

# SHENA SIMON COLLEGE

**Review November 2000**

A report prepared for the  
Further Education Funding  
Council and the Board of  
Shena Simon College by Dr  
Terry Melia CBE

THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1 The review was established in August 2000 as a result of the concerns of the

Further Education Funding Council (the Council) and the board of governors of Shena Simon College, following a critical inspection report on the college in July 2000. The report reviews further education and training provision in and around Manchester, considers the key education and training issues that Manchester needs to address and advises the Council and the board of Shena Simon College on the strategic options for the future of Shena Simon College within this broader context.

### **Terms of Reference**

2 The review, established in August 2000, has the following terms of reference:

- a. to undertake a review of options for the future of Shena Simon College;  
and
- b. advise the Council and the governing body accordingly.

3 Dr Terry Melia CBE, supported by Rachel Curry, a Council officer, undertook the review. Dr Melia was required to provide the Council and governing body of Shena Simon College with interim findings and conclusions on the review by early September 2000 and a final report to the Council by mid-September 2000.

4 The review team was asked to work closely with the governing body in conducting the review, to meet with governors, staff and students of Shena Simon College and to hold discussions with range of people in Manchester who had an interest in Shena Simon College and its future.

### **Recommendations**

5 The principal recommendations of the review are that the Council, in collaboration with the board of governors of Shena Simon College should consult widely on two options for the future of Shena Simon College. These options are:

#### Option 1

6 This option would require the college to refocus its core business through:

- expanding its 16-18 provision to embrace entry, foundation and advanced courses targeted at particular client groups in collaboration with the LEA and local schools
- continuing to offer art and design and performing arts and related type provision
- expanding adult education provision with the support of the Manchester Adult Education Service with an emphasis on ESOL, basic skills and leisure type programmes

- developing foundation degrees with the support of the Manchester Metropolitan University
- exploring partnerships with the Manchester LEA, secondary schools and private training providers.

## Option 2

7 This option would require Shena Simon College to merge with another Manchester College.

8 There are four potential merger partners: City College, Manchester, Loreto College, Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT) and Xaverian College. The suitability of each of these four colleges as a potential merger partner for Shena Simon College is explored. The important qualities that a merger partner should display include: good management, preferably with experience of carrying through successful mergers; good student support, management information and quality assurance systems; and a supportive governing body. Each of the four potential merger partners display these qualities in varying degrees.

9 In addition, it is recommended that the governors of the college in consultation with the Further Education Funding Council seek advice on the possibility of placing the Shena Simon assets in a trust to prevent asset stripping by a merger partner.

10 Some of the evidence collected in compiling this report has wider implications for further education and training provision in Greater Manchester. Attention is drawn to some of these issues.

## **INTRODUCTION**

1 The review was established in August 2000 as a result of the concerns of the Further Education Funding Council (the Council) and the governors of Shena Simon College following a critical inspection report on the college in July 2000. This report reviews further education and training provision in and around Manchester, considers the key education and training issues that Manchester needs to address and advises the Council and the board of Shena Simon College on the strategic options for the future of Shena Simon College within this broader context.

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4 In addition to the terms of reference, the review team was asked to:

- work closely with the governing body in carrying out the review
- meet with governors, staff and students of Shena Simon College and, in the light of its inspection report, analyse the college's position in terms of its student numbers, its finances and its curricula
- obtain and analyse information on further education provision in the locality
- meet with representatives of Manchester City Council and Manchester local education authority to hear their views and discuss post-16 education provision in the area
- meet with Manchester Training and Enterprise Council and Chamber of Commerce, the regional development agency, the government office, members of the Manchester business community to discuss the business and employment context of the college
- meet with principals of other colleges in the area, the head of the Manchester Adult Education Service, heads of schools with sixth forms and other local

headteachers, the Careers Service, and local community associations to hear their views on the future of further education in the area

- meet with local Members of Parliament, national and local trades union and student representatives to ascertain their views
- meet with representatives of the University of Manchester, the University of Salford, Manchester Metropolitan University, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST), and Royal Northern College of Music to obtain their views on the future of further education in the area
- hold regular meetings to review progress with officers of the Council and the chair of governors
- advise the Council and the governing body of Shena Simon College accordingly.

## **CONDUCT OF THE REVIEW**

5 There are four principal strands to this review:

- the collection and analysis of appropriate data
- meet and hold discussions with a wide range of stakeholders
- produce interim findings and conclusions to the Council and the governors of Shena Simon College in early September 2000
- produce a final report on options for the future of Shena Simon College by mid-September.

6 The team held discussions with the chair of governors, governors, principal, staff and students of Shena Simon College; the chief executive and director of education of Manchester City Council; four Members of Parliament, representing Manchester constituencies; representatives of Manchester TEC, the North West Regional Development Agency, the Government Office, Manchester Adult Education Service, three Manchester universities, three of the trade unions involved with Shena Simon College (NUT, UNISON and NASUWT), and the Careers Partnership for Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford; the principals of the following further education/tertiary colleges - City College, Manchester, Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT), Oldham College, Hopwood Hall College, South Trafford College, North Trafford College of Further Education, Salford College and Bury College; the principals of the following sixth form colleges - Loreto College, Xaverian College, Eccles College, Pendleton College, Oldham Sixth Form College and Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form

College; and three headteachers from Manchester secondary schools. Officials of the Council provided background factual briefings.

## BACKGROUND

7 This section of the report aims to provide a brief account of the local, regional and national context within which Shena Simon College operates.

### Education and Training in England

8 Post-compulsory education and training in England is delivered by a wide variety of providers funded through a complex array of funding mechanisms. Providers include school sixth forms, sixth form colleges, further education and tertiary colleges, private training providers and LEA-maintained adult education centres.

