

Lewes Tertiary College

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1997-98**

**THE
FURTHER
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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 according to a four-year cycle. It also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum, disseminates good practice and advises the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circulars 97/12, 97/13 and 97/22. Inspections seek to validate the data and judgements provided by colleges in self-assessment reports. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in the work they inspect. A member of the Council's audit service works with inspectors in assessing aspects of governance and management. All colleges are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

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Grade Descriptors

Inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the report. They use a five-point scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses.

The descriptors for the grades are:

- grade 1 – outstanding provision which has many strengths and few weaknesses
- grade 2 – good provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses
- grade 3 – satisfactory provision with strengths but also some weaknesses
- grade 4 – less than satisfactory provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths
- grade 5 – poor provision which has few strengths and many weaknesses.

Aggregated grades for aspects of cross-college provision, curriculum areas and lesson observations, for colleges inspected during 1996-97, are shown in the following table.

	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	%	%	%	%	%
Curriculum areas	9	59	30	2	–
Cross-college provision	18	51	27	4	–
Lesson observations	19	42	31	7	1

Source: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. Grades were awarded using the guidelines in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*.
Sample size: 122 college inspections

Retention and Pass Rates

Where data on students' achievements appear in tables, levels of achievement are shown in two ways:

- as a retention rate, which is the proportion of students who completed a course in relation to the number enrolled on 1 November in the first year of the course
- as a pass rate, which is the proportion of students which passed examinations in relation to the number entered. Pass rates for GCE A level are quoted for grades A to E unless otherwise specified. Pass rates for GCSE courses are quoted for grade C or above unless otherwise specified. Pass rates for vocational and professional awards are for successful completion of the full award.

Summary

Lewes Tertiary College

South East Region

Inspected March 1998

Lewes Tertiary College is in East Sussex. Production of the college's first self-assessment report involved governors and staff at all levels. It was prepared as part of the college's thorough process for assuring quality, and was additional to the regular review report. A self-assessment was produced for each area of college activity, identifying strengths and weaknesses and specifying actions that are needed to achieve improvement. Inspectors judged that the college's report inadequately reflected the substantial work invested in self-assessment. Whilst strengths were clearly identified, there were instances in which weaknesses were not identified or there were no action points related to the weaknesses. Many statements were descriptive rather than evaluative. The college produced a useful update of the report before the inspection. Evidence supporting the report was clearly referenced and enabled inspectors to substantiate many of the judgements and all of the grades reached by the college.

The college offers a wide range of programmes in all of the FEFC's programme areas. Inspectors selected a sample of five of the college's curriculum areas on which to base their validation of the self-assessment report, including off-site collaborative activities, together with aspects of cross-college provision.

Standards of teaching are good. The quality of provision for students on performing arts and media courses is outstanding. Individual support for students is effective. There are appropriate, well-organised work placements on many courses. Links with local schools are good. The college works with many partners including Sussex Enterprise. Curriculum-related projects support local business, community groups and those people who would not normally consider entering further education. Outward collaborative provision is well managed and has been developed effectively in pursuit of the college's mission to serve the local community. The college has made considerable progress in many respects since the last inspection. Enhanced procedures for quality assurance, that have resulted in measurable improvements in performance, are especially notable. The governance and management of the college are outstanding. The executive management team provides sound financial management and adopts an open management style which is valued by staff. The college has made considerable progress in improving the standard of accommodation and equipment. In some curriculum areas retention rates are poor. The college should: develop a more rigorous format for reporting its self-assessment activities; enhance support for part-time students; and improve signing and decor in some buildings.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Science, mathematics and computing	2	Support for students	2
Leisure, tourism and sport	3	General resources	1
Performing arts and media	1	Quality assurance	2
English, communication and languages	2	Governance	1
Basic education	2	Management	1

Context

The College and its Mission

1 Lewes Tertiary College in the county town of East Sussex was created in 1989 from the amalgamation of a technical college and the sixth form of an adjacent school. Lewes, which has a population of around 15,000, is the location for the college's two largest sites that together form a college campus next to a leisure centre and a secondary school. The college also has a site six miles away in Newhaven. This is to be sold and replaced by a new centre for technology and enterprise as part of an economic development initiative funded through the single regeneration budget and competitiveness fund.

2 The college serves a large part of East Sussex. The majority of full-time and part-time students are recruited from within a radius of 12 miles. The county of East Sussex contains the large coastal resorts of Brighton, Eastbourne and Hastings, together with a large rural hinterland of small towns and villages. Sixth form colleges and 11 to 18 schools predominate in the county; they create a highly competitive environment for the college. However, the college doubled its student numbers in the period up to incorporation. Since then it has increased the provision that is funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) by 30 per cent. The college offers a balance of vocational and academic programmes.

3 To widen access for potential students in the region to a range of provision for education and training, the college has developed an extensive network of partnerships that includes outward collaborative provision with five community colleges, Sussex Rural Community Council and Sussex Careers Service. The college has significantly increased its provision for employers; it actively supports economic regeneration in the area. The college delivers adult education in Lewes and Newhaven under a contract with the county council and also provides an education service at Lewes Prison.

Courses are offered in partnership with Sussex and Brighton Universities and Kent Institute of Art and Design. The college recruits significant numbers of students from overseas, largely from Europe and countries along the Pacific Rim.

4 The nature of employment in Lewes and the surrounding area is changing. Most large employers are in the public sector. Ninety per cent of businesses in East Sussex employ fewer than 25 people. Opportunities for employment in the region are growing for all groups of workers, but especially for women; there is an emphasis on part-time employment. The regeneration programme in Newhaven is expected to create up to 2,000 new jobs by the year 2002. Strong growth in self-employment is also predicted.

5 In line with its mission, the college seeks to widen access to learning opportunities and to provide the highest possible standards of teaching and service within an environment that helps both staff and students to achieve their goals.

Context

The Inspection

6 The college was inspected in March 1998. The inspection team had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and reviewed information about the college held by the FEFC. The college submitted data on students' achievements for the three years 1995 to 1997 which were checked before the inspection against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies.

