLEGE, WILMORTON
EAST MIDLANDS REGION
Inspected March 1996-February 1997

Summary

Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton is one of two further education colleges in Derby. In 1994, the FEFC conducted an enquiry into the college's governance and management. Following this, a new governing body was established. The new governors have a clear understanding of the issues facing the college. The college has a financial deficit. It has submitted a recovery plan to the FEFC for the elimination of this deficit within four years. The managers have provided effective leadership during a period of change. The quality of teaching is good. In most curriculum areas, the students' achievements are satisfactory. Prospective students receive effective help and guidance when they enquire about courses. Students' enrolment and induction procedures are good. The quality of the accommodation is high. Most curriculum areas are well equipped. The college should: improve its management information system; clarify the respective roles of, and the relationship between, the library, the information technology resources, and the learning resource areas; further improve its provision for local employers; improve its tutorial system; increase the use of performance indicator targets for the quality of its provision; complete the introduction of its staff appraisal systems; and enable teachers to update their industrial and commercial experience.

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

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science, mathematics, and computing	2	Caring	2
Construction	2	Performing and visual arts	2
Engineering	2	English, other humanities, and teacher education	2
Business	2	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and basic education	2
Catering, leisure and tourism	2		

INTRODUCTION

1   Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton was inspected between March 1996 and February 1997. Inspectors spent 95 days in the college. They visited 267 classes, examined students' work and inspected enrolment and induction processes. Discussions were held with college governors, managers, staff and students, and representatives of the local community, employers, schools, higher education and the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2   The college was established in September 1989 following a review of post-primary education in the City of Derby and southern Derbyshire. As a result of this reorganisation, two tertiary colleges were formed and the only schools permitted to have a sixth form were one Roman Catholic school within the city boundary and two other schools just outside the city. More recently, six of the 14 secondary schools in the city have developed sixth forms and three of the schools have been designated as technology colleges.

3   The City of Derby has a population of 230,500 of which approximately 10 per cent belong to minority ethnic groups. Although engineering-based industries are not as pre-eminent as they once were in Derby they are still important locally and they require a highly-skilled workforce. Major employers include the Rolls Royce group of companies, various railway companies, and the Toyota car company which is located some seven miles from the college. The college serves the city and the mainly rural area of southern Derbyshire. The unemployment rate in the city is 8.7 per cent and in southern Derbyshire it is 6.3 per cent.

4   The college provides courses in all the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) programme areas except agriculture. At July 1996, there were 7,582 students enrolled at the college. Full-time students accounted for 17 per cent of the enrolments. Approximately 54 per cent of the students were aged 25 or over and 30 per cent were on courses leading to qualifications at level three or higher. Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3.

5   At July 1996, there were 363 full-time equivalent staff of whom 318.5 were full time/fractional. There were 220 full-time equivalent teachers. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4. The principal was appointed in July 1995. The directorate comprises the principal and five directors. There is a director of studies and four other directors who are responsible for finance and information, marketing and customer services, quality assurance, and research and development, respectively. Courses are provided by 11 schools, each of which has a head. Most schools also have two assistant heads and a number of programme co-ordinators. An additional school has a contract

to provide education at a nearby prison. The heads of school report to the director of studies.

6   The college, in its mission statement, sets out to 'be a leading partner in widening education and training opportunities, and raising standards to world class levels, supporting the success and economic growth of the City of Derby'.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

7   The college offers a broad range of further education courses. There are 21 courses leading to general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs), 27 general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects and 19 general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects. The college is facing increasing competition for GCE A level students from local school sixth forms. In recent years, the number of GCE A level students at the college has decreased significantly. The college provides a small amount of higher education and this includes an art foundation course and an access to higher education course. Courses leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) are offered in 32 different skill areas and there are 133 part-time vocational courses. A vocational credit programme is provided for students who have not yet decided on a single area of study or need more time to prepare for a higher level of study. The one-year or two-year full-time programme allows students to explore a variety of options at entry, foundation and intermediate levels. There is a structured vocational credit programme at entry level for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. On some courses, students can progress faster than others by having their knowledge and skills accredited when they consider they are ready to be assessed. Some courses can be made up of units which are chosen by the students to meet their individual needs. There is scope to extend this flexibility in assessment methods and in course design to more of the college's provision.

8   The college is developing a range of additional courses which can be added to a student's main course as part of the 'Wilmorton credit framework'. Most of these additional courses are accredited. They include sports and information technology options, together with more unusual subjects such as deaf awareness and performing arts set design and construction. The accreditation which students can obtain through this framework adds value to their achievements at college, helps them to progress to further or higher education, and strengthens their employment prospects.

9   There is an extensive programme of some 650 work placements arranged with employers in Derby and surrounding areas. Work placements are arranged for many full-time students and for trainees on youth credit programmes. A service level agreement is negotiated with each placement provider and there are standard procedures covering visits, reports, and feedback to students on their performance in the work

placement. The college has a database of information on 3,000 companies and other organisations and this proves useful in helping staff to find appropriate work placements for students. The college, however, makes no use of this database in marketing, or in any other of its activities. The provision of short courses, conferences, consultancy, and in-company training with industry and other organisations is generally underdeveloped. There are some full-cost short courses for industry in areas such as construction, engineering and business but in other areas there has been insufficient provision of these.

10   The college collaborates with a group of independent breweries to help their staff gain NVQs. Managers work for NVQ assessor awards and in turn, they train their staff and help them to obtain NVQs at levels 1 and 2 in areas such as food and drink service and cellar work. The college and the awarding body have produced open learning materials which students may study on their own, at times which fit in with their work commitments. These materials are tailored to meet the students' individual needs and abilities.

11   The college is under contract to the Home Office to provide an education service at Sudbury Prison. A recent inspection by the Education and Training Advisory Service of HM Prison Service described the educational provision at Sudbury Prison as 'outstanding'.

12   The college works closely with the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise to provide training under the youth credit scheme, and modern apprenticeship programmes. In 1997, the number of TEC-funded trainees and the number of curriculum areas in which they work will be limited in order that the college may monitor trainees' progress, and their retention and success rates more easily and more thoroughly. The college is featured in a case study on modern apprenticeships published by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), the National Council of Industry Training Organisations and the National TEC Council. The case study highlights the way in which the college provides key skills to care apprentices. The college has successfully bid for funding through the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise for a number of development projects. One project investigated the training needs of companies in the sciences and it explored the feasibility of developing an NVQ in science.

13   Courses designed especially for women returners have proved successful, particularly those in information and office technology. The courses are timetabled flexibly in order that students may study at times which suit their personal circumstances. They can make use of the childcare facilities that are available at the college site. The daytime GCE A level programme recruits a significant number of adult students. The college has had mixed success with projects which aimed to provide adults with opportunities to return to study. The Osmaston and Allenton

project, supported by the European Social Fund, encourages council tenants to obtain advice and guidance on education and training opportunities. Only a few council tenants, however, have participated in it. Other initiatives, such as 'Progress 96' and co-operation with the University of Derby Centre for Access and Continuing Education, provide a range of opportunities for adults.

