

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Hull College

April 1997

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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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.

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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 35/97

HULL COLLEGE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION
Inspected February-December 1996

Summary

Hull College offers a wide range of general and vocational programmes that provide good opportunities for students to progress in their studies. The college has extensive links with the community and has been successful in attracting students from groups that are traditionally under represented in further education. Relationships with employers are productive. Members of the corporation are committed and well informed. Leadership of the college is strong and the management style is consultative. The college's central guidance and counselling team provides effective support for students. Some good practice has developed in the accreditation of students' prior learning. Standards of teaching and achievement are high, especially in art and design, construction, and engineering. Other strengths include: a clear policy and framework for quality assurance; significant participation of students in the review of courses; an appropriate staffing profile; enough resources to meet learning needs; and some substantial improvements to accommodation. In order to build on these strengths the college should: monitor the implementation of college policies more thoroughly, especially in student services; evaluate the progress of students who receive additional learning support; raise standards of teaching and levels of achievement for students on business courses and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; implement the audit aspect of the quality assurance policy; and seek to resolve the problems attached to some poor accommodation, particularly at Goole.

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

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science, mathematics and computing	2	Hair and beauty	2
Construction	1	Health and community care	2
Engineering	1	Art and design	1
Business	3	Humanities	2
Hospitality and leisure	2	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education	3

INTRODUCTION

1 Hull College was inspected between February and December 1996. Enrolment and induction procedures were observed during September 1996. In October and November, 20 inspectors spent a total of 68 days inspecting programme areas in the college. They visited 332 classes, held meetings with college staff, evaluated a range of students' work and scrutinised documentation. In December, seven inspectors spent a further 32 inspector days examining aspects of cross-college provision. During this period, they held meetings with representatives from the Humberside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), institutions of higher education and the Humberside Careers Service, and with governors, head teachers, students, parents, college managers, teaching and support staff, local employers, and other members of the local community.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Hull College is a general further education college, which traces its origins back to the city's first technical college which was founded in 1893. It is the largest college in the area and provides a wide range of general and vocational courses to school-leavers and adults on the north bank of the Humber. There are two sixth form colleges in the city and other further education colleges in Beverley, Bishop Burton, Grimsby and Scunthorpe. The city schools, in the main, take pupils aged from 11 to 16, but there are five 11 to 18 schools in the outer suburbs of the city.

3 The population of Kingston-upon-Hull is approximately 250,000, of whom less than 1 per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Hull College serves an area with a population of about 450,000 which extends from the east coast to the town of Goole, 30 miles to the west of the college. Kingston-upon-Hull, in comparison with many areas of the country, is marked by serious economic and social deprivation. The level of unemployment in the city in September 1996 was 12.5 per cent, considerably higher than the national average of 7.4 per cent. High unemployment, particularly in the central wards, dates from the decline of the fishing industry in the early 1970s. The city has a low wage economy and a high proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises.

4 Two of the college's main sites, Queen's Gardens and Park Street, are in the city centre and a third site, the Riley Centre, is four miles away in west Hull. In addition, the college shares premises in Goole with the sixth form of an 11 to 18 school. Hull College recruits directly from more than 25 schools, including 14 in the city. Over the last 12 years the proportion of school-leavers joining the college as full-time students has increased from 2 per cent to 24 per cent. However, only 50 per cent of Hull's 16 year olds continue in full-time education. This is considerably below the national average.

5 Part-time and full-time enrolments at the college have consistently increased over the last five years. In 1995-96, 26,630 students enrolled,

of whom 4,187 were full time. Student numbers by age, by level of study and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The curriculum of the college is divided between eight faculties; each consists of a number of schools. Cross-college functions are directed by heads of faculty and heads of service who report to the two vice-principals. An assistant principal is responsible for staffing and student affairs. The principal, vice-principals, assistant principal and heads of faculty form the college management team, which is the main executive group in the college. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

6 The college's mission is to provide education and training of the highest quality within an organisation that recognises and values the individual contributions of staff and students. The college is committed to provide learning opportunities that meet the educational and training needs of individual students. It aims to contribute to the economic and cultural development of Hull and Goole by achieving a significant increase in the number of school-leavers and adults who take up those opportunities.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

7 The college provides a comprehensive range of general and vocational programmes for full-time and part-time students, and is making a significant contribution to the achievement of the national targets for education and training. Eighteen programmes are offered at national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 1, 54 at level 2 and 37 at level 3. General national vocational qualification (GNVQ) programmes are available in 11 areas at intermediate level and in 13 areas at advanced level. Twenty-eight general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects and 23 general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects are available to study on a full-time or part-time basis. The college is responding to the needs of students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A number of higher education courses are offered, some at postgraduate level. A programme of enrichment activities is available for full-time GCE A level students. However, participation by other students in extra-curricular activities is low. There is narrow range of provision in areas such as music, sports studies and public services; the range of some of the provision at the Goole Centre is also limited.

8 Opportunities for students to progress within the college, from basic education through to higher education, are good. They include the 'Action' programme for adults who are returning to study, pre-GCSE courses, and an access to higher education course for mature students. A cross-college foundation level course which has recently been developed offers students a choice of vocational options as well as routes that lead to intermediate and advanced programmes. The college has appointed a 'progression counsellor' to help students to plan the next stage in their studies. Programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are

designed to help students to progress to more advanced vocational programmes.

9 The college offers students a wide choice of how, where and when they study. In addition to the four main centres in Hull and Goole, education and training are available at over 200 centres in the local community, in the workplace, and through schemes that rely on distance learning. For example, the college recently won a national award for a distance learning scheme for workers on off-shore gas rigs. Students may enrol at various times throughout the year, attend a programme of 35 short courses on Saturdays and take part in summer schools. Over 950 students attended the summer schools in 1996. Students in some curriculum areas, where appropriate materials and learning methods have been developed, are able to work on their own. On certain courses, these learning methods are at an early stage in their development.

10 The college has extensive links with the local community and actively promotes education and training opportunities for groups who are under represented in further education. Some courses are aimed at specific groups. The community education scheme comprises a programme of short courses that includes over 90 different subjects. Many are taught in primary schools at times when parents are bringing or collecting their children. The number of primary schools involved in the scheme has grown from 15 in 1994 to 100 in 1996. In 1995-96, 5,728 adults enrolled on these courses, which all lead to accredited qualifications. Many have subsequently enrolled on mainstream college courses, although the college has not kept a record of their progress. The college is a key partner in a number of collaborative schemes in the city designed to widen participation in education and training. In partnership with the North Hull Housing Action Trust, for example, the college has established a 'neighbourhood college' offering training in new skills and support for job seekers.

11 The college uses off-site collaborative arrangements to establish and fund local business and community partnerships. For example, there are franchising arrangements which involve close liaison with the Hull Council For Voluntary Service, and organisations such as residential homes, housing groups, and tenants' organisations. Courses are run for 21 organisations in the voluntary sector and accredit the skills of their clients and their volunteers. The college funds a full-time development worker to help to promote these courses. In another major franchised project, a college teacher assists a local company for one day each week to develop suitable NVQ accreditation for its employees.

12 Links with local schools are extensive and successful. They have led to collaborative schemes which are highly valued by head teachers, staff and pupils. The college runs an extensive programme of foundation level NVQ and GNVQ units in four programme areas for pupils in years 10 and 11 on both school and college premises. Ten out of the 14 Hull secondary schools are involved, and almost 300 pupils took part in 1995-96. Head teachers report that the initiative has considerably raised the aspirations,

motivation and attendance of the pupils who are involved. It has also enabled staff from the college and schools to work together on curriculum development and to learn from each other. The college has provided three one-term secondments for deputy heads from local secondary schools who have worked with college staff on topics such as styles of teaching and reading ages. The deputies have also helped the staff to develop suitable approaches for teaching the younger age group. The construction curriculum centre has focused on work with school pupils, including children at the primary stage. There were 30 projects in 1995-96, which involved some 1,400 children, and won a national training award. The college supports schools for children with special educational needs, and allows them free or subsidised use of specialist resources at college.