7 The college was notified of the sample of provision that was to be inspected approximately two months before the inspection. The inspection was carried out by 12 inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 52 days. They observed 106 lessons. These included tutorials and lessons taking place under arrangements for outward collaborative provision. They examined samples of students' work and a wide variety of documents. Meetings were held with governors, managers, college staff and students, including officers of the students' union. There were also meetings with staff of partner schools and with managers of other organisations with which the college collaborates.

8 Of the lessons inspected, 64 per cent were rated good or outstanding and 7 per cent were less than satisfactory. These figures compare with figures of 61 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, for all colleges inspected during 1996-97, according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of student attendance during the inspection was 81 per cent; this compares with a figure of 77 per cent for all colleges in 1996-97, recorded in the same report. The following table shows the grades awarded to the lessons inspected.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	8	22	12	1	0	43
GCSE	2	2	4	1	0	9
GNVQ	4	3	5	2	0	14
Basic education	4	8	3	2	0	17
Other vocational	7	8	7	1	0	23
Total	25	43	31	7	0	106

Curriculum Areas

Science, Mathematics and Computing

Grade 2

9 Thirty lessons were observed in several college programme areas. The college's self-assessment report contained separate assessments for the three areas of computing and information technology (IT), mathematics, and science. Each report was brief, concentrated on strengths and failed to identify some of the weaknesses which were found by inspectors.

Key strengths

- innovative work experience for students on courses leading to general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs)
- key skills an integral part of vocational courses
- performance in the general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) examination
- good standard of work from students on GNVQ advanced and GCE A level programmes
- the contribution of new management responsibilities to raising standards

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates for students on two-year courses
- students insufficiently involved in their work during some lessons
- insufficient detail for many schemes of work and lesson plans

10 Working relationships between teachers and students are good. Schemes of work have been produced for all courses. Many schemes only itemise topics against a list of weeks and make little reference to the activities that should assist learning. Lessons were well planned. Teachers used an appropriate variety of

activities to hold students' attention. They applied question-and-answer techniques effectively, and used their own and students' experiences to promote discussion. Practical demonstrations illustrated the theory being taught. In less effective lessons students were neither challenged nor given the chance to respond for long periods. Teachers spoke at length without checking whether or not students were understanding what was being taught. These weaknesses in teaching were not identified in the college's self-assessment report. Students are regularly set homework. Assignments are marked and returned promptly. Written feedback is often more helpful for students on GNVQ and access courses than for GCE A level students; in some cases, comments are too brief to be of any help.

11 Most students' achievements in examinations are good although the need to increase the number of students completing courses is an issue that the college has identified in its self-assessment report. In GCE A level, the number of successful students in science, mathematics and computing subjects has steadily improved from 69 to 86 per cent over the last three years. This rise has been achieved during a period when retention rates have been stable, a strength identified by the college in its self-assessment report. Students' achievements in chemistry and biology have improved significantly over the last three years; they reached a pass rate of 100 per cent in 1997. Pass rates on general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses have fallen slightly over the last three years but the retention rate has improved. GCSE results are similar to the national average for further education colleges. The number of students who fail to complete advanced vocational courses is high at about 35 per cent. The pass rate for these courses, however, is very good and reached 88 per cent in 1997. Students of mathematics have been particularly successful. In 1996, three students were placed in the top five candidates for their syllabus, and one of

Curriculum Areas

these was awarded the gold medal for overall GCE A level performance. Another student was awarded a prize for GCE A level geology presented by the Geological Society. A high proportion of students progress to higher education. These successes were clearly identified in the college's self-assessment report.

12 All courses are well managed. Curriculum management has recently been reorganised. Teachers have been appointed to leadership roles for groups of courses. They are enthusiastic about their new roles and have begun to effect improvements to the quality of the teaching and the management of courses. The college has set targets for retention and achievement. Progress is regularly monitored. Teachers with responsibility for individual subjects have produced action plans to address the issues, particularly retention rates and levels of achievement, that were raised by self-assessment. Learning resource areas have been established for science and mathematics. Students are given additional help; the aim is to improve their understanding and, eventually, their grades in external examinations. The arrangements for work experience for GNVQ advanced students are particularly effective.

Employers were originally encouraged to offer places so that they could benefit from student assistance with computing projects, particularly the development of databases. This initiative proved to be particularly successful and employers are now keen to offer places to students.

13 The college is well equipped for courses in science, mathematics and computing. Resources for computing are particularly good. The college has the latest commercial specialist software. All computers are networked and the internet is available by arrangement on any computer. There is sufficient specialist equipment for all science courses. Particular attention is paid to issues affecting health and safety, including risk assessment. In mathematics lessons, graphics calculators are available for students when they are required. Teachers are well qualified; most are graduates with teaching qualifications. An increasing number of teachers hold assessor awards.

Examples of students' achievements in science, mathematics and computing, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level	Retention (%)	64	62	61
	Pass rate (%)	69	81	86
Advanced vocational	Retention (%)	74	60	64
	Pass rate (%)	81	67	88
GCSE	Retention (%)	76	72	87
	Pass rate (%)	45	44	39
Intermediate vocational	Retention (%)	64	90	80
	Pass rate (%)	86	56	50

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Leisure, Tourism and Sport

Grade 3

14 The inspection covered a wide range of provision; 12 lessons were observed. Many of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report were supported by inspection findings. Insufficient weight was given to the uneven quality of the teaching.

Key strengths

- a wide range of programmes
- well-equipped specialist facilities for sport and leisure
- well-managed and well-planned teaching
- well-managed learning support and tutorial activities

Weaknesses

- some lessons in which the pace of work was too slow
- no additional trade qualifications for the GNVQ tourism courses
- low retention rates on some courses
- low achievement rates in GCSE physical education

15 The self-assessment report identifies the wide range of programmes provided and the direction that the college has taken in response to external demand for courses. Inspectors agreed these are strengths. Inspectors disagreed with judgements on teaching and learning in the report; they found that only some of the provision was effective. Practical sessions in the gymnasium were of a high standard. Most of these lessons were well planned and teachers used a wide range of strategies for teaching and learning. In most lessons students worked in a businesslike manner and this helped them to progress. The less successful lessons were conducted at far too slow a pace, did not have clear aims and objectives, or

involved too many activities. Sometimes, teachers failed to make best use of students' experiences to help them to become more confident in their learning. During a few practical sessions in which class control was unsatisfactory, students were distracted and little was achieved.

