

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Woolwich College

May 1995

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

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

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 44/95

WOOLWICH COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION
Inspected August 1994 – January 1995

Summary

Woolwich College has developed its mission in response to the changes in local needs for training and education following the decline in manufacturing industry in the area. It has established strong links with the local authority, the South Thames Training and Enterprise Council, now in receivership, and local further and higher education providers. It is responding well to the training needs of employers and the community. It offers a good range of vocational and general education courses and a growing range of access courses. The strategic planning process has involved consultation with governors, staff, students and external bodies and is well developed. There is an effective induction programme for students. The tutorial system for full-time students has been well planned, but it is not consistently implemented. The recently-developed library and learning-resources centre is attractive and useful. Good practice in teaching and learning should be spread more widely. Examination results are uneven. There is a significant problem of poor attendance by students and there are poor retention rates on some courses. The college should: ensure that quality assurance procedures are effectively implemented in all areas; improve and extend the use of the management information system; address the shortage of teaching aids and out-of-date equipment in some areas; and provide more information technology facilities for students.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	3
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	4
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	3
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics and science	4	Art and design	2
Computing	3		
Engineering	3	English	3
		Other humanities	3
Business studies	3	English for speakers of other languages	3
		Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	4
Health and social care	2		

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INTRODUCTION

1 Woolwich College was inspected between August 1994 and January 1995. The inspection team of 11 part-time and six full-time inspectors spent a total of 66 days in the college. Inspectors visited 181 classes, examined samples of students' work, the strategic plan and other documents. They held discussions with governors, staff, students, local employers, senior managers from local schools and colleges, and representatives of the local community, the local education authority (LEA) and the South Thames Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Woolwich College was established as a further education college in purpose-built premises at Plumstead, in the London Borough of Greenwich, in 1964. A nineteenth century school building at Charlton has provided an additional site since 1983.

3 Greenwich has a total population of 207,650. The college is in an area with high levels of social deprivation and unemployment. The closure of the Woolwich Arsenal, a major local employer, has had a considerable impact. The number of jobs in manufacturing in Greenwich fell from 33,000 in 1966 to 6,150 by 1991, and the loss has not been made good by the service sector. A recent report published by the local authority, 'Breadline Greenwich', provides evidence of the high proportion of low income families in the area, and the college's own investigations show that poverty is a daily experience for many of its students.

4 It was once a major function of the college to offer day-release courses to engineering apprentices at the Woolwich Arsenal. As well as engineering provision it now offers a range of courses in other areas, including 33 General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects, 31 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) subjects, and vocational courses in art and design, community and health care, business and computing. There is a substantial access programme for adults which prepares them for higher education. There are courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLDD), and courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Provision is made for the young and adult unemployed through the training credits and training for work schemes. A growing range of short courses is being developed in response to the training needs of employers.

5 Woolwich College was originally administered by the inner London LEA. On the demise of that authority it transferred to the new Greenwich Education Service for three years before it was incorporated. The college had limited experience of budgetary management before taking on the full financial responsibility required by incorporation, and after so long a period with little autonomy it is having to adapt rapidly to the new circumstances.

6 There is other local further education provision at Bexley, Lewisham and Southwark Colleges, at Christ the King Sixth Form College in Lewisham, and at Tower Hamlets College on the other side of the Thames. Greenwich schools have retained their sixth forms, but in recent years the numbers staying on at school have declined to a current rate of 41 per cent. There are a number of private training providers in the area. The close links between the college and Greenwich Community College, the main provider of adult education in the borough, have recently been formalised into a partnership agreement. Woolwich college sponsors a substantial amount of work at the community college funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

7 A significant proportion of the college's revenue comes from TEC-funded provision such as training for work and training credits. At the time of the inspection the TEC had been put into receivership, owing the college an estimated £500,000 for work already completed. At the time of the report the situation was still unresolved.

8 The college has not yet achieved its growth target of 12.6 per cent. In January 1995 there were 4,251 enrolments. Enrolments by age and level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2. The college employs 87 full-time equivalent teachers on a full-time basis and 34 full-time equivalent visiting teachers. There are 93 full-time equivalent support staff and 15 full-time equivalent part-time support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 3. Students at the college come from a wider range of ethnic backgrounds than is reflected in the surrounding community. The largest minority ethnic groups are black African (11.5 per cent), Indian (7.5 per cent) and black Caribbean (7.0 per cent). Chinese, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are also represented. Fifty-three per cent of students describe themselves as white. Over the last three years adults returning to study have formed over half the student population, and more recently refugees resettled in the area have come to the college in increasing numbers. Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 4.

9 In its mission the college states that 'we aim to respond to the educational and training needs of our community throughout the year. We will grow by being efficient and by putting our clients' needs first'.

Its strategic and operational objectives emphasise its commitment to:

- expand its range of provision, and make it more flexible and learner centred
- set and achieve higher standards
- use its resources more efficiently
- provide a range of support to enable students to maximise their potential.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

10 In its strategic plan the college has set out clear objectives which will enable it to contribute to the achievement of the national targets for education and training. The implications of government policies and the FEFC's funding methodology are disseminated to staff and discussed with them.

11 There is excellent co-operation between the college and the LEA. The college is a member of the Greenwich Collaborative Forum which is devising a post-16 education and training strategy for the London Borough of Greenwich. The forum is convened by the borough and meets once a term. Membership includes representatives of the local authority, the local TEC, Woolwich College, Greenwich Community College and the University of Greenwich.

12 Good links exist between the college and local providers of adult, further and higher education, especially the University of Greenwich, Greenwich Community College and Lewisham College. The college is an associate college of the University of Greenwich and offers the first year of a four-year science degree, a Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) higher national certificate in business studies and parts of the practical component of a mechanical engineering degree which require equipment and expertise provided by the college. There is also close co-operation between both institutions in the provision of the postgraduate further education certificate in education course. Woolwich College provides supervised teaching practice and college staff teach on the course. Woolwich College and Greenwich Community College have a long history of collaboration. The two colleges work closely together to plan coherent provision and avoid a duplication of effort in areas such as English courses for speakers of other languages. The college is currently working with Lewisham College in a project funded by the TEC to develop a system for unitising the curriculum. This will enable students to build up credits over time towards a final award at any participating college. A number of joint ventures with local secondary schools have recently been set up and more have been agreed for next year.

13 The college has been quick to respond to regional and local initiatives. For example, collaboration with the Greenwich Waterfront Development Partnership has resulted in a successful bid for funding from a European fund to support the regeneration of areas previously economically dependent on military activities and the defence industries. This money has been used to build a travel and tourism centre at the college, which is used for training and will soon be used to offer a service to the wider public. As part of another initiative, a member of the college staff was seconded to work on the local authority team which has obtained government funding for a number of innovative projects for the regeneration of the area.

14 In consultation with the TEC, the college has identified training needs which have been incorporated as objectives in the strategic plan. The working relationship with the TEC has been a positive and fruitful one, and the college has been successful in obtaining TEC funding not only for its training activities but also for a number of projects. The future of this funding is at present uncertain.

15 Links with employers have been built up mainly through the provision of work placements for students and through courses organised for employers by the college's enterprise unit. The links between individual curriculum areas and employers vary in effectiveness. Employers are represented on the steering groups for the newly-established BTEC nursery nursing courses and the advanced General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) in travel and tourism. In other curriculum areas there is scope to increase the involvement of employers.

16 The enterprise unit has organised short courses in a variety of areas and responds well to employers' requirements. For example, to fit in with shiftwork, courses for staff at the Dockland's Light Railway were provided at midnight. One hundred and fifteen courses were run between April 1993 and July 1994 generating a turnover of £175,241. The college's hope is that such courses, as well as providing a valuable source of additional income, will lead to improved links with employers, contribute to course development and give staff opportunities to gain industrial and commercial experience.

