

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

South Devon College

July 1997

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

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

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

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

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
Summary	
Introduction	1
The college and its aims	2
Responsiveness and range of provision	8
Governance and management	19
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	29
Teaching and the promotion of learning	40
Students' achievements	52
Quality assurance	63
Resources	75
Conclusions and issues	87
Figures	

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

By June 1996, some 329 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 329 colleges are shown in the following table.

College grade profiles 1993-96

Activity	Inspection grades				
	1	2	3	4	5
Programme area	9%	59%	29%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	14%	50%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	12%	54%	30%	4%	<1%

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 94/97

SOUTH DEVON COLLEGE
SOUTH WEST REGION
Inspected May 1996-April 1997

Summary

South Devon College offers a wide range of programmes for students of all ages and abilities. It is responsive to local demands, particularly from employers and part-time adult students. The college has strong links with the local community and higher education institutions. Governors are experienced and supportive. There is some effective teaching and a good range of support services for full-time students. The college has recently established a well-equipped learning resources centre. In order to build on its strengths, the college should improve: the teaching, students' achievements and students' retention and attendance rates on some courses; communication between senior managers and other staff; tutorial practice; support and guidance for part-time students; and the co-ordination of students' welfare services. In addition, the college should ensure; the collection and use of reliable data about students' achievements and retention; the implementation of its quality assurance policy; and the further improvement of specialist equipment and accommodation.

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

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science, mathematics and computing	2	Health and social care and hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Construction	3	Art and design, media and performing arts	2
Engineering	2	Humanities	3
Business	2	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult learning	3
Hotel and catering	2		
Leisure and tourism	3		

INTRODUCTION

1 South Devon College was inspected between May 1996 and April 1997. Some curriculum areas were inspected in May 1996. Enrolment and induction procedures were inspected in September 1996. The remaining curriculum areas and aspects of cross-college provision were inspected between February and April 1997. Inspectors spent 63 days in the college. They visited 299 classes and examined a wide range of documentation. Meetings were held with governors and parents, and representatives from local schools, employers, the local community, higher education institutions and Devon and Cornwall Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 The college draws students mainly from the three towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, which form Torbay; parts of Teignbridge to the north; and South Hams to the south. The college's main campus is in Torquay. There are smaller centres in Brixham, Paignton and Teignmouth. Collaborative work with various partners is undertaken at venues throughout south Devon.

3 Torbay is the third largest conurbation in Devon. It has a population of 124,000, of which 5 per cent are aged 16 to 19. Twenty-nine per cent are over 60 compared with 19 per cent nationally. The populations of South Hams and Teignbridge, are 79,000 and 115,000, respectively. The local economy relies heavily on service industries, public sector organisations and professional services. There are some manufacturing companies, of which the largest is an electronics communications company. In February 1997, the unemployment rate in the Torbay 'travel-to-work' area was 8.4 per cent, compared with an unemployment rate for the county of Devon of 6.2 per cent. A large number of part-time and casual jobs are available on a seasonal basis in tourism and leisure.

4 During the academic year 1995-96, 22,171 students were enrolled at the college. Of these, 3,301 were full time and 18,870 were part time; 4,269 of the part-time students were enrolled with partner organisations working in collaboration with the college at venues away from the main college sites. Two hundred and thirteen students were enrolled on higher education courses funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3. The college employs 245 full-time equivalent staff who teach or provide support for learning, and 176 full-time equivalent administrative staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

5 Competition for school-leavers in south Devon is intense. The number of 16-year-old school-leavers enrolled on full-time courses at the college has decreased from 1,554 in 1992-93 to 769 in 1996-97. In the Torbay, Teignbridge and South Hams area there are 13 schools for pupils aged 11 to 18 and four for pupils aged 11 to 16, two of which have applied to open

sixth forms. In addition, there are seven independent secondary schools. Six schools cater for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Approximately 32 per cent of school-leavers in the south Devon area proceed to further education. The nearest further education colleges are Exeter College, 23 miles to the north, and Plymouth College of Further Education and Plymouth College of Art and Design, 30 miles to the south west.

6 The senior management team comprises the principal and three directors who are responsible for academic planning and quality; human and physical resources and customer services; and finance and computer services, respectively. The college is organised into three faculties, each with several teaching sections within which there are programme teams. The academic work of the faculties is supported by three cross-college heads who are responsible for curriculum development; community studies and collaborative provision; and commercial development, customer services and marketing, respectively. There are also managers responsible for learning resources; estates and facilities; human resources; finance; and computer services. Only two of the 15 college managers are women.

7 The aims of the college are set out in its strategic plan for 1996-2001. They are to 'encourage and satisfy an increasing demand for education and training in order to create opportunities for people to achieve personal, educational and employment goals and to advance the social and economic well-being of the local, national and international communities'.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 South Devon College provides a broad range of education and training programmes for students of all ages and most ability levels. The college's curriculum covers all the 10 FEFC programme areas. Students can progress within the college from foundation to advanced level in most curriculum areas; they can progress to higher education courses in business and finance, building, engineering, tourism management, hotel and catering, drama, education, social sciences and interior design. About 17 per cent of the college's provision is higher education. The college offers 35 subjects at general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) and 24 general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects. There are access to higher education courses in sciences, business, electronics and humanities. Specific courses cater for young people and adults with severe and moderate learning difficulties. There is little provision at foundation level in some subject areas such as science and construction.

9 The college offers courses leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in 10 occupational areas. Six of these are offered at two or more levels. Courses leading to general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) are available in 10 programme areas at advanced level, eight at intermediate level, and four at foundation level. At intermediate and

advanced level, the college offers Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma and certificate courses in programme areas where GNVQs are not available.

10 Full-time and part-time students can broaden their main programme of study by undertaking additional studies such as optional GNVQ units or GCE A level and GCSE subjects, or by pursuing recreational and leisure activities such as sports, drama and music. Some recreational and leisure activities lead to accredited qualifications. In 1995-96, 59 per cent of full-time students took up an additional area of study or activity.

11 Effective collaboration with the universities of Plymouth, Exeter and Salford has resulted in the development of a number of higher national diploma and degree courses in addition to the higher national certificates and diplomas run by the college. The college is an associate of the University of Plymouth, offering the first part of a degree in social sciences. A postgraduate diploma in psycho-drama is validated by the University of Exeter, to which the college is affiliated and with which it is developing a master's degree course. The first part of a degree in electronic engineering is offered in conjunction with Salford University.

12 Collaborative work with partner organisations began in 1995 with a small programme for the Prince's Trust. Since then, the number of programmes of this kind has grown rapidly, and in April 1997 there were 6,450 students on collaborative courses. There are objectives relating to collaborative provision in the college's strategic plan. There are 23 partners including: schools, local government agencies, public services, private training organisations and community organisations. They provide education and training in areas such as information technology, first aid, business, foreign languages, engineering, art and design, sports, adult learning and the humanities. Most courses lead to nationally recognised qualifications. At present, there are few links between college teachers and training providers in the partner organisations. The college is in the process of improving such links by designating subject specialists from the college to liaise with the training providers.

13 The college is increasingly responsive to the needs of adult students. The proportion of students aged 19 and over has increased from 45 per cent in 1993-94, to 75 per cent in 1996-97. Some courses have arrangements which enable adult students to enrol throughout the year. Modular courses are offered in several vocational and GCE A level subjects. GNVQ courses are timetabled in two semesters to enable students to start in September or February. There are one-year 'fast-track' advanced GNVQ and GCE A level courses in business and finance, and travel and tourism. Innovative software packages have been developed and put on the Internet to enable students to study information technology entirely through computers. The college is also involved in a project to provide distance learning through the Internet to centres in Colombia. Between September 1996 and March 1997, 636 students enrolled at the college's 'open

learning' centre at Torquay, and 78 students enrolled at a centre based in the library at Teignmouth. Large text and reader facilities are available for visually impaired students.

