

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

**Yorkshire Coast
College of
Further and
Higher Education**

August 1996

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

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

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

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GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

By June 1995, some 208 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 208 colleges are shown in the following table.

College grade profiles 1993-95

Activity	Inspection grades				
	1	2	3	4	5
Programme area	9%	60%	28%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	13%	51%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	11%	56%	29%	4%	<1%

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 100/96

YORKSHIRE COAST COLLEGE OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION

Inspected September 1995-May 1996

Summary

Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher education serves Scarborough and its surrounding area. It provides a broad range of courses offering students opportunities to progress through a variety of levels. Governors and all staff are committed to the college and to ensuring the success of its financial recovery plan. Students receive effective guidance and support, prior to, and during, their time at the college. Teaching and support staff are well qualified. They work conscientiously to help the students succeed. The college's buildings are carefully maintained. The provision of equipment is generally sufficient and satisfactory. The college should: conduct market research more systematically; ensure students receive adequate support to enable them to manage their personal records of achievement and individual action plans effectively; review the membership and operation of the governing body; ensure the corporation strengthens its monitoring of performance against targets set in the strategic and operating plan; continue to develop collaborative and open ways of working, internally and externally; revise the quality assurance documentation to ensure it includes more evaluative analysis; and improve the effectiveness of the academic board.

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	4
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	2
accommodation	2

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science and mathematics	3	Hair and beauty	1
Engineering	3	Health and caring	2
Business studies	2	Art and design	1
Hotel and catering	1	Humanities	2
Leisure and tourism	2	Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3

INTRODUCTION

1 Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education was inspected between February 1996 and May 1996. The enrolment and induction of students were inspected at the beginning of the academic year in September 1995. A team of six inspectors spent 30 days in the college from 29 April to 3 May 1996 examining cross-college issues. Earlier, 33 days were devoted to the inspection of specialist subjects. Inspectors visited 148 classes and looked at students' written work and college documentation. They held discussions with college governors, college managers, staff and students, parents, employers, representatives from the North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), head teachers, and members of the wider community.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education is situated in Scarborough on the North Yorkshire coast. The Borough of Scarborough covers an area of 316 square miles, 45 miles of coastline, and half of the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. The college traces its origins to the Scarborough School of Art which was founded in 1882, and became the Scarborough Technical and Evening Institute in 1938. In 1960, the college was located in new buildings on its present site, and was given its present name in 1992. The college has two smaller sites, one in Scarborough town centre, and the other at Whitby. Within a 10-mile radius of the college, there is one sixth form college and one independent school with a sixth form.

3 Scarborough and its travel-to-work area has a population of 103,650. The local economy is dominated by small to medium-size enterprises. Tourism is a particular feature of the Scarborough economy. There has, however, been a reduction in the numbers employed in the tourism industry locally and this has, in part, been compensated for by a growth in employment related to the conference market. The main areas of expansion have been distribution, transport, communications, and financial services. The level of self-employment is above the national average. The unemployment rate currently stands at 8 per cent, compared with the national rate of 8.5 per cent. Minority ethnic groups form 0.26 per cent of the general population and 1.8 per cent of the college's enrolments are drawn from them.

4 In November 1995, the college had 3,769 students enrolled. Of these, 1,075 were on full-time courses and 2,694 were part-time students attending in a variety of modes including day release, block release and evening only. A significant trend has been the recent growth in the number of adult students. Student numbers by age, by level of study and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The college employs 133 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 142 full-time equivalent support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

5 The college's mission is 'to contribute to the economic and social well-being of the community it serves by providing quality post-compulsory education and training for all'. In working to fulfil its mission, the college places importance on providing its curriculum through a variety of modes of learning and timetabling arrangements, in order to meet a wide range of students' needs.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

6 The college offers a broad range of courses which covers all vocational areas except agriculture and construction. It regularly reviews the extent and scope of its provision. There are 60 full-time and 323 part-time and evening courses. In recent years, the provision of courses in art and design, caring and performing arts has expanded, whilst that for General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) has reduced because of declining demand. In the majority of programme areas, students have good opportunities to progress from foundation level to advanced or higher level courses. The college has made a significant contribution to the achievement of the national targets for education and training by developing General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) in 11 vocational areas, and a substantial and growing range of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 to 4. There is a particularly wide range of provision in some occupational areas. For example, in catering and hospitality, the college offers GNVQs at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels, NVQs at levels 1 to 4, and a higher national diploma.

7 Thirty-one per cent of students are enrolled on higher education courses, mainly higher national certificates and diplomas, validated by the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC). Other higher education courses are provided through franchise and other arrangements with five universities and a college of food and tourism. The higher education courses are especially valued by those students who are unable to move out of the Scarborough area.

8 The college has successfully developed provision for groups traditionally under-represented in further education. For example, access courses designed to help mature students to enter further and higher education, have attracted significant numbers of adults who wish to return to study. There is increasing recruitment to a wide range of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including part-time courses for adults with severe learning difficulties. The college is running innovative and imaginative schemes to provide adults with basic skills, including family literacy projects. British Sign Language courses are offered up to stage three. Other outreach work is limited to the Whitby Centre, established two years ago, which now has 783 enrolments.

9 Some of the college's attempts to introduce new provision have been less successful. These include ambitious plans to attract students from other European countries and the launch of courses already offered by

providers in Scarborough. For example, in 1994, the college offered a full-time GCE A level programme. This has recruited very few students and has had an adverse effect upon the college's relations with other local institutions. The college has now decided to close down its full-time GCE A level programme and develop provision which complements that of other providers in the area.

10 Some areas of provision are underdeveloped. For example, there is scope for more provision at foundation level and in business and administration. Few courses are modular and opportunities for students to complete their studies over a longer timescale are limited. There is little provision of open learning whereby students, particularly those with outside commitments, may come to college at times which suit them to study materials which meet their individual needs. Similarly, the college does little to facilitate distance learning for those who cannot attend college regularly or may need to work from home. There is a limited amount of provision at weekends and during the summer holidays.

11 There are good opportunities for full-time students to enrich their programme of study. They can learn a modern foreign language. There is an extensive programme of student exchanges with colleges in other European countries and this is supported by funding from the European Union. There is a wide range of sporting activities and college teams compete locally and regionally. Art and design students undertake work commissioned from outside the college. Many students take part in well-organised work experience placements, which the college arranges through its links with some 1,500 local, national and overseas organisations.

12 A programme of link activities with local schools is organised centrally, through the admissions staff, and also by teachers. Admissions staff have access to all schools in the area and contribute to a range of liaison activities. Some teachers organise effective link activities, such as the sampling of vocational provision by school pupils. There is scope for more teachers to develop such links. There is little co-operation between teachers from the college and local schools on joint planning of the curriculum. Pupils in their final year at school can apply to use the college's learning centre. Teachers involved in provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and in basic education have extensive links with special schools, the local authority and voluntary agencies. The college's new policy of complementing existing provision within Scarborough is helping to further these links.