14   The college's links with the community are developing. The local community makes use of the college. Its facilities are let to individuals and groups; the fitness suite is used by the public. The college is part of the Derby Mentor Project which aims to match black and Asian young people with professional role models in order to combat unacceptable ethnic stereotyping. The college acts as sponsor to the Derbyshire Local Education Authority (LEA) for FEFC funding for its extensive programme of adult education across the city. Because the LEA provides a large number of adult education courses, the college offers only a small amount of community education. Its provision of courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is underdeveloped.

15   A broad range of programmes is provided for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including sensory impairment. The programmes provide these students with a wide range of opportunities through which they may develop vocational skills and key skills. Some students take part in the vocational credit programme and others join the mainstream courses. There is no provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities at college premises away from the main site. The college maintains effective and informal liaison with outside bodies such as schools, social services, voluntary organisations and the LEA. It maintains close contact with the parents of students aged 16 to 18. The college provides vocational courses for students at the Derby College for Deaf People and there is a productive relationship between the two institutions. Specialist counselling courses are offered for people who work with the visually impaired, or who are visually impaired themselves. Students with hearing impairment are provided with the necessary support to enable them to study successfully on a City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) teacher training course with other students who have unimpaired hearing. Special courses are provided for people who have suffered a stroke.

16   The college works with agencies in Derby and the surrounding area to provide appropriate programmes for disaffected school pupils. It has few curriculum links with those local schools with which it competes strongly to attract post-16 students. The college is also in competition with other further education colleges in the area; in recent years, there have been few formal relationships between them and the college. It has, however, entered into a partnership with Broomfield College and South East Derbyshire College in order to create a series of electronic learning networks in collaboration with up to 60 companies. Links between the college and higher institutions are not strong. The college has, however,

established some links with the University of Derby, the University of Sheffield Hallam, and the Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies.

17   There are few international links. A small number of overseas students are enrolled on courses. The college does not, however, market its provision overseas. It runs a student exchange scheme with a Spanish college. Construction students undertake work experience in France.

18   There is a well-planned programme of marketing activities throughout the year. This includes open evenings, road shows, school visits and advertising. High-quality, informative prospectuses and course leaflets are produced. Students say that they find this publicity literature attractive and easy to use. Market research is undertaken in a number of different ways but it is not co-ordinated. Marketing information from a number of sources is available in the marketing directorate, the research and development directorate, and within individual schools. There is, however, no central database of information.   The research and development directorate is responsible for identifying and establishing new initiatives, such as the collaborative project with the group of breweries. It secures funding for worthwhile developmental work and it supports the fostering of new ideas across the college. To some extent the marketing directorate and the research and development directorate duplicate each other's role.

19   Until recently, the college engaged in positive practices and procedures in relation to equal opportunities which stemmed from the county council's policy on equal opportunities. These practices, however, were not implemented with consistency across the college and their effectiveness was not monitored systematically. The college is introducing revised procedures to ensure equality of opportunity for all staff and students. Equal opportunities statements feature in college literature. Key documents on the college are available in a variety of formats for people with sensory impairment. All advertisements affirm that the college is 'positive about disabled people' and that it is a member of 'Pride and Equality', a partnership of local employers which aims to make equal opportunities practice excellent. The college has appointed teachers with disabilities and welcomes students with complex disabilities. Appropriate guidance is provided for personal tutors on ways of raising awareness of equal opportunities. The college has carried out an analytical review of the gender and ethnic origin of students on some care courses. The findings of the review suggest that there is scope for the college to recruit more male students and more students from minority ethnic groups. Staff have held meetings with the careers service to discuss ways of attracting male students and members of minority ethnic groups to the college.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

20   From June to October 1994, the college was subject to an FEFC enquiry into its governance and management. The report of this enquiry

was published in November 1994. A new corporation was formed in 1995 and seven independent governors were appointed by the secretary of state. A further 10 members were subsequently appointed and the new corporation finally achieved full membership in January 1997. The corporation includes two elected staff representatives and a student member. Co-opted members include a county councillor and a member from Derby City Council. There are five female governors and two from minority ethnic communities. The corporation has a search committee and four other committees which cover: finance and general purposes, personnel and employment, audit, and remuneration, respectively. The need for both a finance and general purposes committee and a personnel and employment committee is currently being reviewed. All committees have clear terms of reference. There is a code of conduct and a register of interests for governors and senior staff. Effective training has been provided for the more recently-appointed governors. The independent governors felt that more support and guidance from the FEFC at the time of their appointment would have been helpful to them. The academic board is an advisory board to the principal and governors. It has 22 members including the directorate, elected staff, and students. It has two subcommittees, for health and safety policy and for the monitoring of equal opportunities, respectively.

21 The governors are committed to ensuring the success of the college and they have clear views about the issues facing it. They have been active in the development of the various recovery plans. A major cost, which contributed to the current financial deficit, resulted from the strategic decision to restructure the organisation and management of the college. The corporation, in conjunction with senior managers, has provided strong leadership during difficult times. Governors have set themselves individual targets against which they can measure their performance. A realistic review of the effectiveness of the corporation has taken place. Governors are properly aware of the nature of the relationship which should exist between themselves and the senior management of the college. Effective administration of the corporation and its committees is provided by the clerk who is also the executive director of studies. In recent months, there has been a significant improvement in the way information is presented to the corporation, and in the quality and level of the information itself. A common format has been adopted throughout the college for reports, briefings, and the minutes of meetings. In order to improve governors' links with curriculum areas, presentations are made to the corporation by heads of schools and other managers.

22 Policies with a statutory basis, such as the policy on health and safety, are approved by the governors. Most other policies have been newly written or revised in the last year but no timescale for their review has been set. A working group, including governors and the directorate, has recently been established and this will prepare the next strategic plan. The planning process is fully documented and there is a timetable for each stage. It starts at team level with the incorporation of the college's mission

and statement of values into school development plans. Subject teachers feel they are part of this process. The college's health and safety policy is regularly updated and its latest version is currently being considered by the corporation. The policy covers off-site activities as well as those on college premises. Line managers with responsibility for health and safety are clearly identified. The college has both a statutory health and safety committee and a health and safety group. The college has placed substantial importance upon health and safety training for staff. The aims of this training, and details of training activities are well documented. An induction pack is provided for new staff and all students are given basic health and safety information. Risk assessment is carried out and accident figures are regularly reported to the corporation.

23   The management structure was introduced during the summer of 1995. The structure is designed to facilitate the provision of programmes and courses, research and development activities, and business operations. The structure has proved successful in relation to the provision of programmes and courses but it needs further development to ensure its effectiveness in relation to financial management and the collection and use of management information. There are job descriptions, which include statements of how postholders are accountable, for all posts to the level of programme co-ordinator. No dates are set, however, by which these job descriptions have to be reviewed and there are no targets against which the performance of postholders may be measured. Lines of responsibility are generally clear. There is, however, a lack of understanding of some roles in marketing. The management and co-ordination of a number of cross-college activities, such as learning resources and information technology, require further development. Many of the college managers are still relatively inexperienced or are undertaking new roles and responsibilities. They are receiving suitable training from consultants and through in-house activities. Heads of schools are well supported by administrative staff. There are further plans to rationalise the structure of the college.