13 The college benefits from links with local universities. It is an associate college of the University of Hull. Courses franchised from the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside, and the University of Hull, include the first year of degree courses in biology and physics, and higher national diploma and certificate programmes in business, engineering, electronics and communications. A course for the certificate in education is franchised from the University of Huddersfield. Many members of staff from the universities sit on college committees, advisory boards and the governing body; numerous other links between staff create a strong sense of partnership. The close collaboration between the college and its higher education partners has helped to improve access for students to higher education. For example, credits may be gained at college towards the credit accumulation and transfer scheme at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside, and the University of Hull regularly awards bursaries to enable students from the college to study at the university. Students completing the access to higher education course are guaranteed an interview at the University of Hull and a conditional offer at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside. The college works effectively with other further education providers. For example, it has been successful in jointly bidding for funds with Grimsby College and has collaborated with Wilberforce Sixth Form College in the delivery of GCE A level subjects which otherwise would not have run.

14 The college has established partnerships with employers who take part in staff recruitment interviews and, as members of faculty advisory boards, contribute to the development and evaluation of vocational courses. Employers keep in close touch with college staff on routine matters and, in particular, co-operate with the college to ensure that work experience for students is managed effectively. College-employer partnerships have won national training awards; one such example is the long-term project in which construction students work with Hull City Council to build houses for a housing trust. Courses shaped to employers' requirements have generated significant income for the college as well as benefiting the local community. For example, the college provides a programme of general education for employees on company premises.

A constructive working relationship with the TEC enables the college to respond positively to the training needs of the local area. In 1995-96, the college received from the TEC £1.7 million, 7.5 per cent of its total income, to fund specific projects.

15 The college keeps itself well informed about the demand for courses by maintaining close links with its various client groups. A marketing team arranges for the dissemination of relevant information including labour market intelligence. When faculties seek approval for new courses or the revalidation of existing courses they are required to consider market needs in detail. The college's scheme for its 'community representatives' provides a highly cost-effective and successful means of promoting the college. Fifty local residents are employed for six hours each month to promote the college. They deliver leaflets, visit local community centres and other public places in their locality, for example, libraries and doctors' surgeries, and represent the college at promotional events. The college's publicity is of a high standard and includes an appropriate range of literature, some of which is intended for particular groups such as deaf or partially-sighted people.

16 The college effectively promotes equality of opportunity. Issues that involve equal opportunities form part of the induction for all new students and materials are provided for tutors to use. The equal opportunities policy requires course teams to review their curriculum materials for examples of stereotyping. The college analyses data on staff and students to identify imbalance or possible bias against particular groups. There are clear procedures for following up incidents that appear to involve personal harassment or other forms of unacceptable behaviour. The college issued an annual report and action plan to governors for the first time in November 1996 on the implementation of its equal opportunities policy. A focus group for equal opportunities, drawn from different areas of the college, has the responsibility of overseeing implementation of the action plan and a governor has a specific responsibility for monitoring equal opportunities issues.

17 There are some good links with Europe which help students of modern languages, health and community care, and business studies. The college supervises a GNVQ programme which it has established in a college in Rotterdam. The school of construction has contacts with four European institutions. A modern foreign language is available as an additional unit in a number of GNVQ courses. To date, however, only small numbers of students have taken part in visits, or are studying additional languages or are involved in other international aspects of the curriculum. A focus group has been set up to develop these aspects of the college's work and to provide a European dimension to the curriculum to which all full-time students can have access.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

18 Governors at the college are well informed, committed, and provide a good level of expertise to support the college and its work. The 20 members of the board, which include the principal, are drawn from industry and commerce, education, the professions, trade unions, the voluntary sector and staff at the college. Three governors are women. The two staff members are elected by the teaching and support staff. Two students attend corporation meetings as observers, and, although they have no voting rights, they are encouraged to take part in debates that affect or are of particular interest to the student body. The full corporation meets three times a year. Supporting documentation for agenda are of an appropriate standard.

19 The governors make a significant contribution to the work of the college as members of both the standing committees of the board and of advisory committees of the faculties. There is an appropriate range of standing committees: audit, finance, personnel, policy, premises and remuneration. A search committee makes recommendations for the appointment of new governors and another committee has recently been established to review the mission of the college. Management committees consult with the recognised trades unions and consider health and safety issues. The faculty advisory committees, which report to the policy committee, supply information on the relevance of curriculum provision to the needs of commerce and industry. The corporation has adopted and published a code of conduct, and holds a register of interests of its members. It has also recently evaluated the effectiveness of its activities. New governors are provided with an induction programme; all governors are offered a regular programme of training activities which are generally well attended.

20 The college's current management structure was established four years ago; it functions effectively and is understood by staff. The structure allows for flexibility, for example the number of schools within some faculties has recently been adjusted to meet changing enrolment patterns. The college, recognising its size and complexity, has devolved substantial responsibilities for management to the heads of faculty, the majority of whom have additional cross-college duties. The college benefits from strong and supportive leadership at senior management level and clear academic guidance from the heads of faculty. An open and consultative management style encourages staff at all levels to participate in committees and other college-wide initiatives.

21 Effective communication is maintained through an extensive programme of meetings. These include a cycle of meetings in alternate weeks of the college management team and of heads of faculty, and a series of scheduled meetings between heads of cross-college services and key line managers. The annual calendar of meetings which is produced by heads of school indicates close contact with their heads of faculty, programme managers and course teams. A senior administration group,

chaired by a vice-principal, enables heads of support services to meet monthly. In response to the view expressed by staff that communication mainly by the college newsletter was not effective, team briefings have recently been established. The principal starts the process with a core briefing, line managers in turn brief their own staff. Formal feedback from staff is encouraged and passed back to the principal. An annual address to all staff is given by the principal in July. He also meets with all staff each term.

22 The mission of the college has recently been revised and the main aims of the college have been agreed after widespread consultation with staff and governors. Both the mission and aims set a clear course for the college: to extend learning programmes; to ensure wider participation and improved opportunities; to provide effective guidance for all students; to maintain probity; and to encourage efficiency in all aspects of college operations. There is a clear recognition of the importance of the college's contribution to the social and economic development of local communities. The main aims are contained in the current strategic plan and form the basis for the construction of the faculty development plans. A range of objectives in these development plans is devised in consultation with the constituent schools in the faculties. The operating plans for each school contain clear annual targets with timescales and indicators of success. They are periodically reviewed with the heads of faculty. Recently, and in order to ensure the widest levels of consultation, a 'college 2000 planning group' has been established by the principal with membership drawn from all sections of the college. The aim of the group is to provide a vision for the college which will identify key priorities and targets for the new millennium.

23 To support the planning process and to improve efficiency in the delivery of the curriculum, a number of aggregate indicators of performance are devised at faculty level. Notably these include average class size and an annual target of teaching hours. The college also records staffing costs in relation to the tariff units which are achieved. These costs have fallen over the last three years; the college has set itself the target of reducing staffing costs by a further 13 per cent over the next two years.

24 A register of college policies has been produced. Major college policies are approved by the corporation. There is a range of policies on, for example, student support, health and safety, and equal opportunities. Monthly reports on health and safety are presented to the premises committee of the corporation, but only one report has so far been produced on equal opportunities. The monitoring of many of the policies is assumed to be the responsibility of faculties, schools and other college teams. For example, there is no formal monitoring of learning support or tutorial policies. An internal audit is planned to assess the extent to which college policies are being implemented.

25 Academic affairs are managed through the 'college council and academic board'. Discussion on policy is conducted through a committee on the curriculum which in turn has established task groups to report on particular priorities for curriculum development and for the improvement of academic standards. A comprehensive curriculum handbook has recently been written and distributed to all staff; it sets out the framework for academic organisation and management. An evaluation of the use of the handbook is planned for the end of this academic year. Boards of study in each faculty report directly to the academic board. The membership of these boards is not consistent across the faculties; terms of reference and a model for membership are provided but not always followed. In construction, for example, more than half the representatives are students; in health and social care, all staff are invited to participate. The attendance at board meetings varies considerably and in some cases was recorded as less than 50 per cent of members.