13 Liaison with industry and employers is generally good. There is an extensive range of advisory committees involving employers. The GNVQ in manufacturing is taught on employers' premises through a scheme organised by an industrial consortium of 17 small and medium enterprises. The college has won a bid to offer modern apprenticeships with a local coach manufacturer. The college's own training company delivers

full-cost courses to local companies, and has obtained a high proportion of repeat custom from them. The company acts as a facilitator for arranging work placements for students. It also helps to administer and deliver the TEC management courses and youth training programme. A growing volume of NVQ and other training is provided on employers' premises.

14 Market research and planning are at an early stage of development. The college prospectus does not identify courses for different market sectors, such as adults. A marketing group drawn from teaching staff has recently been established. It has conducted research into the perceptions which members of the local community have of the college. It has used the findings of this research to create an action plan for improving promotional literature and links with clients. A guidance shop providing information on college courses is to be opened in the town centre in partnership with the careers service, the TEC and the borough council.

15 The college has a policy and a working group on equal opportunities. There is reference to the policy in college literature. The college runs awareness-raising activities for staff and students to increase the effectiveness of support for students with disabilities. Considerable effort has gone into making buildings accessible for wheelchair users and the visually impaired. Until recently, however, the working group lacked terms of reference, and met very infrequently. There is no overall monitoring or reporting on the implementation of the equal opportunities policy to senior management and the corporation.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

16 Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education has faced difficult times since incorporation. The small deficit inherited at incorporation had grown to over £2 million by July 1995. Since 1993, the college has reduced its staffing by 65 full-time equivalent posts, including 45 teaching posts. Twenty-four members of staff were subject to compulsory redundancy. There has been a considerable number of changes in senior management posts and college management structures. In June 1995, a recovery plan was formulated and implemented. By November 1995, it became clear that the college was not meeting its income targets, and in February 1996, a working group of governors and senior managers was formed to produce a second recovery plan. About this time, the principal who had been in post since 1992, decided to take early retirement on grounds of ill health, and one of the assistant principals was appointed as acting principal.

17 There are 13 members on the board of the corporation and these include the principal. There is a long-standing vacancy for a TEC nominee. Eight members were governors at the college before incorporation. The board has strong links with the local community. Its members represent a range of backgrounds and have particular strengths in catering and engineering. The board lacks expertise in some areas such as personnel and property management, and it currently has only one member with

professional financial qualifications. Until October 1995, there were no staff governors; there are now two. There is no student governor. Board members have shown themselves willing to devote considerable time and energy to the college. For example, they held six meetings in the period between 29 November 1995 and 22 February 1996. They have established a register of interests and a code of conduct. They have not yet established their training needs or set up a programme for the effective induction of new members.

18 Most of the work of the board is carried out in its monthly meetings. The board has two subcommittees for finance and audit respectively. The terms of reference for the finance committee state that it should meet termly; it has met twice in the last four terms. Published minutes are not available in the college. If there is a request to see the minutes, the clerk to the governors will bring them to the college as soon as possible. Requests to see the minutes are rare. Inspectors experienced considerable difficulty in gaining access to governing body papers. Assistant principals attend board meetings by invitation. Until recently, they were invited infrequently. They now attend for at least part of the meetings but do not receive agenda and papers.

19 Until recently, the board failed to take appropriate account of the implications, over an extended period of time, of reports on finances, staff and student numbers. Some reports were accepted without probing debate. There is no evidence that the board monitors the college's performance against the targets set in the strategic plans. It receives papers from various committees but there is no evidence that these are formally debated. There is no annual report to the board on health and safety. Staff comment that they lack confidence in the governing body. Although staff welcome the involvement of governors in advisory committees, they consider that the board does not have a full understanding of their interests and concerns.

20 The senior management team consists of the acting principal, and three assistant principals with responsibilities for the curriculum, finance, resources and planning, and administration, respectively. Management at the college faces considerable challenges but there has been significant progress in meeting these successfully in recent months. Previous management decisions have led to some current difficulties. For example, between 1993 and 1995, the number of full-time equivalent staff was increased by 20 per cent to allow for anticipated growth in student numbers. This growth failed to materialise, and the college has had to reduce its staffing to the 1993 levels, and to plan for further reductions. Senior managers have recognised the need for the college to move to a collaborative style of management. They have adopted a more open and communicative method of working and they keep staff informed on the issues the college faces. Relationships between management and staff, and between the college and the local community have improved. Staff at

all levels in the college are supportive of each other. They work effectively in teams, doing the best for their students in difficult circumstances. For example full-time staff have voluntarily accepted increased workloads beyond their contracted hours. There has been a significant reduction in the hours taught by part-time staff.

21 The college's planning processes are becoming increasingly effective. The working group on the recovery plan successfully brings together governing body members and senior management. The governing body members are able to assure themselves of the adequacy of the plan and of financial controls. The group meets weekly for the senior management to report, in detail, on progress in driving down costs and on progress in implementing the plan. In October 1995, a planning group was established to co-ordinate the college's production of its strategic plan. Schools produce their plans to common headings, including timescales, responsibilities and information on resources. These are then fed into the college's overall plan. The current strategic plan does not include an updated operating statement, and the risk analysis is weak. There is no established cycle for producing, monitoring and reviewing the plans.

22 The college's structure is clear and understood by staff and students. There are 12 schools: applied technology; art and design; business and secretarial; catering and hospitality; core skills and GCE A level; educational development; enterprise; hairdressing and beauty therapy; health and social care; international education and science; learning support and development; and leisure, tourism and sport. Each school gives those staff who work in it a strong sense of identity. In some instances, however, subject areas are unsatisfactorily fragmented across more than one school and difficulties ensue over the dissemination and sharing of good practice by staff. The structure is currently under review. Communication, within and between schools, is generally good. Heads of school meet weekly. There is a weekly cycle of team, school and course meetings, and these are generally well attended and minuted. There is currently no opportunity for heads of school to meet regularly with the senior management team. Other channels of communication include a weekly news sheet, 'Rumours'. There is a developing network for e-mail; and a telephone-based tannoy system.

23 Shortly before the inspection, the college reviewed its policies and committee structures. The academic board has been reconstituted and given a clearer role in relation to curriculum management and quality. Some college committees, such as curriculum development, are not fully functioning. Some important aspects of the college's work, such as internal verification, are not covered by committees. Policies vary in age, and processes for monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness are not well defined. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of more recent policies.

24 The college's average level of funding for 1995-96 is £19.13 per unit, compared with a figure of £19.48 for the previous year. The median for

general further education and tertiary colleges is £17.84. The college's estimated income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The college inherited a deficit of £230,000 at incorporation, and by 1995 this had grown to £2,454,000. It expects to meet its target of 260,000 units for the year 1995-96. At the time of the inspection, figures provided by the college indicated that it had already achieved over 250,000 units. The college expects to make up the balance through continued enrolment and through units gained for student achievement.

