

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Huddersfield New College

March 1995

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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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.*

*Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone 01203 863000
Fax 01203 863100*

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 32/95

Huddersfield New College
Yorkshire and Humberside Region
Inspected October - December 1994

Summary

Huddersfield New College, a sixth form college in West Yorkshire, has built on its traditional provision of academic courses by successfully introducing a range of general national vocational courses and adult evening classes. It is an innovative and responsive college. It has established productive links with its partner schools, with a local general further education college and with local industry. It provides excellent pastoral support for students. The quality of the teaching is good, and teachers are committed to the success and well-being of their students. Students achieve good results in external examinations. At a time of rapid change, management and staff should work together more closely to create a basis of common understanding of, and support for, the college's strategic direction. Recent changes in the roles and functions of staff have not yet settled effectively, and communication between staff at all levels requires improvement. The college should further develop its study centres, integrate information technology with other work in curriculum areas, implement more effectively its quality assurance systems and improve staff and student accommodation.

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	1
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	1
equipment/learning resources	2
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics, science and computing	2	Creative and performing arts	2
Business studies	3	English and media studies	1
		Foreign languages	3
		Humanities	2
		Social sciences	1

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
Summary	
Introduction	1
The college and its aims	2
Responsiveness and range of provision	9
Governance and management	20
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	31
Teaching and the promotion of learning	40
Students' achievements	49
Quality assurance	63
Resources	70
Conclusions and issues	82
Figures	

INTRODUCTION

1 Huddersfield New College in West Yorkshire was inspected during the period October to December 1994. The college's enrolment and induction procedures were inspected at the beginning of the autumn term 1994. Subsequently three full-time inspectors and seven part-time registered inspectors spent a total of 23 days on specialist subject inspections. Inspectors visited 102 classes, held meetings with college staff and inspected a broad range of students' work. The inspectors also had access to an extensive variety of documentation relating to the college and its courses. In the week beginning 5 December 1994, five full-time and three part-time registered inspectors, including one inspector with experience from outside the world of education, spent a further 29 inspector days looking at aspects of cross-college provision. During the period of the inspection there were meetings with governors, a representative of the Calderdale and Kirklees Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), head teachers, the principal of a neighbouring college, local employers, parents, students, college managers and teaching and support staff.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Huddersfield New College's origins date back to Huddersfield College, a boys' grammar school established in 1838. The word 'new' was added when the grammar school merged with Hill House technical school in 1955. Following the Huddersfield comprehensive reorganisation in 1974 Huddersfield New College was established as a mixed open-access sixth form college in the buildings of the boys' grammar school, with staff drawn from the boys' school and Huddersfield Girls' High School.

3 The college caters predominantly for full-time, 16-19 year old students but has recently begun to offer adult evening classes. At the time of the inspection, 1,088 students were enrolled at the college. Of these 936 were following full-time courses. Percentage enrolments by age and by level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2, respectively.

4 The college is organised into three faculties: arts and humanities; business, mathematics, languages and geography; and science. There is a substantial programme of General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses. The college has also introduced an expanding range of General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) at foundation, intermediate and advanced level. Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 3. The college employs 65 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 28 full-time equivalent support staff. A profile of staff, expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

5 There is strong competition for students from the area around Huddersfield. Within 10 miles of the college there are 20 schools with sixth forms, two further education colleges and another sixth form college.

6 The campus, the largest green-field site in the metropolitan borough of Kirklees, is located three miles north west of Huddersfield town centre on a main access route to the M62 motorway. The boundary with the metropolitan borough of Calderdale is very close.

7 The local economy of Kirklees is dominated by small to medium size enterprises. A feature of the Huddersfield economy is the strong manufacturing base in engineering, chemicals and textiles. Several world-class companies are located in the town. Growth in manufacturing employment is at the skilled technician level. In sectors other than manufacturing, small firms predominate. The main growth sectors in the local economy are leisure and tourism, business and financial services and education. Inner-city Huddersfield exhibits many of the features of a deprived and depressed urban environment. A large percentage of the local labour force do not possess qualifications relevant to the needs of employers. In the past, this group has relied on unskilled manufacturing jobs for employment. Unemployment has risen and currently stands at 10.6 per cent. The regional rate is 10.8 per cent. Minority ethnic groups, mainly of Asian origin, form 11.7 per cent of the general population and 25.9 per cent of the college's student population.

8 In its mission statement, the college aims to provide a high-quality education for students over the age of 16. This is intended to be 'flexible, individually designed, supportive and directed towards both higher education and employment'. The college is seeking to maintain its strong academic base whilst at the same time increasing the level of GNVQ provision and attracting new client groups, especially adults.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

9 Most staff are aware of the National Targets for Education and Training and of government and Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) policies for education. The targets are explicitly referred to in the college strategic plan and have featured in curriculum planning meetings. The college has responded to the targets by extending its range of GCE A levels and by vigorously developing a programme of GNVQs. In September 1993, however, overall recruitment was virtually static and the college failed to achieve the 7 per cent growth intended. The college has been effective in countering this by achieving a 19 per cent growth between September 1993 and September 1994.

10 There is a wide and well-established range of 38 subjects at GCE A level. Many modular syllabuses have been adopted, increasing students' choice of options. Newly-introduced subjects such as law and psychology have recruited well. The college also offers some minority interest subjects such as medieval history. Ten GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects are taken by a small number of students and 15 GCSE subjects are offered. The expanding range of GNVQs currently covers six curriculum areas. Two GNVQs are taught at foundation level, four at intermediate level and all six at advanced level. The number of students following a programme

of GCSE results is declining as the college now offers appropriate alternatives at intermediate level.