26 The college's average level of funding for 1995-96 is £17.88 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £18.13. The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The finance committee of the corporation receives detailed budget estimates, engages in financial strategies and target setting, endorses overall financial targets and receives detailed monthly management accounts. The vice-principal responsible for resources provides overall strategic control; manages cash flow, capital and reserves; and assembles the college budget. Budget holders are required to prepare and submit to the vice-principal detailed budgets for their area of responsibility. Managerial and administrative staff receive appropriate financial training and are supported by comprehensive manuals on financial systems and budget preparation. Heads of schools, teaching and appropriate support staff are aware of the principles underpinning current funding and their impact on the college's mission and its financial viability. The vice-principal and heads of faculty meet regularly to review progress against the achievement of targets on income and expenditure.

27 There is a commitment from the corporation and senior managers to improve resources for management information systems which have gone through a period of rapid updating. An information systems steering group has been established in order to define the needs of staff throughout the college. There are currently some difficulties in reconciling data held centrally and at course level. At the time of the programme area inspections, no computerised data were available to illustrate course transfer or destinations, or the number of students receiving additional support. The 1996 annual report on college information systems contains details of a rolling development plan. The plan includes the intention to extend the range of reports and access to computer terminals and refers to a planned training programme for heads of school to improve their understanding of management information systems.

28 The college has achieved its enrolment targets since incorporation. In 1994-95, the college exceeded its target by 2 per cent. At the time of the inspection, the college had achieved 97 per cent of its 1995-96 target. Although many courses have significant withdrawal rates, rates for the completion of courses are monitored and action is being taken to improve retention. For example, the college has established a scheme to identify vulnerable courses and students so that resources can reach areas where major improvements may need to be made. Destinations data are collected on behalf of the college by the Humberside Careers Service. There is no agreement at present on a measure of performance for 'appropriate progression to employment or further study', which is one of the priority aims of the college.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

29 Pre-entry information and guidance is organised effectively. Together with its faculties the college publishes detailed and well-presented material on all courses to assist prospective students. A liaison team from the college works in the schools to advise and guide groups and individual students as they seek to make well-informed choices on their future studies. An extensive programme of 'taster experiences' offers year 10 pupils the opportunity to sample courses at the college. The community representatives ensure that the information on courses is made directly available to residents in different parts of the city.

30 Interviews are arranged through the college's central admissions system for all full-time and many part-time students. Each is interviewed by a member of staff teaching on the course which the student expects to join. The central student services team provides staff with guidance and help in conducting these interviews. The team also arranges appropriate training programmes for staff on customer care that bring benefits to students and to college programmes: for support staff who also gain some knowledge of sign language; for front-line staff on help desks; and for building supervisors. Some students considered that the information and guidance provided at the pre-entry stage had not prepared them fully for their studies; they gave the example of an absence of information on the cost of studying on courses. School-leavers are encouraged to bring their records of achievement to interview but these are not always referred to by interviewers. Opportunities for transfer are built into programmes. Over 3 per cent of full-time students changed course between September and December 1996.

31 There is some good practice in the accreditation of prior learning and achievement. A major initiative, supported by the TEC and entitled 'access to assessment', involves 170 students across six vocational areas. The college intends to extend this good practice to the other programme areas.

32 The central student services team issues tutors with detailed guidance about induction. Checklists and other support materials are extensively

used during the induction period when all full-time and many part-time students are introduced to the college and to their studies. Those who join their courses late in the first term have a programme which is organised centrally. Whilst many students endorsed the quality of induction, some had reservations about its length and value.

33 Students are entitled to tutorial support which is built into all full-time and the more substantial part-time courses. There is no monitoring, either at institutional or faculty level, of the college's policy on tutorials but in most programme areas students' progress is monitored and reviewed effectively. Students value the personal tutor system and speak highly of the support they receive. However, they have limited opportunities to take part in activities involving personal and social development and do not always maintain the records of achievement which they brought from school. In some programmes, tutors concentrate on additional academic work and do not follow all the recommended activities to which students are entitled. An audit of tutorial provision that was undertaken last year highlighted some areas of inconsistency; these have not yet been fully addressed. A well-developed system for monitoring student absences is understood and accepted by students. Two welfare officers have been appointed to support tutors in following up absences, and where they have intervened there is evidence that levels of attendance have improved.

34 Students needing support with their learning are effectively identified. The vast majority of full-time and some part-time students undertake a screening test which identifies those requiring help with basic literacy and numeracy. The results of the test are notified to tutors, with recommendations for the provision of appropriate support. Although provided in the majority of cases, this support is not consistently available across the college and often learning plans do not focus adequately on students' own individual needs. The tracking of students identified as needing support, and the monitoring of the provision of that support are weak. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are generally well supported on the courses that are designed specifically for them; the quality of support which they receive on mainstream courses is more variable. The college currently provides support for 42 visually-impaired students and has made the facilities at its 'sightcentre' available to members of the local community.

35 The college has a well-developed relationship with the Humberside Careers Service. Four careers advisers are involved with students at the different stages of their studies. They attend open days and schools liaison events, support induction and tutorial programmes, and hold careers clinics in the student services unit. There is a strong and supportive central guidance and counselling team which provides advice to personal tutors as well as offering confidential counselling to students and staff of the institution. The two counsellors maintain effective contact with referral agencies and with 20 other members of staff at the college who have

counselling qualifications; together, this counselling group provides a good service. A clinic has been established primarily to deal with sexual and reproductive matters and is considered to be a particularly helpful development; it is open for two hours each day.

36 There is attractive and well-used provision for childcare on the college's main sites; the high level of this support is cited by many parents as the major factor that has enabled them to return to study. The provision is subsidised by the college and local employers who provide significant financial support through grants to students. The college subsidises travel for full-time adult students by 50 per cent, provides a free bus service between college sites and a late night 'safe bus' for students. A well-supported students' association runs a popular student common room and organises a range of social, cultural and recreational activities.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

37 Of the 332 sessions inspected, 66 per cent had strengths which clearly outweighed the weaknesses. Nine per cent had weaknesses which clearly outweighed the strengths. Twenty-six per cent of sessions were awarded grade 1, which is higher than the average of 20 per cent awarded grade 1 for all sessions observed during the 1995-96 inspection programme, according to the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. The grades awarded to the sessions inspected are shown in the following table.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programmes of study

Programmes	Grade 1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level	5	12	3	3	0	23
GCSE	3	11	3	2	0	19
GNVQ	14	19	17	8	0	58
NVQ	16	26	13	5	0	60
Access to further and higher education	2	5	2	0	0	9
Basic education	0	6	6	1	0	13
Other vocational	39	46	34	5	1	125
Other including higher education	7	7	6	4	1	25
Total	86	132	84	28	2	332

38 The overall attendance in the classes observed was 76 per cent of those on the register and the average class size was 13 students. The attendance rates varied from an average of 89 per cent in construction to 57 per cent in hairdressing and beauty therapy.

39 In science lessons, the working relationships between staff and students were good, and the students' interest was maintained. In the

better lessons, teachers used a suitable variety of teaching and learning techniques. In a particularly lively and successful lesson that was part of a beauty therapy programme, students held a brainstorming session on the factors which affect body shape and size. The poorer lessons suffered from a lack of direction and poor time management. In a few cases, the work was too hard for some of the students who consequently lost interest and became inattentive.

40 Mathematics teachers planned their lessons well, had clear objectives, provided good exposition of mathematical principles and offered helpful support for individual students. Learning was reinforced by a systematic programme of homework and tests which were accurately marked and gave feedback on students' progress. Students were encouraged to study on their own in the mathematics workshop, using materials which allowed them to work at a pace which matched their abilities and to concentrate on topics that were causing them difficulty. When this mathematics work was supporting a vocational course, teachers usually took care to place the work in an appropriate vocational context. Teaching and learning could have been improved by the use of information technology and other media such as videos, and by better use of overhead projectors. There was insufficient discussion and group work.