9 The national scene in further education is changing rapidly. At government level we have:

- the quality improvement strategy
- social inclusion and widening participation policies
- an increasing emphasis on a collaborative agenda
- zero toleration of failure
- standards development for college governors, managers, teachers and support staff.

10 In an attempt to raise the levels of achievement of the population, the Government has set a range of National Learning Targets for the United Kingdom. These are shown in Table 1. Current levels for the UK and the area covered by Manchester TEC (Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford) are shown for comparison. In the Manchester TEC area the achievements of young people at GCSE and level 2 and of 21-year-old adults at level 3 are significantly below the UK average. Within these low achievement levels, there are significant differences between, and within, the four local authorities.

**TABLE 1 - National Learning Targets for the UK and Levels Already Achieved in both the UK and Manchester 1999**

National Learning Targets	2002 Target %	UK %	Manchester %
<b>YOUNG PEOPLE TARGETS</b>			
▪ 16 year-olds with 5 GCSEs grades A*-C	50	48	30
▪ 19 year olds with Level 2	85	74	69
<b>ADULT TARGETS</b>			
▪ 21 year olds with Level 3	60	52	43
▪ Adults with Level 3	50	45	45
▪ Adults with Level 4	28	26	26

Source: *Learning to Succeed*, UK White Paper, 1999. *Economic Assessment 1999-2000*, Manchester TEC

11 In June 1999, the government published a White Paper *Learning to Succeed*, in which it proposed reforms to modernise and simplify arrangements for the planning, funding, delivery and quality assurance of post-16 education and training, excluding higher education. An Act (*The Learning and Skills Act 2000*) giving effect to these reforms has received Royal Assent.

12 The new arrangements provide for the establishment of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for England. This body will take over the functions performed by the Council and those contracted to the Training and Enterprise Councils by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment. The LSC will operate through a network of 47 local councils. The LSC will also take on from local education authorities their duties in respect of adult and community learning. Funding for school sixth forms will also flow from the LSC to Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The new learning and skills sector will be formally established on 1 April 2001.

13 The new arrangements also provide for the establishment of an Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) to inspect further education for those aged 19 and over and work-based training for all ages. The functions of the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) have also been extended to enable it to inspect provision for 16-19 year olds in the further education sector, as well as in schools. OFSTED and ALI are drawing up a common framework for inspection.

14 The Act will also enable the Secretary of State for Education and Employment to establish a new integrated youth support service in England, to be known as 'Connexions'. The Secretary of State will also have the power to approve external qualifications for public funding purposes.

### **Incorporation of Further Education Colleges and Funding Arrangements**

15 The further education sector's 428 colleges cater for 4.2 million students of whom 21% are full-time. The sector's principal source of funds is the Council that funds provision for 3.4 million (80%) of the sector's students.

16 The recent history of further education is pertinent to this review and is discussed briefly below.

17 Under *The Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, further education colleges ceased to be maintained by local authorities and became freestanding, independent corporations on 1 April 1993. The Council was established to administer the central government grant to colleges and is accountable through the Secretary of State for Education and Employment to Parliament.

18 One of the key functions of the Council, central to this enquiry, is to ensure the

adequacy and sufficiency of further education provision for the population of England. Later in this report, we assess the demand for further education provision in the City of Manchester.

19 To provide a proper framework within which the Council can discharge its responsibility to Parliament, it has drawn up a Financial Memorandum with each of the institutions it funds, setting out the conditions for payment of funds to the governing body of that institution. The governing body is required to comply with the Financial Memorandum and is responsible for ensuring proper management and control in the institution.

20 The Council's funding methodology takes into account the initial guidance and assessment received by students, students' learning, and students' achievement. Account is also taken of the length of the study programme, the cost of delivering different programmes and any additional factors which increase the cost of delivery such as the need for additional support arising from a learning difficulty or disability, or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements. The Council adopted a core and margin approach to funding which guaranteed an institution a percentage of funds it received from the Council during the previous year. Additional funds were distributed by the Council to secure cost effective growth through a bidding system against agreed criteria. More recently, the Council has allocated funds to secure planned growth at a stable rate of funding. The education and training for which an institution receives funding from the Council is expressed in terms of a measure called the funding unit.

21 In the early days of incorporation, growth was encouraged through both the bidding system and by the so-called demand-led element (DLE) of funding. In 1993-94, this related to full-time students only but, when the Council introduced its new funding method for 1994-95, it was attached to every unit of activity. This meant that if a college exceeded its Council-funded level of activity, it secured extra demand-led element funds at about one third of the unit value of its funded level of activity. Conversely, if a college fell short of its Council-funded level of activity, it was required to repay funds to the Council.

22 The advantage of the demand-led element for colleges was that it offered them an additional source of income for students recruited above levels agreed by the Council, albeit at a marginal rate. This was particularly attractive for colleges who were able to increase class sizes without a corresponding increase in staff numbers, or those able to deliver provision variously referred to as franchised provision, off-site collaborative provision, outward collaborative provision or simply collaborative provision.

23 Collaborative arrangements share the following characteristics:

- provision for students enrolled by a college, but delivered mainly by a third party
- provision normally delivered at sites away from the college's premises, and in some cases, at a significant distance from the college

- the college claims funding from the Council and transfers a proportion of this to the collaborative partner in relation to the volume of provision delivered.

24 Collaborative provision involving colleges and employers is similar in some aspects to the day-release training with which colleges were traditionally involved. Since 1995-96, Shena Simon College has been involved in franchising provision, from which it has recently withdrawn. In 1998-99, the college had 397 part-time students studying on franchised sailing/yachting courses in Burnham, Hull, Bolton, Ramsgate, Hyde and Rochester. In addition, there were 80 students franchised on a counselling course in Manchester. The college has retained the franchised counselling provision with 54 students in 1999-2000.