17 The college has initiated a number of partnerships with local churches, youth organisations, and the Prince's Trust Volunteer Scheme. Projects have included work with the long-term unemployed, disaffected young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and single parents. Some course teams, such as those providing English courses for those whose first language is not English, have developed strong links with community groups. These links rely on individual initiatives and informal professional contacts. The college has not yet established any formal machinery for developing such links.

18 The college is developing a strategy to increase enrolments from women. Last year the TEC funded a project to investigate the needs of women who might wish to return to study to update their skills and qualifications. The recommendations of the final report are being considered.

19 Links with Europe are being developed. European funding supports a project to provide training opportunities for women. This has been running for two years, and links with Spain, Italy and France have been established which have resulted in exchange visits for 28 staff and 20 students from the college. Modules which look at European and international issues have been included in a number of access and BTEC courses. A co-ordinator for European initiatives has recently been appointed and there is a European working group which addresses curriculum issues.

20 With the decline in its work as a major provider of training in engineering skills for the Woolwich Arsenal, the college is seeking a new role as a provider of training in the skills needed for the regeneration of the area. The college continues to maintain a range of engineering courses. It is the regional centre for lift maintenance courses. A number of GNVQs have been introduced in art and design, leisure and tourism, health and social care and science. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are offered in business skills, childcare, travel services, transport and vehicle studies and in supervisory management. Further provision will be developed in these areas and new courses introduced over the next two years in health and social care, engineering, information technology, and sports and recreation. The college has been responsive to market demands in expanding the courses in health and social care, in the introduction of nursery nursing and travel and tourism, and in the continuing development of the access programme. At present there is limited provision for students wishing to study through open or distance learning.

21 The popular and award-winning Greenwich Access Programme is provided in collaboration with the University of Greenwich and the Greenwich Community College. Access courses are offered in teaching, business studies, nursing, the sciences, the humanities and social work. Participation in this programme has increased and this year about 350 students are studying on access courses to prepare them for further study in higher education.

22 A significant number of students do not speak English as their first language. Many are from minority ethnic groups, including a substantial number of refugees. The college has developed a range of special courses for speakers of other languages, some of which are linked to specific vocational areas. Language support is also available to students following mainstream academic and vocational courses. A policy group monitors the implementation of the policy for languages. It recently conducted a language audit which revealed that 25 different languages were spoken by students, 19 of them by a significant number. The coherence of the provision for these students is being reviewed.

23 The provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is limited to two separate specialist full-time courses, a part-time course for adults, and two link courses run in co-operation with local schools. There are very few opportunities for these students to progress onto other vocational and academic courses. The Charlton centre is designed for access by wheelchairs users, but the Plumstead site has no facilities other than ramps to the ground floor to help students with restricted mobility.

24 The arrangements for marketing the college are effective. They include press and publicity releases, college events such as open evenings and attendance by staff at regional and local careers conventions. Publicity material for prospective students is good, although none of it is written in minority ethnic languages. There is no marketing strategy to target specific groups for recruitment, or promote individual courses.

25 The college's mission statement, strategic plan, and charter include a commitment to provide equal opportunities for staff and students. There are long-standing policies covering equality issues relating to race, gender, and learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but there are no systematic arrangements for monitoring their implementation. These policies are currently being reviewed by a working group with the intention that they will become part of a single college policy on equality which will embrace procedures for implementation and monitoring.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

26 The arrangements for the governance of the college are effective. The main subcommittees of the governing body cover finance and general purposes, audit, and remuneration. There are other committees which meet, when required, to deal with disciplinary matters and appeals relating to staff and students. Meetings are well attended. There are 16 governors including the principal and one member elected from each of the teaching staff, support staff and students. The governors are drawn from a wide range of industry and commerce; those from the public sector include members from the University of Greenwich, Greenwich Community College and the Greenwich Healthcare Trust. The expertise which governors have in fields such as personnel, premises, finance, project management and education enables them to monitor developments in the college and offer general assistance and advice.

27 The governors have shown themselves willing to extend their knowledge of all aspects of the college. They have participated enthusiastically in the training events organised for them on the themes of incorporation, strategic planning and the FEFC's framework for inspection. Governors have been encouraged to improve their understanding of curricular developments by visiting the college to talk to staff and students and observe lessons, and all have responded to this invitation. Some governors nevertheless feel that they could benefit from a more systematic and comprehensive introduction to academic issues than is provided for them at present.

28 Governors and managers of the college work together effectively. Governors expect to be kept informed about developments. They receive regular reports on financial matters and the principal reports to each meeting of the governing body on curricular developments and the progress being made in achieving the objectives of the strategic plan. Their expertise ensures that reports presented by senior managers are understood and adequately scrutinised.

29 The strategic plan has been developed in consultation with teaching and support staff. Governors played a significant role in its evolution. A conference was organised at which governors, staff and students discussed the college's mission and strategic direction. Successive drafts of the strategic plan were presented to the governing body for comment and

amendment. The views of institutions which work closely with the college, for example, the University of Greenwich and Greenwich Community College were also considered.

30 Strategic aims have been established in relation to the responsiveness of the provision, the growth in enrolments, improvements in efficiency and quality, and the improvement of staff-development opportunities. These aims are supported by detailed operational objectives which have been prepared by the faculties and cross-college support services. Many of the objectives, including enrolment and retention targets, are expressed in a quantitative form.

31 The senior management team of eight comprises the principal, the deputy principal, the two directors of academic faculties and the directors of the four support services: finance, personnel, client services, and resources. The team meets each week, alternating business meetings with meetings to formulate policies and ensure that the strategic plan is implemented. There are also regular performance review meetings between each director and either the principal or deputy principal at which progress in achieving operational objectives is reviewed. The two faculty directors are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is developed in line with operational objectives. They are each assisted by a faculty management team comprising heads of curriculum areas and the head of learning support. In addition, there are 15 middle managers who are responsible for areas of work within the support services. These include the finance manager, the personnel manager, the premises manager, the head of learning resources, the head of student services and the head of staff development.

32 The emphasis on strategic planning by the principal and senior managers is not always reflected within faculties at curriculum area and course team levels. In some subject and course teams there has been little or no discussion of long-term plans or the contribution which can be made to the achievement of the faculty's operational objectives. Such discussions are more in evidence within vocational course teams than among GCE A level and GCSE teachers. Even where teams have formulated their own plans in relation to the strategic plan, the need to co-ordinate them with others in related areas is often overlooked.

33 Job descriptions exist for all the college's managers, but there is some confusion among teachers about the roles and responsibilities of the curriculum heads. This is at its worst in areas such as English where a number of curriculum heads share responsibilities for the delivery of courses.

34 Most courses are administered satisfactorily. However, some vocational course teams meet infrequently and, in some GCE A level subjects, individual teachers operate in isolation and there is little sharing of experiences or discussion of common issues even between staff teaching the same subject.

35 The academic board has 20 members, including senior managers, curriculum heads, the head of learning resources and the head of staff development. In addition, there are members elected from the teaching staff, support staff and students. The board meets once a term and is having a steadily increasing influence in providing managers with advice on students and the development and quality of courses. The board has no standing subcommittees, only working groups with a limited lifespan convened to consider specific issues such as the introduction of courses leading to GNVQs and NVQs. The lack of subcommittees to deal with routine matters severely limits the amount of time which the academic board can devote to important issues, such as the annual reviews prepared by curriculum heads. As a consequence, the annual reviews are not subjected to as much scrutiny as they should be.