11 The college has made substantial progress in broadening its traditional offering to meet new aims and objectives. This session, for example, 222 students are on GNVQ programmes and over 150 adult students are attending a range of evening classes. Some of the new provision has been established against national trends. For example, there is a successful GNVQ in manufacturing at advanced level. This has been achieved through collaboration with a local manufacturing company which recruits and sponsors the students. The opportunity to set up this industrial partnership was won against strong local competition.

12 To help meet the needs of a wider client group, a partnership was established in September 1994 with Calderdale College, a further education institution in Halifax, to provide academic support to a sixth form centre operated within Calderdale College. The objective is to provide students who find it difficult to travel to Huddersfield with access to a wide range of subjects taught in a sixth form college environment. The partnership has resulted in the sharing of staff and resources to teach a range of GCE A level and other courses for adults, which involves the use of the Huddersfield New College premises on Saturdays.

13 The college has not yet fully achieved the aims set out in its mission statement and strategic plan. The foundation level provision comprises less than 3 per cent of enrolments. There are as yet no access courses to prepare adults for entry to higher education, and there are few mature students on weekday courses. There are few opportunities for students to use the college's resources in order to follow individually-designed learning programmes at times of their choice.

14 Enrichment activities are a strong feature of the curriculum. Over 500 students are taking options which include sport, performing arts, information technology and community service. About half of the second-year students undertake three days work shadowing and about 80 are undertaking community placements ranging from helping senior citizens to assisting in primary and special schools. GCE A level students in their second year have the option of taking GCE A level general studies. There is provision for collective worship during the lunch time, assisted by a local visiting minister. The take up of modern language options in the enrichment programme and in GNVQ programmes is poor, and European awareness is underdeveloped.

15 Effective links are maintained with the college's partner schools through visits, open days and evenings, and careers events. The schools are supplied with detailed information on the progress and subsequent destinations of pupils who transfer to Huddersfield New College. The technical and vocational education initiative has strengthened the links with local schools. There are excellent channels of communication with parents. There is a range of opportunities for the community to use college

facilities for sports and social events. Junior school pupils have attended productions by a theatre company on the college site, and 47 are enrolled on a junior French course at the college.

16 There are strong links with local businesses. In addition to work shadowing and work placements, a one-day industry conference is held each year for all second-year students, when representatives from industry act as facilitators for groups of students participating in management exercises. Commercial sponsorship has been gained for curriculum development projects in information technology and to develop case studies for use in business studies. There are good links with the Kirklees and Calderdale TEC who have joined in funding the sponsored projects and the college careers library. The college has recently won contracts to deliver information technology training to local organisations.

17 The college recruits students from a wide geographical area. This session, it has recruited over 250 students from outside Kirklees. The college's marketing strategy is effectively underpinned by local market intelligence. Promotional material is well designed and a college newspaper is widely distributed throughout targeted postal areas.

18 The college's clear commitment to promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work, is supported by effective staff-development activities. The college's student charter has appropriate references to equal opportunities and clear advice on grievance procedures. The tutorial programme is used to raise awareness of equal opportunities issues and some curriculum areas have developed relevant materials. Every year there is an exchange of students with Moshi Technical School in Tanzania for which the student council carries out fund-raising events. The college's written equal opportunities policy does not do justice to the good practice which exists.

19 Every year, good support is provided for a few students with visual or hearing impairments, or dyslexia, and the college maintains good links with special schools. Apart from this there is no provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the present accommodation does not permit adequate access for wheelchair users.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

20 At the time of the inspection there were 14 governors, including the principal, two members of the teaching staff and two parents. Other members bring expertise from a variety of business and professional backgrounds including law, engineering, accountancy, personnel management, industry, education and the Calderdale and Kirklees TEC. The corporation makes good use of their skills and knowledge. There is a good balance of men and women and the minority ethnic population is represented. There are no student governors or observers.

21 Members of the corporation fully support the college's mission, and share with the principalship a clear view about the future of the college. In line with this mission, the governors and senior management have successfully achieved the broadening of provision, including the innovative partnership with Calderdale College, and the exceeding of enrolment targets for 1994. Governors take an interest in the college and the majority of members attend meetings regularly. Many attend staff training days, although there has been no formal governor training during the last year.

22 Five governors' committees deal with employment and finance, quality, audit, student consultation and remuneration. The quality committee has met once and the student consultation committee three times. The major committee of the corporation, the employment and finance committee, comprises all the governors except the staff governors, and this committee has met 19 times. It is inappropriate that the audit committee is composed of members of the employment and finance committee. This compromises the audit committee's objectivity and independence and runs counter to the Council's guidance. The governors are planning to remedy this, and the committee structure of the corporation is under review.

23 The principalship consists of the principal and three assistant principals who are responsible for finance and administration, curriculum and marketing, and resources respectively. Line management of the pastoral and curriculum systems is undertaken by two student services managers and three faculty managers, who are responsible to the assistant principal (curriculum and marketing). Together with the principalship they form the senior management group, which meets weekly. There are clear responsibilities for implementing key policies such as equal opportunities and health and safety.

24 The management structure is a complex one for the size of the college. Subject teachers operate in course teams, co-ordinated by course team leaders who report to curriculum managers, who are in turn responsible to the faculty manager. The precise roles and functions of course team leaders and curriculum managers are not fully understood by all staff. Some curriculum managers are unsure of their management role and some teams do not operate as cohesive units.

25 Changes in roles, titles and the organisational structure in recent years have resulted in some confusion amongst staff. For example, the college's organisation chart in the staff handbook shows an executive group in a direct line relationship between the senior management and the curriculum managers. However, this group does not perform an executive role, and its precise function is unclear to staff.