### **Manchester: Some Key Facts**

25 The Greater Manchester area, with a population of about 2.6 million (Table 2), includes the cities of Manchester and Salford, and the Metropolitan Boroughs of Tameside, Trafford, Bolton, Bury, Stockport, Rochdale, Oldham and Wigan. This area will fall within the remit of the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

26 The area covered by Manchester TEC comprises Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford. Many of the statistics used in this report derive from data provided by the Manchester TEC, Manchester City Council and the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council Transition Task Group.

27 The Greater Manchester conurbation has good rail, road and air transport links and is an important area for both transport and distribution. There is also a developing hotel trade and auxiliary businesses to service the needs of an international airport.

28 Manchester covers an area of 45 square miles. It houses many regional and administrative functions and is a business and financial centre. Regional cultural and arts facilities are concentrated in the City. In July 2002, it will host the Commonwealth Games.

**TABLE 2 - Population of the Area Covered by the Greater Manchester Local Learning and Skills Council by Age**

Area	Population (000s)	0 -15 %	16- 19 %	20 -24 %	25+ %	16 -64 %
<b>Manchester</b>	405	23	5	9	63	65
<b>Salford</b>	220	21	5	8	66	59
<b>Tameside</b>	216	21	5	8	66	61
<b>Trafford</b>	213	20	5	7	67	61
<b>Wigan</b>	307	21	6	8	66	63
<b>Stockport</b>	284	20	5	7	68	62
<b>Rochdale</b>	202	23	6	7	64	60
<b>Bolton</b>	259	21	6	8	66	61
<b>Bury</b>	177					
<b>Oldham</b>	217	23	5	7	65	60
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>63</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000, based on 1991 Census

29 Some key facts relating to the population, economy, and social profile and education and training provision of Manchester are presented below:

#### Population

- Manchester’s current residential population is estimated to be about 430,000 (49% male)
- of the estimated 430,000: 27,000 are aged 0–4; 64,000 are aged 5-15 years; 76,000 are aged 16-24 years; 198,000 are aged 25-64 years; and 65,000 are aged 65 years and above
- the high proportion (17%) of 16–24 year olds in the Manchester district is attributed to the large number of students who study in Manchester, particularly HE students
- the present cohort of 16 year-olds is 4,900
- ethnic minorities, excluding overseas students at the two universities, account for about 13% of the total population; the largest groups are of Pakistani, Indian and Black African/Caribbean heritage.

#### Economy

- Manchester contributes about £11.3 billion to the UK GDP of £850 billion
- 264,000 people are employed by firms based in Manchester, this figure represents 25% of the workforce in the area covered by the GMLLSC

- about £0.75 billion is spent on education and training in Manchester
- the unemployment rate in Manchester, at 9% is above the UK average
- in Manchester's central wards, unemployment rates between 15% and 20% are common
- the average weekly wage in Greater Manchester in 1997 was £347 per week, this compares with a Great Britain average of £368 per week.

### Social profile

- Manchester ranks 3rd most deprived of 354 local authorities in England; 20 of the 30 wards fall into the 10% of the most deprived wards in England
- the 1997 Manchester TEC area household survey revealed that 37% of ethnic minority, 44% of women and 40% of those living in Manchester had annual incomes of less than £5,000
- the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, 47% in primary and 45% in secondary schools, is more than twice the national average
- 40% of children come from households with no earners
- the distribution of the Manchester's population amongst the four main social classes and the UK comparators are shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3 - Distribution of the Population of Manchester Amongst the Four Main Social Classes**

Social Class	Manchester %	UK %
Prof./ man. /tech.	36	34
Skilled (non-manual)	24	24
Skilled (manual)	19	20
Partly skilled/unskilled	15	22

Source: *Economic Assessment 2000*, Manchester TEC

### Education and training

- Manchester local education authority maintains 197 schools: 150 primary; 23 secondary, of which three have sixth forms; 21 special and 3 nursery schools; 3 pupil referral units; 29 day nurseries cater for the under-fives; 10 main adult education and 29 neighbourhood centres; and 40 youth clubs. There are several independent primary schools and 11 independent schools for pupils of secondary age. Arrangements also exist with two local colleges for post-16 provision on a number of secondary school sites. Within Manchester, there are also three

universities and two colleges of further education and three sixth form colleges, two of which are Catholic

- about 1,000 pupils who reside in Manchester attend independent schools in Manchester or schools in other LEAs
- in and within relatively easy traveling distance of Manchester there are 47 providers of 16-18 education (31 further education providers and 16 schools)
- about 200,000 people participate in education as pupils, students, teachers and support staff: 75,000 in nursery, primary and secondary education; 75,000 in further education; and over 50,000 in higher education
- in 1999, 59% of school-leavers remain in education; 3% are on government sponsored training schemes (2% on modern apprenticeships, 1% on national traineeship trainees); 5% are on work-based training; 8% enter employment; and the remainder have moved away, not settled or failed to respond
- the performance of Manchester pupils in tests at Key Stages 1-3 is below the national average and varies greatly between schools
- 30% of Manchester pupils gain 5 or more GCSEs grades A\*-C, compared with the average for England of 46 %; 10% obtain no passes and 75% of the pupils from 10 secondary schools gain less than 5 GCSE passes at grades A\*-C
- OFSTED inspections of Manchester schools identified nine schools requiring special measures and 21 with serious weaknesses.