14 The college makes an effective contribution to the local community. Students of construction and art and design are involved in the development of a local performing arts centre. Drama and dance students have worked and performed with visiting national and international professional companies and with local amateur groups. The European Social Fund is used to finance a range of projects. They include study visits to other European countries; retraining for long-term unemployed electronic engineers; a link between travel and tourism students and their counterparts in Denmark and Spain; and the provision of financial assistance towards the childcare and travel costs of individual students.

15 There are good collaborative links with some local schools, but the college has had difficulties establishing relationships with others, particularly those with newly established sixth forms. The number of school pupils attending college link courses has declined as schools have increased their own post-16 provision. However, the college still provides some programmes for school pupils, many of whom later enrol on the college's courses. About 150 pupils attend college for afternoon courses in a range of vocational subjects. College students have undertaken signwriting, decorating and construction projects for schools.

16 The college has links with a range of employers, particularly in construction, engineering, hairdressing, hotel and catering and motor vehicle engineering. Such links have led to the provision of training on employers' premises or at the college, the hire of premises to employers, and donations from employers of up-to-date equipment. Each faculty has an active employer advisory group which provides a network of useful contacts. However, the extent to which employers are involved in course planning and design varies. The college is expanding its provision of short courses at full cost. Tor Business Limited, an independent subsidiary company, delivers training in information technology.

17 Links with Devon and Cornwall TEC are strong. The college is responsive to requests for training. At the time of the inspection, training was being provided under the training credit scheme, and for 327 modern apprentices. The college has been involved in a number of development projects with the TEC and has undertaken research projects on behalf of the TEC. It has been successful in its bid for £123,000 from competitiveness funds towards the purchase of highly specialist equipment for electronic engineering. During 1997, some recruitment and achievement targets related to TEC-funded provision have not been met.

18 The college has been slow to develop a marketing strategy. Each faculty uses information from a variety of sources to identify local needs and to determine how the curriculum can meet these needs. The college has not, however, co-ordinated its market research. At the time of the

inspection, a number of staff voiced frustration that their courses and the image of the college were not being successfully promoted. In February 1997, external consultants began work aimed at marketing the college and its courses more effectively.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

19 The governing body has 11 members. Most have been members for more than one four-year term. There are six business members, the principal, two staff members, a student member and the TEC nominee. At present there are vacancies for one business and one staff member. Governors have expertise in public sector management, law, hotel and leisure management, marketing, industrial management and the construction industry. A chartered accountant has been co-opted to the audit committee. Governors have assessed the extent of their collective expertise and they have reviewed their effectiveness. There is a register of governors' interests, and a code of conduct. Meetings of the board have clear agendas, supporting papers and minutes. Financial information is presented with useful commentaries. New governors are provided with an induction programme and a comprehensive handbook.

20 The senior management team meets weekly and its members work well together. Their roles are clearly defined and widely understood. The principal has established a wide range of external contacts and is active in his promotion of the college's interests. A group of middle managers also meets weekly. The range of responsibilities of the managers in this group is diverse. Some managers feel that the group concentrates too much on operational details and that it is insufficiently concerned with major strategic issues. Steps are being taken to ensure that discussion in the group focuses on the strategic development of the college. The academic board meets at intervals of three weeks and it has a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation role. Each faculty has a board of study as its main management and monitoring committee.

21 Management meetings are held regularly. Following meetings of the senior management team, managers at all levels provide their teams with written briefings. There is an information network which includes a curriculum bulletin, a marketing newsletter and an electronic bulletin board which can be used to display senior managers' answers to questions raised in team briefings. Bulletins are issued by the principal to inform staff of important issues. Despite this range of internal communications, some staff feel out of touch with major college developments. They feel that they are not sufficiently consulted before some key management decisions are taken. The principal attends academic board meetings approximately three times a year. He attends the weekly meetings of middle managers only by invitation.

22 Over the last two years the number of senior and middle managers has been reduced. Senior managers have increasingly delegated

responsibility for planning, budget control and expenditure to middle managers. The role of section heads has broadened in scope. There are some weaknesses in the management of teaching sections and programme areas. For example, some enrolment targets set at programme/section level are unrealistic and performance indicators are not used effectively by some course teams. Information on student destinations is collected, but it is not often taken into account in curriculum management and development. Some courses are heavily staffed by part-time teachers who find it difficult to attend course team meetings. Most cross-college services managers have appropriate arrangements for meeting or maintaining contact with their staff.

23 The college's procedures for the collection and analysis of information on students' achievement, attendance and retention are inadequate. The college was unable to provide accurate students' achievements data during the inspection. Inspectors had to determine with individual curriculum managers data on which judgements could be made. The college's booklet on students' achievements is inaccurate. The academic board does not set performance targets for students' achievements. Inspectors found that attendance and retention rates in some subjects were poor: senior managers were not aware of the extent of these problems. Since this was drawn to their attention by inspectors, action has been taken. Faculties and programme teams are establishing targets for students' retention. Consultants have been employed to advise on ways of improving retention.

24 Each member of staff is invited to contribute ideas for the strategic plan. Governors are involved at each stage of its drafting. Teaching and service teams draft their own operational plans; these are collated and edited to form the basis for the college's operational plan. The plan contains specific operational targets and identifies who is responsible for ensuring that these are achieved. Although the strategic planning process is linked with the budgeting process, the plan does not include costs. The plan is used by senior managers to review the achievement of operational targets with faculty and functional managers.

25 The college's collaborative provision is co-ordinated by the college's partnerships team, led by the head of community studies. There are clear and well-documented procedures. Representatives of collaborative partners said they were generally satisfied with the administration and communication arrangements.

26 The college's health and safety policy is monitored by a health and safety committee which advises governors and senior managers on health and safety matters. A health and safety officer reports through the estates manager to the principal. The academic board is responsible for monitoring implementation of the equal opportunities policy and it considers reports from an equal opportunities action team. The college works with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf and the Royal National

Institute for the Blind to support students in the college who come from residential homes. The implementation of the equal opportunities policy is not systematically monitored.

27 College budgets are delegated to faculties and to cross-college services managers. The budgetary allocation process is understood by most budget holders. There are monthly reports on income and expenditure. Managers value these reports and they find the finance office helpful in resolving any disagreements and making suggestions for better financial management. A course-costing mechanism has been established. All submissions for new courses are subject to this mechanism and some managers use it to assist their decision making.

28 The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The college receives 66 per cent of its income from the FEFC. The college's average level of funding for 1996-97 is £14.50 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges for 1996-97 is £17.97 per unit. The college exceeded its enrolment targets in 1994-95 and 1995-96, and expects to exceed its target for 1996-97.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

29 The college has a central customer services unit, which includes student services. A variety of activities, including open days and evenings, and a 'careers week', provide prospective students with impartial advice about the college and its courses. Prospectuses and course leaflets are informative. Most full-time students receive adequate pre-entry advice and guidance but part-time adult students are less well served. Although the college is increasing the number of part-time adult students it recruits, many do not receive adequate guidance and support when they enquire about courses.

30 The enrolment and induction procedures are generally effective for full-time students. Students are enrolled and inducted in small groups by tutors who are clearly briefed; they use a comprehensive checklist of topics to be covered. However, the quality of induction is variable. Some induction sessions were very good. In others, tutors spent too much time on administrative tasks and overwhelmed students with information. Some part-time students were provided with a short induction, but this did not always meet their needs.