26 A recent survey highlighted concerns about the effectiveness of communications within the college, particularly between the senior management and other staff. Formal opportunities for communication

include a short staff briefing, held twice a week, a staff newsletter which appears approximately every three weeks, and planning days which occur two to three times a year. The vertical line management system, with its various tiers, is not proving to be an effective channel of communication between the senior management and the staff as a whole. More opportunities are required for discussion of college-wide issues.

27 The college has undergone a major and rapid change as a result of the opportunities created by incorporation. Although staff were involved in drawing up the mission statement and strategic plan, and are aware of the objectives embodied in the strategic plan, a basis of common understanding and support for the college's strategic direction has not yet been fully established. Some staff do not feel sufficiently involved in decisions affecting their work and the future development of the college.

28 The college has substantially improved its efficiency by increasing the ratio of students to teachers from 12.6:1 to 14.8:1 between 1993-94 and 1994-95. There has been a significant fall in the average level of funding between the last two financial years. The college's average level of funding for 1994-95 is recorded by the FEFC as £21.78 per unit compared with £23.64 the previous year. The median for sixth form colleges in 1994-95 is £19.81. Summaries of the college's income and expenditure for the 16 month period to July 1994 are shown in figures 5 and 6, respectively.

29 Middle managers have received very little training in finance, and the procedures for delegating financial management to curriculum managers are currently limited to supplies and services. Financial reports are available to senior managers to monitor income and expenditure. The college has developed a scheme for unit costing based on the cost of delivering each staff hour of teaching. Staff are aware of this although not all fully understand it. The system does not take into account the funding methodology of the FEFC.

30 The college management information system provides an extensive range of reports to college managers on a regular basis. Members of the senior management team receive monthly reports on college finance, student recruitment, attendance and withdrawals. The reports include a monthly graph which shows retention by subjects. The corporation receives regular statements on income and expenditure with an accompanying balance sheet, but receives no information on budget variance and cash flow. There has been relevant staff development for the college management information system support staff. The monitoring and evaluation of the college management information system is hindered by the absence of a college policy and the management information system development team does not have a membership that adequately reflects all the potential users of management information. There is no written policy for the planned updating and replacement of the hardware and software for the management information system.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

31 Prospective students receive full information and guidance to enable them to make an informed choice of course. Applicants from the local 11-16 schools benefit from the close links which the college has built up with the schools. The college organises open evenings and 'taster' days when prospective students can visit the college and sample the subjects in which they are interested. Tutors offer sound advice, and draw on the expertise of the college's full-time careers officer to give guidance to those who are undecided about their course. The college keeps in regular touch with applicants between their initial interview and their enrolment at the college. The college has no arrangements for the accreditation of prior learning and experience.

32 A four-week induction programme is common to all courses. During this period, all students receive a full introduction to information technology and take part in a library exercise designed to make them aware of the full range of library facilities. All students receive a student planner which contains useful college information, a diary section, and materials to help them plan their learning. It also informs them of their rights and responsibilities. It is clearly presented and of manageable size. Students recognise its value in providing them with information on sources of individual support, and actively use it to plan and review their work.

33 During induction, each student's learning needs are assessed and a document known as the 'individual diagnostic assessment report' is drawn up. Where necessary students are encouraged to use the study centres to improve their core skills of mathematics, English and information technology. The study centres are new, and resource materials are currently underdeveloped. Subject teachers offer extra help and support outside normal class time: for example, lunchtime clinics are held in foreign languages and physics.

34 All students are allocated a personal tutor whom they meet daily, in a group, for registration. The daily meeting provides an opportunity for information to be issued and individual appointments to be made as necessary. A strong framework of support is provided to personal tutors: they work in six teams, each team co-ordinated by a senior tutor who reports to one of the two student services managers. Students speak highly of the help and support they receive from their personal tutors. Confidential personal counselling is offered by tutors and senior tutors, who enlist the help of specialist external agencies when necessary. There is, however, a shortage of suitable accommodation for personal counselling, where privacy can be ensured. Attendance at classes is closely monitored. Tutors and senior tutors receive a weekly printout of the attendance of students in their groups to enable them to identify poor attendance and take prompt action.

35 Students receive regular feedback from their tutors about their progress. Review days are held at regular intervals. The normal timetable

is suspended to allow students to review their progress with their teachers. During these discussions targets are set and recorded in the student planners. The targets are reviewed in subsequent sessions. Students' progress is also recorded in an individual tracking record which is monitored by senior tutors. Students who wish to change their course or transfer between programmes are counselled by a senior tutor before any changes are made.

36 Each tutor group has a weekly one-hour tutorial and follows a programme of activities which includes careers and higher education guidance, individual review and group discussion of social and personal issues. The programme is well organised and there are materials to support tutors. Some group tutorials are, however, poorly managed: for example, in some sessions, most students are insufficiently occupied while the tutor holds discussions with individuals. The student services managers are seeking to develop greater consistency in the delivery of tutorials.

37 The tutorial programme is supplemented by designated days based on a particular theme. Recent themes have included health, drug abuse and industrial awareness. Students are actively involved in the organisation of these days.

38 The careers information and guidance offered to students is good. Tutors are supported by the recently-appointed, full-time careers officer and through close links with the local careers service. Students make good use of the opportunities for individual guidance: over 200 students were interviewed by the careers officer between September and December 1994. A regular newsletter is published for students to keep them up to date on higher education and employment opportunities, including information on new courses and course requirements as it becomes available. Extensive information is also available in the careers library, which contains computer software designed to help students with information on their career and higher education choices.