#### The workforce

- 531,000 people (388,000 full-time and 143,000 part-time) were employed in Manchester in 1997, of whom 37,000 were self employed
- nine per cent of Manchester residents are unemployed and in some wards this figure rises to nearly 20%
- females comprise 50% of the total workforce, but hold only 40% of the full-time jobs
- it is estimated that one in three of the economically active population and about 50% of the unemployed have no qualifications.

#### **The Economy of Manchester and Greater Manchester**

30 A third of Greater Manchester residents are employed in managerial, professional

and associated professional occupations compared with less than a quarter employed in skilled manual occupations (Table 4).

**TABLE 4 - Employment by Type in the Manchester Learning Partnership Area and in Greater Manchester**

Type Of Employment	Manchester LP (%)	Greater Manchester (%)
<b>Managers &amp; Admin.</b>	15	14
<b>Professional</b>	9	10
<b>Ass. Prof. And Tech.</b>	11	9
<b>Clerical</b>	16	16
<b>Craft</b>	11	13
<b>Personal &amp; Protection</b>	-	-
<b>Sales</b>	8	9
<b>Plant &amp; Machine Operatives</b>	9	11
<b>Unskilled</b>	6	5
<b>Other</b>	9	8

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC TransitionTask Group, August 2000

31 The top ten of fifty sub-sectors account for 73% of the employment (Table 5) in the Manchester Learning Partnership (Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford) area. Construction is the only non-service sub-sector in the top ten. The area relies heavily on large businesses for employment. A high proportion of businesses are concentrated in business services, retail, wholesale, and hotel and catering. All of these businesses, except wholesale, expect to see an increase in employment over the next ten years.

32 Forecasts suggest that employment, including self-employment, will grow by about 4% in the next ten years.

**TABLE 5 - Manchester Learning Partnership Area: Employment by Sector**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Employees (%)</b>
Health and social work	12
Business services	10
Education	9
Retail	8
Distribution	8
Professional services	7
Public admin. and defence	6
Hotel and catering	5
Construction	4
Other services	4
Transport services	3
Banking and finance	2
Communications	2
Food	2
Paper, printing and publishing	2
Land transport	2
Insurance	2
Computing services	1
Mechanical engineering	1
Metal goods	1
Other	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

### **Education and Training in Manchester and Greater Manchester**

33 As mentioned in paragraph 29, Manchester currently has an estimated population of about 430,000 and Greater Manchester about 2.6 million. Twenty one per cent of the population of Greater Manchester is aged 15 years and under, 11% are aged 16-24 years and 68% are aged 25 plus. The Manchester Local Authority District has the largest proportion of young people (17%). This is attributed to the high number of students studying in Manchester. The sixteen-year old cohort in Manchester is stable at around 5,000. A map showing the location of Shena Simon College and other post-16 providers is included as appendix three to this report.

#### School Education

34 There are forty-nine 11-18 schools, including independent schools, in the Greater Manchester area.

35 The City of Manchester maintains 202 schools, of which 25 are secondary schools.

Two maintained, six independent and one voluntary aided school have sixth forms; these schools entered 902 of their pupils for two or more GCE A-levels in 1999 and achieved an average A level points score of 15.7.

36 The Manchester Local Education Authority received a highly critical OFSTED report in Spring 1998 and was re-inspected in June 2000. The re-inspection found that the LEA had made significant progress since 1998 in:

- removing surplus places in schools
- reducing school budget deficits
- improving relationships with schools
- improving consultation and communication with schools

and within the Education Department, in:

- budget and asset management planning
- implementing the *Excellence in Cities* initiative
- support for the use of performance data
- the provision of education for excluded pupils
- the provision of behaviour support
- the timeliness of issuing statements for special educational needs.

37 On a more critical note, OFSTED observed that this undoubted progress has not yet led to significant improvement in the schools and the LEA is still failing some of the most vulnerable young people in the city.

38 In the Greater Manchester area, the educational attainment of Year 11 leavers shows considerable variation as Table 6 demonstrates. Manchester and Salford leavers perform particularly poorly with only 30% and 34%, respectively, achieving five or more GCSEs grades A\*-C in 1999.

**TABLE 6 - Greater Manchester: GCSE Results by LEA 1999**

LEA	5+ GCSEs (A*-C) %	5+ GCSEs (A*-G) %	No Passes %
<b>Bolton</b>	43	88	7
<b>Bury</b>	54	95	2
<b>Manchester</b>	30	79	10
<b>Oldham</b>	40	89	6
<b>Rochdale</b>	39	86	8
<b>Salford</b>	34	87	6
<b>Stockport</b>	50	92	5
<b>Tameside</b>	40	91	4
<b>Trafford</b>	54	92	4
<b>Wigan</b>	46	90	6
<b>England</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>6</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

#### Further Education

39 There are 12 general further education/tertiary colleges, 14 sixth form colleges, 9 external institutions and 3 higher education institutions funded by the Council in Greater Manchester. There are also four specialist colleges at which the Council funds a number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to attend on a residential basis. In 1999-2000 the Council provided funds of over £200 million for these institutions. Additional providers of further education and training in the Greater Manchester area include 49 schools with sixth forms and about 160 private training providers.

40 Projected numbers of students at Council-funded institutions in the Greater Manchester area in 2000-01 are shown in Table 7. In 1998-99, 252,000 students attended courses at these Greater Manchester institutions, of whom 221,000 were on programmes funded by the Council. Fifty two thousand of these further education students were aged 16-18 years and 45,000 were on Council-funded programmes (Table 8). Because students often enrol on more than one programme, enrolments at the Greater Manchester institutions totaled 430,000. Additionally, there are school sixth forms and a wide range of TEC-funded provision that in 1997-98 accounted for 36% of 16-18 year old and 8% of all post-16 year-old enrolments (Table 9).