24   The principal's regular open forum for all staff, staff meetings, and the open access which staff have to information, promote effective communication. All management groups report to the directorate. This includes the 29 strong college management group which is the main channel for formal communication. There are seven policy groups and each is headed by a member of the directorate. The board of studies policy group is an effective forum for curriculum matters. Other groups are set up to tackle particular tasks and are disbanded when these are completed. Overall, the groups function well, with the exception of the finance and information policy group, which has had changes of leadership. These groups have enabled many staff to be involved in consultations and policy making. The directorate spends a considerable amount of time in meetings and there is some duplication of agenda items for these. Managers are growing in confidence and there is scope for them to

review the rationale, or the necessity, for all these meetings. Course administration is good and there is a coherent course team structure. Teams meet regularly to track students' progress, to act as a forum for moderation, to monitor progress towards the achievement of team goals, and to ensure that feedback from students is taken into account in future planning.

25   The college's main priority in its planning is to clear its financial deficit. Two recovery plans have been submitted to the FEFC. The most recent identifies measures to pay off the accumulated deficit within four years but this plan has yet to be fully approved by the FEFC. During 1995-96, the college reduced its staffing establishment by 43 full-time equivalent posts; further reductions in staffing are planned for the 1996-97 financial year. In 1995-96, enrolments were 16 per cent above target. This compares well with 1993-94 and 1994-95 when enrolments reached only 83 per cent of the target figure. The college's average level of funding for 1996-97 is £17.75 per unit, compared with £17.94 per unit in 1995-96 and £19.99 in 1994-95. The median for all general further education and tertiary colleges for 1996-97 is £17.97, and for all sector colleges, it is £18.66 per unit. The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. Eighty per cent of funding is from the FEFC. In 1995-96, staffing costs formed 74 per cent of expenditure.

26   The corporation, the directorate, and budget holders receive regular financial reports. In addition, some budget holders also keep their own records. Owing to the departure of key personnel, the budget for 1996-97 was not approved by the corporation until well into the financial year. Increasingly, the allocation of funds for consumable items in curriculum areas is calculated on the basis of the number of students recruited. The board of studies controls and allocates around 70 per cent of the capital fund through a bidding process which managers perceive to be open and fair. A system of financial modelling is being developed which will be part of the next strategic planning cycle. Through this system, about 60 per cent of expenditure will be devolved to the heads of school. College-wide performance targets have been set this year for students' enrolment, retention and achievement rates. Individual schools have the power to modify these targets in the light of their particular circumstances. The practice of monitoring performance against targets is not yet fully established in the college.

27   The college recognises that its current management information system is inadequate. For example, contradictions between data in the system and in class registers persist, despite the efforts of staff responsible for the system and the student registry staff. Duplication of effort is required to reconcile conflicting data, and as a result of the contradictions, staff lack confidence in the data and, at course team level, staff do not always make full use of the data. Financial, personnel, and student records cannot be linked through the data systems. The college has established a

project group to recommend the purchase of new computer hardware and software to overcome the present limitations of the college's management information system. The college intends to implement an improved system by the start of the 1997-98 academic year. The college has developed a soundly conceived modelling system for planning and control purposes. It hopes that this new system, when fully operational, will prove valuable in ensuring that course management decisions are made on the basis of accurate information. The effectiveness of the system for monitoring students' punctuality, attendance and retention is variable, and the system itself involves some cumbersome procedures. The system for monitoring students' destinations is still being developed.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

28   Two groups of staff have responsibility for student services. They report to the executive director of marketing and customer services. These services, which cover students' recruitment, guidance and support, are clearly structured. The roles of staff providing services are well defined and they are understood by students and by other staff. The staff in enquiry and enrolment services deal with prospective students from the point when they make their first enquiry about the college, through to their enrolment. They are also responsible for organising and giving presentations about the college's work to year 11 pupils in local schools, and for administering the processing of applications to the college. The staff in the student support services team have a range of responsibilities. These include: the provision of support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; the provision of counselling, tutorial support and careers guidance for all students; the organisation of work placements; and the provision of childcare facilities.

29   Personal, telephone and written enquiries from prospective students are dealt with by the enquiry and enrolment services staff. They use a well-documented system which enables them to track the progress of an enquiry, record the action taken, and log the outcome. Staff from the enquiry and enrolment team know when to refer an enquiry to a subject specialist; they then work with the specialist to ensure that the enquiry is answered. Arrangements have been made for school pupils to visit and get to know the college, in order that those who decide to go on to college may make an informed choice of a course of study. College staff attend school parents' evenings and give presentations to year 11 students. At one local school, staff from the college made a successful contribution to an industry day designed for year 11 students. A series of open evenings is held at the college during the autumn and spring terms. Students and their parents/guardians stated that they found these evenings informative.

30   Prospective students applying to attend full-time programmes receive impartial advice and guidance. The application process is well organised. For school-leavers, the first stage of the process is an individual interview which includes discussion about their proposed programme of study and

their future career intentions. Documents such as the student's record of achievement and careers action plan are taken into account at interviews. Successful applicants are invited to attend a 'taster' session which provides more specific information about their proposed subjects or vocational area. Students spoke positively about the value of these 'taster' sessions; their responses to questionnaires confirmed that the objectives of the sessions were being met. There are effective arrangements to help students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the transition to the college. These students receive interviews at which they discuss and agree with staff, programmes of study suited to their individual needs. Mature applicants for full-time courses are interviewed at times which are suitable for them, and advice and guidance are available to them on childcare and on financial matters.

31 The college has developed a service for the accreditation of students' prior learning. Those wishing to have their prior learning accredited first contact the enquiry and enrolment services team which provides them with an explanatory leaflet on the accreditation process. The extent to which this accreditation service is used varies from one curriculum area to another, and depends, to a certain degree, upon whether or not teachers advise their students to have their prior learning accredited. Some teachers are more enthusiastic about the accreditation process than others.

32 The enrolment process is organised into separate sessions to cater for the different needs of students. Students wishing to study full time, who have already been through the interviewing process, enrol at a different time from those who require advice and guidance. Applicants for part-time courses have an opportunity to discuss their proposed programme of study with specialist members of staff at the enrolment session. All staff are briefed about the enrolment process. They are provided with checklists to help them ensure that students complete the necessary paperwork and know the details of their first timetabled class.

33 Well-structured induction sessions ensure that all new students rapidly become familiar with the college. The student support services team provides teachers with a handbook of useful induction materials, including exercises which the students carry out in order to learn more about the college and its facilities. There is consistency in induction practice across the college and particularly in the way essential information, such as guidance on health and safety matters, is presented to new students. The induction programme for full-time students is implemented by their personal tutors. Part-time students have a separate induction programme at which they are advised about the range of support services available to them and the procedure for examination entries. Part-time students have welcomed their induction process. They say that it makes them feel that they are part of the organisation and that it gives them confidence to use the social areas of the college. Students who join the college late, after the commencement of their course, also have an induction programme during which they receive essential information.