16 A new national diploma in sports studies was introduced in 1997 to complement GNVQ and GCE A level programmes. The GNVQ course in tourism lacks sufficient vocational relevance. Various additional sports awards are offered including rugby coaching; a limited range of coaching awards is available through the college-wide 'electives' programme. Travel and tourism trade certificates are unavailable to GNVQ tourism students. The sports and leisure aspects of the curriculum are more energetically managed than the provision for tourism. In some areas, schemes of work are inadequate. There is no statement of aims and no reference to teaching methods and resources. Much of the work on the review of courses and action-planning for improvement is satisfactory.

17 Students' written work is of a good standard. Assignment briefs for students are easily understood, well managed and have clear assessment criteria. Teachers' written comments on work are often supportive and help students to make progress. Students complete a self-assessment for work which is formally submitted for assessment but, in some cases, there is little correlation between their judgements and those of their teachers. There is no overall assessment policy which has been agreed by all teachers. Inspectors found it difficult to identify which students' work had been verified internally. Students' achievements on the GCE A level programmes are close to the national average for general further education colleges. Retention rates have not reached the college's targets. Students' achievements on both the GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses are below the national average. Retention rates have been below the college's

Curriculum Areas

target for three consecutive years on the advanced course and for two out of three years on the intermediate course. These rates are identified as a weakness by the college in the self-assessment report. Pass rates on the GCSE physical education are very low.

18 Inspectors agreed that the college has good basic resources to support all aspects of the programme area. Accommodation includes: a gymnasium; sports fields; ample changing facilities; and during daytime, priority access to the adjacent leisure centre which has a sports hall, specialist training areas, and a swimming pool. Students are encouraged to participate in national and county events and have obtained national or county awards in hockey, gymnastics, golf, athletics and swimming. The college closed its travel agency in 1994 when courses were rationalised. This closure has reduced tourism students' opportunities for practical learning. Their base room is inadequate and it is not effectively utilised. Classrooms are well equipped and clean. Modern computers and CD-ROMs are available in a well-equipped learning resources centre. Most teachers have a degree and a teaching qualification. Many teachers are still working towards assessor qualifications.

Examples of students' achievements in leisure, tourism and sport, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level physical education	Retention (%)	74	61	74
	Pass rate (%)	81	84	77
GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism	Retention (%)	63	55	77
	Pass rate (%)	52	45	57
GCSE physical education	Retention (%)	88	64	100
	Pass rate (%)	29	11	13
GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism	Retention (%)	65	71	85
	Pass rate (%)	16	52	77

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Performing Arts and Media

Grade 1

19 Inspectors observed 13 lessons which covered courses at GCE A level in media, film, dance, theatre studies and music; GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses in media; and GNVQ advanced in performing arts. Inspectors considered that the self-assessment report was insufficiently detailed.

Key strengths

- consistently good and frequently outstanding teaching
- the range of teaching and learning styles and strategies
- a well-planned curriculum
- appropriately structured learning
- students' high, often excellent, levels of achievement
- a broad range of performance opportunities

Weaknesses

- inadequate records of team meetings
- no consistent monitoring of action points

20 The programme area is divided into four sections: media including film; performing arts including theatre studies; dance; and music. Each section contributed to the preparation of the self-assessment report. A number of key strengths were identified by staff and students. They have not been analysed in a way that enables improvements to be made and good practice to be shared.

21 Most lessons are well taught and learning is lively and challenging. Of the classes observed, 12 were good or outstanding. A wide range of teaching methods is used. Lessons are well structured and the aims are clear to students. In practical classes, students are encouraged to adopt professional work

practices. Dance students carry out an intense, rigorous warm up programme which demands a mature level of mental and physical concentration. The dance staff provide good role models for students through their own high levels of achievement and commitment to their specialism. The dance studio is spacious, meticulously maintained, quiet and conducive to high standards of professional practice.

22 Relationships between lecturers and students are good. Students work co-operatively and effectively as individuals and as members of a team. When working on the production of a magazine, they successfully allocated roles and tasks and worked at their computers with enthusiasm to produce images and articles. The teacher guided them calmly through new computer processes and the students were then able to apply these processes confidently in producing their publication. Technical skills in production, voice and singing are well developed. Students are confident; they talk about their work with knowledge and enthusiasm. As noted in the self-assessment report, external verifiers' reports confirm the strength of the courses.

23 Students in all areas spend a considerable amount of time outside college practising their specialism. Music students receive individual instrumental tuition. A pre-professional music course is offered for students wishing to enter higher education. Music is housed in a separate building in the centre of Lewes. Rooms are drab and there is little attempt to enliven the environment. Students are obliged to travel between the music centre and the college which sometimes makes them unavoidably late for classes. Students found a lesson in music technology absorbing; they outlined the purpose of their compositions, and clearly explained the sources and stimuli. After listening to tape recorded compositions, the group critically appraised each piece. The lecturer prompted and challenged their thinking and extended their understanding and appreciation. The

Curriculum Areas

range of students' ideas, their technical approaches and capacity for making constructive criticism were being developed effectively.

24 Students' achievements are high. In dance, media and music they are excellent. The dance section has won several national awards. Many students progress to higher education. Students develop appropriate skills and technical confidence; they are encouraged to develop their own ideas and to be innovative. Many undertake work placements, and participate in a series of 'elective' programmes. Their practical and written work is critically assessed and the quality of the feedback that they receive enables them to continue to improve. On some courses, students are regularly set targets for improvement by which other progress is monitored. The improvement targets for achievement and retention identified in the self-assessment report have, in the main, been achieved through an increasingly effective process of course review and continuous monitoring. Students' attendance is monitored and absences are followed up. Students receive regular written reports on their progress which they are expected to share with their parents.

Parents are asked to respond to these reports through a college pro forma.

25 The area is well managed. There are clear lines of communication between staff. Weekly meetings ensure that information is regularly disseminated and that decisions are implemented. Staff feel they play a part in the process of formulating college policy and are kept informed of planned developments. Course team meetings take place when they are needed. They are not consistently minuted and actions subsequently taken are not monitored on a regular basis.