36 Summaries of the college's income and expenditure for the 16 month period to July 1994 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The average level of funding is £22.98 per unit, significantly above the median for general further education colleges of £18.17. With the TEC in receivership, the college estimates there will be a significant revenue shortfall in the current financial year.

37 An external consultant was appointed to investigate why the college's provision has been more costly than in many other institutions in the sector. His report suggests that the main reason is the relatively high salary costs of a teaching staff with a high age profile. It concludes that the scope for making substantial reductions in costs is limited and that the best way for the college to address the problem would be to seek to increase its revenue substantially in relation to its costs. The implication is that the college will not only need to attract more students, but also retain a higher proportion for the full length of their courses, and achieve better examination results. It will also need to investigate means of increasing revenue from sources other than the FEFC.

38 Limited funds are delegated to faculties to cover such items as books, stationery, materials, examination entry fees and small items of equipment. Within faculties the funds are further delegated to curriculum heads. Although course leaders bid for these funds they are not all clear about the criteria for their distribution. Expenditure on capital items costing in excess of £1,000 must be bid for and approved by the capital expenditure committee comprising the principal, the deputy principal and the directors of finance and resources. Bids for such expenditure are considered in relation to strategic and operational objectives and there are clear criteria to guide those submitting them. Faculty directors also have delegated funds to cover the estimated costs of part-time teachers; these funds are allocated to curriculum heads on the basis of teaching hours.

39 Once funds have been allocated to the college's 28 cost centres, the cost centre managers regularly compare actual expenditures with budgeted figures. Monthly financial reports are sent to all budget holders

to assist such comparisons. The college has calculated the unit costs of all its courses, including individual GCE and GCSE subjects. Curriculum heads are encouraged to compare these costs with course revenues to assess the cost-effectiveness of their provision.

40 The development of management information systems in the college has been fragmentary. Faculties and cross-college support services have each developed their own systems to monitor specific aspects of the college's work. There has been no detailed analysis of the part these systems play in the strategic planning process and management decision making. In the absence of an integrated system, information is not readily available to all staff who might need it. Curriculum heads and course teams make little use of management information to identify issues and trends and point to possible solutions. An information systems policy for the college is being prepared.

41 The health and safety officer, assisted by the health and safety committee, is responsible for implementing the college's health and safety at work policy and initiating safety training programmes. All staff were briefed on the health and safety issues deriving from incorporation and a programme of risk assessments in curricular areas is well under way.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

42 Over the past two years, the college has developed the advice and guidance services available to students. Between February and September 1994 the college handled 4,816 enquiries. All those enquiring about courses are offered an interview; between July and September just over 1,000 such interviews were conducted. Full advice and guidance services were available during the summer vacation, despite the absence of teaching staff because of industrial action. To overcome this difficulty, support staff were given training and additional guidance staff were appointed on a temporary basis.

43 The enrolment process was well organised and effective. It was supported by good transport facilities between the college's sites, clear signs and effective marshalling. The college makes considerable efforts, through its publicity material and through the selection and enrolment procedures, to ensure that students are provided with impartial guidance.

44 All students taking part in an interview are required to complete an initial assessment and guidance completion certificate which is countersigned by a member of staff.

45 Most students are given good guidance to help them enrol on suitable courses. However, there are some students, especially on GCE A level and GCSE courses, who are not coping with the demands of their course and would be better off on a different kind of programme. By the beginning of December 1994 a total of 287 students had formally withdrawn from their course. Of these more than a quarter transferred to another course at the college. Others had left because they had started a job, or because their

employer had withdrawn support. Some gave personal and financial reasons for leaving. Over a third had withdrawn for reasons not known to the college.

46 The college has a co-ordinator for the accreditation of prior learning. The process is well established in access courses, but not elsewhere. The target in the strategic plan, to set up a college-wide system by October 1994, was not achieved.

47 Most full-time students received an effective induction programme. Staff received training for induction and were provided with a helpful check list. The process began with specific course induction programmes just after enrolment and continued during the first six weeks of the autumn term during tutorial periods. Subjects covered included the student handbook and agreement, the college charter, health and safety, and action planning. A limited version of the programme was devised for, and in part used by, those teaching on part-time courses. During the induction process full-time students were introduced to the wider range of college support services, which include careers guidance, advice on financial, accommodation and other welfare matters, confidential counselling, the students union and the popular sports and recreational programme. A detailed review and evaluation of the induction programmes is being carried out, using information from a survey of students.

48 An important new feature of the induction process in 1994 was the use of the diagnostic tests produced by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit to assess students' level of study skills and skills in communication, numeracy and information technology. Staff were given preparation for the conduct of these tests. This initiative was organised by a curriculum head responsible for developing learning support services across the college. It was welcomed by many staff and students. As a result of this testing 400 students were receiving additional support by November. There is not yet a system for learning support staff to report back to teachers on the progress made by their students; this is left to individual initiative.

49 The managers of student services, learning support and learning resources meet together regularly to co-ordinate their work. In the first half of 1994 the head of student services led a review of the tutorial system to ensure that practice was consistent. With the help of staff who had already established good practice, guidelines were issued and staff development organised.

50 A programme of weekly tutorials has been established for full-time students. Each student has a tutor, who is usually a subject teacher, and an hour is set aside each week for group or individual work. Tutorial sessions in the early part of the year are largely taken up with the induction process. Some staff felt this continued for too long and involved too much paperwork. During the rest of the year tutors are asked to work within the general college guidelines but may also include elements which they, or

their individual curriculum heads or faculty directors, consider necessary. Of the 800 students who completed a survey questionnaire in November, 70 per cent said they had received an individual interview and 82 per cent had started action planning in their tutorial time. There is more time for individual interviews on access courses where 90 minutes each week is allocated to tutorial work.

51 Action planning was introduced into the college in 1993 on a pilot basis funded through the technical and vocational education initiative. It has now been extended across the college. Students complete a document in the autumn which sets out their targets and identifies their learning requirements. A further section of the document is a review sheet on which students regularly assess the progress they are making and evaluate their course. It is intended that in the summer term these action plans will form the basis of a record of achievement for each student. In the meantime, students who have brought their records of achievement from school have to delay their completion.

52 The effectiveness of tutorials varies across the college. Some students are not clear about the purpose of action planning or convinced of its need.

53 In response to the volume of requests for support in core skills, the head of learning support has set up a variety of additional facilities. These include additional staffing on courses to provide information technology tuition; one-to-one sessions for students with specific learning difficulties; and group workshops. There are currently insufficient teachers and space available to meet all the requests.

54 Careers advice for students is provided by careers advisers from the London Borough of Greenwich who attend the college for four days a week. The advisers work closely with the other members of the student services team and participate in induction and tutorial sessions.

55 Counselling and welfare services are an important part of the support system. Two members of the student service team are trained counsellors and offer confidential interviews. This service is effectively publicised and confidential records are maintained. The welfare services provide assistance to students who seek help on a wide variety of problems, especially those concerning grants, finance, benefit issues and accommodation. Financial assistance is available to students who face acute hardship. The main sources are the college education fund, the access fund and a number of local charitable foundations. In the current year £32,750 is available from the various sources. During the autumn term of 1994, 289 applications for financial assistance were received and 265 were granted support. Most were for assistance with travel or book costs, and the average grant was £30 per term. The system is well documented and all cases are carefully assessed. Lunchtime sessions for students seeking welfare advice are well used. In the autumn term, 284 students were seen at the welfare office at the Plumstead Centre and 443 at the Charlton Centre.

56 There is a creche at the Charlton site. The 15 places are used mainly by students. There are over 50 children on the waiting list. The creche recently received a favourable inspection report from the London Borough of Greenwich.