All students receive a handbook that contains a section setting out the college's commitment to the student. Students find the handbook helpful and easy to understand.

34   During induction, all full-time students take screening tests to identify those requiring additional support in numeracy or literacy. The college's key skills workshop provides support in a variety of ways and offers programmes which lead to a range of awards. The opportunity to achieve these awards is valued by students. This year 184 full-time students were identified as requiring additional support. Data are not kept on the number of part-time students who receive support or the vocational and academic areas from which they have been referred. There is no formal monitoring of attendance at support sessions, and no analysis of the achievements of students who receive support. Students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by the college. Deaf and hearing impaired students have access to communicator support; visually impaired students are provided with learning materials in large print or Braille.

35   All full-time students, and part-time students studying for nine hours or more, are allocated to a personal tutor. Students attending for less than nine hours may request a tutor. The tutorial system is managed and co-ordinated by the student support services team. The tutorial policy emphasises the need to monitor and review students' progress through weekly group tutorials and one-to-one interviews. The policy and supporting documentation are clear. Tutors are responsible for liaising with subject specialists to produce progress reports twice yearly; for students under the age of 18 these reports are used as a basis for discussion at parents' evenings. In a survey of parents, over 80 per cent felt that the parents' evenings were informative. The college views contact with parents as important and recently introduced a newsletter giving them useful information about term dates, parents' evenings and points of contact within the college. Administrative officers work with tutors and subject specialists to monitor students' attendance and to record any action taken. In most cases, the monitoring of attendance is effective.

36   Group tutorials occupy 45 minutes each week. The tutorial curriculum covers topics such as study skills, the use of the library, careers information, and the preparation of applications for jobs and higher education. GCSE and GCE A level students study for the East Midland Further Education Council certificate in general and communication studies. The effectiveness of tutorial sessions varies. Meetings for tutors are held regularly but some tutors do not attend these. The college has recently developed its own record of achievement documentation and full-time students are encouraged to complete this during tutorials. The purpose of the documentation is not clear to all students. In completing it, some students have to provide information which is already well documented because they hold a national record of achievement.

37   The college has a full-time careers adviser. There is a service level agreement with the Derbyshire Careers Service. Officers from the service work with groups of students, conduct individual interviews, and provide support at parents' evenings and enrolment sessions. There is a careers resource base containing relevant information and computer software. Student support services provides guidance for students applying to higher education institutions, organises visits to university open days, and holds a higher education fair in the college.

38   Students have access to social facilities including a bright and welcoming common room and a food court that is open until 20.00 hours. They can become members of the fitness suite and participate in student organised activities. A 'freshers' fair' is organised at the commencement of the year. There is a lively and well-organised nursery with 30 places.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

39   Sixty-six per cent of the teaching sessions inspected had strengths which outweighed the weaknesses. Four per cent had weaknesses which outweighed the strengths. This compares with a figure of 63 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, for the colleges inspected during the 1995-96 academic year, according to the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. The average attendance at the sessions inspected was 77 per cent, which is close to the average of 76 per cent recorded in the same report. Attendance ranged from 68 per cent in languages to 91 per cent in history, law and politics. On average 10.4 students were present in each class inspected. 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
GCE AS/A level	10	31	13	2	0	56
GCSE	1	8	7	0	0	16
GNVQ	6	21	21	4	1	53
NVQ	4	13	8	0	0	25
Other*	37	46	29	5	0	117
Total	**58**	**119**	**78**	**11**	**1**	**267**

includes access to higher education, higher education, basic education, national certificates and diplomas.

40   Science courses are well planned and assessment schemes are thorough, particularly those for GNVQ programmes. The modular GCE A level physics course has been structured to make it accessible to a wide range of students and to ensure it is cost effective. Practical work in the laboratory is well organised and students are given clear instruction sheets which make appropriate reference to health and safety risks. Work

experience and practical examples are drawn on extensively by teachers. There is scope for increased dissemination of good classroom practice to all teachers. In computing, the quality of course and lesson preparation is high. In mathematics, teaching strategies are varied to match the differing needs and abilities of the students. The GCSE and C&G programmes are organised in a way which allows students to identify their problem areas and to then concentrate on them. Teachers carry out regular checks on students' progress and help students resolve their problems. There is insufficient use of aids to learning such as computers or graphical calculators.

41   In construction, there are good schemes of work and lesson plans. All courses lead to NVQs or other recognised national qualifications. A good range of teaching styles is used and industrialists regularly provide demonstrations and lectures. Desktop publishing is used to produce good-quality overhead transparencies, printed notes, and information sheets. In some lessons, the more vocal students were allowed to dominate discussion and the pace of the work was too slow. Students with language or learning difficulties are well supported by staff who are sensitive to their views. Some students, however, find the learning support material is difficult to understand.

42   Engineering teachers make good use of teaching resources; most rooms can be used for both theory and practical teaching. Teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching methods although some lessons were unimaginative and dull. Teachers have produced some imaginative assignments for GNVQ and NVQ courses. The marking of students' work is thorough.

43   The planning of business courses and lessons is generally good. Visual aids and other learning resources are well prepared and they are normally used with skill. Most of the assignments sustain the students' interest and many are based on real work situations. Students are encouraged to make contributions to lessons and draw on their own experience. In mixed ability groups, teachers provide good support for individual students and encourage them to contribute to discussion. Students receive helpful advice on how to build up their NVQ portfolios but they are given insufficient opportunity to develop key skills.

44   Catering and hospitality programmes are well planned and the course documentation is of high quality. Lesson plans have clear aims and objectives and they relate to comprehensive schemes of work. In lessons on NVQ courses, students were engaged in a variety of appropriate activities which they carried out using an extensive range of packs of learning materials and worksheets. In some skills training sessions, teachers failed to make the students sufficiently aware of the commercial demands of practical kitchen and restaurant operations. Teachers sometimes failed to correct students' unsatisfactory working methods. Leisure and tourism lessons are well planned. Students' records are well maintained. The quality of marking and assessment is high. There is

scope for more people who work in the leisure and tourism industry to be invited to make a contribution to the courses, in order to give students the benefit of their experience of current working practices.

45   Health and social care students are offered a broad curriculum. They have opportunities to gain accreditation in additional skills in areas such as food hygiene and sign language. Some students undertake a residential activity and work with other students who have disabilities. Students are often encouraged to work on their own and to think for themselves. However, a few lessons were not well planned and in these students failed to grasp the key points. Marking is detailed. In their written comments on students' work teachers strike a good balance between acknowledging achievement and offering pointers for further improvement.   Key skills, particularly information technology, are integrated well with the content of vocational programmes.

46   Art and design teaching is of a high standard. Lessons are well prepared and staff are responsive to students' needs. There is an appropriate emphasis on the development of students' exploratory and diagnostic skills on the foundation course and the GCE A level programme, but this emphasis is less evident on the GNVQ programme. Performing arts teaching is generally sound. There is considerable variability in the quality of schemes of work. Assessment is generally rigorous but the students' workload on some GCE A level courses is uneven.