25 Until recently, the college had insufficiently rigorous controls in a number of areas, such as expenditure on teaching hours. In 1994-95, the budget for part-time teachers was overspent and there was some under-utilisation of full-time staff. Controls on staff expenditure have been strengthened. The hours worked by full-time teachers are now rigorously monitored and the college has reduced its expenditure on part-time teaching. Budgets for schools have been determined on a historical basis. Because of the college's current financial circumstances, these budgets have been withdrawn and schools may only implement essential expenditure. Unit costing is being pursued as a matter of urgency, but is still at an early stage of development.

26 The college's computerised management information system is based on software developed in the college. It collects much of its data from student attendance registers. In the past, the information provided was not always reliable. There is now a high level of confidence in the accuracy of the data produced. A wide variety of useful and up-to-date reports on current college activity is available both on paper and through the extensive network of computers in the college. There are effective working relationships between the management information systems managers and the users of the system.

27 Each school has course enrolment targets. Managers are able to monitor applications, at various levels of detail, on a regular basis and compare them with the previous year's data. Data on the retention rates of students on courses and on the reasons why students leave courses early are collected through the register system and regularly monitored by management.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

28 The college has developed a number of approaches to ensure that students are provided with impartial information and guidance to help them to choose appropriate programmes of study. There is an attractive college prospectus and a range of informative material on courses. Opportunities are provided for prospective students to visit the college during open evenings, 'taster days' and other events. In a number of cases, effective links have been established between course teams and local schools. For example, local pupils attend short courses and

workshops in hairdressing and beauty therapy, and year 10 and 11 pupils are invited to help with preparations for a summer art and design exhibition and fashion show held at the college. Most applicants receive adequate and appropriate guidance to enable them to make an informed choice of course.

29 Procedures for admissions and enrolments are clear and effective. Applications for entry are dealt with promptly and efficiently. All full-time applicants are interviewed by an admissions officer, and part-time students are given the opportunity of a formal interview. School leavers are encouraged to bring their national records of achievement to their interviews. Enrolment procedures are flexible and efficient, and enable adult learners to enrol at the college throughout the year. Written contact is maintained with applicants. In many cases, they are invited to visit the college during the period prior to enrolment. Admissions officers have good links with curriculum teams, obtaining regular and appropriate information on course developments.

30 There is some good practice in the assessment and accreditation of the experience and learning which students have acquired before college. The process of such accreditation and assessment of prior experience and learning is not, however, effectively or consistently applied across the college. Managers recognise the need to extend the use of this process and increase the awareness of staff of its importance.

31 Induction procedures are well organised and provide the majority of full-time and part-time students with appropriate guidance. A comprehensive induction pack is issued to all students. Tutors are given additional information to use on induction programmes. All students are provided with a diary and handbook providing information on college services. Staff in different programme areas use their discretion as to the length of the induction period. Some provide additional activities, such as talks by local employers and previous students. Examples of effective team-building exercises took place during induction. Other aspects of induction were less satisfactory and activities failed to interest the students and lacked sufficient variety. The induction process did not always address the needs of the increasing number of mature students.

32 Effective procedures enable students to transfer easily between programmes of study. Students requesting a transfer during the induction period undertake an action plan review with the appropriate admissions officer. There are opportunities for those students wishing to transfer between programmes at the end of their first year of study to do so.

33 There are effective systems for the identification of students' additional learning needs. All full-time students take a screening test, developed from the Basic Skills Agency test, to identify those needing additional help with their learning. In addition, teachers are encouraged to refer students to the learning centres for help with communications, numeracy, information technology or study skills. Each school has a

liaison tutor who has received training on the levels and types of support available. Support is also available to part-time students. The learning centres are well resourced and staffed by teachers who are specialists in the provision of additional support for learning. Students make an action plan to remedy their specific weaknesses. Records are kept of their progress and attendance. The system for tracking students with additional learning needs is underdeveloped. For example, some students are not receiving all the support they need. Some are reluctant to attend the learning centres or their identified needs for additional support with their learning have not been systematically addressed.

34 Tutorial guidance and support are appreciated and valued by most students at the college. The majority of full-time students have a formal programme of tutorials, and some part-time students also have regular tutorial meetings. For example, the hairdressing department has recently introduced a formal tutorial system for part-time day release students which they find highly beneficial. NVQ care students have regular meetings to review their portfolios of work. Many students spoke positively of the open, friendly approach of their tutors, whom they regard as an important source of information, guidance and advice.

35 There are significant weaknesses in the support provided to students to manage their personal records of achievement and individual action plans. There is no formal policy to ensure that tutors encourage students to update their records of achievement. Examples of ineffective tutorial support on individual action planning were seen in a number of curriculum areas during the course of the inspection. Insufficient attention is given to ensuring that personal tutors provide a consistent level of pastoral support and careers advice across all programme areas.

36 There are effective arrangements to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in making a successful transition from school to college. The school of learning support and development is developing effective links with the special needs co-ordinators in local schools. Prospective students and their parents are encouraged to visit the college. Specialist teachers are involved in admissions interviews, and they have developed effective links with recently appointed liaison tutors in the different curriculum areas. Learning support staff attend lessons for students with particular learning difficulties and/or disabilities and provide them with effective assistance. Where appropriate, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are enabled to transfer from discrete provision to mainstream programmes within the college.

37 An effective and confidential counselling service is provided to all students by a full-time college counsellor. Detailed financial and welfare advice is available to students, and access and welfare funds are administered by the central admissions unit. A day nursery with 50 places for children aged from two to five years is available at subsidised rates. Careers guidance is available to both full-time and part-time students, and

is provided by college admissions officers and by careers officers from North Yorkshire Careers Guidance Services Limited.

38 The college has a systematic approach to monitoring the attendance of students. The management information system enables attendance to be tracked, and there are established informal and formal follow-up procedures for absent students. Part-time students were especially appreciative of the assistance provided by their teachers when they had missed a session. Students are represented by a part-time student union administrator at formal school meetings. Few students are actively involved in the student union.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

39 Inspectors observed 148 teaching sessions involving 1,475 students. Seventy per cent of the teaching sessions inspected had strengths which outweighed weaknesses, which is 6 per cent higher than the national average reported by the chief inspector in his annual report for 1994-95. Seven per cent of sessions had weaknesses that outweighed the strengths. The following table summarises the grades given to teaching sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		2	3	3	2	0	10
GCSE		0	1	2	0	0	3
GNVQ		11	18	17	4	0	50
NVQ		13	14	1	0	0	28
Other*		14	27	11	3	2	57
Total		40	63	34	9	2	148

**includes a number of courses encouraging adults to return to learn, higher national diploma courses and adult basic skills courses.*

40 In the better lessons, teachers used coherent schemes of work. Their lesson plans contained clear aims and objectives. The pace of learning was well managed and students' understanding was regularly checked. Teachers used a suitable variety of techniques in order to engage and sustain the students' interest. Where appropriate, they related theory to current commercial and industrial practices. Teachers marked assignments and other work fairly and returned it to the students promptly. In the less successful lessons, teachers used only a limited range of teaching strategies and their schemes of work lacked detail. In some instances of poor classroom practice, students spent too much time taking notes from dictation, and teachers failed to make sure that students understood the work.