57 There is a mentor system to provide additional personal support for some students. The mentor is an adult working in the local community who is available to give advice and to serve as a role model in the occupational area most relevant to the student's interest. Nearly 60 students are paired with mentors under this scheme. A residential visit to Wales has been arranged to take place later in the year for the students and their mentors.

58 The systems for recording the attendance of students and reporting absences are not being observed by all teachers. The college should ensure that its procedures for dealing with persistent absence are understood and consistently followed by staff.

59 All students are informed of their rights and responsibilities. Files kept in the registry contain copies of the health and safety agreement signed by students. Copies of the college charter and the students' handbook are distributed during induction. The handbook sets out what the college undertakes to provide and what it expects of students. Students speak warmly of the efforts made by the college to honour its commitments. A feature of student involvement in the life of the college is that some students have accompanied college managers and members of the corporation on residential sessions at which the college's strategic plan and other key documents have been drawn up.

60 Although there are no formal policy statements on student support, a clear set of guidelines has been developed and is kept under review. In the strategic plan there are a number of objectives for developing and extending the support systems for students. Good progress is being made with most of these.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

61 Of the 181 sessions inspected, 41 per cent had strengths which outweighed the weaknesses. In 18 per cent of the sessions weaknesses outweighed strengths. The following table shows the grades awarded.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		3	8	17	12	1	41
GCSE		0	6	12	5	2	25
GNVQ		0	2	5	0	0	7
NVQ		3	6	5	0	0	14
Access		5	8	6	2	0	21
ESOL/SLDD		0	3	9	6	0	18
Other vocational		11	19	20	4	1	55
Total		22	52	74	29	4	181

62 Engineering courses were generally well planned and at the beginning of their studies students were given handbooks containing details of their course and an assessment timetable. In health and social care and on access courses students were given similar documents. Those prepared for students on access courses were very comprehensive. In art and design there were clear schemes of work based on the syllabus, although there have been problems arising from a change of syllabus in GCE A level art and design halfway through the course. Planning in business, mathematics and science courses was less consistent but generally adequate. In English and humanities schemes of work were available for most courses, but some were limited in scope and did not identify aims and objectives and they were not always shared with the students. Educational visits and exchanges had been planned for some courses. For example, 50 students on surveying, photography, geology and biology courses are going on a residential field trip to Wales in April.

63 Poor planning affected the quality of the teaching and learning on courses for English for speakers of other languages and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There was a lack of clear aims and objectives on a number of the English courses. In the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the schemes of work for individual subjects were not linked together to make coherent courses. Co-ordinators have recently been appointed for these two areas and are already working to improve the planning and teaching.

64 Some lessons were timetabled for periods of three or four hours. Although a break was taken during this period, the sessions were often too long for the interest of students to be sustained.

65 In health and social care many classes benefited from the vocational experience of teachers. In the best lessons there was a well-judged balance of activities. Well-structured presentations from teachers were followed by group work which allowed students to discuss their ideas and encouraged them to make notes and record conclusions arising from the discussion. In one class students were preparing for an assignment on the

issues facing blind parents. One of the group experienced the difficulties of preparing a simple meal while blindfolded, while the rest of class observed and commented. In such successful classes, there was a feeling of partnership between staff and students. In other classes, however, the questioning techniques of teachers were poor. Questions were not addressed to individuals and they were not used to ensure that all the students had understood the work. In other classes, teachers expected students to take notes but gave them little guidance by identifying key words or concepts.

66 Teaching and learning were good in art and design subjects. In media studies, good use was made of video extracts to stimulate thought and illustrate points. In art and design, students were given a clear briefing and encouraged to experiment in a wide variety of media but not all students were sufficiently challenged by the work set. In photography, students were encouraged to assess the quality of their own work and that of others in the class using specific criteria. Students benefited from the experience and expertise of teachers who had professional and commercial experience which set the work in a realistic context. Clear assessment criteria were used to guide students in their work on assignments.

67 In engineering the teaching was generally good, although better use of visual aids would have improved some sessions. Students enjoyed practical lessons, including those which made use of modern computer-aided design equipment and paint spray shop facilities. In a theory lesson students were introduced to problem-solving techniques in electronics through the use of well-directed questions and an overhead transparency which illustrated each stage of the approach. Briefings for engineering assignments were clear and well prepared. Assessment practice varied widely, however, and some teachers set little or no homework.

68 In business studies there was a good balance of theoretical and practical work, and good opportunities for students to develop their skills. Too often, however, students were allowed to determine the pace of the work, with the result that it was too slow and insufficiently challenging. In some classes teachers did not take account of the wide variation in the prior knowledge and experience of the students, and did not ensure that the needs of both the more able and the less experienced students were met. The progress of students is assessed through homework and assignments, but the records kept by some teachers are not sufficiently detailed to chart the improvements made and the help still needed.

69 In the humanities, the quality of the teaching varied a great deal, especially in English. The teaching in some English classes was lively and imaginative but in others the dull delivery lacked purpose and failed to interest or challenge all the students. In GCE A level law, lessons were well planned and the variation in teaching styles ensured that students retained their interest and motivation. Students on this course benefited from visits to legal institutions, for example, the Old Bailey and the High Court. In psychology and sociology the teaching was sound, but some

lessons lacked detailed aims and objectives and few teaching aids were used. In history and in government and politics some, but by no means all, teachers planned a range of activities designed to develop analytical skills and students' knowledge and understanding.

70 Although assessments were generally appropriate for the standard and level required by the examining board, there is no planned approach to the teacher assessment of coursework on GCE A level courses in the humanities. Teachers sharing a class use different grading notations and there is no framework to ensure that the grades awarded are consistent and fair. In governments and politics, economics and in history, work is set regularly and records of students' progress are kept. Little homework had been completed by students in psychology and sociology.

71 In computing, students spent much of their time working on practical assignments in which they were acquiring and practising relevant skills and techniques. In the most effective sessions clear, short-term objectives were set; good graded instructional material was available; and teachers helped students overcome any problems in the exercises set for them. In some other sessions, however, students were left for long periods without guidance to work at their own pace. In some theory sessions students were encouraged to participate and given verbal and written questions to reinforce their learning and check their understanding. In others, they spent much time copying notes. Appropriate assignments were set at planned intervals and a record of students' progress maintained. The recording procedures are well designed and thorough in most computing courses.

72 The pace of many GCE and GCSE science lessons was slow and students spent much of their time copying notes from a whiteboard. Questions used to check students' understanding and learning were often poorly focused. No account was taken of different levels of prior achievement amongst the students. In mathematics, although there was more variety, there was little use of teaching and learning aids. Little homework had been completed by the students on these courses and students' progress was not being systematically monitored. In access courses, the work in mathematics was relevant and challenging. In some access and vocational science courses, students were carrying out well-planned practical exercises in which the tutors ensured that all students understood the principles on which the work was based. Appropriate assignments were set for these students, accompanied by clear guidelines and realistic deadlines.

73 In classes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities the tasks set were not always appropriate to the very different needs of individual students. Students who were unable to read or write were expected to copy notes. A student with a physical disability was working on tasks better suited to students with learning difficulties. There were no individual programmes of learning suited to the needs of the individual and no means of systematically assessing and recording students' progress.

74 In classes for students for whom English is not their first language, tasks and materials were not varied enough to meet the wide range of ability. Good oral work was observed in a number of classes, in which teachers' high expectations were justified by confident responses from students and lively discussion. There were, however, no explicit criteria against which students themselves could measure their achievements and progress.