39 There is an active student council which represents student opinion. It has a direct link to staff, who are good at responding to students' requests. This has resulted, for example, in improvements to the students' common room. The council organises social and charity events and raises money for student facilities and activities.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

40 Of the 102 sessions inspected, 60 per cent had strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses of the work were evenly balanced in a further 32 per cent of sessions. The following table shows the grades awarded as a result of the inspection.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		12	31	17	6	0	66
GCSE		1	8	5	0	0	14
GNVQ		0	4	8	1	0	13
Other		1	4	3	1	0	9
Total		14	47	33	8	0	102

41 In the sciences, teachers used a variety of teaching strategies which, in most classes, actively involved students. The teachers demonstrated an up-to-date knowledge of their subject, and their good relationships with the students were conducive to learning. They regularly assessed students' work and kept them informed of their progress. Students appreciated the extra help which they received when experiencing difficulty with their work. Many classes, however, lacked a planned structure. In the majority of classes, teachers failed to take sufficient account of the individual learning needs of students who came from a range of science backgrounds.

42 Teaching in mathematics was well planned and involved the students in a variety of activities including group work, investigations and the use of information technology. Students were encouraged to think about and discuss mathematical concepts rather than learn techniques by rote. Additional support was available in the study centre but a lack of co-ordination between the centre and subject teachers reduced the centre's effectiveness. In computing and information technology, students were engaged in well co-ordinated theoretical and practical activities. Students on the GNVQ information technology programme benefited from well-produced additional learning support materials.

43 Students in business courses were well motivated and enjoyed their studies. Teachers were knowledgeable about their subject area and made good use of the knowledge and backgrounds of individual students. In the majority of lessons, there were appropriate schemes of work and a good variety of teaching and learning strategies. In all GCE A level and AS classes, students' knowledge and skills were appropriate to the stage and level of their course of studies. Students' work was returned promptly with relevant comments from teachers which assisted their learning. All students were given individual targets for assignments which were reviewed on a regular basis as part of their action plan. Some GNVQ lessons did not sufficiently extend students' skills and application of knowledge. In the majority of classes, there was insufficient attention to the needs of individual learners, both in the way the class was conducted and the materials which were used. Group work was ineffectively managed in many classes. In some lessons, students did not work together effectively and demonstrated undue dependence on the teachers. In half of the classes, there were insufficient checks on students' progress.

44 In art courses, students experienced a range of media and techniques. The teaching was well matched to the needs of students of varying levels of ability. Students' progress was regularly monitored and areas of weakness addressed by helpful discussions between students and teachers. Design courses were professionally relevant and practically focused. Assignments provided students with the opportunity to develop formal and informal techniques for design presentation and to experiment with a variety of media to develop craft and design skills. However, student achievement was limited by the restricted access to computer-aided design facilities. In music, performing arts and theatre studies, students' learning was helped by the positive relationships which existed between staff and students. An effective balance of practical and theory classes helped to maintain students' interest. Learning was enhanced by the access to specialist facilities outside normal lesson times. Student progress was monitored by means of regular tutorials.

45 In English classes, students were fully engaged in their work and showed high levels of concentration and understanding. Teachers used well-prepared teaching materials of a high standard. Lessons were marked by good staff-student relationships and a well-judged variety of activity. Some teachers encouraged the students to record their personal response to the texts studied in a private diary. Students were encouraged to borrow English resources to use in their private study time.

46 Foreign language classes differed widely in their effectiveness. In the best lessons, students were stimulated by skilful exploitation of contemporary materials, particularly satellite television and newspaper articles, and the language being studied was dominant in the classroom. In other lessons, English was the main means of communication, activities were mechanical and the level of student involvement was low.

47 Of the humanities subjects, standards of teaching and learning were particularly high in history. In one GCE A level European history lesson both lecturer and students approached the work with infectious enthusiasm and students were encouraged to formulate independent judgements. The quality of responses from many students was high. In history and geography, teachers made effective use of video recordings as a learning aid. In all humanities subjects, staff are knowledgeable and committed to the success of their students. Students value the course guides which provide details of the course content and assessment methods. Some classes, however, were mainly taken up with the imparting of information by the teacher, and students had insufficient opportunity to think for themselves.

48 In the social sciences, the standards of teaching and learning were particularly high in psychology and sports studies. Students of psychology receive a well-produced student handbook which includes a code of practice for the marking and return of homework. Students' progress is monitored through a well-organised system of individual review which

complements the college-wide scheme. Students were challenged in their thinking by the use of probing questions. In both psychology and sociology, students learned through discussions in which their views were treated with respect by other students and by the teacher. Schemes of work for sports studies were well planned and teachers made good use of an extensive bank of learning resources. Students' interest was sustained through the variety of activity including practical work, and regular oral and written tests.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

49 In most classes, students showed a willingness to respond to teachers. This was particularly so in humanities subjects, such as history and politics, where students formulated their own judgements and debated them fluently. In sports studies also they responded effectively and with enthusiasm. In other classes, students were more reticent. In some business studies and English lessons, for example, students showed a reluctance to respond to questions. In some modern language classes, the language being studied was not spoken as much as might be expected.

50 Where students had the opportunity to take part in group work, they did so enthusiastically. In sociology, students working in small groups collaborated effectively and exchanged lively opinions. Some of the group work in performing arts was of a high standard. In some areas, however, students' achievements were limited by teachers' ineffective management of group work or students' lack of opportunity to develop the skills of working in a group.

51 Many GCE A level students go on to higher education and are developing the skills which will be useful to them. Students of psychology showed good organisational skills and a sound grasp of research methodology in their project work. Personal studies in GCE A level history reflected students' abilities to research topics meticulously and challenge conventional interpretations. Projects in GCE A level computing were well documented. Written assignments in English were well presented and showed high levels of understanding. In a chemistry demonstration, students displayed originality of thought in applying their understanding of chemical concepts to new situations. In foreign languages, skills of independent research were insufficiently encouraged.

52 Students used study planners issued by the college to organise their schedule of work. Students of foreign languages kept careful notes of new vocabulary and structures. Note-making skills in humanities were under developed, and some science students' notebooks and files were such that their usefulness for revision was limited.