41 In art and design, teaching was well planned and the work set was stimulating. Lesson plans were thorough. They showed careful timing of the different sections of the lesson and the learning activities involved. Teachers used an appropriate variety of teaching and learning approaches. The design briefs provided by teachers matched the different levels of the various programmes. Students found the work set by teachers exciting and challenging and it enhanced their motivation. Teachers encouraged students to enter national competitions and their preparation for these complemented their course work. Most lessons were lively and had a sense of purpose. Teachers displayed a thorough knowledge of their specialist subjects as well as the more general aspects of the programmes.

42 Teaching in humanities was generally of a high standard. Lessons reflected the aims of the course and were carefully structured. Teachers ensured that there was time to review and summarise what had been learnt. They strengthened the students' learning by effective use of games or questioning. Classroom management was generally good. In one lesson, the teacher managed a complexity of activities well. Some students worked with the teacher to complete records of skills they had acquired while other students were working individually, or in pairs, on a number of different tasks. Staff showed enthusiasm for their subject. They motivated their students by giving encouragement when it was due. Their questioning of the students was thoughtful and constructive. In a few instances, lesson plans were insufficiently detailed and only consisted of lists of topics to be covered. In a few unsatisfactory lessons, staff did too much of the work themselves. They spent too long dictating notes or gave too much help with tasks, with the result that these presented little challenge to students. The teachers' marking was generally fair, informative and helpful to the students. There was, however, considerable variation in assessment practices between staff.

43 Hairdressing and beauty therapy lessons were well managed. Teachers provided students with an appropriate variety of activities. Students found their work interesting and they were well motivated. Teachers used good quality handouts and a variety of learning aids. The teachers set high professional standards and provided good role models for the students. They encouraged students to apply what they had learnt in work-related situations. Practical lessons took place in realistic working environments. Teachers made regular reference to current commercial practices. Teachers used questioning techniques skilfully to check that students had understood the work. In some lessons, however, teachers allowed adult students to dominate, and gave little opportunity to younger students to answer questions.

44 Much of the teaching in health and care was of a high standard. Teachers encouraged students to draw on their work experience in order to link theory with professional practice. Assessments were set at the right level and were appropriately graded. Students were kept well informed on their progress. In some lessons, students were required to

copy too much information from overhead transparencies. Some teaching failed to challenge the students sufficiently. The lesson plans of some teachers were insufficiently detailed. In a number of lessons, teachers provided little opportunity for students to raise questions or engage in discussion.

45 In hotel and catering, the quality of teaching and learning was consistently high. Teachers made good use of their up-to-date knowledge of their subject and their practical experience. They drew effectively on their knowledge of, and links with, local industry. Schemes of work and lesson plans contained clear aims and objectives. Teachers set their students challenging work which necessitated the use of a wide range of practical skills. Assignment work was well planned for each level of the GNVQ programmes and was set within a relevant vocational context. Students received regular and constructive information concerning their progress and achievement. Relevant core skills were effectively integrated with other aspects of vocational work. In some lessons, group work was hindered by unsuitable accommodation.

46 In business and secretarial studies, lessons were generally well planned and students found them challenging and stimulating. Teachers displayed enthusiasm for their subjects. Most teaching was rigorous and delivered at a suitable pace. Teachers of NVQ and the RSA Examinations Board (RSA) single subjects used a range of good learning materials and exercises which were suitable for the students' different levels of skill and knowledge. Teachers had devised effective tracking systems to ensure they could monitor the progress and learning activities of students. There were some examples of good working and discussion in small groups, effective oral questioning and good use of students' work experience to bring out key issues. In some lessons, the context of the teaching and learning was not sufficiently related to current commercial practice. Some subject schemes of work consisted of little more than lists of topics. Teaching styles in a minority of sessions were dull and lacked appropriate variety. In business administration, students spent too much time working through past examination questions and work sheets. These did not sustain their interest and did not necessarily extend their range of skills.

47 In science, the schemes of work and lesson plans contained clear aims and objectives which were shared with students. Students' assignments were set and marked at an appropriate level and returned promptly. Teachers regularly checked that learning had been achieved. Comprehensive records of students' achievements were kept and these informed the students of their progress. Teachers emphasised the importance of safe working practices. In most lessons, the teachers carefully explained the objectives of the lesson. In some lessons, however, they began with a series of questions without setting the context. Some lessons failed to challenge students sufficiently and they did not develop and extend their knowledge and skills. Teachers made limited use of teaching and learning aids. Where handouts and videos were used to

complement teaching, their effectiveness and quality were variable. In two lessons, teachers failed to answer students' questions adequately.

48 In engineering, teaching was generally planned satisfactorily. Teachers devised outline schemes of work and effective lesson plans. In the better lessons, learning materials and the overhead projector were used well and teaching was lively and purposeful. In some motor vehicle engineering lessons, teachers identified the students' levels of knowledge and understanding through skilful and keen questioning and short written tests. Students who needed it, received extra and effective help in mathematics. Practical work in the motor vehicle workshops was well organised. Students worked well and received careful help and support from their teachers. They were also assisted by good supporting documentation and learning materials. In some subjects, such as engineering science and electrical principles, students undertook insufficient practical work. In some instances, teachers did not return assessed work promptly. Tutorials on some courses were poorly organised. Students received insufficient help in completing course records and they were poorly informed of their progress. Some lessons lacked momentum and students were left too long to work on their own without direction from the teacher.

49 In leisure and tourism, teaching was effective and extended the students' knowledge and understanding. Teachers kept students regularly informed on their progress. In most lessons, an appropriate variety of teaching and learning methods was used and topics were covered thoroughly. GNVQ students were provided with a range of well-planned visits to employers' premises where they could relate their learning to work-based practices. In some instances, teachers failed to check the students' understanding of the lesson sufficiently. On the sports and recreation course, teaching and learning strategies did not ensure that the students developed a full range of relevant skills.

50 For students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the most effective lessons were those which met individual students' needs identified through programmes of learning which the students and teacher had planned together. Teachers regularly monitored and reviewed each student's progress. In the better lessons, schemes of work and lesson plans were used effectively and each student had detailed learning objectives. The students' interest was engaged and sustained when their work was suitably challenging. In a few lessons, students lost interest and questioned the relevance of what they were learning. Some students had difficulty with reading materials which were not appropriate to their level of achievement.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

51 Most students enjoyed their studies and showed a willingness to learn. They acquired knowledge and understanding appropriate to their

level of study, and most had the confidence and ability to apply their skills. They spoke with enthusiasm about their programmes of study, assignments and work experience. The students showed a good understanding of their progress and the requirements of the programmes which they were following.

52 In hairdressing and beauty therapy, students demonstrated high levels of skill in their practical work, which was carried out to professional standards. Students enjoyed their studies, found learning activities challenging and the range of subjects interesting and relevant. The core skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology were integrated with their vocational studies. The standard of the students' written assignments was high. Students worked effectively in groups and the adults were supportive towards one another.