**TABLE 7 - Greater Manchester: Projected Student Numbers by Programme Area for Council-funded Institutions 2000-01**

Programme Area	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Sciences	8,845	31,618	40,463
Agriculture	586	1,935	2,521
Construction	1,561	11,278	12,839
Engineering	2,379	8,666	11,045
Business	6,715	30,863	37,578
Hotel and catering	3,282	8,524	11,806
Health and community care	7,252	30,157	37,409
Art and design	6,084	8,288	14,372
Humanities	12,352	27,282	39,634
Basic education	1,913	12,596	14,509
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50,969</b>	<b>171,207</b>	<b>222,176</b>

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

**TABLE 8 - Greater Manchester Area: Students by Type of Institution, Age and Source of Funding 1998-99**

Type Of Institution	Number	16-18 year-olds		19+ year-olds		TOTAL		
		FEFC	Other	FEFC	Other	FEFC	Other	All
General Further Education/ Tertiary College	12	25759	6764	128152	19981	153911	26745	180656
Sixth Form College	14	17215	296	18508	3588	35723	3884	39607
Higher Education Institution	3	437	7	2359	6	2796	13	2809
External Institution	9	1300	0	27223	0	28523	0	28523
<b>Students</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44711</b>	<b>7067</b>	<b>176242</b>	<b>23575</b>	<b>220953</b>	<b>30642</b>	<b>251595</b>
<b>Enrolments</b>		<b>167215</b>		<b>263526</b>		<b>430741</b>		

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

**TABLE 9 - Greater Manchester: Distribution of Students and Trainees by Type of Institution 1997-98**

Provider	Age Of Students/ Trainees	
	16-18	All Post-16
<b>Adult education</b>	-	8%
<b>Colleges</b>		
• FEFC funded	64%	58%
• Non-FEFC funded	-	16%
<b>External institutions</b>	-	9%
<b>Higher education institutions</b>	-	1%
<b>School sixth forms</b>	9%	2%
<b>TEC</b>	27%	6%
<b>Total population</b>	132,000	2.1 million
<b>Overall participation</b>		
• Numbers	88,000	0.3 million
• per cent of age group	67%	14%
<b>ENGLAND</b>		
• numbers	1.4 million	4.9 million
• per cent of age group	74%	14%

Source: The Further Education Funding Council and Department for Education and Employment

41 Within the Manchester City boundaries there are two general further education colleges, City College, Manchester and the Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT) and three sixth form colleges, Loreto College, Shena Simon College and Xaverian College. The five Manchester colleges enrolled over 75,000 students in 1998-99.

42 The 16-19 year-old cohorts in Greater Manchester are shown in Table 10 and the destinations of Year 11 school-leavers in Table 11. Only three of the LEAs in the Greater Manchester area have participation rates of Year 11 school-leavers in full-time education above the national average of 70%. Two LEAs, Manchester and Salford, with staying-on rates of 59% and 55%, respectively, are more than 10% below the national average. If staying-on rates in education in Manchester reach the national average an additional 1,000 places will be required for 16-18 year olds in Manchester schools and colleges.

**TABLE 10 - Greater Manchester: 16-19 Year-old Cohort 1998**

LEA	16-17 year-olds	18-19 year-olds	16-19 year-olds
<b>Bolton</b>	6,849	6,173	13,022
<b>Bury</b>	4,616	3,972	8,588
<b>Manchester</b>	11,449	15,535	26,984
<b>Oldham</b>	5,975	5,362	11,337
<b>Rochdale</b>	5,764	5,356	11,120
<b>Salford</b>	5,400	5,838	11,238
<b>Stockport</b>	7,135	6,715	13,850
<b>Tameside</b>	5,532	4,895	10,427
<b>Trafford</b>	5,532	5,351	10,883
<b>Wigan</b>	7,683	6,916	14,599
<b>Greater Manchester</b>	<b>65,935</b>	<b>66,113</b>	<b>132,048</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

**TABLE 11 - Greater Manchester: Destination of Year 11 School Leavers 1999**

LEA	Full-time education %	Training %	Employment %	Other %
<b>Bolton</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Bury</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Manchester</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Oldham</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Rochdale</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Salford</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Stockport</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Tameside</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Trafford</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Wigan</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

43 Students at the two Manchester further education and three sixth form colleges, the Manchester Adult Education Service and Manchester Metropolitan University are shown in Table 12.

**TABLE 12 - Students Attending Further Education Courses at Manchester Institutions 1998-99**

<b>INSTITUTION</b>	<b>16-18</b>	<b>19+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>City College</b>	2438	21,476	23,914
<b>MANCAT</b>	2969	33,753	36,722
<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>
<b>Loreto College</b>	885	1249	2134
<b>Xaverian College</b>	1239	6	1245
<b>Shena Simon College</b>	739	1603	2342
<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>
<b>Manchester Adult Education service</b>	313	7984	8297
<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>	<b> </b>
<b>Manchester Metropolitan University</b>	242	247	489
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8825</b>	<b>66,318</b>	<b>75,143</b>
<b>Funded by FEFC</b>	<b>7617</b>	<b>59,492</b>	<b>67,109</b>

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

44 Students in and around Manchester generally attend their local college although, as the recruitment maps available from the Council for the five Manchester colleges demonstrate, students are prepared to travel to attend their chosen institution or course.

45 Between September 1999 and May 2000, the Council has conducted seven college inspections in the Greater Manchester area. A summary of the inspection grades awarded is given in Table 13. The proportion of the work inspected in the Greater Manchester colleges which was awarded inspection grade 1, in both the curriculum and cross-college areas of provision, was significantly above the national average. However, those awarded grades 4 or 5 were also significantly above the national averages with 22% of both curriculum and cross-college areas of provision being deemed less than satisfactory, compared with the national averages of 7% and 9%, respectively.