75 English is not the first language of a significant number of students at the college. Teachers did not always take sufficient account of the needs of these learners in their lessons. The college participated in a TEC-funded project in 1993-94 to support such students on motor vehicle courses and this has provided a model of good practice for all vocational areas. Specialist tutors take part in interviews, team teaching and the dissemination of relevant course materials. A recent language survey has enabled the college to identify those areas where the need for help is greatest.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

76 Students in most classes were well motivated and enjoyed their studies. Students on GCSE courses were less enthusiastic. Students on the access courses and courses providing English tuition for speakers of other languages had a strong desire to succeed and progress to higher level studies or employment.

77 Attendance was poor in many classes. In some lessons only half of the students registered were present and in a few lessons only a quarter. Poor punctuality was also noted. In some lessons as many as a third of the students arrived up to 45 minutes after the start of the lesson and teachers did not always challenge their late arrival or ask for an explanation.

78 The college management and the governors are aware that poor retention rates are a problem in some courses. The college has set a target to improve retention rates by 5 per cent over the rates for 1993-94, with an overall target figure of 90 per cent. The college figures for 1993-94 indicate a wide variation of between 50 and 100 per cent in different course retention rates. This year retention is being monitored by curriculum heads on a monthly basis.

79 In humanities classes some students were able to explore and develop their ideas well in discussion. Some students in psychology and sociology showed a mature perception and understanding of important issues. Students' written work in business courses was well presented and demonstrated a sound grasp of theory and a growing understanding of its application to the analysis of business phenomena and decision making. The best students in mathematics were developing good levels of knowledge and understanding, but this did not apply to the majority of students on the GCE A level and GCSE courses. Students worked well in pairs and groups in engineering, business studies, science and health and

social care. In English, however, small group work generally lacked focus and direction, although students' abilities to work in groups were being developed in some GCE A level classes.

80 Students on BTEC and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry business courses had well-developed computing skills, but this was less marked in GCE A level and GCSE courses. In computing a surprising amount of students' work was handwritten, although it was well presented. Study skills in mathematics were poor, despite the useful pocket guide produced to help students. In engineering students had well-developed note-taking skills. Students in science subjects did not always have the mathematical skills required to make good progress. Their work was often poorly presented and showed little evidence of the use of information technology. Students on access courses in business were developing effective oral and communication skills. Practical work in science was competent and the quality of work carried out by students in engineering workshops was good.

81 About 3,000 students entered for a variety of awards in 1994: 73 per cent for vocational and other awards, 16 per cent for GCSE subjects, and 11 per cent for GCE A level and GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects. The college has set as a target for all courses, the achievement of pass rates in line with national averages. Overall, the aim is that 90 per cent of students should achieve their primary learning goal.

82 In English courses for speakers of other languages, students were achieving fluency in speaking English and many had succeeded in gaining national qualifications. To remedy the current lack of formal accreditation of the achievements of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the college has registered its provision for the Youth Award Scheme for recognition by the further education development and accreditation network. This will enable students to gain recognition for their achievements in core skills, work experience, and community work. In access courses, of the 162 students who completed their studies 110 achieved the London Open College Federation access certificate. All but one of these students gained a place in higher education. Most of the remaining students continued their studies in further education or obtained employment.

83 National performance tables published by the Department for Education indicate that of the 49 students aged 16-18 entering for vocational examinations, 65 per cent achieved a qualification; this compares with a national figure of 81 per cent. Although this is better than the figure of 48 per cent for 1993, this still places the college in the bottom 10 per cent of colleges in the further education sector on this measure of performance. Most students are aged 19 or more in the final year of their award. The college figures show that 68 per cent of all students entering for BTEC assessments gained the full award. The figures for City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G), RSA Examinations Board (RSA) and

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry awards were 41 per cent, 40 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively. In addition, many students have gained units which will count towards a full award.

84 Good results were achieved in the BTEC higher national certificates in motor vehicle management and mechanical engineering, and in the BTEC national certificate and diploma in business and finance, where more than 90 per cent of the students gained the full award. In the national diploma and the first certificate in engineering, however, the pass rates were below 50 per cent. In C&G examinations very good results were achieved in vehicle body competence, computer-aided design and caring for children. In electrical and electronic craft studies, and repair and servicing of road vehicles, fewer than 40 per cent of students achieved the full award.

85 Four hundred and seventy-five students entered for GCSE in 27 subjects in 1994. Overall, one-third of the examination entries were awarded grades A-C. Results were very good in art and design and German where all the students were awarded grades A-C; in media studies the figure was 80 per cent. Results were poor in accounting, geography, physical education and sociology where 25 per cent or fewer of the students were awarded grades A-C. In some of these subjects the number of students sitting the examination was very small. In the sciences the results were significantly better than in previous years, with 46 to 59 per cent of students awarded grades A-C. In mathematics of the 225 students sitting the examination only 59 were awarded grades A-C; 45 of those who had entered for the examination did not take it. In English language of the 136 students who sat the examination, 58 students were awarded grades A-C; 30 of those who had entered did not sit the examination.

86 Three hundred and thirty-six students sat GCE A level examinations in 29 subjects in 1993-94. The 103 students aged 16-18 taking two or more GCE AS/A level subjects at the college achieved an average point score per candidate of 8.9 (where A=10, E=2) in 1994, an improvement on 7.7 in 1993. The achievement compares well with the other four inner city further education colleges in South London where the points score lay between 4.0 and 8.8. The national average is 15.3. The average points score per GCE A level entry was 3.3, which places the college in the middle third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure based on the data in the performance tables published by the Department for Education. Very good results were achieved in art and design, media studies, and business studies, where all the students sitting the examination achieved a pass at grades A-E. In photography and English more than 85 per cent of the students obtained a pass at grades A-E. Results were poor in mathematics, the sciences, geography and French.

87 The college recorded the intended destinations of the 426 students who completed courses in 1993-94. Most were aiming either to go on to further or higher education or to enter employment. Of those with GCE A level awards, 56 per cent gained entry to higher education.

88 A survey was undertaken of the reasons why students failed to complete their courses. Of the 661 early leavers before the end of last year, 21 per cent gave a reason for leaving to do with their course, 5 per cent left because they had gained employment, and a further 9 per cent gave financial and personal reasons for leaving. Another 15 per cent left for a variety of other reasons. In 50 per cent of all cases the reason for leaving was not known to the college.

89 Notable achievements by students included success in a national competition for students for the design of a trophy to be awarded by BT. A photography student gained an award in a competition run by the TEC.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

90 The college has a comprehensive quality assurance policy which has yet to be fully implemented. The strategic plan sets three targets for quality assurance: to revise and establish minimum quality standards through service level statements by April 1995; to develop monitoring procedures to take effect by June 1995; and to implement the recommendations following the FEFC inspection within a defined timescale. The deputy principal is responsible for quality assurance.

91 Strategic objectives for each college directorate have been published in the strategic plan. Senior and middle managers monitor the progress against these objectives at performance management meetings three times a year. Changes to objectives are made and action plans are discussed and agreed. This system is proving to be effective in identifying management priorities and monitoring action. The corporation monitors the performance of the college's management by a series of regular reports presented to it by the principal which charts progress on the achievement of the college's operational objectives.

92 All curriculum and support areas of the college have prepared quality statements and set quality improvement targets. Some of them have already been achieved: for example, that from September 1994 all full-time students should have negotiated learning plans. Each area of the college has measured itself against the guidelines in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*, using the five-point scale. Action plans have been developed to address the weaknesses identified and progress is monitored at the regular performance management meetings.