53 Students in art and design displayed a positive attitude to their work. They had confidence to work on their own and they developed a wide range of relevant technical skills. Their portfolios contained many examples of imaginative work of a high quality. Core skills were well integrated with specialist study, and students had access to a range of appropriate information technology. Levels of achievement were good across the programme area. In 1995, 100 per cent of the students achieved the BTEC foundation studies in art and design. Results in both the GNVQ advanced and intermediate courses were good. There were examples of students who started at intermediate level and progressed to higher education within the college. In 1995, 68 per cent of the students progressed to degree or higher national diploma programmes. All students completing the BTEC foundation studies in art and design course obtained a place on a degree course. Eighty-seven per cent of those completing intermediate courses, progressed to related further education courses.

54 Students of catering and hospitality achieved good pass rates on NVQ courses. Results in NVQ reception were good; part-time students achieved 100 per cent success. Full-time students achieved 100 per cent success in NVQ food service and food preparation. Many students on hotel and catering courses displayed a high level of professional competence in both restaurant and kitchen work. Their files and portfolios were well organised, researched and presented. Students at all levels demonstrated good organisational skills. They had acquired the skills to work on their own and they were able to make productive use of their free time. The standards of their assessed work were appropriate to the level and type of programme being studied. There were opportunities for all students to develop core skills, enterprise and initiative within a vocational context. A significant number of students progressed to higher education. There was poor student retention on the advanced GNVQ and only 36 per cent of those originally enrolled, completed the course.

55 In business studies, most students were well motivated, enjoyed their studies and took pride in their completed work. Written work was

generally of a good standard and well presented. Students understood the tasks set and spoke confidently about them. Students on secretarial and administration programmes demonstrated a high level of standards and achievement in their work and in their results. Most full-time students progressed to employment on completion of their courses. Students achieved good pass rates across all programmes. Many obtained distinction grades in secretarial programmes. Students' files were well presented and showed clearly how students had acquired a range of skills as their course progressed. Most full-time students achieved good pass rates in their main, and additional qualification, examinations. In a minority of cases, students were not encouraged to develop the skills to research and work on their own. There were a few examples of poor standards in written English.

56 Students of health and social care demonstrated the ability to work together effectively in groups to complete assignment work. They used information technology to record the results of research activities, to enhance the presentation of assignments, and as a core skill within their vocational work. Students enjoyed their studies. They acquired appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding to progress to childcare and health-related employment, further training or a higher level of study. All programmes had well-planned work experience and this was used effectively by teachers to link theory to practice. Pass rates on the GNVQ advanced and intermediate courses for those completing the courses within the normal period of time, were 100 per cent and 90 per cent.

57 Engineering students were well motivated and carried out practical work safely to industry standards. Students' assignment work was well presented and of an appropriate standard. Students made good use of information technology to enhance their presentation. The success rate of students who complete their course is generally satisfactory. For example, 70 per cent of the BTEC first diploma engineering students who completed their course in 1994, gained the diploma, and 78 per cent of students who completed the national diploma in the years 1994 and 1995, were successful. Success rates, for one and two-year full-time courses, recorded during a recent national survey of engineering undertaken by the inspectorate, were 63 per cent and 77 per cent, respectively. Part-time students on the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) course for the repair and servicing of road vehicles, achieved better results than full-time students taking the same examination.

58 In mathematics and computing, students showed enjoyment and interest in classes. Students' achievements were variable. In 1995 there was a pass rate of 89 per cent on the BTEC national diploma course in computing. The students' retention rates were poor on the GNVQ advanced information technology, higher national certificate information technology, and GCE A level mathematics courses. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results have declined each year since 1994.

59 Science students, and particularly those on GNVQ courses, enjoyed their studies. They demonstrated good teamwork skills and undertook practical tasks safely and competently. Students acquired levels of knowledge and understanding appropriate to their level of study. GNVQ students undertook work experience, although industrial placements were limited. There were 100 per cent pass rates in GCE A level environmental science and biology in 1995. However, results in GCE A level physics, chemistry, and human biology were below the national average.

60 Students of sport, leisure and tourism, demonstrated appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding in the majority of their assignments. The assignments of students on the BTEC sports science national diploma were well presented and structured. The students' sporting achievements were good. Individual students and teams of students have gained national and local recognition. There were 100 per cent and 90 per cent pass rates, respectively, on the GNVQ advanced and intermediate courses. The students' practical work was up to industry standards of competence and safety.

61 Humanities students, particularly adults and those on vocational courses, made an effective contribution in lessons. They developed appropriate core and study skills. The standards they achieved in their work were generally good and they did well in their examinations. Examination results in 1994-95 were generally better than those of previous years and matched, or were slightly above, the national average. Results in some individual subjects were good. For example, the GCSE English results were above the national average for the last two years, with 100 per cent of students gaining grades A to C. Good GCE A level results were obtained in 1994-95 in French, psychology and on some English courses. Results in other subjects including German and sociology, were below the national average. The GCE A level pass rates obtained by language students rose from 43 per cent in 1994, to 80 per cent in 1995. Students on vocational language courses also performed well. However, although those completing their studies were generally successful, drop-out rates were high, and were over 50 per cent for full-time students.

62 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enjoyed their studies. They gained in self-confidence and worked competently and safely in workshops. Many students were making progress and took externally validated and nationally recognised qualifications. For example, one student in catering had progressed from a basic programme designed for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, through NVQ level 1 and 2 and was now studying at NVQ level 3.

63 Students in the 16 to 18 age range who were entered for GCE advanced supplementary (AS) or GCE A level examinations in 1994-95 scored an average of 4.1 points per entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2), compared with an average score of 4.8 in 1993-94. This places the college among the middle third of colleges in the sector on this performance

measure, based on the data in the 1995 tables published by the Department for Education and Employment. According to these tables, 72 per cent of students in their final year of study on vocational courses at the college, gained their qualifications. This places the college among the middle third of colleges in the sector, based on this performance measure.

64 Figures provided by the college show a retention rate on further education courses in 1994-95, of 82 per cent for full-time students, and 75 per cent for part-time students. Information on the destination of students is collected by course tutors for full-time and part-time students and it is collated by the central admissions team.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

65 The college's charter is fully explained to full and part-time students as part of their induction. Complaints arising from the college's non-compliance with the charter's commitments are logged, analysed termly and a record is kept of action taken. Realistic standards are set for admissions, the provision of support for learning and grievance procedures. The standards for teaching and learning are less clearly identified and are not linked closely to those of the *Charter for Further Education*. The college has not established a group to review the content and format of its charter. Some commitments in the charter, including the commitment to assess and return work within deadlines, are not met consistently.

66 Students answer questionnaires about the quality of the college's provision, when they join the college, during, and at the end of their course. The purposes of these questionnaires are explained carefully to all full and part-time students. Summaries of the students' opinions are displayed on noticeboards throughout the college, and distributed to heads of school and programme team leaders.