**TABLE 13 - Greater Manchester Colleges: Summary of Inspection Grades Awarded Following Council Inspections 1999-2000**

<b>Inspection Grade</b>	<b>Curriculum Area Grades %</b>		<b>Cross-College Grades %</b>	
	<b>GM Colleges</b>	<b>National Average</b>	<b>GM Colleges</b>	<b>National Average</b>
<b>1. Excellent</b>	14	10	22	14
<b>2. Good</b>	32	53	26	54
<b>3. Satisfactory</b>	32	30	30	23
<b>4. Less than satisfactory</b>	22	7	19	7
<b>5. Poor</b>	0	0	3	2

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

## Adult Education

46 The Manchester Adult Education Service is the third largest provider of post-16 education in the City. It has 21 main venues and 86 other centres and aims to provide access to lifelong learning opportunities within 1.5 miles of the home of every Manchester resident. In 1998-99, the Adult Education Service had 32,000 enrolments

involving about 14,699 students, about 4.7% of the adult population of Manchester. Seventy two per cent of the total annual spend of £8.2 million was funded by the Council and 24% by the LEA. Gross expenditure on adult education per head of adult population was £26.20, of which the LEA contributed about £10 per head.

47 The Manchester Adult Education Service has a good reputation both locally and nationally, particularly in basic skills. Courses are geographically accessible, targeted to local needs and there is a wide curriculum choice.

#### Higher Education

48 There are four universities in the Manchester Lifelong Learning Partnership area (Manchester Metropolitan University, UMIST, the University of Manchester and the University of Salford). These universities have grant income of over £200 million, are major employers and their students bring significant spending power to the City. They, with their further education counterparts, thus make a major contribution to the economy of Manchester and its surrounds. Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Salford offer further education programmes.

#### Training

49 There are 160 training providers contracted with Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) to deliver training programmes in the Greater Manchester area. (Table 14). Twenty-three of these providers contract with two or more TECs. Table 15 shows the number of providers in the Greater Manchester area that delivers each occupational area.

**TABLE 14 - Greater Manchester: TEC Contracted Training Providers**

TEC Area	Number Of Providers
<b>Bolton and Bury</b>	23
<b>Manchester</b>	63
<b>Oldham</b>	15
<b>Rochdale</b>	17
<b>Stockport</b>	19
<b>Wigan</b>	23
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

**TABLE 15 - Greater Manchester: TEC Contracted Training Providers by Occupational Area**

Occupational Area	Number Of Providers
Agriculture	17
Construction	45
Engineering	48
Manufacturing	30
Transportation	6
Management	19
Business administration	89
Retail and customer service	87
Leisure, sport and travel	26
Hospitality	43
Hair and beauty	32
Health, care and public service	39
Media design	14
Foundation for work	28

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000

50 The Training Standards Council has inspected 55% of training providers in the Greater Manchester area. Of those inspected, 67% were awarded grade 3 (satisfactory) or better and 33% had grade 4 (less than satisfactory) or grade 5 (poor) in one or more occupational area. On re-inspection, 62% of the latter group achieved at least grade 3.

51 In 1999-2000, TECs in the Greater Manchester area provided over £40 million to fund work-based training for young people. TEC funded programmes included Modern Apprenticeships (now known as Advanced Modern Apprenticeships), National Traineeships (now known as Foundation Modern Apprenticeships) and other training aimed at young people. Participation in the various programmes is shown in Table 16.

**TABLE 16 - Greater Manchester: Young People on Training Programmes by TEC Area - July 1999**

TEC	Modern Apprentice	National Trainee	Other	Total
Bolton and Bury	1,226	878	583	2,687
Manchester	3,216	814	2,867	6,897
Oldham	468	201	468	1,137
Rochdale	699	231	500	1,430
Stockport	865	238	636	1,739
Wigan	1,025	318	659	2,002
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,499</b>	<b>2,680</b>	<b>5,713</b>	<b>15,892</b>

Source: *Greater Manchester Handover Report*, Greater Manchester LSC Transition Task Group, August 2000s

52 In July 1999, there were 1,468 TEC-funded adults on work-based training programmes. The majority (52%) of these trainees receive their training through private training providers. Public sector institutions provided 22% of the training, employers provided 14% and voluntary organisations provided, 11%. Three quarters of the trainees were male. The contract value of these training places was just over £5 million.

### **SHENA SIMON COLLEGE**

53 Shena Simon College was established in 1982 when schools in Manchester were re-organised. For the first four years of its existence as a sixth form college, pupils from its predecessor institution, the Central High School for Girls, continued to be educated alongside post-16 year old students.

54 The college occupies a valuable single site in the centre of Manchester adjacent to UMIST and Manchester Metropolitan University. The buildings have Grade II listed building status. Part of the building has recently been converted to residential flats and the income used to implement substantial modernisation and refurbishment of part of its building. Although the college does not serve a residential community, there is easy access by public transport.

55 In recent years, Shena Simon College has undergone a significant change in character. Originally catering principally for 16-18 year olds, 60% of its students are now adults, in particular there has been an increase in students taking courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and in courses, at all levels, for international students progressing to higher education. The Council commented, in its recent inspection of Shena Simon College, that the ESOL department 'successfully addresses the needs of local and overseas students of all ages and backgrounds' and that 'the decision to change the strategic direction of the college was informed by sound community needs analysis'. The college is committed to social inclusion and the Council has identified the college as of one of a group that typically recruits a high percentage of its students from disadvantaged areas. In 1998-99, 80% of its students were recruited from disadvantaged areas and 50% were from ethnic minority groups. Franchising activity, in line with the strategic plan, has declined markedly from over 3,500 enrolments in 1996-97 to under 100 in 1999-2000. On receipt of a draft of this review report, the principal of Shena Simon College produced a response to some of the issues and concerns I have raised in the report. I have attached the principal's verbatim record as appendix one to this report.