53 All new students receive a well-managed induction course in information technology, and many enrol for the follow-up course to develop their skills. In most subjects, however, students have insufficient opportunities to use information technology as part of their main course of study.

54 Good levels of practical skill were demonstrated in sport studies, performing arts, science and technology. In their laboratory work, science students showed a high level of skill and knowledge, reflecting their disciplined, interested approach to their studies. Performing arts students demonstrated their practical skill in a variety of public performances, although not all had the confidence to join in.

55 Students' achievements in the voluntary enrichment programme are of a high standard. The college's rugby union team won the British Association of Sport in Colleges national championship in 1994 and teams in rugby league, soccer, hockey, tennis and basketball have all achieved national or regional honours. An outdoor pursuits group includes kayaking and climbing amongst its activities. Students take part in wind bands, choirs and rock bands, and a recent highly-successful college production brought together over 100 students with talents in acting, singing, dancing, lighting and stage design.

56 There were high levels of achievement in the GCE A level examination. Students aged 16-18 entered for GCE AS/A level examinations in 1993-94 scored, on average, 4.7 points per entry. This places the college among the top third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure, based on the data in the 1994 performance tables published by the Department for Education. Excluding general studies, 87 per cent of the subject entries in 1994 gained grades A-E and 49 per cent gained grades A-C. These results compare well with the provisional figures for all sixth form colleges of 83 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively. The results in English were particularly good: 96 per cent gained grades A-E and 61 per cent gained grades A-C. A pass rate of 96 per cent was also obtained in GCE A level business studies. Of those subjects with 10 or more entries, all students passed their examination in design and communication, design and technology, performing arts, political studies, theatre studies, and sports studies. Sports studies has had a 100 per cent pass rate each year since the first candidates were entered in 1991.

57 The college measures GCE A level achievements in relation to students' entry qualifications. In 13 of the 24 subjects measured in this way in 1994, students gained, on average, better results than predicted by their achievements at GCSE. The most significant of these was English language. However in Spanish, art, and pure mathematics with mechanics, students' grades were significantly lower than predicted.

58 In GCE AS subjects, students' achievements were close to national averages. Of the 73 subject entries in 1994, 75 per cent gained a grade A-E pass, and 34 per cent gained grades A-C, compared with provisional averages of 70 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, for all sixth form colleges.

59 Students taking the one-year GCSE programme in 1994 gained an overall pass rate of 54 per cent at grades A-C. This compares with a 1993 pass rate of 50 per cent for all sixth form colleges. Eighty-one per cent of

those repeating GCSE English language, but only 37 per cent of those repeating GCSE mathematics, were successful in achieving a grade A-C pass.

60 Of the 28 students taking a GNVQ, 25 gained the qualification. All the students taking the Business and Technology Education Council national diploma in business studies passed, 40 per cent with distinction and 40 per cent with merit. Students taking RSA Examinations Board examinations in information technology subjects gained a pass rate of 83 per cent, including 28 per cent who achieved distinctions.

61 For each programme of study, the college compares the number of those enrolled on 1 November of the first year of the course with the number who complete the one-year or two-year course. The resulting course completion rates are high; for example, 82 per cent for the one-year GCSE course and 84 per cent for the two-year GCE A level course. The retention rate for all students, measured over one year, 1993-94, was 93 per cent.

62 The college has a good record of enabling students to progress to higher and further education. In 1994, 84 per cent of those completing their advanced programmes of study continued into higher education. Of the students completing intermediate programmes, 60 per cent progressed to advanced level courses at Huddersfield New College.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

63 The college has recently produced its own student charter which contains statements about rights and responsibilities together with complaints and disciplinary procedures. Currently, only a small number of the statements are quantifiable and the charter is not directly addressed to the wider community. However, an action plan has been drawn up for the current academic year to consider these issues, including establishing a set of service standards. All teaching staff have been briefed about the charter and the corporation was involved in refining a number of the statements. Tutorial activities have focused on an analysis of charter statements and have helped to raise awareness amongst students about the importance of the charter document.

64 The college has a key strategic objective to improve continually the quality of all its services. It has developed a quality assurance policy and framework which is monitored by a curriculum group responsible to a recently-established governors' quality committee. Appropriate in-service training has raised staff awareness about quality assurance.

65 The framework consists of a subject team action plan, a quality monitoring report which itself is derived from a number of key performance indicators, a students' satisfaction survey and a quality assurance review. Whilst some action plans and quality reports are detailed, for example, those for business studies, a number are perfunctory

and not always linked to the data on performance and students' satisfaction. In some cases, the objectives from the team action plan do not correlate with those in the quality report. The quality assurance reviews are completed against a six-point scale. The criteria for allocating these grades, however, are not clear and there are many examples where the relevant supporting comments section is not completed. A comprehensive college-wide quality monitoring report has been produced which includes all the subject plans and quality reports together with faculty summaries. However, these summaries do not result in faculty action plans or quality improvement targets for subject teams.

66 A start has been made towards evaluating the quality of cross-college services. Some of these services, such as the library, benefit from in-depth reviews supported by key performance indicators. Others are less detailed, and some areas, such as marketing and the management information system, are not evaluated in the quality report. The college recognises the need to refine its quality system and has redesigned a number of the forms for use during this academic year. It is also introducing development team plans linked to strategic objectives and performance indicators, as a means of reviewing more consistently the quality of cross-college services.

67 The college subscribes to the Advanced Level Information System which provides value-added information on student achievement. Although the college requires a commentary on value-added measures, including a comparison with performance in like institutions, for the subject quality assurance review, the Advanced Level Information System points score comparing actual achievement with that predicted, is not used as a performance indicator.