31 The college has a policy and procedures for assessing and accrediting students' prior learning. Accreditation procedures are at various stages of development in different programme areas. A few students gain accreditation by this route.

32 All full-time students have a personal tutor but the quality of tutorial support provided for them is variable. Course tutors also act as personal tutors. Many students said that their tutors were accessible and generous with their time. Group and individual tutorials are held on a regular basis,

but there is no agreed tutorial programme. Tutorial practices vary widely. The weekly tutorial periods are used in a variety of ways from planned individual and group sessions to informal arrangements where students are expected to seek out their tutor if they need support. Some tutorial sessions are effective. Others are poorly managed and their purpose is not explained to students. Record keeping by some tutors is poor. Attendance at group tutorials is often low. Some full-time students commented that tutors spend too much time on administrative matters instead of providing tutorial advice and guidance.

33 There is no consistency in the extent to which part-time students are provided with tutorial support. Some part-time students receive no tutorials and have few opportunities to discuss course-related and personal problems with staff. Managers recognise that they must improve the tutorial system and have established a guidance and support panel to carry this out. The panel has recommended that staff training in tutoring skills should be a priority for the college.

34 Students are encouraged to continue to maintain any existing records of achievement during their time at the college. On some courses, students' progress is noted regularly on their records of achievement, but the practice is not uniform across the college. The college has a newly revised policy on records of achievement. This is intended to promote their use for recording students' progress and the action plans they make to improve their work. However, the policy cannot be fully implemented until the tutorial system has been improved.

35 Full-time students have the opportunity to have their literacy and numeracy skills tested during enrolment. Methods of identifying students who need additional support are more effective in some curriculum areas than in others. In September 1996, over 1,000 students were identified as requiring some form of learning support, but only half this number took up the offer of support. Despite the efforts of course tutors to encourage students to attend literacy and numeracy workshop sessions, there is considerable absenteeism. Those who attend receive effective support.

36 The college provides counselling, medical, chaplaincy and financial welfare services. These are available five days a week by appointment or on a 'drop-in' basis. The services provide individual support for students and refer them to outside agencies for specialist help where necessary. Although these individual services are well regarded and valued by students and staff, their work is not co-ordinated. Recording and reporting arrangements are insufficiently systematic.

37 There is a comprehensive careers advice service which is well publicised and used by current and prospective students. Careers education and guidance are provided through an agreement with Cornwall and Devon Careers Services Limited. Four careers advisers are present in the college for up to four days a week. During the past year, they interviewed over 600 students. A further 250 students were seen by the college careers manager who is also the student services manager and has

responsibility for co-ordinating careers advice. Careers and higher education materials are available in the library, the careers suite and the learning support centre. Students are issued with a careers folder at induction. Staff are provided with a careers guide to help them with their tutorial work. Careers service advisers visit local schools to provide advice and guidance and to ensure that potential students are fully informed of the education and training opportunities available to them. Careers advice is available to adult students, but few ask for it. A careers group comprising managers from the college and careers advisers is being set up to review the college's careers advice service. Targets have been set for its future development.

38 A nursery for three to five year olds caters for up to 50 children. It provides childcare for the children of students, staff and people in the community. The college also has arrangements with local private childcarers to provide care for children under three.

39 Students are represented at college committees, faculty boards, and programme team meetings. Suggestion boxes are located in the main buildings for students' suggestions and complaints. There is a handbook that provides useful guidelines for the support and training of students who are representatives on programme teams.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

40 Two hundred and ninety-nine teaching sessions were inspected. Of these, 60 per cent had strengths which outweighed weaknesses. This compares with an average of 63 per cent for colleges inspected during the 1995-96 academic year according to the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. In 8 per cent of sessions, weaknesses outweighed the strengths. The grades awarded to the sessions inspected are shown in the following table.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade 1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE A level	9	23	25	7	0	64
GCSE	4	14	7	1	1	27
GNVQ	11	17	17	6	0	51
NVQ	6	20	9	3	0	38
Other vocational	13	47	16	3	0	79
Higher education and access						
to higher education	2	3	2	0	0	7
Basic education	0	2	3	1	0	6
Other	1	8	15	3	0	27
Total	46	134	94	24	1	299

41 In science, lessons are generally well planned. Teachers give clear explanations of scientific concepts, provide good support to individual students and encourage discussion in the classroom. Most make insufficient use of teaching and learning aids. However, in one effective lesson a consultant surgeon used his own slides to help students studying oral health and hygiene to understand the topic of AIDS and its relevance to dental surgery practice. Students' work is marked thoroughly and returned quickly. In mathematics and computing, individual students are given appropriate help. Marked work is returned promptly and students are regularly informed of their progress. In the best mathematics lessons, teachers provide clear explanations and students respond well to the frequent questions directed at them. In computing, teachers make good use of commercial applications to stimulate students' interest; they successfully combine the theoretical and practical elements of topics. In the weaker lessons, teachers do not take account of the differing needs of students or provide sufficient opportunities for students to work in small groups.

42 Construction teachers have developed good schemes of work. In the best sessions, teachers make effective links between theory and practice. They set the topic in an industrial context and link it to students' own experiences. They make good use of assignments in the form of 'learning packages' at different levels of difficulty. Students work through the learning materials in these packages and undertake tasks which suit their individual abilities. In the weaker sessions, teachers do not take account of the different abilities and experience of students. They give monotonous presentations and provide few opportunities for students to question or discuss the topic being considered.

43 Engineering assignments are well designed and students are clear about what is expected of them. Most sessions are well taught. Teachers use an appropriate balance of theory and practical work. They draw on the experiences of employed students to illustrate and strengthen the industrial relevance of topics. In a particularly effective presentation on casting, the teacher showed examples of moulds, wax and final metal castings to illustrate the process which the students would see on their visit to a local firm. The students were encouraged to ask and answer questions on the process. They all participated in discussions and enjoyed the lesson. Most teachers provide helpful and encouraging comments on students' practical and written work. In a minority of instances, schemes of work contained insufficient detail and lessons were poorly planned; the timetabling of assignments was unsatisfactory and practical sessions were inadequately prepared. The assessment techniques of some teachers are poor and they fail to provide their students with guidance on how they might improve their work.

44 Most courses in business have well-prepared schemes of work which ensure that all topics on the syllabus are covered. Most assignment briefs are clear and concise. They help students to apply theoretical knowledge

in a practical context. In the best sessions, students are able to complete activities at their own pace. Teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching methods and they encourage lively debate. Assignments develop students' ability to work in teams or by themselves. Teachers carefully monitor students' progress and provide them with sensitive guidance and support. Most assessments are marked and returned promptly. Some sessions contain too much theory, are poorly presented, and require students to do too much copying of notes from overhead transparencies.

45 Catering teachers have devised clearly structured schemes of work. They make good use of their practical experience and their links with industry. Most practical sessions take place in realistic simulated work environments, such as the training restaurant, where activities are carefully organised to allow students to demonstrate their skills. Teachers give students appropriate support and guidance which enables them to develop a competent and professional approach to their work. In the better theory sessions, teachers questioned the students skilfully in order to challenge their ideas, encourage them to solve problems, and help them to make progress. Teachers monitor students' progress carefully and discuss it with them. Assessments are of an appropriate standard and are marked fairly. Some theory sessions were poorly planned and badly taught. The teachers' questioning of the students was prolonged to the point where the students became bored and their interest and attention were lost.