56 Shena Simon College became an incorporated college funded by the Council in 1993. The Council inspected the college on two occasions, in 1995 and more recently in May 2000. The college's self-assessment grades, produced prior to the inspection, and the grades awarded in the May 2000 inspection are shown in Table 17.

**TABLE 17 - Shena Simon College: Comparison of Grades Awarded in the May 2000 Inspection and the College's Own Self-assessment Grades**

Curriculum Area	Grade	Self-Assessment Grade	Cross-College Area	Grade	Self-Assessment Grade
Maths & science	4	3	Support for students	4	2
Bus. & accounting	4	3	General resources	3	2
Psychology, sociology, English	4	3	Quality assurance	4	3
ESOL	1	1	Governance	3	2
Basic skills	3	2	Management	4	2

Source: FEFC inspection Report on Shena Simon College, published in July 2000

57 In the May 2000 inspection, the college was complimented on:

- outstanding ESOL provision
- the diversification of its curriculum to meet the needs of its local community
- course planning arrangements
- some specialist resources
- its accommodation strategy
- its improving financial position
- its links with a broad range of external partners.

58 However, the inspection report was highly critical and the college was urged to improve:

- the quality of teaching and learning
- retention rates and the number of students achieving their intended qualification
- the implementation of its student support system
- the use of management information to monitor and review its performance
- the rigour of its quality assurance arrangements
- the use of performance indicators and targets in the management of all areas of college activity.

59 The detailed inspection findings in relation to governance, management, quality assurance, resources, support for students and the curriculum areas inspected are summarised below.

### Governance

60 Governors were complimented on their wide range of expertise, involvement in strategic planning, oversight of the college's financial position and their working relations with senior managers. However, the Council's audit service concluded that governance of the college was weak. Amongst the weaknesses identified were:

- failure to conduct its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government and to fulfil its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the Council
- vacancies carried for a long period of time
- poor attendance levels
- governors leaving meetings early leading to inquorate meetings
- inadequate training arrangements for new governors
- clerking arrangements, including the clerk's job description, inadequate minuting of meetings and accessibility of governing body papers
- governors arrangements for monitoring their own performance.

### Management

61 Inspectors complimented the college management on the sound community needs analysis that underpinned its decision to change its strategic direction, the well-managed diversification of the curriculum, and on its links with the local community. However, inspectors identified a number of weaknesses including:

- unreliable management information
- unrealistic target-setting
- failure to meet targets for student retention and achievement
- lack of rigour in the oversight of the college performance
- lines of accountability not rigorously applied
- lack of rigour in the appraisal of senior managers

- some inadequate curriculum management
- no formal monitoring of key policy implementation
- failure to meet deadlines for student record submissions to the Council.

### Quality Assurance

62 Inspectors complimented the college on the progress that it had made in standardising its quality assurance procedures, on its staff development arrangements and its internal verification system. However, inspectors found that the college's quality assurance arrangements displayed more weaknesses than strengths. In particular, inspectors found:

- lack of rigorous use of performance indicators and targets
- variation in the quality of course reviews
- lack of improvement in retention and achievement levels
- decline in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection
- over generous self-assessment
- lack of awareness amongst students of the college's charter
- staff appraisal not fully established for all staff.

### Resources

63 Amongst the strengths identified by inspectors were the college's accommodation strategy, the well-equipped learning centre, access provided for students with restricted mobility and the high standard of refurbishment of some specialist areas. Criticisms levelled by inspectors related to:

- the development and maintenance of the college's IT network
- inadequate library facilities
- many classrooms and common areas in need of refurbishment

### Support for Students

64 Inspectors complimented the college on its well-documented student support system

and its good links with local schools and community organisations. Again, however, inspectors found that weaknesses outweighed strengths. Amongst the weaknesses identified were:

- insufficient co-ordination of aspects of student support
- underdeveloped counselling service
- ineffective careers education and guidance
- variation in the quality of tutorials.

### Curriculum Areas

65 In three of the four curriculum areas inspected weaknesses identified include:

- teaching below the national average
- lack of student participation in learning
- student punctuality, attendance, retention and achievement
- declining enrolments and class sizes that were not viable
- insufficient use of IT.

### Consequences of the Inspection Report

66 The Council requires colleges to produce an action plan following an inspection that addresses weaknesses identified in the inspection. This Shena Simon College has already done. Subsequently, the inspectorate reinspects provision previously graded 4 or 5. Shena Simon College would therefore be subject to reinspection of its mathematics and science, business and accounting, psychology, sociology and English provision. In addition, support for students, quality assurance and management would also be subject to reinspection. The inspectorate and Council staff also monitor whether or not the action plan has been implemented satisfactorily. The Council also places a 'cap' on student numbers in curriculum areas graded 4 or 5, i.e. the college can not increase student numbers until the provision is judged to have improved to at least at grade 3 at reinspection.