67 A policy statement on quality control was approved by the corporation in 1993. This stated the college's intention 'to confirm existing good practice and identify minimum standards which all courses should meet'. The main focus of the quality assurance system is the annual course review and evaluation process. Comprehensive manuals clearly document the procedures to be used to support the process of course reviews. The review documentation does not always allow for a detailed level of analysis. For example, the section on recruitment, induction and progression lists a series of questions that generally only require a 'yes' or 'no' response. There is no requirement to record the average levels of course attendance against the college's target of 75 per cent attendance. The documentation does not cover any review of progress on the action plan from the previous review. Although the reports of moderators and assessors are considered by course teams during the academic year, they are not systemically taken into account in the course review process. The senior management team has set few performance indicators. It is intended that a number of key performance indicators will be established and form part of the 1995-96 review process.

68 The quality assurance policy is implemented by a quality review group consisting of the quality review co-ordinator, the GNVQ co-ordinator, five representatives from the teaching staff and two from the support staff. The review group produces an annual summative report which is distributed to the heads of school and senior management team. It draws on the annual course reviews, responses to student questionnaires and the external verifier reports in order to select courses that it will audit. The audit process requires the review group to monitor the implementation of suggested improvements, four months after the audit takes place. In 1994-95, 14 full-time courses were subject to internal audit. The report gives few examples of good practice. The academic board does not receive the annual report, or discuss issues related to quality assurance.

69 There are manuals which outline the operational procedures for the majority of college services. Some service managers have not produced annual reports. There is no common format for the reports, and there are few agreed service standards. College services are not subject to the audit process.

70 Arrangements for the induction of teaching and support staff are effective. For example, newly-appointed catering staff workshadow colleagues for one week before commencing their duties. The induction process is supported by good documentation on college policies and procedures. The college was one of the first in Yorkshire and Humberside to achieve the Investors in People award in March 1995. As part of its preparation for securing this award, an appraisal system for teachers was introduced in September 1992. This has been extended to include support staff. Appraisers are usually line managers. The principal focus of the appraisal scheme is the identification of training and development needs of individual staff. Training for the implementation of the scheme was provided for the appraisers.

71 The financial allocation for staff development represents about 1.2 per cent of the total staffing budget. The head of school for education and development, who also has a responsibility for staff development, produces an annual training plan which supports the schools' operational plans, the college strategic plan and the annual process of staff appraisal. This plan is effectively used to provide teaching and support staff with information on staff development. Staff development and training activities are also published in the college newsletter and through school meetings. There are effective procedures for staff to disseminate information that they have acquired through training events and activities. Efficient and effective use is made of the skills of college staff in the implementation of staff-development events. There is no annual report to the academic board or the senior management team evaluating the staff-development programme.

72 The college produced a self-assessment report and position statement for each major aspect of provision, using the headings contained in Council

Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Strengths are clearly identified but weaknesses are not rigorously recognised. The report fails to identify many weaknesses identified by the inspectors.

RESOURCES

Staffing

73 Overall, the numbers of teachers and support staff are well matched to the courses which the college offers. Staff are well qualified. Despite the current financial difficulties, the morale of staff is generally good. Staff are committed to their students and the college.

74 There are 91 full-time teachers, 95 per cent of whom have signed the new contracts, and 42 full-time equivalent part-time teachers. Three-quarters of the full-time teachers have a teaching qualification and 87 per cent are educated to degree or higher national diploma standard. Fourteen per cent have a higher degree and 11 per cent have technical qualifications. Many of the staff working on vocational courses have relevant industrial experience. Much of the industrial experience of teachers of catering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, is recent. In a few instances, particularly in business administration and science, the industrial experience of staff is more limited. All full-time teachers, and 42 part-time teachers are working towards the training and development lead body awards. Only eight staff have achieved the D36 award. There are almost equal numbers of men and women on the teaching staff. Of the 30 managers, 18 are women.

75 There are 107 full-time and 35 full-time equivalent part-time support and administrative staff. The quality of support that they provide is high. They receive the same help and encouragement from the college to further their qualifications as teaching staff. Levels of technical support in art and design, catering and hairdressing and beauty therapy are good. In engineering and information technology, however, the level of technical support is insufficient. There is no information technology network manager.

76 Personnel policies and procedures on selection and recruitment are well documented. All staff have up-to-date job descriptions. There is a computerised staff database. The personnel section carries out a detailed monitoring of staff by ethnic origin, gender, and disability.

Equipment/learning resources

77 General equipment and learning resources are adequate and sufficient for most areas of the college's work. All classrooms are well equipped and they have whiteboards and overhead projectors. Specialist equipment is sufficient to support courses. There are particularly good resources, to industry standards, in catering, hairdressing and beauty therapy and motor vehicle. There is a wide range of specialist equipment available for use by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

For example, special telephone equipment is provided for students with partial hearing who need to work in a reception area as part of their course. Large screens and enlarged text are available for visually impaired students.

78 In some curriculum areas the quality of equipment is variable. For example, equipment in the language laboratory is growing old and is becoming less suitable for the courses offered. There is a lack of modern physics equipment. Specialist equipment for sports science and tourism services courses is inadequate.

79 The overall quality of information technology equipment is high. The college has spent £349,000 over the last three years updating and increasing the number of computers for use by students. There is a total of 279 computers on all the sites. The ratio of workstation to students is 1:6. There are excellent computer-aided design facilities. In catering, a computerised stores system of industry standard is available to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of staff rooms have computers.

80 The learning centres on all three sites provide a welcoming environment. Students have access to information stored on 32 compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases, and to videos, journals, vocational and core skills learning materials. Teaching staff are timetabled for part of their duties in the learning centres. There are effective links between the centres and the schools. The book catalogue is fully computerised. At present, there is no system in place to monitor students' usage of the learning centres. The main site learning centre is small for the number of students on roll; and has only 202 study places. The college plans to extend this facility.

81 The college has a central purchasing strategy. The college belongs to a college consortia which has negotiated the cost of gas and electricity provision, with 30 per cent savings over the previous financial year. There is no capital replacement policy.

Accommodation

82 The colleges' main site is located at Lady Edith Drive, situated in extensive grounds two miles from the town centre. In addition there are two other sites, one at Whitby and the other, the Westwood site, in Scarborough town centre. The Whitby site is located in the St Hilda's Business park, and is a newly refurbished building used by a range of local businesses. The Westwood site is a grade II listed building, refurbished two years ago and used exclusively by the school of art and design.

83 The college has a decorating strategy for all sites. Many rooms are well decorated and carpeted. Teaching rooms have modern furnishings and blinds. The majority of specialist accommodation is of high quality. Over the last three years, the college has refurbished a number of teaching

areas. These include: the biology and chemistry laboratories; hairdressing and beauty therapy salons, including a purpose-built retail shop; and a restaurant with reception and bar, which provides a realistic working environment. There is some poor accommodation, mainly mobile classrooms which represent about 10 per cent of accommodation on the main site. However, it is intended to reduce the number of mobile classrooms from 17 to 7 by the beginning of June 1996. The exterior of the main site is in need of repainting. Standards of cleaning are high throughout the college.

84 Students and staff with restricted mobility can gain access to about 85 per cent of the buildings. The college is planning to improve access, for persons with restricted mobility, to the hairdressing and the gymnasium facilities. The needs of Braille users have been taken into account in parts of the college. Vibrating fire alarm indicators for the partially hearing have been installed.