Examples of students' achievements in performing arts and media, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level (two year)	Retention (%)	86	82	87
	Pass rate (%)	96	91	98
GCE A level (one year)	Retention (%)	86	93	75
	Pass rate (%)	85	92	88
Vocational (two year)	Retention (%)	66	76	89
	Pass rate (%)	83	97	83
Vocational (one year)	Retention (%)	*	*	81
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	73

Source: college data

*course not running

Curriculum Areas

English, Communication and Languages

Grade 2

26 Inspectors observed 34 lessons which covered courses in English, communication studies and modern foreign languages at GCE A level and English as a foreign language (EFL). Inspectors found that the self-assessment report identified only some of the strengths and that weaknesses were understated.

Key strengths

- the high quality of most teaching
- the high level of achievement on most courses
- effective management and teamwork at course level
- well-developed schemes of work
- the high quality of students' work
- thorough assessment procedures

Weaknesses

- some overcrowding in classrooms
- poor retention in a number of GCE A level subjects
- lack of pace and variety in some teaching

27 Teaching is good. Most lessons are well planned, lively and have a clear sense of purpose. Teachers successfully employ a range of teaching strategies. Textbooks are often supplemented by well-designed handouts. Sometimes the whole class concentrates effectively on an analysis of previous students' work; this activity often defines the learning objectives for subsequent lessons. Teachers' expectations are generally high and students respond well to their commitment and enthusiasm. In many lessons, teachers combine

purposefulness with humour; the atmosphere is congenial yet earnest. As indicated by the self-assessment report, effective schemes of work have been developed. In modern foreign language lessons, the use of the language being studied is widespread, appropriate and successful. English classes make effective use of small group discussion and student presentations. A minority of lessons move at too slow a pace and teachers fail to sustain students' interest. The student attendance rate was generally high; a few students who arrived late for lessons were not challenged on this.

28 Students' work is good. They write accurately and critically, and enjoy their work. Orally, they display confidence and maturity. English students are generally enthusiastic about literary study and relish the challenge of a wide range of texts. Marking of assignments is thorough and consistent; assessment criteria are appropriate. Students' progress is systematically monitored; teachers skilfully encourage and criticise. Feedback to students is invariably handled sensitively. The opportunity to participate in trips, visits and exchanges enriches the teaching programme. An extensive system of testing to establish the level of competence on EFL courses commences when students register, and continues throughout their courses to ensure appropriate examination goals are set and kept under review. When necessary, a change of course can be arranged.

Achievements at GCE A level, GCSE and in EFL are good; most courses have pass rates well above the national average for general further education colleges. A large number of students progress to higher education. As the self-assessment report recognises, retention rates in all GCE A level English classes are low. A range of strategies is being developed to address this issue. GCE A level English language is to be discontinued because of a series of disappointing results. More places will be available in classes in English language and literature.

Curriculum Areas

29 The number of students studying modern foreign languages is low. However, the policy of teaching first and second-year students together on GCE A level courses has maintained the viability of the subjects. Since the last inspection report, the range of countries from which EFL students are recruited has broadened considerably. The associated resources have not increased in line with student numbers. Across the extensive range of EFL courses, there are a few examples of excessive tolerance by teachers of lax attendance, unpunctuality and failure to meet homework deadlines. EFL students have access to a varied and imaginative social programme which increases their cultural awareness and extends their social circle; they much appreciate the opportunities offered by this programme.

30 As indicated in the self-assessment report, the management of the curriculum area has recently been reviewed. There is now a clear structure to support the management of courses.

The arrangements are working well although the high number of fractional appointments to the staff impedes attendance at team meetings in some sections. Many strengths are evident: effective leadership; good communication; managers who are accessible to their staff; and teams that work well together. Many of the teaching staff have current experience as external examiners. Lessons take place in well-furnished and well-equipped classrooms. Each subject has its own dedicated area. The benefits of this arrangement are reduced by the disadvantages; for example, overcrowded classrooms for some lessons, cramped teaching styles and reduced opportunities for learning. Since the last inspection, a language resource base and two suites that combine teaching space and the facilities of a language laboratory have been provided. The language base, although it is an asset to students, lacks some resources and would benefit from closer monitoring of use.

Examples of students' achievements in English, communication and languages, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level English and communication	Retention (%)	67	75	65
	Pass rate (%)	88	85	87
GCE A level modern foreign languages	Retention (%)	88	88	62
	Pass rate (%)	82	97	100
GCSE English	Retention (%)	65	79	100
	Pass rate (%)	60	66	68
GCSE modern foreign languages	Retention (%)	69	84	78
	Pass rate (%)	77	87	86

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Basic Education

Grade 2

31 Inspectors observed 17 lessons across a range of foundation level programmes. The self-assessment report contained little evidence to support some judgements and few weaknesses were explicitly identified. Some weaknesses identified by inspectors had been indirectly referred to by the college in its list of actions to be taken to improve provision.

Key strengths

- some creative teaching
- the structure of the provision
- the work in practical sessions
- productive links with a range of external agencies
- good use of work experience
- comprehensive monitoring of students' progression and destinations

Weaknesses

- the lack of individual programmes and personal targets for some students
- a failure to match lessons to the needs of some students
- some ineffective recording of students' progress

32 There is provision for a wide range of students at foundation level, a strength which the college identifies in its self-assessment report. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. Productive links have been developed with many external agencies. These links enable the college to recruit students and to provide them with appropriate specialist support. The curriculum at foundation level is well structured. There is a productive focus on key skills and vocational skills. There are good opportunities for students to undertake vocational training in areas where

the college has identified employment prospects. In the teaching of adult basic skills, for example literacy and numeracy, classroom activities are effectively linked to students' experiences of life or to other aspects of the curriculum.

33 The most effective teaching is well planned. It enables students to learn the skills that they will need to progress to courses at a more advanced level or to employment. Inspectors' judgements reflected those made by the college in its self-assessment report. In some lessons, teachers have given careful thought to the methods which are most effective in helping students to learn. In a foundation level programme, students practised food preparation skills before applying these skills while working in the college butchery. Other students set up a company and ran a sweet shop as part of a team enterprise. In one lesson, students were actively involved in gaining experience of caring activities in the role of both the carer and the client. On foundation and initial training programmes students have benefited from work experience or work placements.