68 There is an outline staff-development policy which states the priorities for institutional and individual needs. A staff-development and training group has been established to oversee and identify the training and development needs of the college. Whilst the range of activities undertaken by staff is extensive, they are rarely related to strategic priorities. In addition, because the system is currently driven by the demands of individuals, a number of staff have received no external training over the last two years. The college has recently redesigned its training application form to facilitate course evaluation. The dissemination of information gained from staff training and development and the resulting changes to teaching practice, are not always monitored formally. An induction programme has been established for new teaching and support staff. Action plans have resulted from this process and appropriate targets have been set for the first year of teaching. A wide range of professional development opportunities, particularly related to the updating of the information systems at the college, has been provided for support staff. An appraisal system for both teaching and support staff is due to be introduced in January 1995.

69 The internal quality-assessment report is written against six of the seven inspection headings outlined in the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It provides a lucid and evaluative summary of major strengths and weaknesses for each of the areas considered. It provided an accurate and informative position statement and largely reflected the grades awarded by inspectors.

RESOURCES

Staffing

70 Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Ninety-five per cent have a first degree, 11 per cent have a higher degree and 98 per cent have a teaching qualification. Teachers in many curriculum areas are either examiners or moderators for external validating bodies. Several staff teach in more than one curriculum area. Teachers are adapting to changing curriculum needs and responding well to new curriculum initiatives, such as the piloting of GNVQ programmes. They demonstrate high levels of commitment to their students, providing both pastoral and academic support outside as well as in classes.

71 The support staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and are actively involved in planning and budgeting processes. The administration support staff hold regular meetings to review their work and set priorities. There is insufficient technician support in performing arts, design and technology, sports studies and information technology.

72 Part-time teachers are used effectively to complement the expertise of the full-time teachers. They are well supported by the college and the students benefit from their special skills and experience.

Equipment/learning resources

73 The quality and range of equipment are at least satisfactory to support most curriculum areas. The delegated faculty budgets ensure appropriate levels of funding for equipment. Audio-visual equipment is made available in all areas of the college. The reprographics equipment is inadequate to meet current needs. There are deficiencies in the level of equipment in art, the performing arts and some humanities subjects.

74 The college has made a significant investment in information technology, and a networked system is being developed. There is a ratio of one workstation for every seven students. Two large computer suites are available for student use when they are not being used for classes. In humanities, information technology equipment is not readily available in the teaching areas.

75 The library is generously funded and provides a good range of texts, as well as up-to-date computer facilities for student reference. It is managed by qualified and experienced staff. There are productive links between the library staff and course teams. The distribution of funds to

subject areas within the library is effectively monitored. There is an insufficient number of study spaces in the library to meet demand at peak times.

76 There are some good examples of learning resources being produced in house, for example, the modular study guides in psychology and information technology. All students are provided with relevant and up-to-date text books.

Accommodation

77 The college is set in pleasant surroundings, in 29 acres of grounds on the edge of Huddersfield. It is adjacent to an 11-16 comprehensive school. The green-field site provides excellent sports facilities for team games. The main building was designed as a school in the 1950s. Because there are no corridors on the upper floors, access to classrooms is through other rooms or by using one of four staircases. This layout does not make for efficient use of space, and sometimes causes disruption and inconvenience. There is inadequate access for wheelchair users.

78 Plans are at an advanced stage to remodel and renovate sections of the buildings to make more effective use of space. This includes a larger library and study centre, a new centre for the performing arts and a new block designed to provide flexible classroom accommodation. The implementation of these plans will greatly enhance the learning opportunities for students.

79 The college has refurbished many sections of the buildings to provide attractive and stimulating accommodation. This is particularly the case in design and technology, science, information technology and sports studies. The gymnasium, however, is small and in need of repair.

80 The dining area is used as an overspill for the student common room and is overcrowded at peak times. The combined area does not meet the needs of students and staff. Staff accommodation is inadequate. Most staff rooms are cramped, lack storage space and are in poor decorative order.

81 A maintenance plan is being implemented and the daily cleaning is of an adequate standard. A lack of storage space has led to clutter in classrooms and in general circulation areas.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

82 The college is making good progress towards fulfilling its mission to provide a high-quality education for students over the age of 16. The strengths of the college are:

- the effective links with local schools and the community
- the extensive range of academic courses and growing number of general vocational and adult programmes
- the productive collaboration with industry and further education

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- the commitment of the governors to the aims of the college
 - the excellent pastoral support for students
 - the high standards of teaching in most areas
 - the good relationships between staff and students
 - the high levels of student retention and achievement
 - the well-qualified and supportive teachers.

83 If the college is to improve further the quality of its provision it should:

- continue to increase opportunities for adults and part-time students
- separate the membership of the corporation's audit and finance committees
- gain increased staff support for the rapid changes in the college's strategic direction
- improve communications between staff at all levels
- clarify management roles and responsibilities
- further develop the study centres and their links with curriculum areas
- integrate information technology with other work in the curriculum areas
- implement quality assurance procedures more effectively
- improve staff and student accommodation.