93 New procedures for monitoring academic quality through a system of annual course review and evaluation were introduced last year. Reports on each course are prepared by course leaders and used by curriculum heads in their reports to the academic board. Quality assurance at this level is poor. Most of the reports were descriptive and insufficiently detailed. There was very little analysis or evaluation. There has been no systematic setting of targets, or use of performance indicators. Few reports contained information about retention and attendance rates although both have been recognised as problems for the college. Where such information was presented, little attempt was made to identify and address the issues

raised. The data entered in some of the reports were inaccurate. Plans for action, where they existed, were vague. For example, 'to maintain and improve standards' was one stated plan for action. It was not accompanied by a description of the standards to be met or the tasks to be carried out to achieve this aim. Plans did not identify timescales or name individuals responsible for taking matters forward. Course leaders of externally-moderated courses rely heavily on the moderators' reports in their course reviews and planning. The course review procedures have not yet been effective in improving quality. The college is currently reassessing them and the level of scrutiny of course reports exercised by the academic board. It plans to have revised systems in place for implementation by September 1995.

94 The college's own quality assessment report provided the inspectors with useful background information which helped set the college in context. The report made use of the headings set out in the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement* but the sections did not address some important issues set out in the inspection guidelines. For example, there was no comment on poor attendance by students or the college's systems for reporting absence. On the whole, the report was descriptive and did not identify the college's weaknesses as clearly as its strengths. Little supporting evidence was included, although reference was made to other documents such as the examination results, the college charter and the strategic plan. The report gave a good description of quality assurance processes but contained only a limited amount of critical self assessment.

95 The college charter was published in July 1994 after extensive internal and external consultation. All students have received a copy together with the students' handbook and the learner agreement. Copies of the charter are available from the college library and reception. The charter contains clear statements of intent. Some of these are expressed in absolute terms such as the right of students to expect high standards to be maintained by suitably-qualified staff who deliver high-quality education and training, and the right to have written work returned within 15 working days. Senior managers are committed to a continual review of the college's performance against its charter standards, although the necessary procedures have yet to be finally decided.

96 The college has a combined suggestions and complaints procedure for students but the procedure has been little used. Students prefer to take their complaints directly to tutors, or to address them through the students' union to the principal. In both cases students feel that they receive a sympathetic hearing and that action is taken. Students are represented on the board of the corporation, the academic board and a number of working groups. Surveys of their views are undertaken three times a year, and the results analysed and published. Although these results are distributed to course teams for use in the course review and evaluation process, little use has been made of them in practice.

97 There is an appraisal scheme for all full-time members of staff. All full-time staff have been appraised. The appraisal system includes the identification of staff-development and professional updating needs.

98 The budget for staff development for 1994-95 is £80,000, which represents 1.3 per cent of the FEFC's funding and 0.9 per cent of total income. Priorities have been set and funding allocated to different categories of activity. The largest proportions of the budget have been set aside for training in curriculum delivery (26 per cent), management training (26 per cent) and training in quality monitoring (7 per cent).

99 All college staff are entitled to undertake staff-development activities related to the college's strategic objectives, and the majority, 100 teachers and 40 support staff, underwent some form of training between April 1993 and July 1994. Courses attended included courses on women in management, the development of core skills and GNVQs in engineering. In-house activities included managing change for teachers, time and stress management, quality assurance, and learning-resource development. Financial assistance is given to staff who wish to follow degree, diploma or certificated courses at universities. A well-used and cost-effective system is the internal information technology consulting service, under which two specialists give advice and assistance to any staff who need it. After a slow start, nearly 30 staff are now working towards the Training and Development Lead Body awards which will enable them to act as internal assessors and verifiers for vocational courses.

RESOURCES

Staffing

100 The number of teaching staff is adequate to cover the curriculum offered. Staff are generally well qualified and have appropriate experience for the subjects they teach. About three-quarters hold a degree or equivalent qualification and almost all staff have a teaching qualification. Teachers are generally deployed effectively. Nearly 25 per cent of all teaching is provided by staff in fractional appointments or part-time teachers, who bring useful current experience to the classroom. Job descriptions for all teaching staff are clear and concise.

101 Support staff are allocated to faculties or cross-college functions. They are almost all suitably qualified and experienced for the work they do. Clerical and administrative support is generally satisfactory, although the administrative support for teachers and curriculum heads is limited. The provision of technical support is variable. In science there are sufficient technicians who service each of the specialist laboratories very efficiently. In some other areas, support is insufficient. For example, in art and design the evening support is inadequate. Opening hours in the library and learning-resource centre have had to be restricted because of staff shortage. Technicians are not always available to provide support in information technology.

Equipment/learning resources

102 The quality and quantity of equipment and learning resources varies across the college. In some areas, for example, art and design and computer-aided design there is good provision. In business studies, however, the training office is poorly equipped, there are too few computers in science and mathematics and some engineering equipment, for example, in motor vehicle and mechanical engineering is dated and near the end of its useful life. When course reviews have identified additional equipment and learning-resource needs, they have not always been met.

103 The learning-resource centre is responsible for the provision of teaching aids in classrooms. The aim is that an overhead projector, a screen, a video monitor and the network cables for a computer will be available in each room, but at present many rooms are lacking an overhead projector and the provision of audio equipment is less than satisfactory. In one English literature class a tape recording was played on a tape machine which gave poor reproduction and distorted voices. Although the college has made important improvements there is a need to make more visual-aids equipment available to all teaching rooms.

104 The overall provision of computers in the ratio of one workstation to about 12 full-time equivalent students is close to the national average. The terminals at each site are networked, but the sites are not linked. Opportunities for students to use information technology equipment outside timetabled lessons are poor, with only 15 computers at Charlton and four at Plumstead on open access. There is a good range of software and material on compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) database. The learning-resource centres are open only from 09.00 to 18.30 on Mondays to Thursdays and 09.00 to 17.00 on Fridays. They provide good facilities in a high-quality environment. The use of the centres is growing; nearly 800 users visit the Charlton centre each day.

105 Both sites have comprehensive library facilities. There are some 33,000 books. In addition there are journals, reports and reference materials, and library staff have organised useful collections of newspaper cuttings. Books and materials are, however, limited in some areas, especially where courses have only recently started or have moved from one site to the other. The library is well managed and its use is growing. Opening hours from 09.00 to 18.30 on Monday to Thursday and 09.00 to 17.00 on Friday, are inadequate. Access for students with limited mobility is virtually impossible at Plumstead. Despite good induction procedures to ensure that students know how to make use of the facilities, not all students take advantage of them. Book losses have been high; 2.2 per cent of the stock in 1993-94.

Accommodation

106 Major improvements have been made recently to the structure and the appearance of the buildings on both sites. Plumstead is the larger of

the two sites, housing 63 per cent of the college's students in 8,297 square metres of accommodation on a plot of 0.83 hectares. It has good access by public transport. The Charlton site lies two miles away and occupies 0.51 hectares; it houses most of the other teaching in 5,121 square metres of accommodation. It is not readily accessible by public transport. Both sites are congested and there is little scope for expansion. Space at Charlton will be reduced by road widening. Neither site can provide adequate car parking, which poses difficulties for the 25 per cent of staff who have to commute between them during the day. The Plumstead buildings date from the 1960s, and have many good features, but major expenditure is needed to bring them fully up to standard and maximise their utilisation. The refurbished foyer at Plumstead provides a welcoming atmosphere. The Charlton buildings, originally designed for use as a school, date from the end of the nineteenth century. There are many pleasant large rooms in good condition, but the building is expensive to run. Some of the hatted accommodation is unsuitable for teaching and there are problems with the heating. The college has made a thorough review of its accommodation to try to ensure that it can meet needs identified in its strategic plan up to 1997 and projections for student numbers up to 2004.

107 The college has sufficient space but some rooms are too small for the numbers of students in some classes. The space-utilisation rate is lower than could reasonably be expected for a college of its type. The college is aware of this and is aiming to improve utilisation through improved timetabling and some alterations to rooms.