85 Generally, the college provides a stimulating learning environment. The learning centres and computing rooms are well organised and provide students with a pleasant setting in which to work. College entrances are well marked with internal signposting to curriculum areas and college services. Specialist rooms in some curriculum areas, such as mathematics and information technology, lack visual interest and imaginative display materials.

86 Students' facilities for recreation and leisure include a fitness suite, and a refurbished, comfortable, bright and pleasant refectory. The college is in the process of providing additional social facilities for the students.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

87 The college is working to achieve its mission. Its strengths are:

- the breadth of its provision
- a well-organised programme of work placements with local, national and overseas organisations
- the management style of the college
- the commitment of all staff and governors to the college's recovery plan
- effective recruitment procedures, tutorial support and student services
- well-qualified, enthusiastic and committed staff
- a comprehensive staff-development policy linked to appraisal
- welcoming and well-maintained buildings
- modern and plentiful information technology and workshop facilities.

88 If the college is to maintain and improve the quality of its provision it should:

- conduct market research in a more systematic way
- establish a cycle of regular meetings between the heads of school and the senior management team
- strengthen the monitoring by the corporation of performance against the targets set in the college's strategic plans
- review the membership and operation of the governing body
- ensure students receive an adequate level of support to help them manage their personal records of achievement and individual action plans effectively
- revise the course review documentation to allow for more evaluative analysis
- increase the number of performance indicators used
- improve the effectiveness of the academic board.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (as at November 1995)

 - 2 Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at November 1995)

 - 3 Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at November 1995)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1995-96)

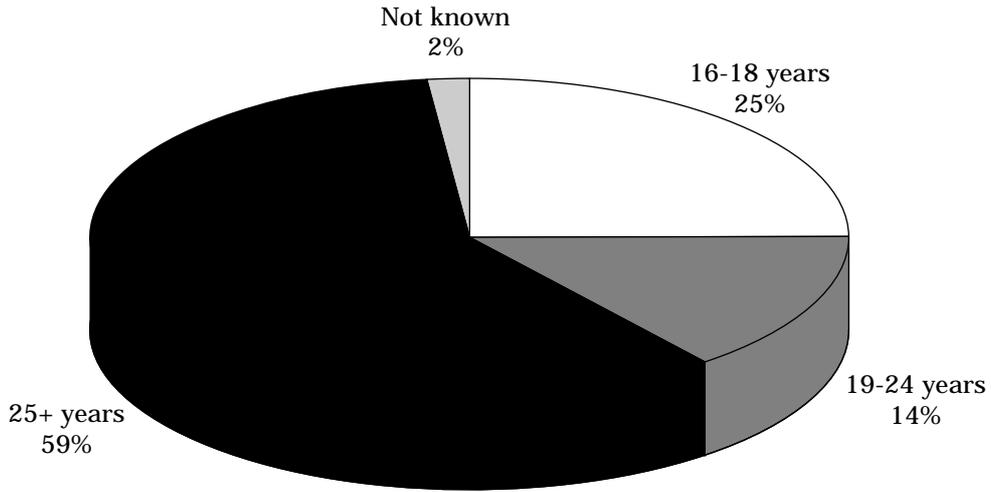
 - 5 Estimated income (for 12 months to July 1996)

 - 6 Estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

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

Figure 1

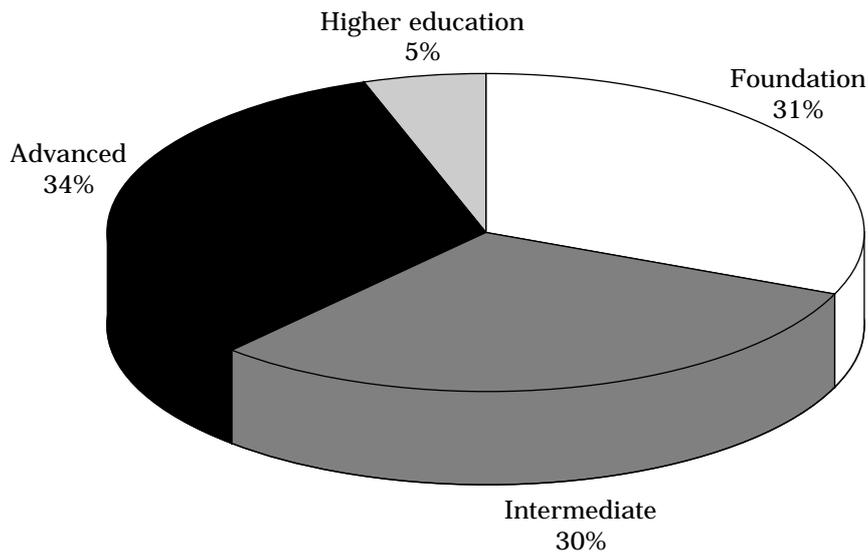
Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: percentage student numbers by age (as at November 1995)



Student numbers: 3,769

Figure 2

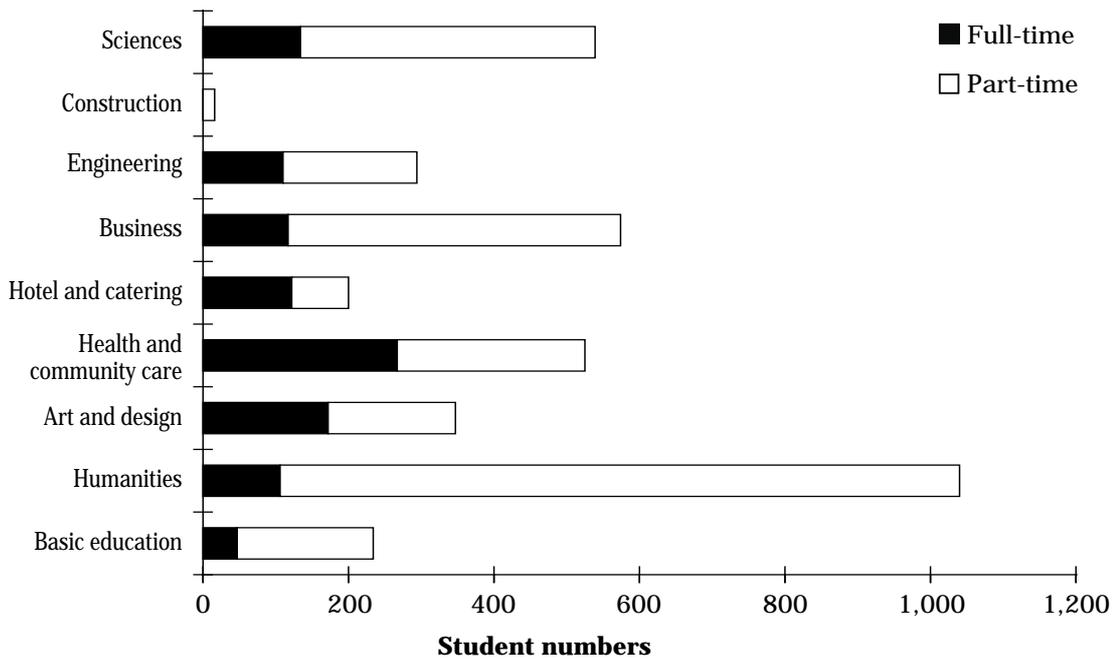
Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at November 1995)