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)

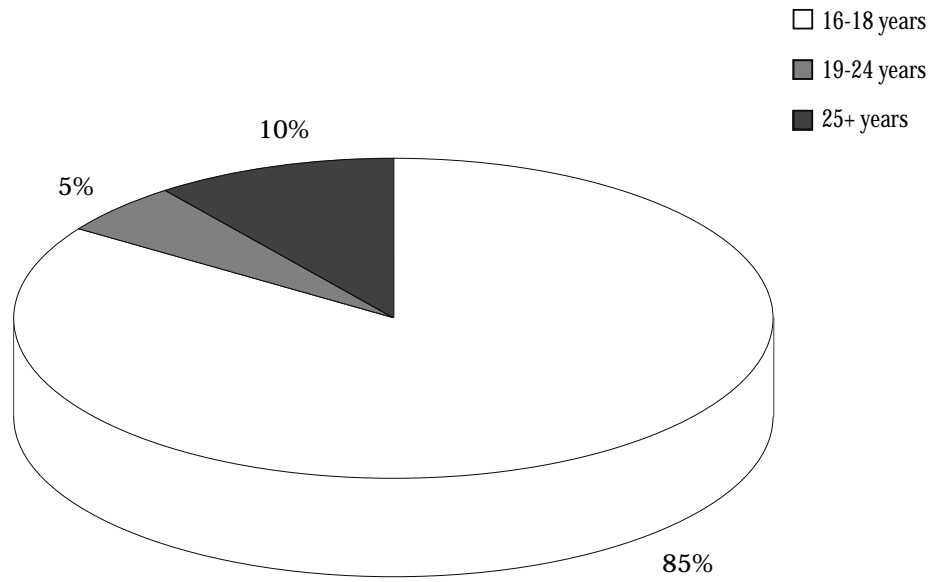
 - 5 Income (for 16 months to July 1994)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)

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

Figure 1

Huddersfield New College: percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)

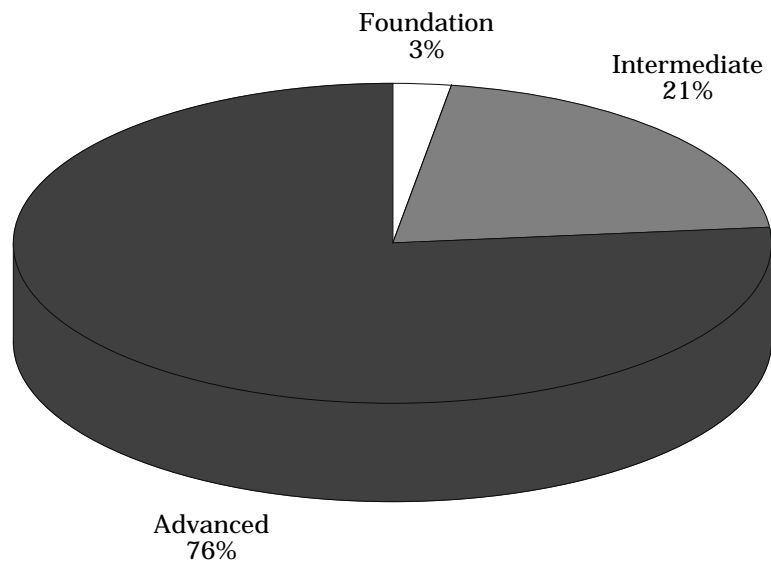


Enrolments: 1,088

Note: this chart excluded four enrolments under the age of 16.

Figure 2

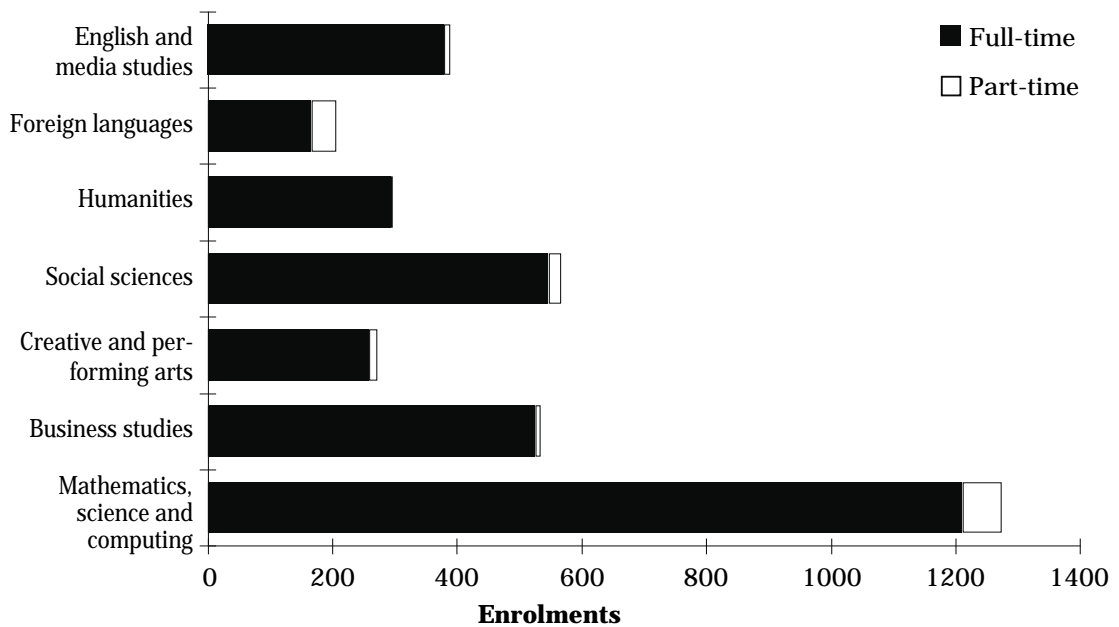
Huddersfield New College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)