34 Insufficient planning goes into some lessons, particularly those for adults with more severe learning difficulties, to establish what students most need to help them to learn more effectively by themselves. Some teaching fails both to recognise that students' needs differ and to provide sufficient opportunities for them to study with more independence. Individual programmes for students have not been established. Teachers do not always set appropriate skill levels and goals, or identify objectives against which individual progress can be monitored. In some lessons, the relevance of the work was not made clear to students. Some teachers and support workers gave too much assistance to students and prevented them from learning for themselves. Some staff recognise the importance of providing appropriate resources to help students with their studies. Others rely too heavily on worksheets and handouts that use language and concepts which

Curriculum Areas

some students cannot understand. The self-assessment report recognises the need to improve the use of IT.

35 Retention and attendance rates in the programme area are high. For example, in foundation and initial training, retention rates are 86 and 85 per cent, respectively. The self-assessment report identifies the strengths and weaknesses in students' achievements. Some of the claims that relate to achievements required clarification. Although assessment criteria on part-time courses for students with learning difficulties permit them to receive substantial help and support from staff to reach their goals, the level of support given is not recorded alongside the statements of students' achievements. This policy makes recorded claims of 100 per cent achievement open to misunderstanding. The college does not set clear learning targets for each student. Consequently, it is difficult to monitor their progress. Insufficient attention is given to analysing what students have learned.

36 Some students are able to work competently and confidently with minimal supervision. Some have been able to progress to more advanced level courses, including courses in vocational areas. For example, there are students who have progressed to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 1 and then level 2 in hairdressing. Many students have gained considerably in confidence and self-esteem but the current assessment and recording systems do not effectively measure and record these gains. The majority of leavers progress to further courses; 49 of 58 students who left four courses moved into employment or to further training.

37 The management of the curriculum area is good. Course teams meet regularly. They clearly identify the targets that need to be set and the actions that need to be taken to achieve improvement in the provision. Most teachers are appropriately qualified. Some have specialist qualifications for teaching students with basic skills needs at foundation level.

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 2

38 Inspectors generally agreed with the judgements in the college's self-assessment report. Inspection evidence revealed one weakness which the college failed to identify.

Key strengths

- high levels of personal support for full-time students
- effective, regularly monitored recruitment, guidance and enrolment procedures and processes
- strong support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- good welfare services
- a well-established system for assessing the needs of students for learning support

Weaknesses

- the uneven standard of group tutorials
- a lack of systematic support for students attending evening classes
- a lack of adequate induction for full-time students enrolling late on programmes

39 The college justifiably identifies as a strength its publicity, recruitment, enrolment and induction procedures for full-time students. There are close links with the schools in the immediate locality. A range of joint activities includes visits, curriculum links, open evenings and 'taster' days. The college accurately identifies the need to strengthen links with other schools. It recognises as a weakness the prospectus of part-time courses which is difficult to follow. The structures for advice and guidance have recently been strengthened. They seek to ensure that students receive impartial advice and guidance before they enter the college and when they are studying on

courses. Arrangements for enrolment are clear and fair. However, there is no system for recording the advice and guidance offered to part-time students who enrol by telephone.

40 Full-time students take part in induction activities which help them to settle into the college quickly, and to make final decisions about appropriate courses. The induction arrangements for students attending evening classes are less effective. Students who are late joining courses do not always benefit from an appropriate induction. The majority of students have received a copy of the college charter and are aware of its contents.

41 In 1997-98, the college screened all full-time students for their literacy and numeracy needs, except those on GCE A level programmes. The screening process uses materials which are appropriate to each course and level of study. Over 160 students have been identified as needing support and a high proportion have benefited from this service. On programmes where many students require support, the learning support team works alongside teachers. Screening results are increasingly used to influence developments in the design and teaching of courses. The college provides effective support for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities and identifies this support as a strength in the self-assessment report. The college, through the academic board, has endorsed the principles of inclusive learning and a post has been created to co-ordinate activities.

42 Support for students is well managed through a combination of cross-college and curriculum-based arrangements. Full-time students are entitled to a maximum of two hours in a group tutorial each week. There are regular individual interviews where students' progress and goals are reviewed. In the academic year 1996-97, tutorials for full-time students included two new study units designed to develop certain key skills. One unit focused

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on improving the skills needed in planning a career; the second on improving students' effectiveness as learners and capacity to gain appropriate qualifications. Students report unevenness in the quality of group tutorials; some students failed to attend. The self-assessment report recognises neither these shortcomings in tutorials nor the need to improve the monitoring of their effectiveness. Full-time students are positive about the high levels of personal support which they receive; they appreciate the additional time that is given to them. Students are entitled to records of achievement but their use is unsystematic and varies across programmes. The appointment of a pastoral clerk has improved the effectiveness of monitoring the attendance of full-time students. This development has led to improved contacts with parents through a 'hot line' and to earlier identification of students who require support. Tutorial and support arrangements for part-time students are less effective. These students are not always aware of their entitlement. They report that communication between themselves and their tutors is not always adequate. Changes in their programmes and teachers are not always properly explained. Inspectors agreed that the college has identified this weakness in support for part-time students and plans to address it.

43 The college, in partnership with Sussex Careers Services, provides an effective careers service. Access to careers education and information is widely available. Careers officers are present throughout the week and the careers library is open to all who wish to use it. Specialist guidance staff are available for students with special needs and for students from overseas. Sound monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure that the service is effective and that provision is regularly reviewed. Preparation for students planning to apply for places in higher education or expecting to seek employment begins during the first year of two-year programmes. All full-time students aged 16 to 19 receive an individual interview.

The college has a good welfare service, including a responsive counselling unit that operates for 34 hours each week.

44 The students' union is energetic and well organised. In addition to arranging social activities, the executive committee represents the students at many levels. The president of the students' union, who is given a sabbatical by the college to concentrate on the post, is a member of the governing body, and the vice-presidents are members of the academic board. Students' views are taken seriously. Students understand the equal opportunities policy and feel that it operates effectively in the college.

General Resources

Grade 1

45 Inspectors agreed with the college's analysis of its resources. The college's ambitious accommodation strategy has delivered considerable improvements to the overall quality of accommodation and resources since the last inspection.