41 Computing and information technology lessons were characterised by clear objectives and thorough planning, which were reinforced by well-designed practical work and assignments. Many assignments were based on examples from business and industry which increased their realism. Students also made visits to companies to see ideas put into practice. Teachers made good use of group work and adopted an interactive style of teaching, encouraging students to ask questions, develop answers and make presentations. In some classes, it was difficult for all the students to see the computer demonstrations clearly.

42 In construction lessons, teachers showed great enthusiasm for their subject. They encouraged craft and technician students to work on their own or in groups, as appropriate, and to pursue personal research or develop appropriate practical skills. They skilfully related the students' own work experience to the subjects being taught. Teachers and support staff worked together in teams to help students to undertake training projects which simulated conditions at work, and also to give individual support to students to improve their knowledge of theory. Records of students' progress, particularly the tracking of NVQ achievements, are exemplary. In only a few instances did lesson and assessment practices fall below a high standard. In some sessions, there was insufficient use of audio-visual resources to enhance the learning experiences of students.

43 The teaching of engineering was well planned and ensured that students took part in a variety of suitable activities including work experience, visits and residential sessions. In class, teachers provided an appropriate balance of practical work and study of theory, made good use

of questioning and demonstration, used audio-visual aids effectively, and checked students' understanding by means of short diagnostic written tests. In many cases, practical work supported the development of theoretical concepts. Students' progress was carefully monitored and reports were issued to students, employers or parents as appropriate. In a small number of classes, insufficient attempts were made to maintain the interest of all students, and some learning materials were poorly prepared or too difficult for the students.

44 In business administration and secretarial subjects, students were competently supported by staff who dealt promptly with the different queries arising in workshop sessions. Workbooks for self-study, which were produced by college staff for information technology classes, were lucid and contained a range of tasks which were structured to suit the different abilities of students. Teaching staff demonstrated a thorough understanding of assessment mechanisms for the different NVQ levels and used record sheets appropriately to track students' progress. There was a lack of specialist learning material for the legal secretaries course and the work programme in the training office did not always sufficiently challenge those students scheduled to attend. The better classes in business, management and professional studies were thoughtfully structured and maintained students' enthusiasm and interest. In a GNVQ intermediate class, students working in groups were using local newspapers to identify whether the organisations which were advertising were local, national or international. The activity suited the wide range of abilities. However, there were occasions when not enough use was made of the students' own knowledge and experiences to help them to develop an understanding of different business concepts.

45 Standards of teaching in catering were high. Teachers had established positive working relationships with students which enabled them to participate fully in learning activities. Most classroom and practical sessions created a stimulating and appropriately challenging experience. In one successful lesson, the teacher asked pertinent questions at the start to check the level of students' knowledge and understanding before showing a relevant extract from a video which provoked further discussion and introduced new concepts. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities received strong support, and were helped to progress to higher level courses within the college. Teachers of leisure and tourism used a wide range of teaching methods and styles, knew their students well and gained a good response from them. Work placements were a part of all full-time programmes. Some of these took place in the college's health and fitness suite and travel agency, which are run on a commercial basis. On some courses, students were not provided with assignment schedules and some assignment briefs were poor.

46 In health and social care courses, students benefited from well-planned sessions which included a variety of activities, good use of audio-visual aids and challenging tasks which successfully related theory

to practice. Enthusiastic teachers frequently drew on their professional expertise, demonstrating sound subject knowledge. Occasionally, opportunities to reinforce learning were missed through a failure to give a summary of key points at the end of a teaching session. In childcare classes, activities were varied and stimulating, and included effective role-play, group and paired work. Feedback on students' written work was sometimes not sufficiently thorough; question and answer sessions did not always involve the whole student group. Hair and beauty sessions benefited from positive relationships between staff and students. Good teaching was enhanced by opportunities for students to extend their learning through studying some scientific and business applications of the subject matter.

47 Teaching in art and design was purposeful and effective, and supported by good-quality visual aids and well-designed assignments. Teachers made good use of their recent or current professional experience. There was an appropriate balance of teacher-led activity and freedom for students to develop their own ideas by working independently. Staff gave good support to individual students. The standard of the teaching in performing arts and media was consistently high, lessons were well structured and teachers were demanding and professional. Students used hired premises in the city for theatre productions, which enhanced their experience. Students of art and design, performing arts and media worked together on appropriate activities, for example theatre design, to broaden their knowledge of the programme area.

48 In English lessons, teachers challenged students and provided them with stimulating and interesting work. Group activity was effectively managed. In GCSE classes, students often studied independently and at their own pace using learning packs of high quality. Students were able to make a steady start to the work through a five-week pre-GCSE programme which provided them with accreditation if they decided not to progress to GCSE. In some sessions, students rarely took part in the learning activities. Most classes in foreign languages were well structured and taught predominantly in the language being studied. Activities were designed to encourage communication between students who received helpful support from foreign language assistants. In some classes, teachers gave students insufficient opportunities to practise their language skills. The quality of the teaching in other humanities classes was good. The lessons were thoroughly prepared, taught in a lively manner and accompanied by helpful handout material. In the best lessons the teachers maintained a brisk pace, challenged the students and often obtained a thoughtful response from them. However, teachers dominated some classes and this led to an insufficient response from students.

49 Teachers of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities established positive working relationships with students and worked hard to motivate and encourage them to learn and to achieve. Some students benefited from the opportunity to learn in a working environment, for

example the college bistro. A positive start had been made to restructuring the programmes which had been specially designed for students with learning difficulties. However, the need to provide evidence for accreditation dominated some of the teaching and learning. Staff did not include specific objectives for individual students within their lesson plans and, in some programmes, gave too much emphasis to whole-group, classroom-based activities. In some sessions, inappropriate teaching strategies were used, such as asking students to copy writing from the board which was at too high a reading level. Students had too few opportunities to assess their own work or that of their peers.

50 Teaching and learning in adult basic education and on the community education programme was well planned and recorded. Accreditation was available to all who required it. Working relationships between staff and students were generally excellent. Efforts were made to support the independent learning and individual needs of students, particularly those with dyslexia. In the primary school initiative, many tutors took good account of their students' previous experiences and levels of achievement. Overall, there was a lack of detailed and specific individual learning targets, with little variety in teaching methods or resources. In some sessions within the community education programme, the teaching style discouraged students from becoming actively involved.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

51 In many of the teaching sessions, students were attentive, enthusiastic, and able to speak about their work in a confident manner. Mature students, in particular, completed their work on time; they were able to study at a pace and level which matched their ability. Teachers ensured that safe procedures were followed in practical activities and notices that advised on safe practice were prominently displayed in workshops and laboratories. The standards achieved in practical activities were high, particularly in art and design, construction, engineering and sports studies. In catering, in addition to their practical work, students were encouraged to gain a certificate in basic food hygiene. In computing, work involved realistic assignments and commercial practices; in business administration the absence of commercial contracts limited the range of practical tasks which could be performed in the training office. Similarly the shortage of models in hairdressing reduced opportunities for achievement. Where students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were given the opportunity to learn vocational skills, they responded well to the challenge of practical tasks. They were less well motivated in classroom-based sessions.

52 Key skills formed an appropriate part of many courses; the communications, information technology and mathematics workshops provided further opportunities to develop these skills. Most of the teaching of GCSE mathematics, for example, took place in the learning workshop where students were encouraged to work independently. Students had

good access to information technology facilities and developed skills not only in wordprocessing but also, for example, in the analysis of data using spreadsheets. In health and social care courses, personal development skills were appropriately emphasised together with the other key skills. In engineering, specialist teachers of communications worked alongside their vocational colleagues in workshop sessions to correct poor written work. There were many examples of teaching sessions where oral communication skills were effectively practised, particularly in modern foreign languages; however, numeracy skills were less consistently developed. In some key skills sessions, for example those in art and design, students were not always sufficiently challenged.