Enrolments: 1,088

Figure 3

Huddersfield New College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

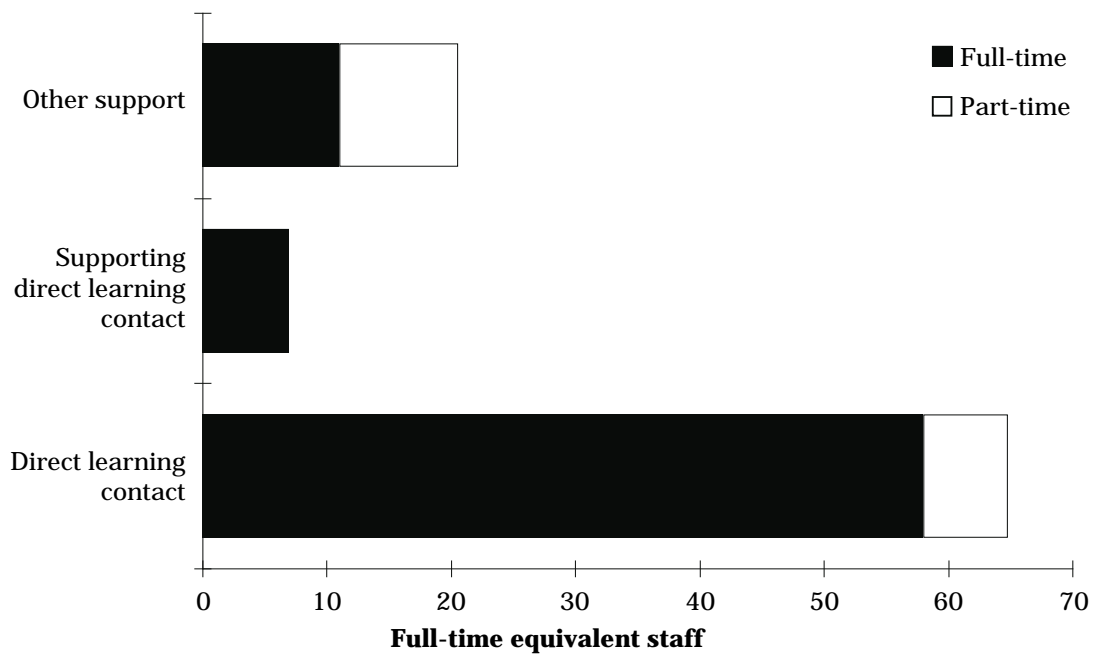


Enrolments: 1,088

Note: students may enrol in more than one curriculum area.

Figure 4

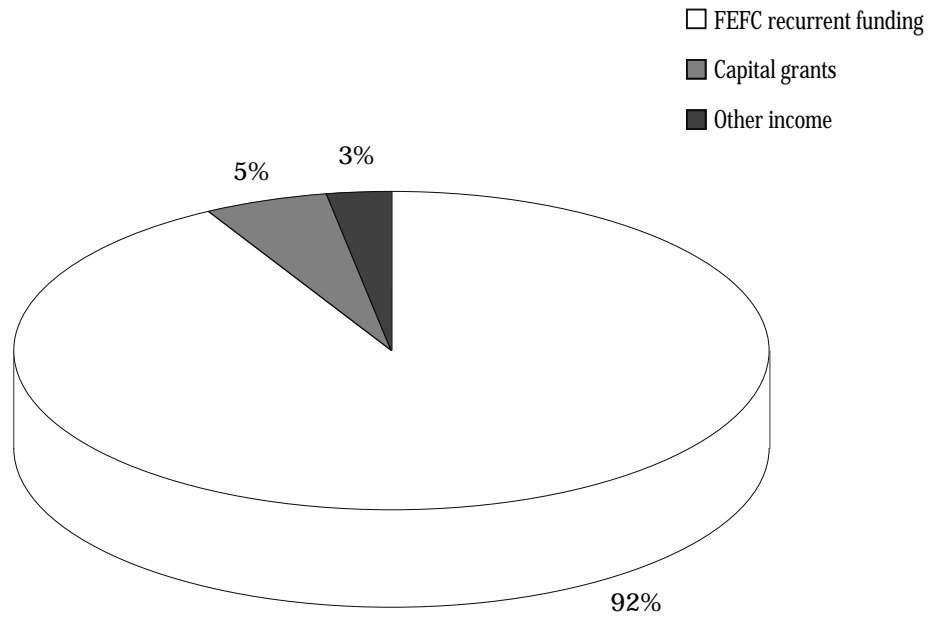
Huddersfield New College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)



Full-time equivalent staff: 93

Figure 5

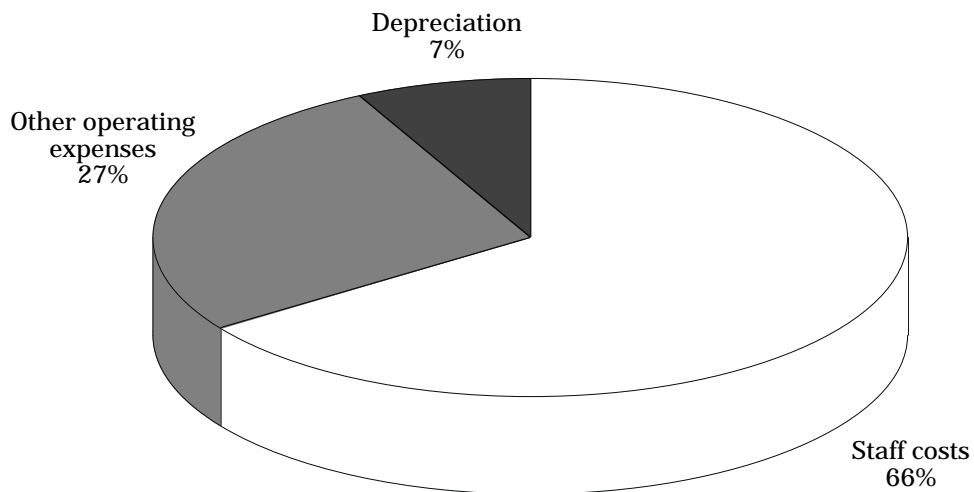
Huddersfield New College: income (for 16 months to July 1994)



Income: £3,847,627

Figure 6

Huddersfield New College: expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)



Expenditure: £4,013,895

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