108 Most of the Charlton site is accessible to students and staff with limited mobility. Only the ground floor at Plumstead is accessible and the college is considering the installation of a lift. There are creche facilities at Charlton but not at Plumstead. There is a large sports hall at Plumstead and social areas for students at both sites, but in general sports and social facilities are limited. Staff accommodation is inadequate, overcrowded and lacking the facilities teachers need to carry out their non-teaching duties efficiently.

109 The quality of teaching accommodation on both sites is satisfactory. Classrooms are mainly clean and tidy and in reasonable decorative order. There is a general lack of display. The travel and tourism centre offers pleasant and stimulating work surroundings.

110 The integrated learning-resources centre at Charlton has been renovated recently to a very high standard. The library at Plumstead is less splendid and rather small, but still a good place to study. The space for open access to information technology is limited and does not meet the current demand. There is a total of 183 study spaces across the two sites, which is adequate.

111 There is a good balance between specialist rooms, such as laboratories and workshops, and general teaching rooms. Some essential specialist rooms are underused for their designed purpose and allocated much of the time to non-specialist uses. Apart from teachers' workrooms, the administrative accommodation is adequate in size and of good quality.

112 Costs of maintenance, cleaning, heating and lighting are generally higher than average for the size of the premises, due mainly to their age and need for upgrading and alteration.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

113 The college is making progress towards achieving its objectives. Particular strengths of the provision are:

- the good links with the local authority, the TEC and local providers of further and higher education
- the good range of access courses
- responsiveness to market demands and changing local needs
- the strategic plan developed through extensive consultation
- an effective induction programme for students
- support and advice systems that meet the needs of students
- the tutorial system which includes action planning and the identification of the need for learning support
- some good teaching
- good pass rates in some external assessments and examinations
- the experience and expertise of part-time staff
- good library provision
- the learning-resource centre at Charlton.

114 The college should address the following issues:

- the lack of employer involvement in a number of vocational areas
- the inconsistent implementation of college guidelines on tutorials
- the lack of systematic reporting of absences
- limited resources for the provision of learning support
- a significant number of lessons which were poorly planned, overlong, or made use of an insufficient variety of teaching and learning strategies
- poor pass rates on some courses
- significant absenteeism by students
- poor retention rates on some courses
- ineffective course review and evaluation
- limited use of management information by course teams
- insufficient access to information technology equipment for students
- the shortage of classroom teaching aids
- out-of-date equipment in some areas.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (as at January 1995)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (as at January 1995)

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

 - 4 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area
(as at January 1995)

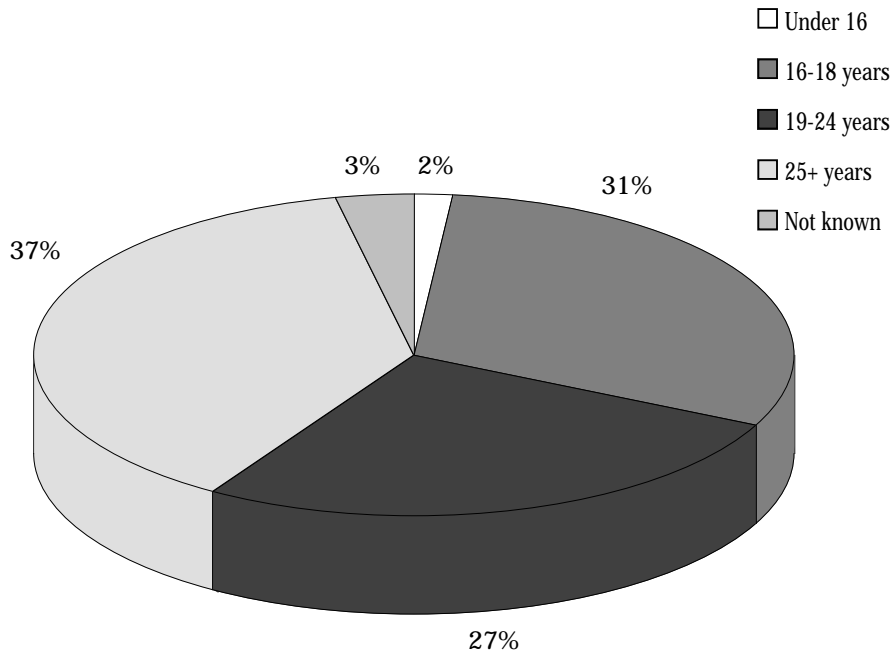
 - 5 Income (for 16 months to July 1994)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)

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

Figure 1

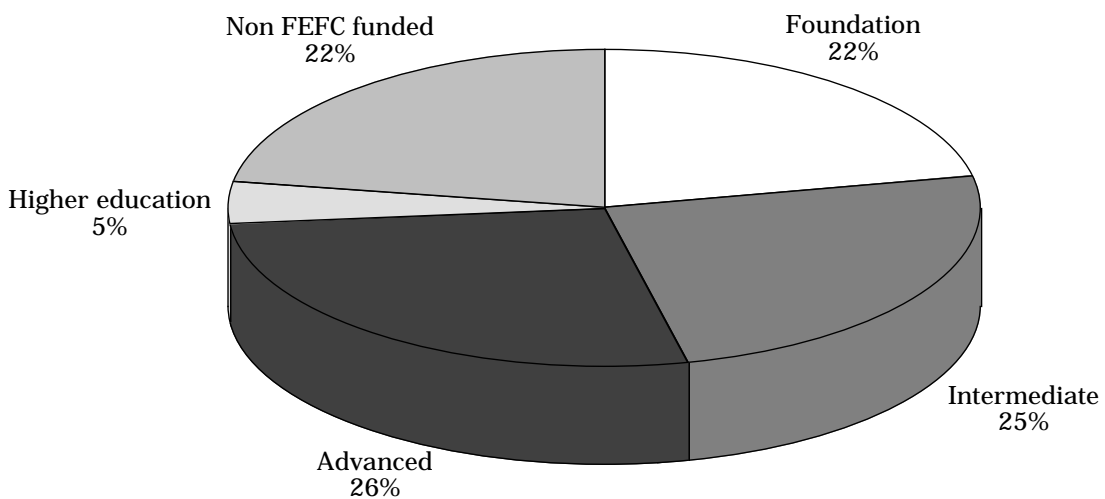
Woolwich College: percentage enrolments by age (as at January 1995)



Enrolments: 4,251

Figure 2

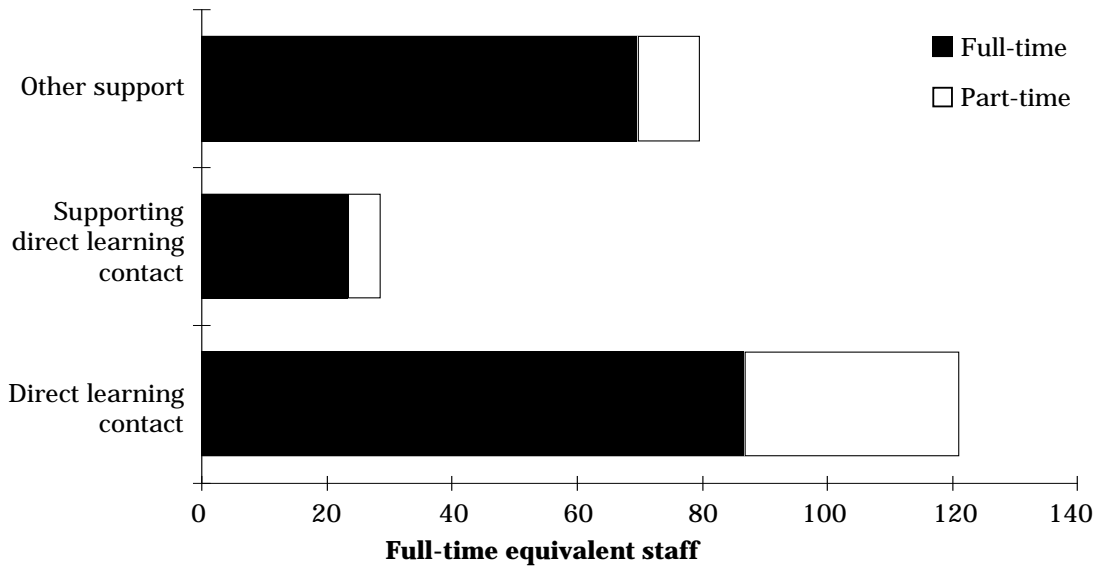
Woolwich College: percentage enrolments by level of study (as at January 1995)