46 In leisure and tourism, some sessions are well planned. Teachers organise a range of appropriate learning activities which involve students in various methods of working. Written and oral instructions for tasks and assignments are clear. The teaching and assessment of key skills is effectively integrated with the vocational work. Teachers mark students' work thoroughly and provide them with clear advice on how they can improve. In a lively session on a course leading to a sport leader award, students taught 30 primary school children. The session was well planned and the students videotaped it for future analysis. Many sessions were inadequately planned and poorly managed. Students were not given activities which required their full attention or were given tasks which were insufficiently relevant to working life. Teachers failed to explain the purpose of the lesson to the class. They did not question the students effectively to make sure they understood the lesson. Their use of teaching aids was poor.

47 Hairdressing and beauty therapy teachers use a range of teaching methods and appropriate teaching aids to motivate students and engage their interest. The teaching of theory and practical skills is good. Teachers display sound knowledge of their subjects and they encourage their students to work to professional standards. Students are provided with good-quality handouts and packs of learning materials which are produced in the college. In one practical session, the teacher ably demonstrated new techniques using a model, video film, handouts and compact disk

read-only memory (CD-ROM) database. The session promoted considerable discussion and it engaged and held the students' interest. Teachers set assignments regularly and mark them thoroughly. In some practical sessions, students were not encouraged to assess their own, and each other's, work. In health and social care, many sessions were well structured and they had clear aims and objectives. Teachers maintained students' interest by using a variety of appropriate teaching methods. Teachers encouraged students to draw on their work experience and they used it skilfully to link theory to practice. Most students participate in classroom activities and work well, particularly on tasks which they undertake in small groups. Teachers mark and return students' work promptly and they offer constructive comments on how the students may improve their performance. Some lesson plans are insufficiently detailed. In some sessions, teachers provided little opportunity for students to raise questions or engage in discussion. Students were required to copy too much information from overhead transparencies.

48 Art and design teachers use a variety of appropriate teaching methods and respond effectively to the needs of a diverse range of students. Students are encouraged to develop their creative and technical skills. They are expected to research topics thoroughly. Teachers make sure students understand the historical and social context of their work. In one session, students were working on an assignment based on a painting by Hans Holbein. Each student was asked to select a detail from the painting. After researching the history of their chosen item, students were asked to predict how its design would have developed by the year 2020. The assignment required students to undertake thorough research, originate and develop ideas in an individual and imaginative manner and produce finished design work to a professional standard. In a few sessions, the planning of the teaching was insufficiently thorough. The aims and objectives of assignments were not made clear to students. In media studies, some teachers prepare detailed and informative materials to help and support students in their work. They skilfully helped students to grasp difficult concepts and principles by asking them probing questions. However, some teaching was insufficiently planned and some schemes of work were not well designed. Sessions were conducted at an inappropriately slow pace. Teachers in performing arts use their links with external organisations to good effect. Students benefit from visits to performances and from the experience of professional practitioners who visit the college. Many assignments provide students with exciting opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge and practical skills within a realistic professional context. In a well-planned session, the teacher skilfully introduced students to the style and forms of *commedia de l'arte*. Students were soon improvising scenes with masks and exploring appropriate acting styles. In some lessons, teachers did not make clear to students the standards expected of them. The college has insufficient resources and accommodation to enable it to offer a wide enough range of music activities.

49 In humanities, there is some skilful teaching, but there is also some poor classroom practice and levels of absenteeism are often high. Many schemes of work are simply lists of the topics to be covered. In some sociology, psychology and religious studies lessons, teachers relate new topics to previous work and they vary the pace, the teaching methods and the learning activities in order to sustain students' interest and motivation. However, in other sessions, teachers talked too much and did not question students sufficiently or encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. In some history, law, economics and geography sessions, teachers used a variety of techniques, including questioning and work in small groups, to sustain students' interest. Some teachers used handouts effectively in order to encourage students to contribute to discussions. However, some sessions were poorly planned and teachers failed to ensure that learning activities were suited to the varying capabilities of the students. Teachers did not provide students with sufficient opportunities to undertake research on their own.

50 In English, teachers mark students' work effectively and they provide the students with helpful feedback on their performance. Some lessons were carefully planned and were based on thorough schemes of work. The teacher's skilful questioning helped students to develop their own ideas. Others consisted almost entirely of formal presentations by the teacher; students remained silent and they were unable or unwilling to engage in discussion or develop their own ideas. In some cases, discussion was encouraged, but it lacked discipline and the students gained little from it. Many modern language sessions are well planned. Work is conducted at an appropriate pace. Teachers make good use of the language laboratory, satellite material on video film and audio tapes. Teachers use the language being studied when giving information or instructions and explain any grammatical points. Some sessions did not extend students' abilities or understanding: teachers did not provide students with enough opportunities for them to practise their language skills.

51 Course documentation and schemes of work for adult basic education are well organised, thorough and detailed. Many sessions are well structured and they are effective in developing students' knowledge and skills. Teachers encourage students to draw on their own experiences outside college and relate these to their studies. Students speak highly of the support they receive. In some sessions, teachers had low expectations of their students and they failed to make the learning activities sufficiently demanding. As a result, in a few sessions, students lost interest and questioned the relevance of what they were learning. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with well-prepared learning materials such as worksheets and handouts. In the best sessions, teachers used well-presented assignments to encourage students to develop confidence and knowledge. In some sessions, teachers made insufficient demands of students. Where students of varied abilities were taught together, the learning activities were insufficiently differentiated to

meet all their needs. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to undertake realistic work experience in the college's wholefood sales project. In some cases, this leads to part-time employment.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

52 Most students who complete their courses gain an appropriate level of knowledge and skills. Many students speak enthusiastically about their courses and apply themselves to their studies well. Mature students are particularly committed to their work. In some instances, however, students do not work hard enough. Some are unresponsive to the teacher's prompting to participate more fully in classroom discussions. Some do not complete their assignments. Students' timekeeping and attendance are often poor. The college has carried out little 'value-added' analysis of students' achievements whereby students' actual examination results are compared with those predicted for them on the basis of their previous achievements.

53 Many students on vocational courses acquire practical skills of a standard required in industry. They are encouraged to develop safe working practices. In many subjects, such as performing arts, students develop effective teamworking skills and they help and support each other. In engineering, students' performance in assignments and written work demonstrates a sound grasp of relevant theoretical concepts and practical skills. On hairdressing and beauty therapy courses, most students acquire a balance of practical skills and supporting knowledge. On hotel and catering courses, students achieve appropriate levels of competence. Students on art and design courses develop good practical skills and they present their work well. The achievements of some students on GNVQ courses are below standard.

54 Many GCE A level and GCSE students produce good-quality projects and coursework. Their written work is generally satisfactory. Most students on courses in modern languages are developing a good standard of oral competence. Written work produced by students of business studies is usually well presented and of good quality. In mathematics and computing, students display confidence in their use of information technology. In science, most students' written work is at an appropriate level. Standards achieved in practical laboratory sessions are usually good and safety precautions are observed. In humanities, some students achieve competence in research and problem solving. Many ensure that their work is well presented, and that their grammar and spelling are correct. Some students do not develop discussion skills or an ability to work on their own or in groups because teachers do not offer them enough opportunities to practise these skills.

55 Most employers interviewed by inspectors were complimentary about the extent of knowledge and skills gained by employees attending college programmes or programmes organised by the college's collaborative partners.

56 There are serious weaknesses in the accuracy and reliability of college data relating to students' achievements. Centrally generated data were found by inspectors to be less reliable than that generated by the course teams. The college considers that the data submitted to the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) depicts students' achievements to be lower than they really are. In the absence of agreed and secure data, it is not possible to determine the extent to which the figures published in the DfEE performance tables are correct. For the purposes of this report, the results in individual subjects are provided by, and agreed with, programme teams.