Key strengths

- the effective management of space and accommodation
- well-maintained accommodation of a good standard in attractive grounds
- extensive networked IT facilities for staff and students
- a new and attractive learning resources centre
- a range of specialist learning centres
- a good range of recreational facilities and common rooms for staff and students
- good-quality service and food in the refectories
- purpose-built residential accommodation for students from overseas

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Weaknesses

- the poor external condition of the few older buildings
- problems with temperature control in the college

46 Since the last inspection, the college has completed an extensive rationalisation of its buildings. The south building has been upgraded to a high standard and complements the original three-storey north building. These developments have established the college in Lewes on one attractively landscaped campus of 5.8 hectares. The structure and external fabric of some small parts of the older north building are of poor quality, and in its self-assessment report, the college accepts this feature as an area for improvement. From its own resources the college has built a student residence within the college grounds to provide accommodation for 57 students. In Newhaven the college is leasing a modern building, which provides a high standard of well-furnished accommodation, for the delivery of IT courses. The many centres used for outward collaborative provision offer adequate accommodation and resources. The sports facility at Ringmer is of a particularly high standard.

47 The buildings in Lewes are clean and well maintained and provide a pleasant environment both in the public spaces and teaching areas. A planned maintenance programme is regularly reviewed with external consultants. Classrooms are well furnished and equipped with appropriate teaching aids. The college makes good use of new software available on the college network to control the timetable and maximise room utilisation and the use of space. There is an appropriate regard for issues that affect health and safety. Exit and fire notices are clearly sited and there are termly fire drills. Problems with temperature control throughout the building have not yet been resolved; staff and students report that areas are either too

cold or too hot and that adjustments cannot be made. The internal signposting in the north building does not assist movement around this complex building. The display of students' work is an attractive feature of some parts of the building, but not others.

48 The learning resources centre, which was built within the south building in 1996, provides a pleasant light environment; there are 200 workspaces in the central hall and 50 spaces in quiet work areas. The bookstock has been substantially improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be poor. There are now 19,500 titles. The range of videos and journals is particularly suitable especially in, for example, humanities, art and design and film studies. There is a growing provision of CD-ROMs and compact discs. The budget for the centre is £55,000 for 1997-98 which provides about £25 for each full-time equivalent student. There are good links between the staff of learning resources and the programme areas. There are 25 networked personal computers available in the centre; six have access to the internet. The central learning resources centre is complemented by specialist learning centres in eight subject areas. Each centre has its own learning resource assistant and is separately managed. At present, materials in these centres are not included on the college's computerised catalogue.

49 The college's self-assessment report is justified in claiming that the college as a whole is now well equipped with a high standard of IT provision for students and for staff. The college has invested heavily in installing a high specification network that connects all classrooms and offices on both sites. There are 466 computers available for students which represents a ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students of 1:6.7. In addition to the provision in the learning resources centre, there is an IT centre that contains 80 computers. The practice of closing the IT centre for 15 minutes each morning and afternoon seems to be

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unnecessary. There is an appropriate range of up-to-date software. Specialist software can be accessed on the network in the subject-based resource centres, for example in engineering and art and design. The IT training centre in Newhaven is well equipped with 30 computers. Access to the internet and electronic mail is being extended throughout the college as more staff are trained.

50 There are good facilities for recreation and sporting activities. Most students participate in the excellent range of 68 activities offered on the additional studies programme. As well as the gymnasium, and dance and performance areas, students have priority of access to the Lewes Leisure Centre and swimming pool which are located on the college boundary. The refectories on both sites provide a good range and quality of food and the service is much appreciated by staff and students. There is a suite of student common rooms and recreation rooms which is managed by the students' union on the north site. Staff have their own restaurant area and common room. All staff, including many of the part-time staff, have reasonable workspaces with access to computers that are linked to the college network. The small number of machines in some of the larger staff work rooms makes access to the network difficult at present. A prayer room is provided for Muslim students. Access for students with restricted mobility is good, a strength identified in the college's self-assessment. The college is gradually converting manual fire doors to automatic opening to ease movement on corridors. A purpose-built nursery which the college subsidises at £10,000 per annum provides places for 20 children. The nursery, which is centrally located, reflects the welcoming and responsive nature of the institution.

Quality Assurance

Grade 2

51 Inspectors confirmed the findings of the college's self-assessment.

Key strengths

- a strong and well-established commitment to continuous improvement
- quality assurance procedures embracing all aspects of the college's work
- close links between quality assurance and strategic planning
- an effective staff development policy
- rigorous annual report on quality assurance and students' achievements

Weaknesses

- a few poor course reviews
- internal verification inadequate in several areas
- no overall analysis of complaints and their resolution

52 The college has made good progress in developing its quality assurance processes since the last inspection. Continuous improvement of the quality of provision is at the heart of the college's mission. It is firmly embedded in the culture of the college at all levels. Quality assurance procedures embrace all aspects of the college's operations. Service standards and performance indicators are reviewed annually for their appropriateness. There is a growing appreciation in all areas of college life of the need to achieve value for money. Action-planning at course and support team and programme area level is informed by and contributes to the college's strategic plan. An annual report and a rolling programme of reports designed to improve achievement, for example on GCE A level and GNVQ programmes, provide a rigorous and clear assessment of strengths and weaknesses which

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are the outcomes of the quality review process. Internal audits assure compliance across the college with systems for quality assurance. Governors regularly review the effectiveness of the quality assurance policy.

53 Reviews and evaluations of courses and support services are now established as part of normal college routine. Inspectors agreed that teams conduct reviews thoroughly and document the outcomes. They set improvement targets and identify specific actions designed to achieve the targets. Data for programme areas from the management information system are now produced on time and are proving to be more reliable. Destination data are comprehensive and identify trends. All partners working with the college in contracted provision are involved in appropriate quality assurance arrangements. A system for value-added analysis which measures students' performance by comparing their entry qualifications with their final examination results, was introduced in 1997. Initial findings are positive.

54 A few course reviews lack rigour. Data are not analysed thoroughly, and targets and subsequent action plans are imprecise. The college has set targets for retention and attendance but recognises in its self-assessment that not all course teams address them in their reviews. The quality of teaching and learning is not identified in many reviews and internal verification is weak in a number of areas.