53 Portfolios of students' work were often well organised, particularly on GNVQ courses. Files and log books for construction and engineering students were clearly written and provided good evidence of planning and evaluation. In general, standards of work were appropriate for the level studied and, where relevant, a significant proportion of competencies were demonstrated through work experience. Primary research was a particular feature of the assignments undertaken in childhood studies. The standards of completed work in the spatial, textiles and photography areas of art and design were high.

54 Many students enter the college having achieved poor GCSE results at school. In 1996, for example, only 22.6 per cent of year 11 pupils in the city schools achieved five or more GCSEs at grade C or above, according to tables published by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). This compares with the national average of 44.5 per cent. In 1996, 70 per cent of the 454 college students aged 16 to 18 on the final year of advanced vocational courses and 53 per cent of the 313 students on intermediate programmes were successful. In both cases this places the college nationally in the middle third of colleges of further education. The students in the same age group that year who were entered for GCE AS/A levels, scored on average 3.5 points per subject entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2). These figures also place the college nationally in the middle third of colleges of further education according to tables published by the DfEE.

55 Pass rates on science courses at GCSE and GNVQ level were above national averages in 1996. Although the pass rates at GCE A level are satisfactory overall, the proportion gaining A to C grades in biology and physics is low. The pass rate of 42 per cent for the national certificate programme in 1996 was also unsatisfactory. The completion of courses by students is a particular problem on part-time courses; many fail to continue from the first to the second year of two-year programmes. In mathematics, pass rates are generally sound but there is concern that too many students do not complete their course. For those completing the GCE A level, the pass rate was 94 per cent in 1995 and 88 per cent in 1996, well above averages in the sector. GCSE mathematics results were also good in 1996 with 61 per cent passing at grade C or above. Retention

of students on both programmes was, however, below 40 per cent. Results in computing are improving in GNVQ programmes, with passes averaging above 50 per cent in 1996. Good results over the last three years have been achieved on a City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) modular information technology scheme which has over 300 enrolments; an 86 per cent success rate is recorded for 1996.

56 Courses leading to NVQ awards at levels 2 and 3 are particularly successful in construction. Some, for example those in wood machinery, plumbing, painting and decorating, had pass rates of 100 per cent in 1996. The performance of students following GNVQ courses has improved and pass rates are now well above national averages. The progression rate of craft students onto higher level courses is particularly good. A number of craft and technician students have achieved major individual awards. For example, a student on the postgraduate Chartered Institute of Building course recently obtained the highest marks nationally and internationally for project evaluation and development. Pass rates on two-year advanced level engineering programmes averaged 86 per cent, and at intermediate level they were over 75 per cent. On some part-time craft programmes, results are less satisfactory. Rates for the retention of students are generally good and, in most cases, are above 80 per cent.

57 Achievements are sound for many of the awards for single subjects in business administration; for example, the pass rates in text processing at stages 1 and 2 are usually concentrated between 70 and 85 per cent. The large numbers of students entered for the computer literacy and information technology award consistently achieve close to a 90 per cent success rate. The proportion of students achieving full awards in 1996 for NVQs is satisfactory at level 2 but below 50 per cent at level 3. Pass rates in the national certificate programmes in business studies have averaged over 80 per cent during the last two years. However, only modest achievement is recorded on GNVQ programmes, for example a 54 per cent pass rate at advanced level in 1996. Retention of students on GNVQ programmes is also less than satisfactory. On NVQ programmes in management, whilst rates for completion of courses are high, pass rates are modest.

58 In catering, the proportion of students gaining GNVQ advanced awards is above the national average and a significant number pass with a distinction grade. Students are also able to gain NVQ units on this programme. Pass rates for other catering programmes, including the basic food hygiene certificate, are often good except at GNVQ intermediate level where they have averaged just over 50 per cent over the last three years. Retention of students is an issue on a number of two-year programmes; in some cases, more than half of the students leave before completing their courses. Results on level 3 programmes in sport and leisure mainly show pass rates of 80 per cent or better in 1996. However, the GNVQ intermediate programme is less successful; fewer than 30 per cent of students have achieved an award over the last three years.

59 Full NVQ awards in hairdressing and beauty therapy have averaged nearly 75 per cent of students during the last three years. There have been particularly good results on the part-time hairdressing course at NVQ level 2 where course completion is also usually over 70 per cent. In health and social care courses, achievements at advanced level have been generally sound, but less satisfactory on GNVQ foundation and intermediate programmes where pass rates fell below 50 per cent in 1996. A 93 per cent pass rate is recorded in 1996 for the level 3 childcare diploma; results on advanced nursery nursing courses are also sound, averaging over 70 per cent. Retention of students on courses is sometimes poor, particularly at intermediate level.

60 Overall pass rates in art and design are above national averages. On advanced spatial and graphic design courses they were over 90 per cent in 1996. At intermediate level, pass rates averaged 80 per cent. Annual rates for retention of students are above 90 per cent, although a significant number of students on two-year programmes leave after the first year. GCSE results in media and art and design at grades C or above were usually over 80 per cent in 1996; the GCE A level results in art and design and photography were also good but those in theatre studies were less satisfactory. A high proportion of students in this programme area progress to higher or additional further education.

61 In the humanities programme area, GCSE English language and literature results are good for students aged over 19, with 82 per cent of the 88 students who entered in 1996 gaining grade C or above. However, students aged 16 to 18 averaged only half this rate for grade C or above in the same year. There were sound results at GCE A level in English literature although only small numbers of students entered. In modern foreign languages the best results occurred on teacher training and access courses; results were weaker at GCSE and GCE A level. Retention is poor on many courses particularly for part-time students studying in the evenings. In the other humanities subjects, some unsatisfactory results in daytime GCSE and GCE geography and psychology courses coincide with high rates of withdrawal from the courses. Results above national averages were achieved in law, economics and history where pass rates were close to or above 90 per cent. A high percentage of students completed the access to further education programme and succeeded in moving on to higher level courses.

62 Only a small number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have been entered for external awards; some have progressed to mainstream programmes. Many, however, progress only from one specialist programme to another. Accreditation for adult basic education students is underdeveloped. Only 44 certificates, for example, were awarded in 1996 for wordpower and numberpower, although 142 students were enrolled.

63 The college employs the Humberside Careers Service to undertake surveys of the destinations of students when they leave the college. The

results of these surveys are published annually in a college booklet. Provisional figures for 1996 show that 66 per cent of full-time students progressed to further or higher education, or to employment related to their courses; 7 per cent went to other employment or to training programmes; 8 per cent gained part-time or temporary employment; 10 per cent were unemployed; and 9 per cent of destinations were unknown.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

64 All students and staff receive copies of the revised version of the students' charter for the college which is printed in the student diary and handbook, and is available in minority ethnic languages, Braille and on tape. Students are given a clear explanation in the handbook of what they are entitled to receive from the college. Staff understand the commitments in the charter, which are monitored through the college system for assuring quality. The system for making complaints functions effectively and can also be used to record appreciative comment. The recent introduction of suggestion cards is proving to be a useful method for learning about the concerns of students and has produced results, for example improved signposting of facilities within the college.

65 The college policy on quality is succinct, comprehensive and included in most documentation for use inside and outside the college. It is clearly understood by staff. The management structure for quality assurance has recently been revised. A college committee for quality has been established and reports to the college council and academic board. It is chaired by one of the vice-principals, draws its member from teaching staff and students, and includes the vice-chair of governors. The terms of reference of the quality committee include the validation of all new curriculum programmes and the review and revalidation of existing courses every five years. External groups or institutions, which are collaborating with the college to run courses away from the college's sites, receive extensive guidance on the college's quality assurance systems, to which they have to subscribe before contracts are signed. The universities working with the college also have to comply with the quality assurance systems that the college operates.