57 Published figures from the DfEE indicate that students aged 16 to 18, entered for GCE A level examinations in 1995-96 scored, on average, 4.1 points per entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2). This places the college in the middle third of all further education colleges on this performance measure. Pass rates at grades A to E were above the national average in creative arts and media, some foreign languages, psychology, history, law, English literature, government and politics, human biology, environmental science, physics, business studies and accounting. Pass rates were below the national average in religious studies, French, economics, geography, English and communication studies. The number entering the examination in some subjects was small, in some cases, partly due to high drop-out rates.

58 In 1996, the college records show that there were 1,447 entries for GCSE subjects. The proportion of students achieving grades A to C was 53 per cent. This is above the national average of 50 per cent for all students in general further education colleges. The proportion of students achieving grades A to C was significantly above the national average in sociology, psychology, French, German, Italian, accounting, English, biology, history, chemistry and accounting. The proportion of students who obtained grades A to C was below the national average in business studies and geography.

59 Results on advanced vocational programmes included in the information produced by the DfEE for the academic year of 1995-96, showed that 58 per cent of students aged 16 to 18 in their final year of study gained their qualification. This placed the college in the bottom third of further education colleges in England according to this performance measure. The pass rates of students on vocational courses who are over the age of 18 are difficult to assess. The results of those who are on modular courses or courses which allow for study beyond the end of the academic year, are not included in the tables published by the DfEE. Results on intermediate level vocational programmes included in the information produced by the DfEE for the academic year of 1995-96 showed that 32 per cent of students aged 16 to 18 in their final year of study gained their qualification. This placed the college in the bottom 10 per cent of further education colleges in England according to this performance measure.

60 In 1996, students achieved good results on the following vocational courses:

- BTEC first diploma in motor vehicle
- BTEC national diploma in performing arts
- South West Access Federation diploma in foundation art and design studies
- BTEC higher national certificate in electronics
- BTEC national diploma in electronics
- NVQ level 1 cookery
- NVQ level 2 in hairdressing and in aromatherapy
- NVQ levels 2 and 3 in beauty therapy
- NVQ level 3 motor body repair
- NVQ level 2 mechanical craft competencies
- NVQ level 2 food service
- GNVQ advanced business
- GNVQ advanced information technology.

Pass rates were low on the following courses:

- BTEC national certificate in mechanical engineering
- BTEC national certificate in electronics
- GNVQ advanced built environment
- GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism
- GNVQ intermediate health and social care.

61 Retention rates were also poor on the courses with low pass rates, and on some other courses. At the time of the inspection, the college had not carried out evaluation of students' retention rates across the college. Inspectors found that retention rates varied significantly from course to course. On two-year programmes, a significant proportion of students leave at the end of the first year. The rates are particularly low in courses in humanities, construction and leisure and tourism. On GCE A level courses in modern languages, social biology and physics retention rates were 80 per cent or higher. In GCE A level courses in mathematics, biology, human biology, psychology, sociology and history retention rates ranged from 29 to 70 per cent. Retention rates were also poor on GNVQ advanced courses in media studies, leisure and tourism, hospitality and catering and information technology. Retention rates are particularly poor on the advanced GNVQ course in media (39 per cent) and intermediate health and social care (49 per cent). The retention rates on BTEC courses ranged from 56 per cent to 95 per cent, and were higher than some of the retention rates on other vocational courses.

62 Records of students' destinations are kept by most course teams. For the past three years over 90 per cent of students from the foundation art and design course have gone on to higher education. All the students who completed the GNVQ advanced art and design course and 85 per cent of students following the GNVQ advanced course in business progressed to higher education. Ninety per cent of adult students on the access to science course and 83 per cent on the access to business and social science course gained entry to higher education. All of the college's adult basic education students progressed to further training or employment.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

63 The college's commitment to quality assurance is set out in its mission statement and in a policy statement approved by governors in 1992. This policy statement commits the college to: setting objectives for its work; identifying standards for all its provision; establishing targets against which its effectiveness can be measured; specifying entitlements for students; establishing a 'quality review cycle'; and taking appropriate action to improve its performance. The college is not meeting all its commitments. For example, some course teams, sections and faculties do not set explicit standards and targets against which performance can be monitored. There are few targets for retention rates and for students' achievements. The college has acknowledged the need to improve its system for monitoring the quality of its provision, particularly with regard to support services.

64 Policies and procedures relating to quality assurance are set out in the handbook on quality for all teachers and programme support staff. This includes standard procedures for programme review, new course approvals, students' induction, student questionnaires and academic appeals. In many respects, the handbook provides a sound basis for academic quality assurance. It does not, however, include procedures which enable managers to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

65 The review of programmes operates consistently across the college in accordance with the criteria set out in the handbook. There are standard agendas for programme review meetings which take place twice a term. These are attended by student representatives who, in most cases, have had training for their role. Following a team meeting, towards the end of the summer term, the programme manager writes an annual programme review. This includes an introduction on students' achievements, an analysis under the headings in the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*, a conclusion and an action plan. There are some weaknesses in the programme reviews. For example, there is no requirement to record and comment on the level of students' attendance. Programme reviews are summarised by section heads for consideration by faculty boards of study and the academic board. Action plans are monitored by section leaders and faculty heads.

66 The programme team plays a central role in the quality assurance process. The programme review is regarded as a working document for the programme team. The quality of programme reviews varies. Some reviews have led to changes in the way programmes are taught. For example, in an attempt to improve retention rates on GNVQ leisure and tourism programmes, the amount of time students spend working on individual assignments was reduced, and the amount of time staff spend on teaching the group as a whole was increased. Some reviews only include a brief description of how the programme in question is taught. There is no requirement to evaluate performance against targets. There is a need for more systematic aggregation of key findings from all the reviews, and more critical analysis and evaluation of the reviews by managers.

67 Students have opportunities to express their views about their courses in response to questionnaires and at meetings. Students who are offered a place at the college are asked to complete a questionnaire about their admission interview. They are given a second questionnaire after the induction process. They answer a third questionnaire at the end of their course. In the past, the views expressed by the students in response to the admissions questionnaire have led to improvements in admissions procedures. This year, replies to this questionnaire have not been analysed. Responses to the induction questionnaire revealed that most students were satisfied with their introduction to the college and their course. The end-of-course questionnaire focuses on college facilities and services rather than the overall quality of their course. The responses to the questionnaires are held by programme teams. They are not always aggregated or passed on to relevant cross-college managers.

68 Student representatives attend course team meetings, which take place twice a term, and the annual programme review meeting. Staff and students feel that these meetings contribute to the improvement of quality. Recently, senior managers have had separate meetings with student representatives from higher and further education courses. These meetings have focused on college facilities and have led to some improvements.

69 Internal verification operates effectively across the college. There is a college policy on internal verification and a detailed systems and practice handbook. The lead internal verifiers in each faculty meet regularly and they contribute to the development of consistent standards and practice in verification across the college. The college has also agreed a protocol for external verifiers with one of the main examining bodies. It seeks to ensure that external verification operates effectively by providing a framework for external verifiers' visits. It sets out the expectations the college has of its verifiers and the way the college will contribute to the external verification process. There is a thorough procedure for approval of new courses. A detailed proforma is submitted to the faculty board of studies. This is then passed for approval to the academic board. Faculty boards

and the academic board meet every three weeks. At these meetings there is an appropriate focus on issues which relate to the quality of provision and there is regular discussion of programme reviews, verifiers' reports and new course approvals.