47   In English, detailed schemes of work are produced in a common format. Many teachers question students skilfully to test their knowledge and understanding. On all courses, with one exception, excellent learning materials help students of all ages to understand difficult texts. In GCSE lessons where GNVQ students predominate, however, the learning materials and the teaching and learning methods were not well matched to the needs of the students. On the access to higher education course, the teaching methods take account of the needs of adult learners; appropriate learning programmes are negotiated with individual students. In history and law, there are well-organised programmes of study but their aims and objectives are not always defined clearly. Teachers encourage critical debate, printed learning materials are used effectively to stimulate learning. Coursework is set regularly, and it is marked and returned promptly. In some instances, teachers' expectations of their students are too low. Modern languages lessons are imaginatively designed and well managed, but their learning objectives are not sufficiently clear. In psychology and sociology the teaching is generally well planned. Aims and objectives are clear. Students' contributions to lessons are used productively.

48   The teaching of ESOL, and the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the key skills workshop and during vocational classes is of good quality. Staff have high expectations of students and give appropriate praise and encouragement. Teachers question students effectively to check that learning has taken place. One-to-one teaching is effective and motivates

students to learn. In the teaching of key skills, there was often an inappropriate reliance on worksheets during lessons. Students were not encouraged to work on their own. At the entry level of the vocational credit programme, initial assessment is insufficiently rigorous and individual learning programmes are not fully developed.

49   Support for students with physical disabilities who are following general further education courses is unobtrusive and facilitates their learning. Students who are deaf receive particularly effective support. Students from the Derby College for Deaf People attend the college and they undertake work in most curriculum areas. Signing support is provided in a wide range of classroom and practical activities by staff from both colleges. For example, approximately 30 per cent of the students on two performing arts courses have severe hearing impairments and two signers work exclusively on the programme to support them. Some groups for deaf students are too large for effective learning to take place.

50   Appropriate learning materials have been developed for the NVQ courses provided for the independent breweries. These courses take place on licensed premises where the students develop their practical skills. The students are encouraged to acquire the underpinning knowledge for these skills in their own time. Assessment procedures are normally part of their daily work routines. Each student's progress is reviewed regularly. Some premises where students work only have a bar operation and the range of NVQ assessment which may be carried out on these premises is limited.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

51   The 230 students entered for GCE A level examinations in 1996 scored, on average, 3.8 points per entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2). This places the college among the middle third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure, based on data in the 1996 performance tables published by the DfEE. The 1996 score is an improvement on the 3.4 points per entry score in 1995 and the 3.5 points per entry score in 1994.

52   Seventy-two per cent of the 135 students, aged 16 to 18, in their final year of study on advanced vocational courses recorded in the DfEE's 1996 performance tables, were successful. This places the college in the middle third of all colleges on this performance measure. The students' success rates on advanced vocational courses in 1994 and in 1995 were 81 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively.

53   Fifty-three per cent of the 162 students, aged 16 to 18, in their final year of study on intermediate vocational courses recorded in the DfEE's 1996 performance tables were successful. This places the college in the middle third of all colleges on this performance measure.

54   In 1995-96, the average number of grades at C or above, obtained by students aged 16, 17 or 18, in GCSE mathematics, psychology, science and sociology was higher than the national average for these subjects, but it was lower than the national average in GCSE English and law. The average number of grades at C or above, obtained by students aged 19 or over in GCSE sociology was above the national average, but it was below the national average in art and design (painting and drawing, graphics), English, French, mathematics, psychology, and science.

55   The students' achievement data for 1995-96 were published in December 1996. Examples of good pass rates achieved by students aged 16 to 19 who completed their courses, included:

•   93 per cent; GNVQ business, foundation level

•   100 per cent; NVQ carpentry and joinery, level 2

•   100 per cent; numeracy and literacy awards.

and for students over 19:

•   100 per cent; NVQ supervisory management level 2, and numeracy, literacy, information technology and site management awards.

56   Poor pass rates for students aged 16 to 19 included:

•   10 per cent; GNVQ art and design, intermediate level

•   45 per cent; NVQ food preparation and cooking, level 2.

Poor pass rates for students aged over 19 included:

•   50 per cent; national certificate in social care

•   32 per cent; NVQ food preparation and cooking, level 1

•   19 per cent; Chartered Institute of Marketing course, level 3

•   17 per cent; diploma in counselling.

57   The college records the destinations of its students. For 1995-96 the proportion of students whose destinations are unknown is extremely high. Students' destinations are shown in the following table.

Destinations of students 1995-96

Destination	18 years of age and under	19 years of age and over
Further education	18.5%	4.4%
Higher education	20.0%	16.5%
Employment	5.8%	4.0%
Other	1.0%	1.0%
Unknown	54.7%	74.1%
Total students	**724**	**321**

Source: college data.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

58   In November 1995, the post of corporate director of quality was established and all the college's quality assurance procedures were reviewed and revised. The academic board has approved a policy statement on, and a framework for, quality assurance; the policy has not yet been submitted to governors for their approval. The new quality assurance framework was implemented in 1996-97. The new management roles and responsibilities for quality assurance are clearly defined within the framework. Many of the managers filling these roles are new in post, however, and some are not yet fully effective. There has been some staff-development activity related to quality assurance procedures, for managers and their teams but the college recognises that more is required. A helpful newsletter about quality matters is circulated to all staff.

59   During 1995-96, reviews were undertaken by each school in which they were required to identify strengths and weaknesses in their provision. There was considerable variation in the rigour and effectiveness of these reviews. Some contained self-critical analysis based on sound evidence. Others made insufficient use of quantitative data and the judgements they contained were not founded on sufficient evidence and were largely subjective. Few of the reviews provided a detailed analysis of students' achievements. Plans of action to improve the quality of provision were also variable in quality.   The college has conducted a systematic examination of the review process and guidance has been issued on how the 1996-97 review should be carried out.

60   The new quality assurance framework provides for a comprehensive process, beginning with a system of course reviews and culminating in a school assessment report based on the headings in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*.   Course teams will carry out three formal reviews in each academic year at specially convened meetings. Student representatives will be present at these meetings where possible. The school's performance indicators and the progress made on agreed action points are reviewed with the director of quality in early October. The mid-year reviews undertaken in October 1996 show that the rigour with which the new framework is being implemented is increasing. There is evidence that the process of review and the subsequent monitoring are leading to improvements in the curriculum. A system for the review and evaluation of the college's support services is still at an early stage of development.

61   The corporation assessed its own performance during the autumn of 1996. The assessment was structured around 10 key responsibilities of the corporation and a personal self-assessment by each member. Governors identified the need to improve procedures for the recruitment and induction of new members, and to build up their knowledge of the college curriculum.

62 Internal verification is well established in some curriculum areas. A policy on, and general principles for, internal verification have been produced. For a number of years, the college has subscribed to an independent external service for analysing students' performance. This service provides an analysis of the value added to students' achievements by comparing their actual performance at GCE A level with their predicted performance, based on GCSE achievements. Little effective use is made of this analysis, however. In general, good use is made of surveys of students' views on the quality of provision, to inform course reviews and to improve students' recruitment, guidance and support. Feedback is sought from parents but not from employers. The college has a clear and effective complaints procedure. The number and type of complaints are monitored and reported to college managers and the academic board.