66 Systems of quality assurance for courses are well established. They focus on the course teams who are responsible for keeping course logs up to date, for setting standards and targets, evaluating the success of their courses and making plans for improvement. Detailed guidelines on the content and organisation of the course logs are provided by the college and, in the majority of curriculum areas, the files are kept up to date. Students are encouraged to participate in evaluating their courses and most course teams include student members who are provided with training to help them to carry out this role. Teachers report that this training has been effective in improving the quality of the contributions from students. Course teams review the quality of both the support

provided for students and the working relationships between staff and students. They monitor the rates for completion of courses by students and their achievements. Course reviews in many of the programme areas are rigorous and contain an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses that contribute to an action plan. In mathematics, the review process lacked thoroughness and in leisure there was insufficient use of performance indicators to support the comments in the review.

67 Annual reports on different aspects of quality are considered by the corporation, which also initiates improvements. For example, following a report to the board summarising the views of external verifiers, the teaching of key skills on GNVQ courses is being reviewed to achieve greater consistency. The service areas of the college are less advanced in developing systems to assure quality. All the support units are involved in producing their own standards including entitlements for students and staff. Some areas, such as the library and human resources, are currently piloting agreed standards; they are in draft form for the other service areas.

68 The quality of provision is evaluated effectively through questionnaires issued to students and to employers. Three questionnaires on cross-college issues are circulated by the management to a selected sample of students, involving about 6 per cent of the student body. In addition, most students complete questionnaires which relate specifically to their programmes of study. The findings influence analysis of courses, but as they remain confidential to the course team and students, they cannot be used for other evaluations in the college. The analysis of some of these opinion surveys is not sufficiently rigorous and there is often no formal feedback to students about the outcomes of the questionnaires. In addition, student opinion is gathered through tutorials and individual contacts and has led, for example, to improved induction and tutorial programmes. Employer perceptions have not been surveyed systematically until very recently; views have previously been gathered through personal contact at meetings of advisory bodies or on visits to employers' premises. The college has in the past engaged external consultants to report on aspects of quality assurance. As yet there has been little development of an internal audit system, which is specified in the quality policy of the college. The quality committee intends to pursue this matter in the near future.

69 Expenditure on staff development represents 1.2 per cent of the college budget. It is matched to college and curriculum priorities, and the results of reviews by staff. Five days are allocated annually to whole-college activities. As a result, all full-time staff were able to participate in staff-development activities during the last year. The college has identified a comprehensive range of accredited training for all staff. This includes assessor and verifier awards, counselling, information technology, and the teaching of basic skills. Staff at middle management level have attended

staff-development sessions each week aimed at improving their leadership skills. A management development policy has resulted from this activity and includes opportunities for accreditation of the training. All staff-development activities are recorded and courses are promoted through a college publication called 'The Investor'. In recognition of its commitment to staff development, the college was awarded Investor in People status in January 1997.

70 The annual cycle of staff appraisal by line managers is well established and includes the identification of future staff-development needs. Appraisal has been of particular value to staff working in the service area. Part-time staff are also entitled to individual reviews, or like the cleaning staff they are able to opt for a group appraisal session if this is their preference. 'Reflection' sessions for those who have been appraised are held to evaluate the process of their review. These have resulted in modifications to the appraisal scheme. New staff are generally well supported through induction programmes which are run by the college and the faculties. In addition, each new staff member is allocated a mentor. In some cases, staff starting work in mid-term miss the designated termly induction programme and receive insufficient guidance on their roles and responsibilities.

71 In order to prepare for inspection, each programme area completed a self-assessment review and prepared an action plan. Summaries of the action plans were included in the college's self-assessment document. Despite variations in the thoroughness of the individual assessments, the report maintained a high level of honest self-evaluation. Inspectors agreed with the majority of conclusions at college level, if not always at programme level. Action points were not identified but were implicit in the weaknesses.

RESOURCES

Staffing

72 The college manages staffing issues competently. An appropriate range of policies has been developed and tested in practice. The great majority of teaching staff are working under revised contracts which were negotiated without recourse to industrial action. 'Learning advisers' were introduced in 1995-96 to support the work of teachers, for example through the assessment of competencies in workshops. Currently, 30 full-time and 13 part-time learning advisers are employed. Their role was reviewed in July 1996, but needs further clarification. Whilst detailed records of staff absence and sickness are maintained, these records are not used as an indicator of the college's performance. Part-time staff, for whom there are flexible employment arrangements, provide students with valuable current commercial and industrial experience. In each of two curriculum areas at Goole, only one full-time teacher is employed. Co-operation between teachers in similar disciplines at Hull and Goole is variable; the college is developing strategies to improve the sharing of good practice.

73 A large majority of full-time and part-time staff are well qualified and have appropriate experience for their roles in the college. Almost 80 per cent of the full-time and substantive part-time teaching staff have recognised teaching qualifications, and the remainder are working towards this standard. Good progress has been made in most vocational areas in achieving individual assessor and verifier awards. Teachers on vocational courses often lack recent industrial experience, and in some faculties too few staff have appropriate qualifications to support any expansion of higher level courses. Teachers who were taking workshop sessions for students with a wide range of abilities or running classes for adults in the community were not always adequately experienced or trained.

74 Teachers are generally well supported by technical staff. Technicians working in specialist areas of the curriculum are responsible to the heads of faculty and are represented at faculty, school and course level meetings. The level of support provided for the sciences is less effective than in other specialist areas. Support staff for media services and information technology are managed in units that work across the college. They are responsive and provide a competent standard of service. An unexpected staff vacancy and some communication difficulties during the period of the inspection reduced the effectiveness of the support for information technology, particularly at the Riley Centre.

Equipment/learning resources

75 Equipment is effectively managed. A register of all assets has been established and is increasingly useful for planning future expenditure. A schedule for maintenance is regularly used to check and to service major equipment. Appropriate attention is paid to safety requirements. Central control of the purchase of capital items helps to obtain value for money through bulk purchase; when placing orders for new equipment careful attention is also paid to records kept throughout the college of the quality and reliability of previous purchases. Faculties take particular care to recycle used materials whenever possible. The resources available to support teaching in specialist areas are generally sufficient in quantity and of a good standard. A variety of modern aids supports students with visual impairment. Successful bids for special funds have resulted in some purchases of high quality to support learning. For example, in electrical engineering and in motor vehicle studies, suites of electronic workstations are used to study real or simulated electronic and vehicle systems. In a minority of specialist areas, the equipment resource is outdated or insufficient to support class sizes.

76 Each of the main college sites has a library, and, in general, students judge the service to be of good quality. Faculties are delegated a separate budget for the purchase of books and periodicals, and are regularly required to examine the bookstock to identify redundant texts. There is now sufficient and up-to-date stock for most subjects. The libraries support

specific topics and assignments across the programmes through a system of boxes that contain extracts from lengthier materials. These are well used and appreciated by students. To improve access to these printed resources, the college transfers the information on to compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) disks. The library at the Riley Centre is proportionately the most heavily used and has insufficient study spaces. Students on all sites lack appropriate facilities in which to work in small groups on assignments or projects without interfering with the private study of other students. Students are able to purchase many of their recommended texts at the well-stocked college bookshop at Queen's Gardens.

77 Most students' studies are supported by sufficient and modern information technology hardware and software. Many subject areas have dedicated computer suites, and there are good arrangements for open access to information technology facilities on all sites. In a number of subjects, for example in mathematics and humanities, neither the contribution of information technology to teaching and learning within the curriculum nor the resources that are required have been sufficiently developed. In design studies the computer equipment needs to be upgraded and increased to match growing demand. The college is in the process of modifying its policy on resource-based learning and will be promoting learning centres in all of its teaching schools.

78 General teaching rooms are equipped with basic teaching aids such as whiteboards, overhead projectors and screens. Most have furniture of adequate quality which allows the space to be used appropriately for formal or informal activities. A newly-developed lecture theatre at the Wilberforce Centre is equipped with a range of advanced audio-visual aids. In a minority of areas, the furniture used is unsuitable or worn.