70 The college is making efforts to ensure that its partners, with whom it offers collaborative provision, comply with college's academic quality assurance procedures. The suitability of new partners is carefully considered. Courses proposed by partners are subject to the same course approval process as college courses; many proposals have been rejected. Partners are issued with a modified version of the handbook on quality and students are given a version of the charter which has been modified to suit their needs. Some students on courses offered through collaborative provision were not aware that they were members of the college. There is a planned programme of visits to partner organisations. Standard proformas are used to record the outcome of these visits. In the past, subject teachers from the college have not been sufficiently involved in assuring the quality of provision made by partners and the quality of students' experience has not been well monitored. The college mainly relied on partners' quality assurance and course review procedures, but these were not always implemented with rigour. For example, in 1995-96, some partners did not undertake course reviews at all. Partners are now required to follow all the college procedures for quality assurance, including those for internal verification and annual programme review.

71 Quality assurance procedures for support areas are less well developed than those for courses. Methods for seeking the views of users of these services are not systematic. Many support teams do not evaluate the quality of the service they provide or identify improvements which they intend to implement. Some support teams have carried out some quality assurance initiatives but these are limited in their scope. For example, the computer services support unit has set itself a target of responding to 80 per cent of high-priority requests within four hours. The library has carried out a user survey. The finance team carries out customer satisfaction surveys annually.

72 The annual staff-appraisal system applies to teaching and support staff. Teaching staff can request classroom observation as part of their appraisal, but few do so. All teaching staff, and 62 per cent of support staff, have been appraised. Staff generally valued their appraisal and felt that it addressed both their performance and their professional development. Appraisal is linked to staff development. A standard form is used to notify the professional development officer of training needs identified through appraisal. There is an extensive programme of staff development which takes place in the college. Last year, this involved almost all of the teaching staff. There is a formal induction programme for new full-time staff, which provides them with an appropriate introduction to the college.

73 The college has three separate charters: one for students enrolled at the college; one for students enrolled on collaborative provision; and one for members of the community. They are well presented and clearly written. They are updated each year. The college has made no formal arrangements to monitor how it is meeting its charter commitments. For example, the charter states that the student services team will meet 80 per cent of requests for appointments within three days. Records do not show whether this commitment has been met. The various questionnaires do not contain questions which relate specifically to the commitments the college makes in the charters. There is a procedure whereby students may formally offer favourable or unfavourable comments about the college, in writing, by telephone, or in person. Records show that when these comments take the form of a complaint, they are dealt with promptly and properly. The college achieved the Investor in People award in 1994. In 1994, it was the first college in the sector to be awarded the Charter Mark for excellence in public services. In 1995, it was awarded the Basic Skills Agency quality mark.

74 The college has produced a self-assessment report which sets out strengths and weaknesses under the headings in the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Self-assessment reports produced by the teaching sections were taken into account when the overall college report was written. Many teaching and support staff have not seen the final report. In some areas, the college's identification of its strengths and weaknesses accords with the findings of inspectors. In other areas, the college has understated its weaknesses. Some important aspects of the college's business are not covered in the report. In particular, the report fails to identify weaknesses in teaching and students' achievements.

RESOURCES

Staffing

75 Most of the college's 267 full-time teachers have appropriate qualifications and experience for the courses they teach. Eighty-three per cent of teachers hold first degrees or equivalent professional qualifications. Ninety-one per cent have a teaching qualification. It is college policy to encourage and assist all teaching staff to obtain a teaching qualification. A substantial proportion of the teaching staff has obtained, or is working towards, the awards of the training and development lead body. Forty-five per cent of staff have obtained assessor awards, 20 per cent have obtained the internal verifier award and 3 per cent have obtained the external verifier and accreditation of prior learning awards. Full-time teachers are appropriately deployed in most programme areas and good use is made of their expertise. However, in some cases, their industrial and commercial experience is out of date.

76 There are 190 part-time teachers, some of whom are not as well qualified as full-time staff who teach the same subjects. Only 53 per cent

of part-time staff have a degree or equivalent qualification. However, many have valuable commercial or professional experience, some of which is highly specialist. Students in many programme areas benefit from being taught by part-time teachers who have up-to-date industrial experience. Part-time teachers are not deployed evenly across the college. In some programme areas there is heavy dependence on fractional posts and part-time teachers. In other areas, fewer part-time staff are employed, and consequently, students in these areas may not have the benefit of being taught by persons who are current practitioners in their particular field. Where part-time teachers are used extensively, a disproportionately heavy burden of administration falls to full-time teachers.

77 Suitably qualified and experienced administrative and technical staff provide good support for teachers. Although the overall level of support staffing is adequate, there are some areas where there is insufficient technician support.

78 There are well-established personnel practices. Procedures and policies for the recruitment of staff are clear. Comprehensive information on employment is set out in the personnel policies and procedures handbook. The personnel section has recently installed a new computerised staff database, but this is not fully operational yet.

Equipment/learning resources

79 General classroom equipment is adequate and sufficient for most areas of the college's work. Classroom furniture in refurbished areas is of good quality. However, some parts of the campus have furniture which is old and unsuitable. Audio-visual equipment is of variable quality. Some items have been recently acquired and are in good condition. Other items are old and out of date.

80 The standard of specialist equipment varies. There are good specialist facilities in plumbing, childcare, hairdressing and beauty therapy. In engineering, external sponsorship and funding has provided excellent facilities for motor vehicle work and electronics. Language students benefit from a good but old language laboratory. There is a well-equipped and well-appointed dance studio. The ceramics studio is appropriately equipped. In some areas the inadequate range and quality of equipment have an adverse effect on the quality of the students' learning experience. Much equipment is becoming outdated in mechanical engineering, carpentry and hotel and catering. The music section is very poorly equipped. There are insufficient resources and equipment for the GNVQ media course. Textiles and fashion are poorly equipped. There is a shortage of small specialist equipment in the training kitchens. There is no systematic rolling programme for the replacement and improvement of equipment. The college has begun to address some of the equipment deficiencies identified by inspectors. For example, it has recently purchased two specialist computers for art and design.

81 The college has spent a lot of money on computing resources in recent years. There is a ratio of one industrial standard machine to every seven students across the college, but problems remain over the compatibility and reliability of some machines. The computer services unit sets information technology specifications, acquires and maintains hardware and software and manages the college's communications network. Across the campus there are some 570 workstations, of which 356 are connected to the college's communications network. There are some inconsistencies in software across the college. There are some parts of the college which do not have sufficient computers. The number of printers is inadequate and some of them are of poor quality. As a result of these inadequacies, some students have insufficient access to information technology equipment. Students with physical or sensory disabilities have access to monitors with large screens and magnified text.

82 The college's learning resources provision is in the Philip Kinder building; the main library provision is on the ground floor, the second floor is largely a private study area, but is being developed to provide increased information technology resources, and the top floor is the 'open learning resources centre' where students may work on their own using learning materials suited to their individual needs. The learning resources centre provides an attractive area in which to study. There is a good stock of books, journals, CD-ROMs, video and audio cassettes. Students can use the Internet. There are enough study spaces to meet the current demand.

83 The library is extensively used; records show that it is visited by 13,000 users each month and that nearly 900 books are issued each week. The library catalogue is computer based and is available across the college network. In a number of subject areas, including mathematics, science, English, hairdressing and beauty therapy, media, social sciences and humanities the bookstock is inadequate. Library expenditure on books is low. The faculties have their own libraries. Records of books in faculty libraries are not held centrally and the staff in the main library cannot direct students to books which may be found in other parts of the college. The library staff have established good links with some programme areas such as art and design, business studies, leisure and tourism and health and social care, biology and languages. They are responsive to teachers' and students' requests to produce material to support assignment work.