63 The college's charter was updated in 1996. It is a well-presented, clear document but it specifies few targets against which the college's performance can be measured. A combined charter and handbook has been produced for students who would not normally visit the main college site, for example, those who receive their education and training at their place of work.

64 The college's self-assessment report was compiled from the schools' self-assessment reports. It is set out under the headings in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It is laid out clearly and identifies areas where improvement is needed, the person responsible for taking the necessary action, and the timescale within which the improvement must be carried out. There is more emphasis in the report on strengths than weaknesses; some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were not identified by the college. The report tends to give credit for developments which are not yet fully achieved.

65 Quality assurance procedures for the provision offered collaboratively with a group of independent breweries, on premises away from the main college, have developed steadily. The arrangements for assessment and appeals meet the requirements of the lead body. Quality assurance is carried out by a steering group and the 'quality circles' established for each brewery. There are no clear performance indicators for this collaborative provision, however, other than the targets for enrolment and students' achievements. The systems used to track a trainee's progress do not provide a comprehensive picture of the current enrolments for, and students' achievements on, the collaborative programmes.

66 A head of professional development was appointed in July 1996 as part of the quality directorate. The professional development budget is 1.4 per cent of the college's salaries budget. There is training for all staff in health and safety at work procedures. Student support services staff have received training in customer care. A comprehensive staff-development programme on management is provided to help the newly-appointed heads of school. Staff express satisfaction with the level and quality of the training and development available to them.

67   There is no system of staff appraisal linked to staff development. A new appraisal process is being developed in which staff are appraised by their line managers. As part of the process of management restructuring, a firm of external consultants worked with senior managers to clarify their management roles. The principal had individual meetings with senior managers to review their strengths and weaknesses and to discuss future developments in the college. The executive director of studies now holds similar meetings with the heads of schools.

68   A system, whereby staff have their performance in the classroom observed by other staff, was piloted in 1995. The pilot system was judged to have made an effective contribution to staff development. The system has now been adopted and it has been implemented more widely. It has developed from a process of observation by line managers to one which involves mutual observation by pairs of teachers. The system is intended to further the dissemination of good practice, and to encourage the introduction of more varied and innovative approaches to teaching.

69   In collaboration with the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise, the college has undertaken a project to promote training and development for business support staff. Approximately 47 staff are taking part in the project. Most of this training is provided within the college but some takes place at other institutions. The college is working towards the Investor in People award.

70   All new staff are provided with an induction to the college. The induction process is thorough and it includes a mentoring system. The process is appropriately documented. Where appropriate, new staff are given reduced teaching loads in order to provide them with additional time for lesson preparation.

RESOURCES

Staffing

71   There are 363 full-time equivalent staff of whom 318.5 are full time/ fractional. Fractional full-time staff and part-time staff teach 22 per cent of the teaching hours. Fifty-two per cent of all staff are female. The proportion of staff from minority ethnic groups is 6 per cent and this compares with a proportion of students from these groups of 14 per cent. Most of the teachers have degrees and relevant professional and teaching qualifications. The college helps and encourages staff who do not have a teaching qualification to obtain one. About 60 per cent of the teachers hold assessor and/or verifier qualifications and four are qualified to assess students' prior learning experience. Some staff are also external examiners, moderators or verifiers. The extent to which staff have recent industrial and commercial experience varies; in catering staff have such recent experience, but most teachers of science, media, leisure, computing and construction lack substantial industrial experience which is up to

date. There have been some short industrial secondments for teachers of hospitality, leisure and performing arts courses. Administrative staff and technicians provide effective support for the teachers and work well with them.

72   The college's personnel procedures are appropriate. A useful handbook, containing details of personnel policies, has been produced for managers. A staff handbook contains relevant information to help staff carry out their duties. A trades union consultation group discusses matters of common interest. An interesting and innovative development has been the involvement of students in the appointment of teaching staff.

Equipment/learning resources

73   Most teaching rooms are well equipped and have basic teaching equipment such as whiteboards and overhead projectors. Television, video players and cameras are readily available. A new telephone system, including voicemail, has improved internal and external communications. There are some useful materials to help students to study on their own, for example, in mathematics and in the key skills workshop. Most specialist equipment is suitable for its purpose. The quality of the equipment is particularly good in the language centre, the restaurant, the computer-aided engineering suite, and in art and design. The administration software in catering is insufficient and there are some aging machine tools in engineering, and some out-of-date equipment in science. The college has no equipment replacement plan.

74   The library provides a pleasant working environment. It has a reading area, a silent study room, a careers library, and a staff workroom. A small number of compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) database titles are available in a separate room and there are limited facilities for students to use audio cassettes and video tapes. There is a computerised catalogue. The budget, staffing and bookstock are mostly satisfactory. Stock is weeded regularly to ensure that it meets staff and students' needs. The library is open for 54.5 hours a week during term time and is open at some times during vacations. Liaison between the library staff and teachers is effective. The library co-ordinates the purchase of textbooks for students. Students speak favourably of the quality of service they receive from the library.

75   The college has recently purchased many new computers. The overall ratio of full-time equivalent students to computers is about 7:1. Some out-of-date machines are, however, still in use. Work is in progress to network all the computers. A new computer centre is open for 30 hours a week. Staff, however, are available to help individual students in the centre for only 16 hours a week because the room in which the centre is based is also used by timetabled classes. There are no general purpose computers available for students' use in the library. Some curriculum areas such as information technology and caring provide students with

good access to computers. Students in other curriculum areas do not have ready access to computers. The computers in the mathematics workshop are not used. There is no effective monitoring of the students' use of computers and software.

76   The college has a number of learning resource areas where students can study on their own using electronic and paper-based information sources. Students find those in the curriculum areas of caring and construction to be particularly useful. The respective roles of, and the relationship between the library, the cross-college information technology resources area, and learning resource areas are insufficiently clear.

Accommodation

77   The college's main site at Wilmorton is about a mile from the city centre. The Pentagon centre is about two miles from the main site. The college also owns a restaurant near the centre of the city which is managed by staff and students. The main college buildings were built between the 1960s and the 1980s. They are located in attractive grounds and there is adequate space for car parking. Upon entering the college, a visitor receives a pleasing impression of a bright and welcoming environment. There is an attractive reception area, and adjoining it, are the refectory, the restaurant, and students' social facilities. The buildings are easily accessible to wheelchair users. Most of the interior of the college is well decorated and furnished. External signposting is clear but internal signing is incomplete. The colour coding of individual blocks is helpful.

78   Some curriculum areas, for example caring, have attractive displays of learning material, including students' work. There are, however, few pictures and posters in corridors. The nursery and the sensory impairment centres are particularly attractive. The accommodation for the teaching of GCE A level students is of good quality and that used for engineering has been well adapted to provide a mix of practical and classroom areas. The science laboratories, the sports hall and the changing rooms need refurbishment. The accommodation for art and design and performing arts is located in several parts of the main site. This dispersal of accommodation hinders the efficient operation of courses and the effective use of resources. The suite of rooms used in the Pentagon building is attractively furnished and is accessible to wheelchair users. The restaurant provides catering students with a realistic working environment in which to develop their skills.