Accommodation

79 The college's accommodation has been greatly improved since incorporation through rationalisation and investment. The accommodation strategy was developed with the assistance of external consultants shortly after incorporation and is currently being brought up to date. Maintenance and development schedules are aligned with other planning processes. All rooms are surveyed for their suitability for purpose. Faculties are given clear timetabling guidelines; targets for room usage are set, and detailed surveys of actual occupancy are carried out. Information from surveys is considered at the regular meetings between faculty and college managers. Management arrangements for the current building stock are sound although, because of its age and variety, it remains difficult to manage. There are particular problems associated with the joint ownership of the Goole Site, for example the maintenance of those buildings which are not wholly owned by the college.

80 Overall, the general teaching accommodation, circulation areas and public rooms are in good decorative order. They are well maintained, and provide a pleasant and appropriate learning environment. The college has made considerable progress in making its facilities available to those with mobility difficulties and estimates that 93 per cent of its total floor area can be reached by wheelchair users. An increasing emphasis is being placed on security. Routine patrols are provided by external contractors at all sites. They are supplemented at Queen's Gardens by a small in-house security force and a sophisticated closed-circuit television system. Some classes take place in classrooms that are too small. The quality of refectory provision for students varies; for example, at Queen's Gardens the main refectory is often too crowded and the smaller coffee bar is a more popular alternative. There are still buildings of poor quality, for instance the temporary accommodation at Goole. There are inadequate sports facilities for students at all centres except Riley, and few appropriate social areas for staff.

81 Many of the areas for specialist teaching are of high standard. For example, students of plumbing crafts benefit from an extensive craft workshop. Motor vehicle and fabrication and welding studies are based in large purpose-built accommodation at Riley. Catering students service and operate a high-quality bistro at Queen's Gardens and performing arts students enjoy a stage and studio facility which has been imaginatively converted at Riley. The 'solutions' information technology centre which has been opened recently provides an environment of a professional standard for clients from small businesses and for students from within the college. Good-quality base rooms are provided for some student groups, for example in child studies, but many other groups have neither a designated base nor lockers in which to keep their learning materials. Much specialist teaching takes place in rooms without any special subject identity. Some facilities that are intended to attract custom from the general public are in need of refurbishment, for example the training restaurant and the hair salons.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

82 Hull College is making significant progress towards achieving its mission to provide education and training of the highest quality and to contribute to the economic and cultural development of local communities. Its strengths include:

- the wide range of general and vocational programmes with good opportunities for progression
- extensive links with schools and the community
- provision for students from groups that are under represented in further education
- productive relationships with employers

-
- committed and well-informed governors
 - strong leadership and a consultative style of management
 - consistent achievements of enrolment targets
 - good practice in the accreditation of prior learning and achievement
 - a strong and supportive central guidance and counselling team
 - some high standards of teaching and achievement, especially in art and design, construction and engineering
 - a clear policy and framework for quality assurance
 - significant participation of students in course team meetings
 - an appropriate overall staffing profile
 - good levels of resources for learning
 - improvements made to the quality of accommodation at the Queen's Gardens and Park Street Sites.

83 If the college is to build on these strengths, it should:

- monitor thoroughly the implementation of college policies, especially in student services
- evaluate the progress of students who receive additional learning support
- raise standards of teaching and levels of achievement for students on business courses and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- further develop auditing systems in line with the quality policy
- seek to resolve the problems attached to some poor accommodation, particularly at Goole.

FIGURES

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- 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)

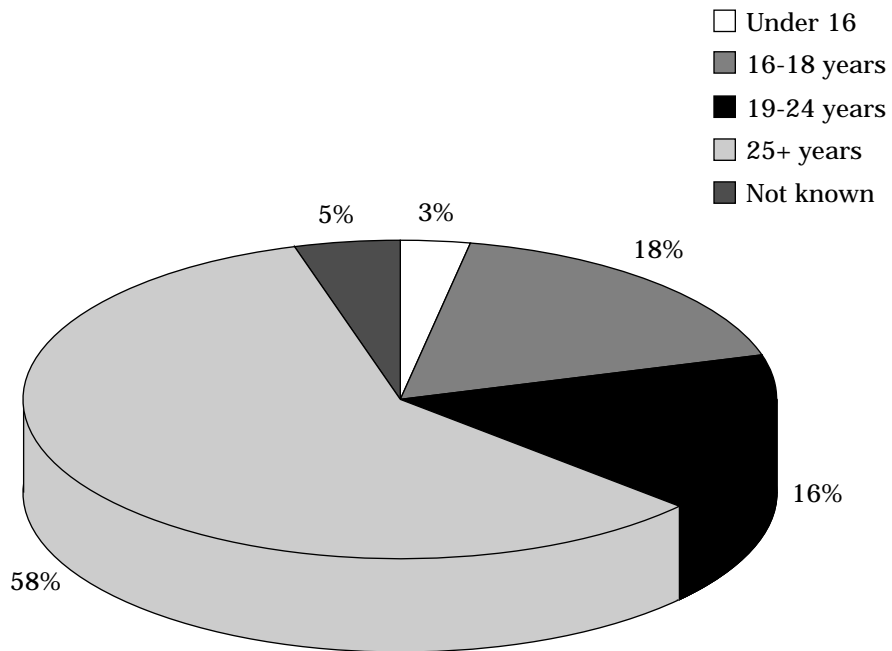
 - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1996)

 - 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

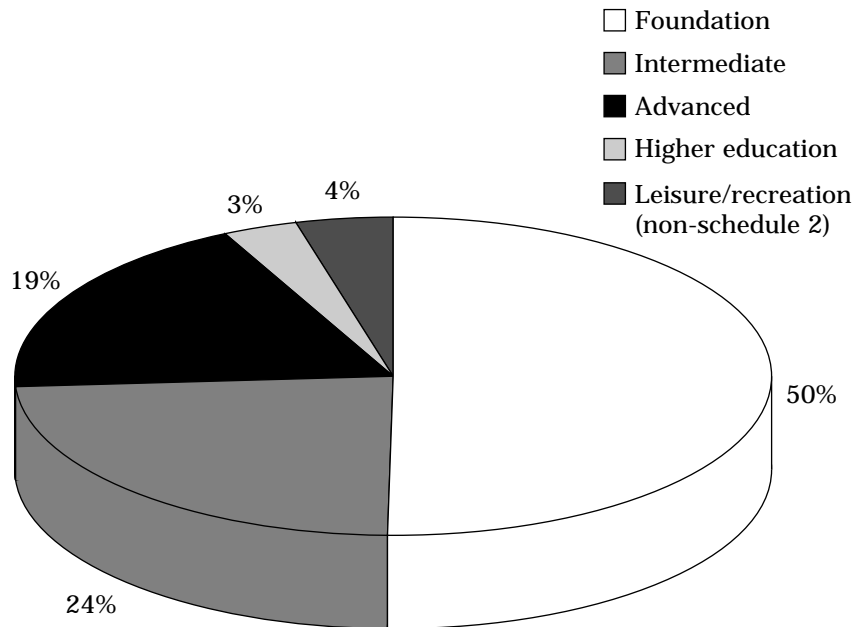
Hull College: percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 26,630