55 The academic board was revitalised at the beginning of the current academic year. It is now a lively and challenging forum for debate on issues that can lead to improvement in the quality of provision. Quality focus groups, whose membership includes students, have been formed to draft recommendations on how to make progress towards inclusive learning and on how to improve aspects of recruitment, guidance and support.

56 Most students are aware of the charter and its contents which are reviewed annually.

Students' evaluations of their experience at the college are sought at regular intervals through the circulation of questionnaires. Feedback to students on the results of analysis of the questionnaires is uneven. The complaints procedure is well publicised. Most students and other customers of the college, whatever the level of their confidence, are likely to find ways acceptable to them for registering their complaints. The college does not have an overall picture of the nature and range of complaints nor whether they are resolved to customers' satisfaction. These shortcomings were not identified in the self-assessment report. The response to complaints does not always meet the college's service standards and is not always sensitively managed.

57 The self-assessment process is derived from the quality assurance procedures and involves all staff. Strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified in the annual reports on quality assurance and on the improvement of achievement; the reports contain recommendations for action. Governors conducted their own assessment of governance and approved the college's self-assessment report. This report, however, failed, in particular, to reflect accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum areas. Some issues listed under action points failed to specify the action that was to be taken to remedy the weakness.

58 The college has a well-established staff development policy and strategy. A thorough analysis of training needs leads to an appropriate range of staff development activities at all staffing levels in the college. Priority for these activities is determined against the requirements of the strategic plan. As the development and training centre maintains careful records of training schedules, it is able to advise each programme area of the take-up of training places and of any failure to keep up with the schedules. The mentor system is effective as a means of settling new members of

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staff into the college. The Investor in People award was gained in 1995.

59 Inspectors confirmed that staff appraisal is viewed positively and conducted thoroughly. Appraisal takes place every two years; a review is then held after some 12 months to check that targets are being met. Direct observation of teaching has been introduced and is beginning to help to spread good practice. On some observations feedback is too concerned with teaching style rather than what students have learnt. A working group is examining the further development of the appraisal system and the introduction of observations for support staff.

Governance

Grade 1

60 Inspectors agreed with the analysis of the governance of the college in the self-assessment report. It identified all the strengths noted by the inspectors and one of the weaknesses.

Key strengths

- an effective, committed corporation with a wide range of experience and expertise
- a productive working relationship between governors and senior management
- effective involvement in strategic planning
- scrutiny of the college's academic performance
- supportive relationship between governors, college staff and students
- the high quality of agenda and minutes of governors' meetings

Weaknesses

- evaluation of board performance not yet completed

61 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is good. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC. The self-assessment report made statements for which there is appropriate evidence and which are in accordance with the audit findings.

62 The corporation has 16 members: seven independent; four co-opted; and one from the training and enterprise council (TEC). The principal, two members of staff and a student are also governors. Six of the members are women. At the time of the inspection there was one vacancy. New members are sought under arrangements which rely heavily on informal contacts. There is no standing search committee with clear terms of reference and standing orders, and only *ad hoc* procedures for identifying potential new governors. The weakness is not identified in the self-assessment report.

63 The corporation receives effective support from the clerk. Meetings are supported by timely, clear and concise minutes. The governors have adopted a code of conduct although this has not been reviewed recently. They have completed a comprehensive register of interests and make an annual declaration of eligibility.

64 Governors have a broad range of expertise and experience which they use to guide and advise the college effectively. Governors clearly distinguish between their role and that of the senior management, whom they support effectively. They show their commitment by attendance as observers at academic board meetings and at some staff meetings. These arrangements help them to understand the cycle of college activities. After each corporation meeting, there is effective feedback to college staff led by the chair of governors, principal and

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staff governors. As a result, relationships between governors, staff and students are good.

65 Members have a clear understanding of their duties and responsibilities. They define the mission and strategic direction of the college effectively. They identify matters of major strategic importance which they delegate for consideration to working groups that meet outside the normal committee cycle. The proposals from the groups contribute to the college strategic plan which is produced at the final board meeting of the academic session.

66 An effective committee structure has been established which includes the appropriate statutory committees. These all have a membership approved by the board and clear terms of reference; they are well attended. Three further advisory committees have recently been established by the board; they have standing orders and terms of reference. Working on a series of different assumptions, each committee has the task of preparing a draft that determines the future direction of the college.

67 Governors, including staff and student governors, participate with enthusiasm in training and development sessions; they are joined by senior managers. Topics, selected by members, are of strategic importance and use is made of external consultants. At their most recent meeting, governors addressed the evaluation of their own performance, a process which they identified, and which inspectors agreed, was a weakness in the self-assessment report.

68 Once the strategic plan has been determined, its implementation is delegated to the principal. The corporation reviews the academic performance of the college against targets in each autumn term. This system of review is effective. The principal's performance is reviewed annually by the chairman and one other governor. There is a formal review system for other senior postholders.

69 The translation of the strategic plan into the three-year financial forecast is fully considered by governors. The ongoing financial position of the college is monitored through the finance and general purposes committee which receives concise summaries of financial information, including the income and expenditure forecast to the year end. The cash position is highlighted.

Management

Grade 1

70 The self-assessment report identified all the strengths and weaknesses noted by the inspectors.

Key strengths

- staff understanding of, and support for, the college mission
- comprehensive and effective strategic planning
- effective system for production, implementation and review of operational plans
- good internal communications between managers, staff and students
- a range of external partnerships
- effective policy and practice in respect of equal opportunities
- good financial reporting
- reliable financial data for budget holders

Weaknesses

- need for a more formal evaluation of links with external organisations

71 The college takes its mission seriously and pursues it with integrity. The mission statement commits the college to widening access, to continuous improvement in the quality of the teaching and learning, and to the achievement

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of equality of opportunity. Staff at all levels and others involved in the life of the college respect the mission statement and want to contribute to the achievement of its aims. Indeed, staff not only support the mission, but most do so with obvious enthusiasm.