79   The college's accommodation is well managed, and it is clean and tidy. Eight purpose-built and two adapted toilets are provided for the students with restricted mobility. Careful management has resulted in savings in energy and water costs. Security is effective but unobtrusive. The college, in association with consultants, has recently completed a space utilisation survey which shows that the overall level of use of the accommodation is low. These consultants are also working on a redevelopment of the college's accommodation strategy.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

80   Particular strengths of the college are:

*   the new governors who have a clear understanding of the issues facing the college

*   its managers who have provided effective leadership during a period of change

*   the effective support for students during enquiry, enrolment, and induction

*   good-quality teaching in most curriculum areas

*   generally well-equipped curriculum areas

*   the high-quality accommodation.

81   The college's priorities for action should be to:

*   eliminate the financial deficit

*   improve the quality and accessibility of management information

*   improve the links with, and provision for, local employers

*   improve the effectiveness of tutorials

*   complete the implementation of the new quality assurance arrangements and make greater use of targets and performance indicators

*   implement a staff-appraisal system linked to staff development

*   enable teaching staff to update their industrial and commercial experience

*   clarify the respective roles of, and the relationship between, the library, the information technology resources, and the learning resource areas.
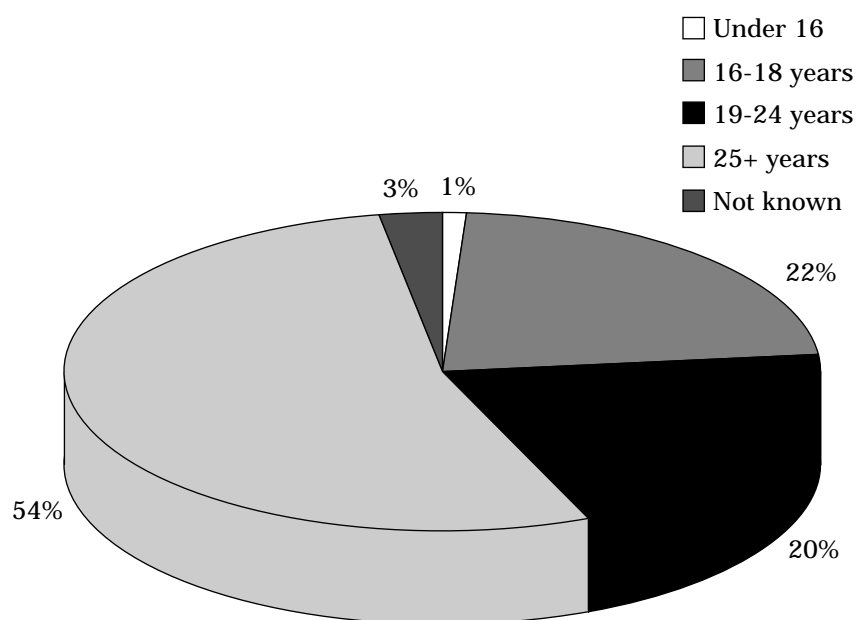
FIGURES

1	Percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)
2	Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)
3	Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)
4	Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)
5	Income (for 12 months to July 1996)
6	Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

Note: the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.
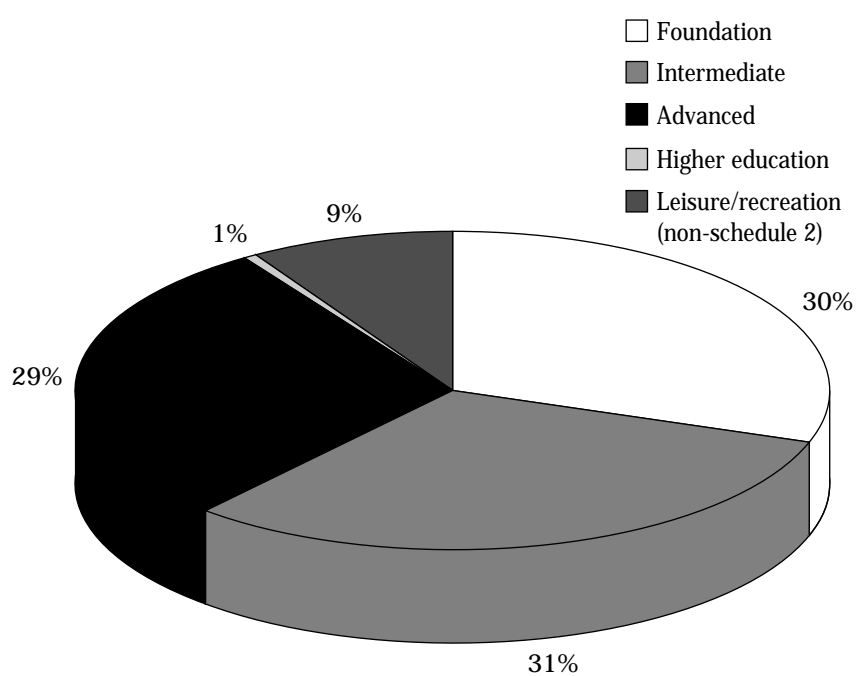
Figure 1

**Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: percentage student numbers by age
(as at July 1996)**

Under 16
16-18 years
19-24 years
25+ years
Not known

3% 1%

22%

20%

54%

Student numbers: 7,582

Figure 2

**Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: percentage student numbers by level of study
(as at July 1996)**

Foundation
Intermediate
Advanced
Higher education
Leisure/recreation
(non-schedule 2)

9%

1%

30%

29%

31%

Student numbers: 7,582

26

Figure 3

Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)
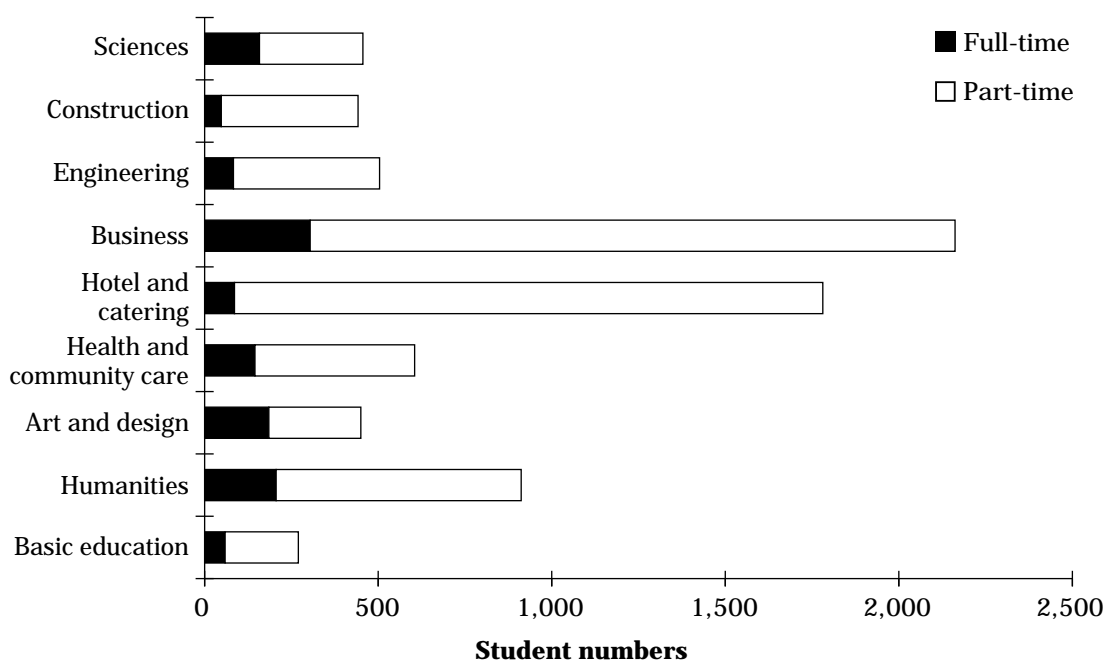