Accommodation

84 The main college site is near the centre of Torquay. There is a variety of types of building on the site, including a house dating from the 1830s, two buildings dating from the 1930s, four purpose-designed, post-war buildings and seven temporary huts. A modern industrial unit for motor vehicle work is situated five miles away at Yalberton. The college is making progress on the improvements to its accommodation which are identified in its strategic plan. Building work is expected to start soon on a new five-storey teaching block, a construction workshop and improved access roads to the college.

85 Despite recent improvements, the quality and appropriateness of the college's accommodation remain variable and some is in need of attention. There is appropriate accommodation for the courses in mathematics, computing, science, electronics, motor vehicle engineering, construction, hotel and catering, art and design, drama and hairdressing. The new learning resources centre is a valuable resource. The ground floor of the MacKay building is easily accessible and it is convenient for the comprehensive range of customer services located there. Teaching rooms for humanities are mostly adequate, but they are drab and some are too small or of an unsuitable shape. A battered hut provides very poor accommodation for music. General teaching rooms used by leisure and tourism students are of a poor standard. The accommodation is poor in one of the buildings used for painting and decorating courses. Decoration, ventilation and lighting are unsatisfactory in some rooms used by business students. There are no changing facilities for beauty therapy students. There is a lack of storage facilities in some areas. In the older buildings, some lavatories are of a poor standard. There are few social areas for students and there is little use of wall displays to enhance the learning environment.

86 Many parts of the college, such as the art block, the hotel and catering rooms, the science laboratories and the learning resources centre cannot be reached by wheelchair users. The site is on many levels. The arrangement of buildings is complex and some signposting is unsatisfactory. Some students experience difficulty finding their way around the site.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

87 The main strengths of the college are:

- the wide range of programmes for students of all ages and abilities
- its responsiveness to local demands, particularly from employers and part-time adult students
- strong links with higher education institutions
- some effective teaching
- experienced, committed and supportive governors
- effective careers advice and other support services for full-time students
- the effective learning resources centre.

88 In order to improve, the college should:

- ensure that reliable data about students' retention and achievements are collected and used
- improve students' retention and attendance rates and students' achievements in some subjects
- improve the teaching in some subjects
- improve the effectiveness of communication between senior managers and other staff

-
- improve support and guidance for part-time students
 - address inconsistencies in tutorial practices
 - improve the co-ordination and monitoring of students' welfare services
 - meet the commitments on quality assurance set out in its policy statement
 - improve specialist equipment and accommodation in some curriculum areas.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)

 - 2 Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)

 - 3 Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)

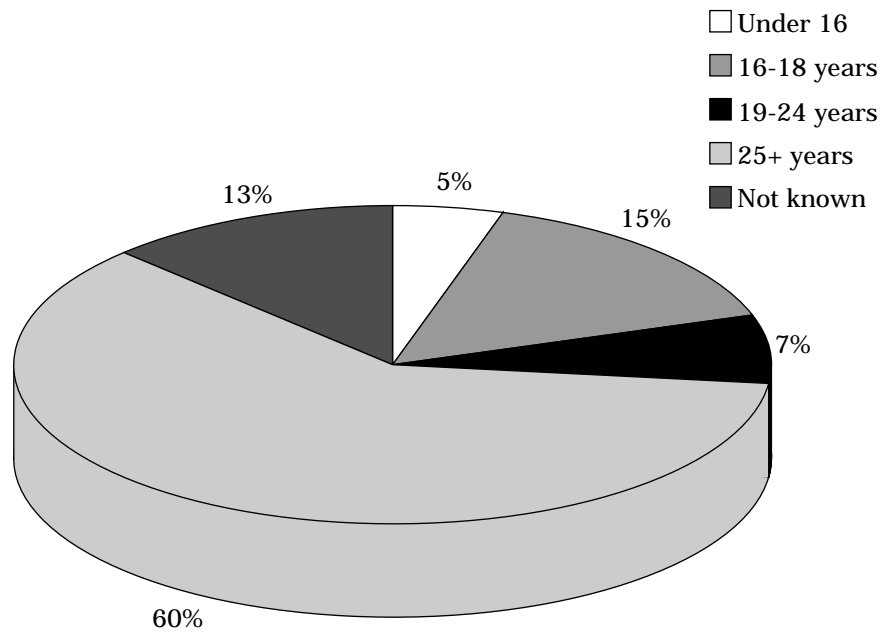
 - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1996)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

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

Figure 1

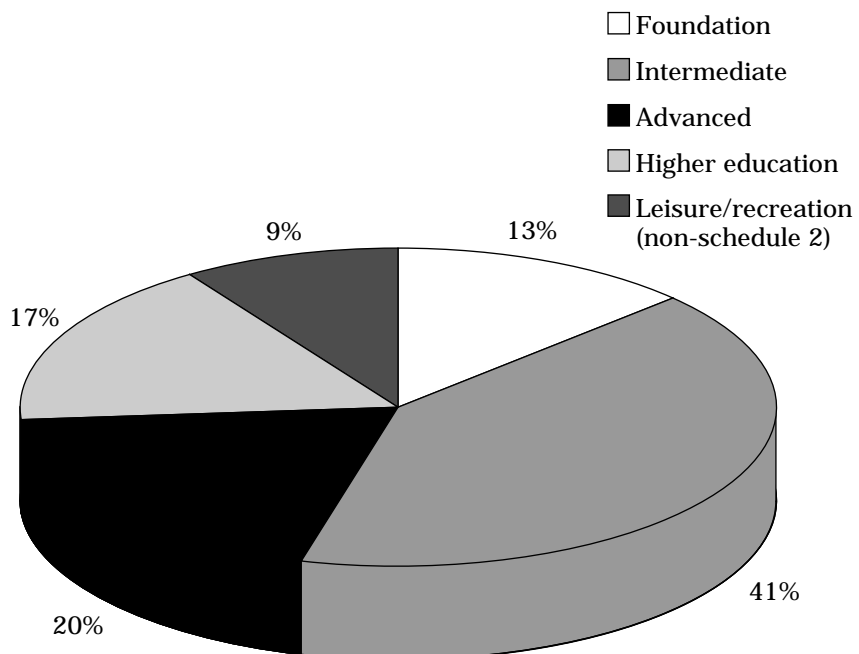
South Devon College: percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 22,171