Student numbers: 3,769

Figure 3

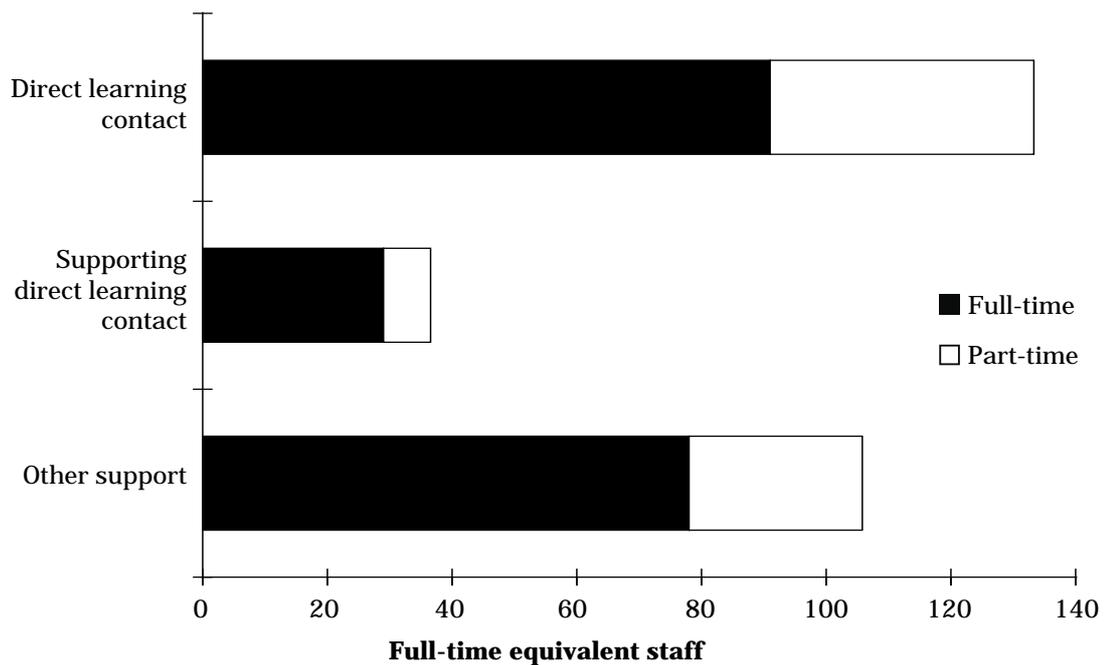
Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at November 1995)



Student numbers: 3,769

Figure 4

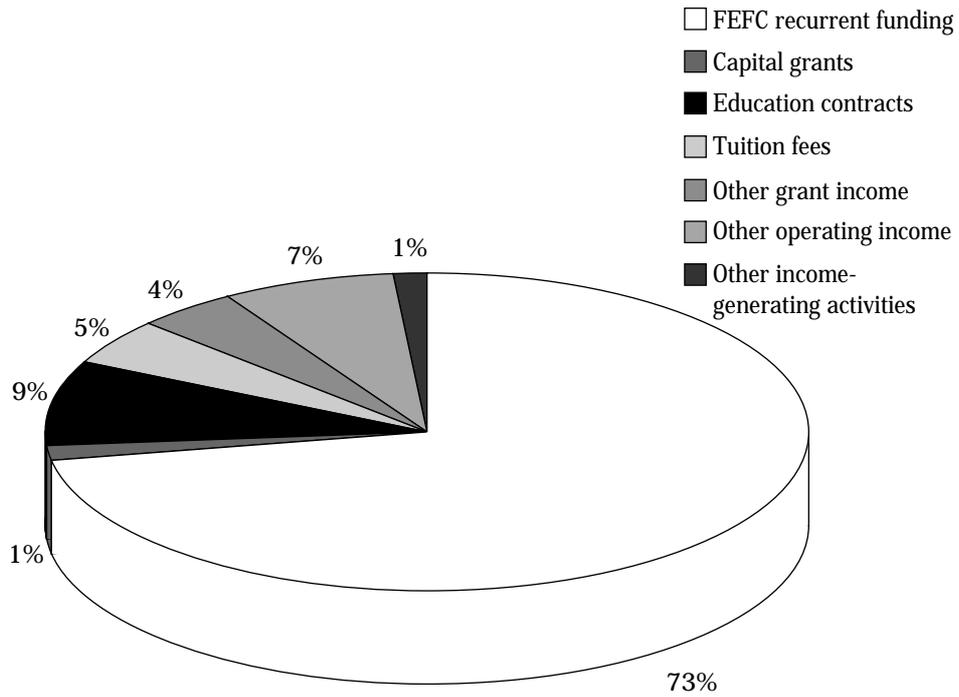
Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1995-96)



Full-time equivalent staff: 276

Figure 5

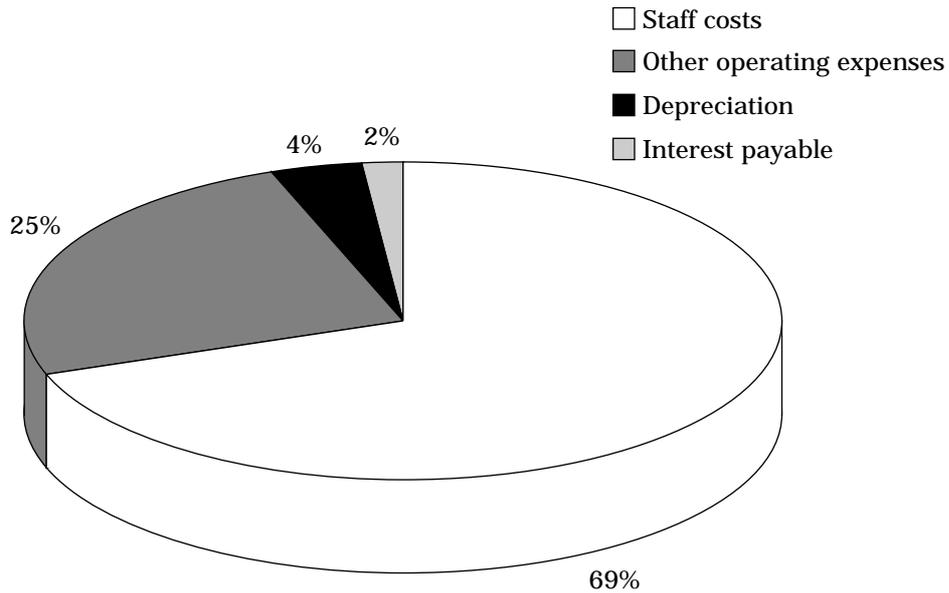
Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: estimated income (for 12 months to July 1996)



Estimated income: £6,897,283

Figure 6

Yorkshire Coast College of Further and Higher Education: estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)



Estimated expenditure: £6,579,288

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