Student numbers: 7,582

Figure 4

Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)

Full-time equivalent staff: 363
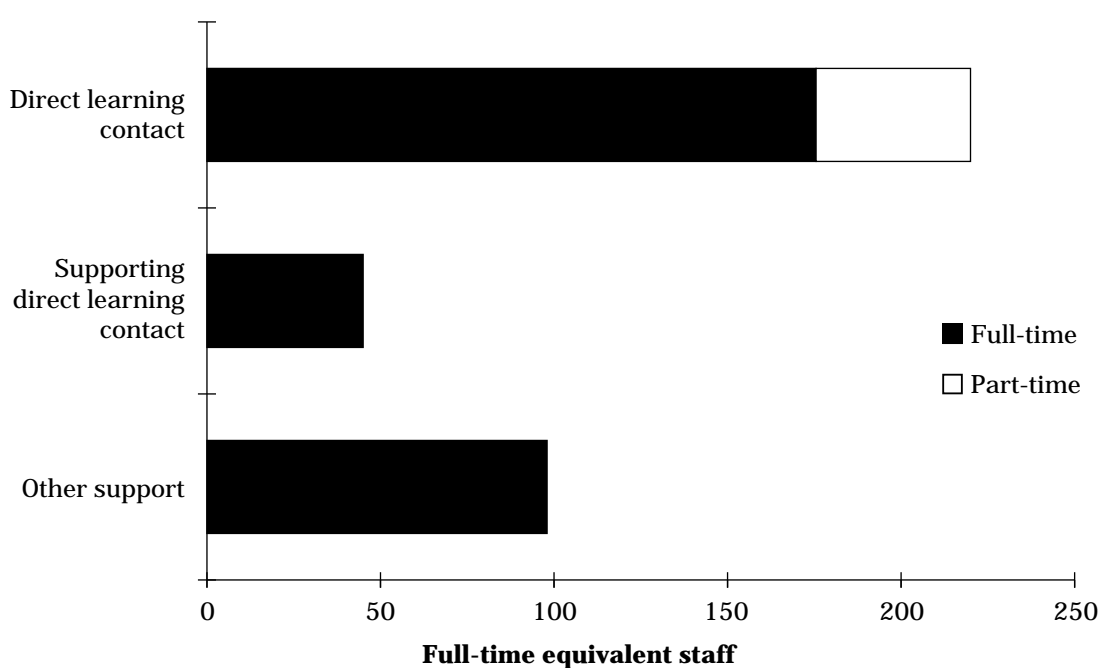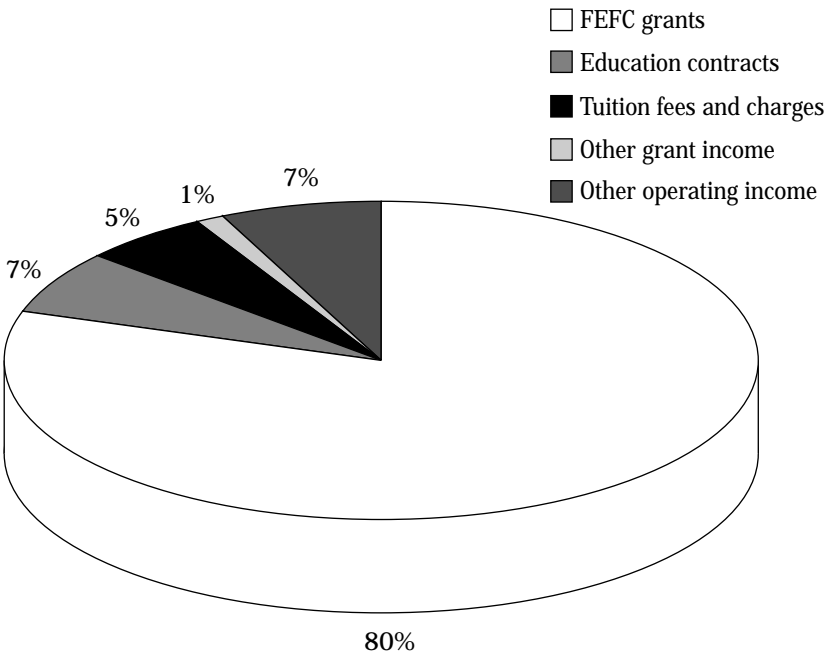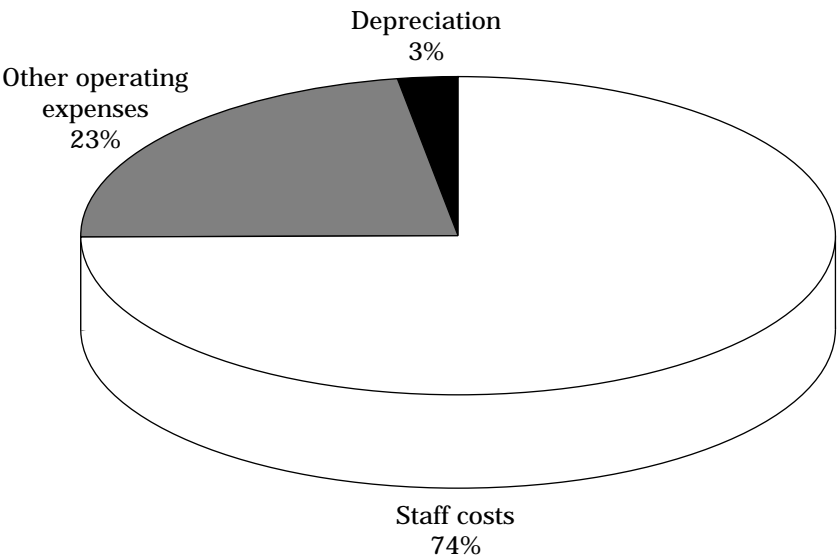
Figure 5

Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: income (for 12 months to July 1996)

□ FEFC grants
▨ Education contracts
■ Tuition fees and charges
▨ Other grant income
▨ Other operating income

7%

1%

5%

7%

80%

Income: £10,205,000

Figure 6

Derby Tertiary College, Wilmorton: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

Depreciation
3%

Other operating
expenses
23%

Staff costs
74%

Expenditure: £12,366,000