72 The college has a comprehensive and effective process for strategic planning which the self-assessment report justifiably identifies as a strength. Each year the operational units within the college consider potential developments for the next three years as well as for the coming year. These plans are analysed and refined during a series of rigorous meetings at different levels of management. The outcome is a draft plan which is then taken to the corporation. When the new three-year plan is finally adopted, annual plans derived from it are produced for all managers and areas within the college. These plans contain targets which are reviewed regularly with line managers. In 1997-98 the college introduced a potentially powerful means of reaching its targets by delegating greater responsibilities to managers. Agreements are reached with managers that commit them to a specified volume of provision at an agreed standard within a defined resource. Managers understand and welcome this increase in responsibility. A minority of staff do not have so clear an understanding of this development. In one example that was identified by inspectors, there was some resistance from certain staff to the way in which the targets have been set.

73 The college's atmosphere is characterised by a remarkable degree of openness at all levels. This distinctive trust begins with the interchange between governors and senior managers and is then communicated to the other managers, and on to staff and to students. The principal is readily accessible to staff and students. This example is followed by other managers. Staff and students value the ease of these relationships. Effective working relationships are further fostered through a series of well-

structured meetings that involve all staff in various groupings. These meetings also provide an effective channel of communication between staff which is reinforced by written bulletins and the emerging use of electronic mail.

74 Openness in working relationships is equally evident in off-campus operations. Where appropriate, the college is committed to realising its mission by collaboration and partnership. It has developed a range of successful links with a wide number of external organisations through the provision of opportunities for education and training. Such organisations speak highly of the college's flexibility and responsiveness. The college has taken a leading role in a partnership that is committed to economic regeneration in Newhaven. The self-assessment report recognises the need to evaluate partnership arrangements more formally.

75 The college has recently restructured its organisation to enhance performance and reduce costs: programme areas have been reduced from 22 to 12; middle and junior managers reduced in number; and a member of the senior management team has not been replaced. The structure has been in operation for one year and is already producing benefits. Staff understand the new arrangements.

76 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The finance department is led by a qualified accountant who is assisted by an appropriate number of experienced staff. Good budgetary control procedures are in place which have enabled management to introduce a planning and funding agreement. This process delegates planning, funding and review functions to 17 discrete areas. Budget holders receive detailed monthly information which is closely monitored. The financial regulations have been updated recently. The internal and external auditors have not identified any significant weaknesses in

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the college's system of internal control. The college assesses its own financial management as good.

77 The college has a significant amount of information about the market it serves. Some of this information provides a broad picture of employment trends and informs the strategic plan. The rest of the information is more specific and falls into two categories: much has already been of benefit in particular curriculum areas; the remainder will not be of use until it is classified and co-ordinated. The college recognises the need for more systematic and comprehensive labour market information for its own locality; an appropriate strategy has been devised to meet this need.

78 All staff had moved to new contracts by 1995. Since then a new employment structure has been successfully introduced for teaching staff which identifies teaching and non-teaching duties. This policy has enabled the college to respond with greater flexibility to changing patterns in the enrolment of students.

79 Data about students are widely available in the college and are monitored effectively at a variety of levels. Financial information is printed and circulated. This information is planned to be put on line for staff by the end of the academic year. The college network is already extensive and available to most staff.

80 The pursuit of equal opportunities is a key part of the mission and is effectively promoted. A committee of the academic board works to targets; its reports are presented to the corporation. A variety of events that are intended to raise awareness on equal opportunities issues has been arranged. Effective action is taken where inappropriate discrimination is found to have occurred. The college now monitors equal opportunities in staff recruitment. It has only recently begun to collect the necessary data and this development has not yet been reported to the board.

Conclusions

81 Inspectors found that the self-assessment report did not provide a very constructive basis for planning and carrying out the inspection, although the college's regular reports on quality issues provide an accurate overview of strengths and weaknesses. In most respects, inspectors agreed with the judgements reached by the college. Strengths were generally accurately identified. In some cases, weaknesses were either not identified or were understated. Inspectors agreed with all curriculum and cross-college grades awarded by the college.

82 Strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection are listed under each section of this report. The main strengths and weaknesses are identified in the summary.

College Statistics

Student numbers by age (November 1997)

<i>Age</i>	<i>%</i>
Under 16	2
16-18 years	22
19-24 years	15
25+ years	59
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (November 1997)

<i>Level of study</i>	<i>%</i>
Foundation	38
Intermediate	14
Advanced	30
Higher education	1
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	17
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (November 1997)

<i>Programme area</i>	<i>Full time</i>	<i>Part time</i>	<i>Total provision %</i>
Science	192	399	12
Agriculture	11	4	0
Construction	0	21	0
Engineering	48	63	2
Business	152	589	15
Hotel and catering	87	19	2
Health and community care	167	1,187	27
Art and design	299	117	8
Humanities	366	996	27
Basic education	86	260	7
Total	1,408	3,655	100

Source: college data

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (October 1997)

	<i>Perm- anent</i>	<i>Fixed term</i>	<i>Casual</i>	<i>Total</i>
Direct learning contact	121	21	0	142
Supporting direct learning contact	24	2	0	26
Other support	123	5	1	129
Total	268	28	1	297

Source: college data, rounded to nearest full-time equivalent

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£7,330,000	£8,435,000	£8,778,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£20.30	£19.36	£19.39
Payroll as a proportion of income	71%	70%	66%
Achievement of funding target	94%	101%	99%
Diversity of income	26%	28%	30%
Operating surplus	-£68,000	-£242,000	-£30,000

Sources: Income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

ALF – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96), Funding Allocations 1996-97 (1996-97)

Payroll – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96), college (1996-97)

Diversity of income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

Operating surplus – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	312	341	343
	Average point score per entry	4.8	4.8	5.3
	Position in tables	top third	top third	top 10%
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	136	128	161
	Percentage achieving qualification	79%	71%	75%
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	middle third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	94	110
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	51%	57%
	Position in tables	*	bottom third	middle third

Source: DfEE

Note: the majority of the college's students are 19 years of age or older

The achievements of these students are not covered in published DfEE performance tables

*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

College Statistics

Three-year Trends *continued*

Students' achievements

		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Advanced academic	Pass (%)	76	80	81
	Retention (%)	74	74	79
Intermediate academic	Pass (%)	56	63	61
	Retention (%)	73	77	88
Advanced vocational	Pass (%)	86	78	85
	Retention (%)	80	64	67
Intermediate vocational	Pass (%)	55	66	71
	Retention (%)	88	90	89

Source: college data

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