Figure 2

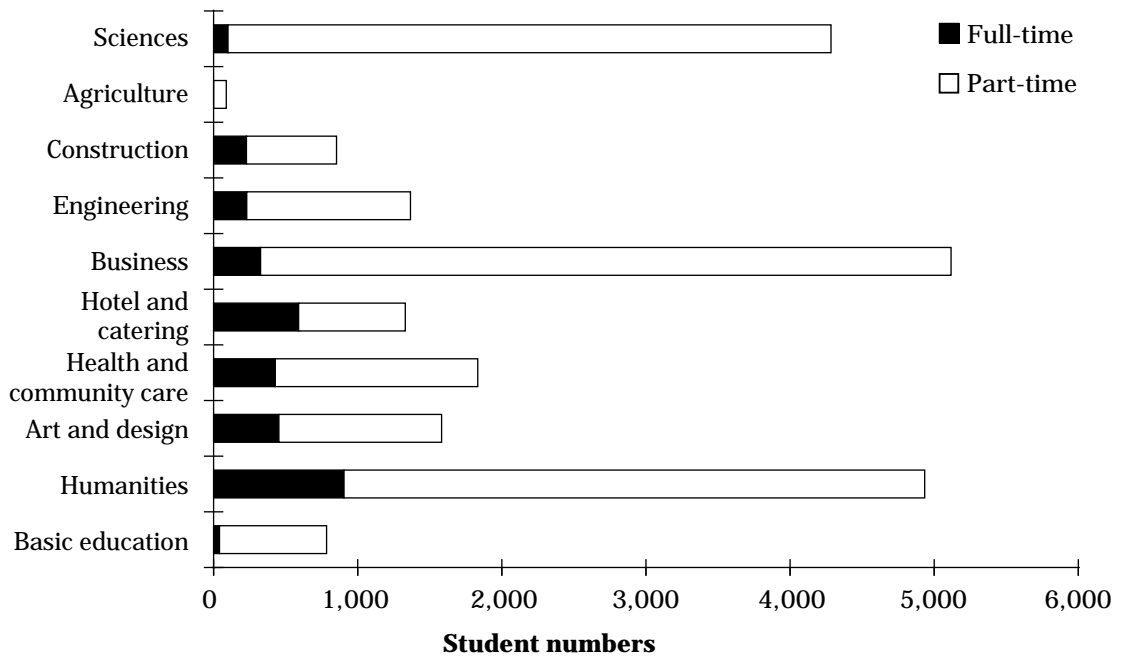
South Devon College: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 22,171

Figure 3

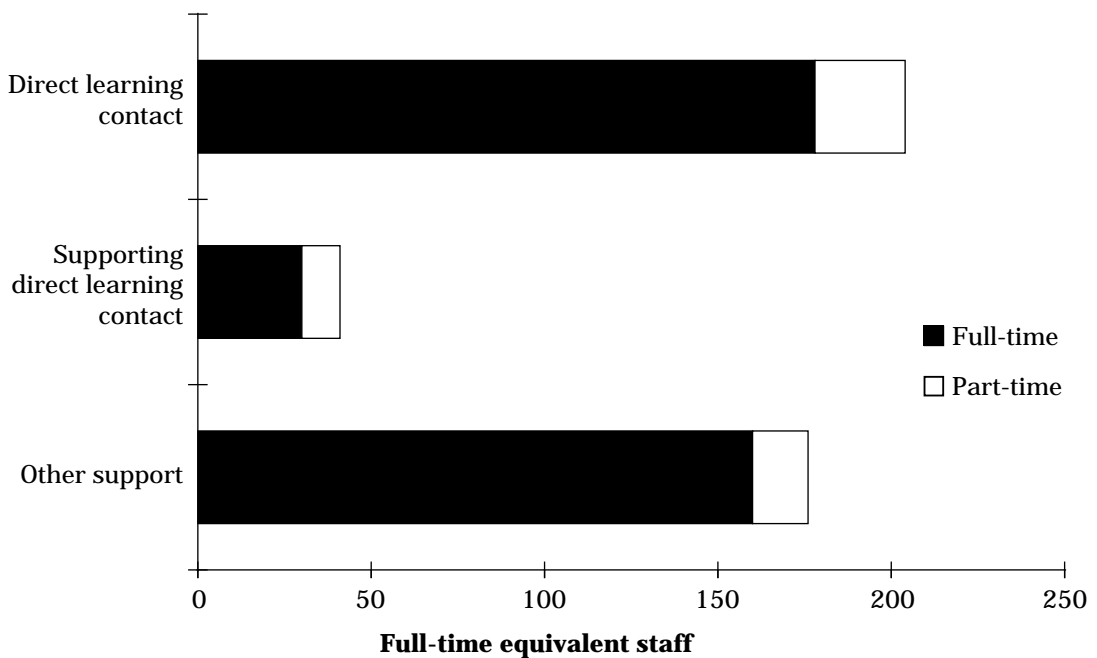
South Devon College: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)



Student numbers: 22,171

Figure 4

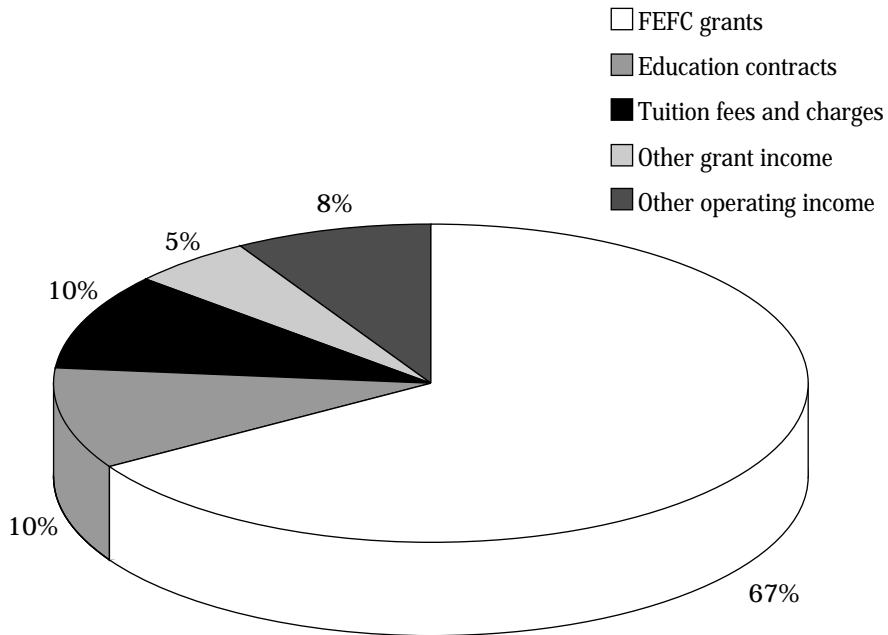
South Devon College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)



Full-time equivalent staff: 421

Figure 5

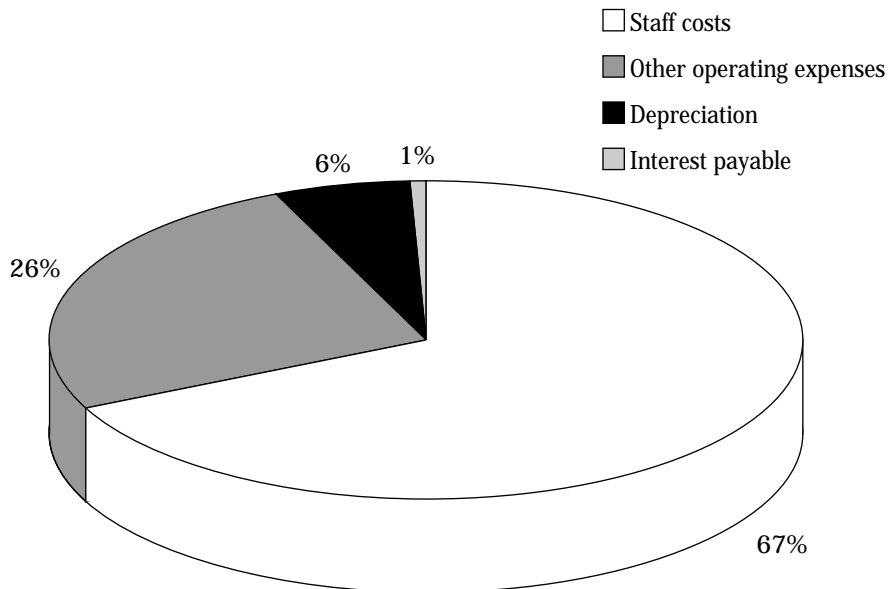
South Devon College: income (for 12 months to July 1996)



Income: £13,669,000

Figure 6

South Devon College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)



Expenditure: £14,163,000

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