Enrolments: 4,251

Figure 3

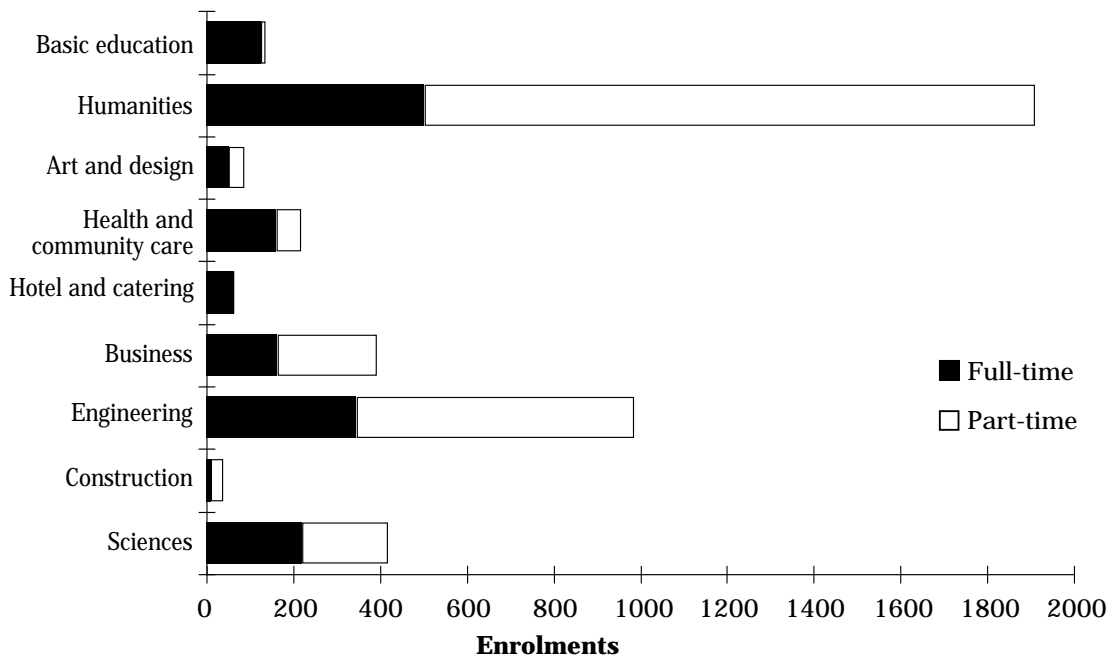
Woolwich College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)



Full-time equivalent staff: 230

Figure 4

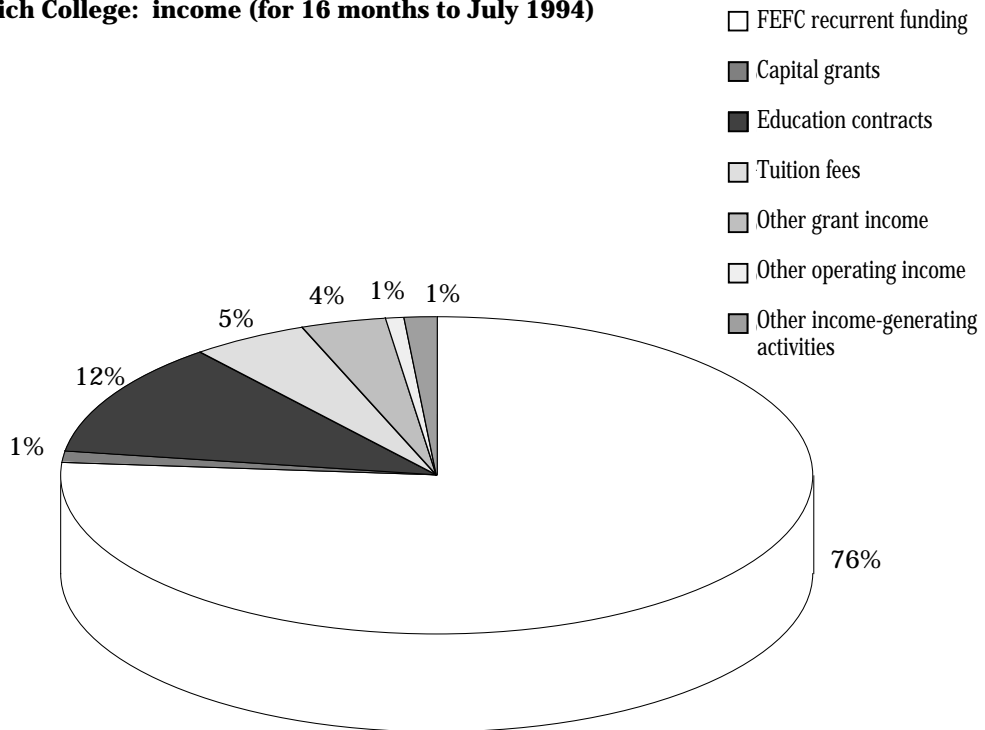
Woolwich College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at January 1995)



Enrolments: 4,251

Figure 5

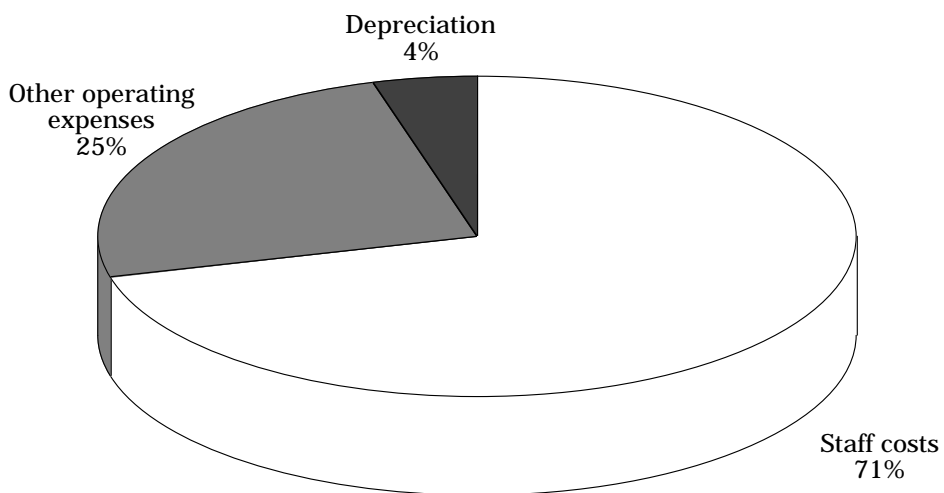
Woolwich College: income (for 16 months to July 1994)



Income: £9,712,000

Figure 6

Woolwich College: expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)



Expenditure: £9,456,000

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