Figure 2

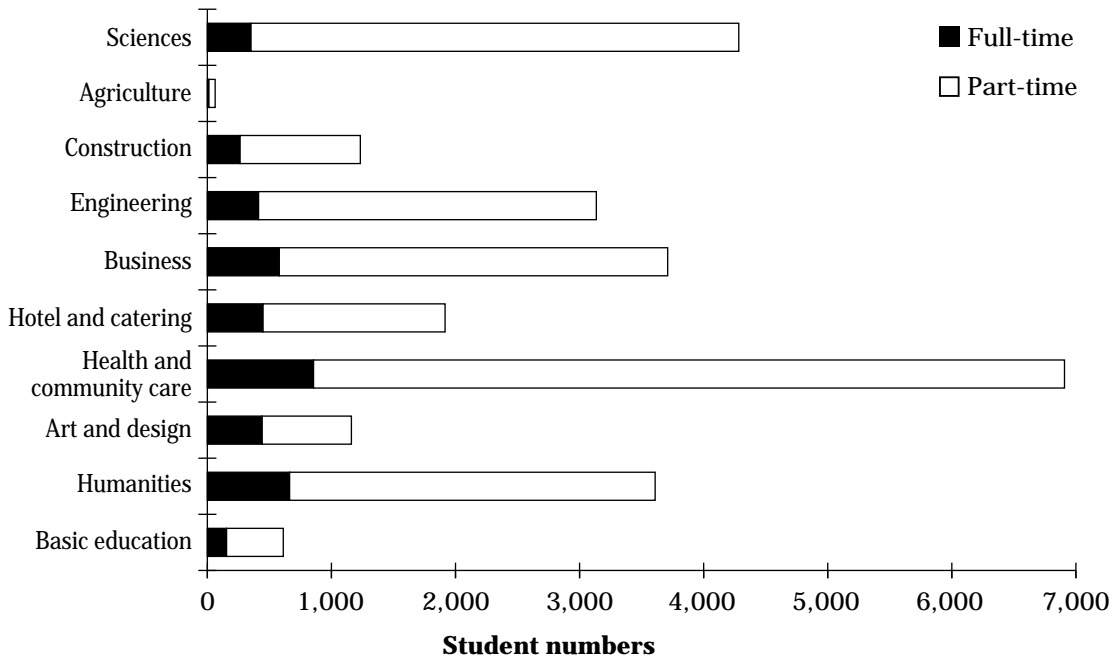
Hull College: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 26,630

Figure 3

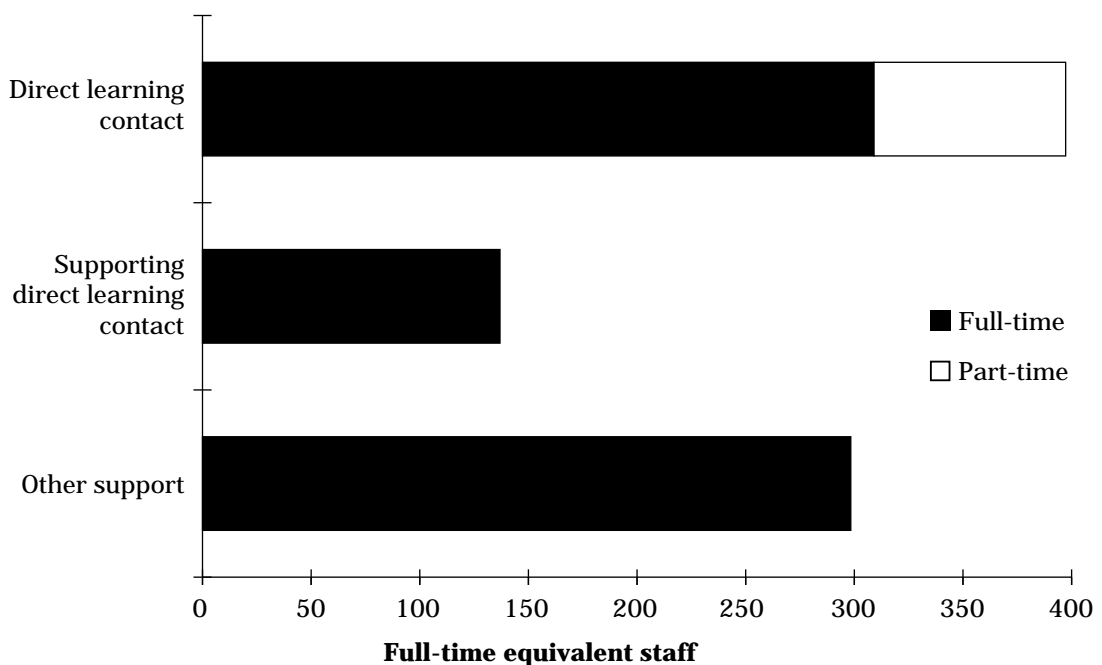
Hull College: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 26,630

Figure 4

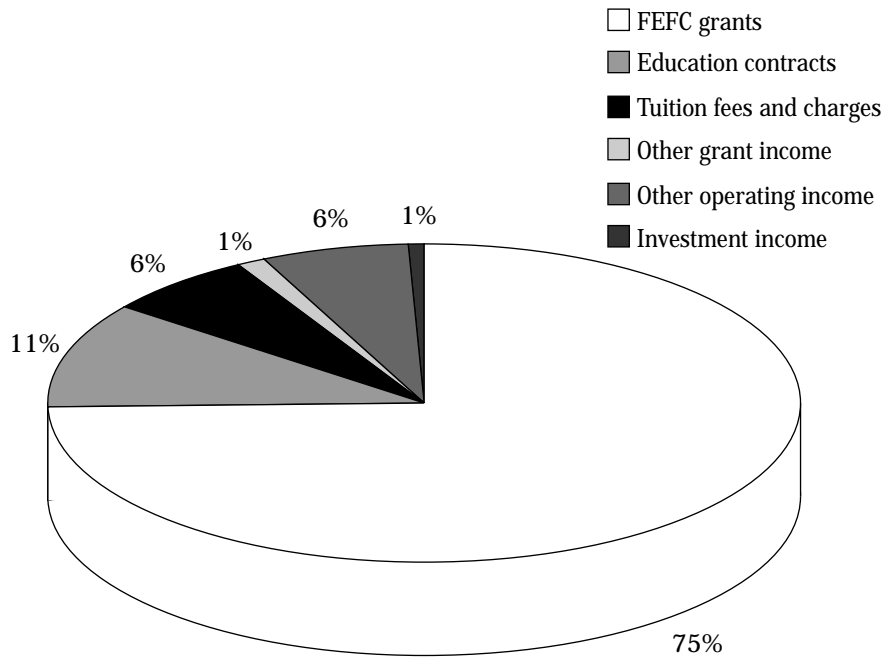
Hull College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)



Full-time equivalent staff: 833

Figure 5

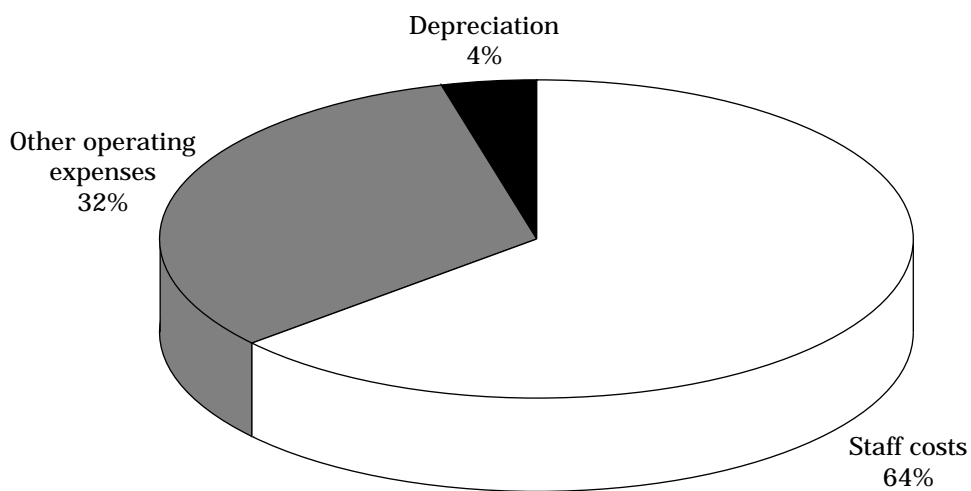
Hull College: income (for 12 months to July 1996)



Income: £21,755,000

Figure 6

Hull College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)



Expenditure: £22,088,000

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