### Response to the Inspection Findings

67 In responding to the findings of the inspection, the college has taken the key strategic decision to refocus its work. It has decided to concentrate its efforts in those curriculum areas in which it has strengths, namely, basic education, ESOL, visual and performing arts and media, information technology, key skills, learning support and its

adult evening work. It should be noted that not all of these curriculum areas were inspected by the Council in May 2000. It is also intends to withdraw from the three curriculum areas (mathematics and science; business and accounting; and psychology, sociology and English) that were awarded grade 4 by the inspectors. Provided that there are no Council-funded enrolments in any of these curriculum areas, there will no longer be a need for a reinspection of this provision. This withdrawal commenced in September 2000, when the college ceased to recruit students to the first year of programmes offered in these three curriculum areas. It will, however, continue to maintain its commitment to those students enrolled on two-year GCE A-level programmes in these three curriculum areas and offer these until the end of 2000-01 academic year. The course portfolio for 2000-01 is shown in appendix two.

68 A consequence of this decision is that the college has implemented significant redundancy and re-organisation programmes. Up to 33 redundancies have been proposed, though it is expected that some of those staff declared redundant will be appointed to jobs in the new structure. As a consequence of the re-structuring, the staffing profile will change with a small net reduction in staffing, although the staff skills profile will change substantially to match curriculum changes. The college's staffing establishment in 1999-2000 and that proposed for 2000-01 are shown in Table 18.

**TABLE 18 - Shena Simon College: Staffing 1999-2000 and that Proposed for 2000-01**

Posts	1999-00	2000-01
Principal	1	1
SMT	3	3
Directors	6	4
Teachers	53	48
• full-time	45	14
• part-time contracts	8	25
• re-appointments	-	6
• others	-	3
Support Staff	33	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>92</b>

Source: Shena Simon College: *Response to Inspection Findings, August 2000*

#### The New Curriculum 2000-01

69 The new curriculum model that has been introduced in session 2000-01 (appendix two) generates a projected requirement of 42,000 teaching hours, this equates to about 48 full-time equivalent staff (Table 16). Permanent staff posts are supplemented by the use of third party staff provided by a private firm, Nord Anglia.

70 In 2000-01, it is proposed that teaching staff will be used in four major areas of work: art and design; basic education/ESOL; key skills and 'second year completers'. Estimates of the enrolments, teaching staff needs and likely Council funding units generated by these four areas of activity are shown in Table 19.

**TABLE 19 - Shena Simon College 2000-01: Estimates of Student Enrolments, FEFC Units and Teaching Staff Needs**

Activity	Students (FTE)			FEFC Units	Teaching Staff	
	Ft	Pt	Total		Hours	FTE
Art & design	290	60	350	40,000	10,500	12
Basic ed. Inc. ESOL	400	400	800	100,000	21,000	24
Key skills	Provided for 16-18 yr olds			8,000	1,500	2
2 <sup>nd</sup> year completers	65			14,000	5,500	6
Learning support					3,500	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1215</b>			<b>162,000</b>	<b>42,000</b>	<b>48</b>

Source: Shena Simon College: *Response to Inspection Findings, August 2000*

71 The approach proposed for the three curriculum areas that are being discontinued will be to concentrate on ensuring that those students completing the second year of their programmes are not disadvantaged by the impending changes. In relation to the remaining curriculum areas, and in the five areas of cross-college provision, action is being taken to address the issues raised in the inspection report with the aim of achieving across the board improvement.

72 The college's initial response to the inspection findings does not explore the long-term viability of the refocused provision within the context of Manchester and the establishment of the new learning and skills sector. This is the subject of this review that I am conducting on behalf of the Council and the governors of the college.

#### Post-Inspection Action Plan

73 Since the inspection, college inspectors have visited the college regularly to monitor its implementation of the post-inspection action plan and to assess, where possible, the quality of the students' experience. A considerable number of issues have been raised by these visits. Inspectors are concerned that the college is not making the required improvements to quality. These issues have been fed back to the college both verbally and in writing.

#### Financial Position

74 In 1998-99, Shena Simon College had an annual income of just over £3 million, most of this income is in the form of grant provided by the Council. The college set up a company in 1998-99, called Shena Simon Properties Limited, for the sole purpose of taking forward a specific premises development project. In 1998-99, Shena Simon Properties had an income of £0.9 million, most of which stemmed from the sale of the lease on part of the college building. The group thus had a total income of £3.9 million in 1998-99 when the college had an operating surplus of £32,000.

75 In 1999, the college's payroll as a proportion of income was 69% and its diversity of income was 9%. A summary of the college's funding allocations from the Council over the period 1995-96 to 2000-01 is presented in Table 20.

**TABLE 20 - Shena Simon College: FEFC Funding Allocations 1995-96 to 2000-01**

YEAR	FEFC Units	Total Funds (£ Million)	Average Level Of Funding (£)
2000-01*	163,028	2.853	17.50
1999-00	157,446	2.803	17.80
1998-99	148,510	2.575	17.34
1997-98	144,598	2.590	17.91
1996-97	123,145	2.500	20.65
1995-96	123,000	2.551	20.74

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

\* - provisional allocation

76 The last formal assessment of the college's financial health was based on the college's audited financial statements to 31 July 1999 when it was assessed as group A. That is: the college appeared to have sufficiently robust finances to implement its strategic plan and to deal with the circumstances which are most likely to occur during the planning period.

77 In its three-year financial forecast 2000-03, the college has self-assessed its financial health as being group B: that is, showing signs of financial weakness that might limit its ability to implement its strategic plan if it encounters adverse circumstances during the planning period. The Council is not able to concur with this assessment for a number of reasons and has therefore assessed the college's financial health as category C: that is, the college is or may become dependent on the good will of others.

78 The Council received a copy of the college's management accounts on 13 September 2000, following the request by the college for an advance of funding. The table below shows the key indicators:

**Table 21 – Shena Simon College: Key Financial Indicators Twelve Months to July 2000**

Key Indicators	
Total Income	£3,600,000
Total Expenditure	£3,500,000
Operating Surplus	£184,000
General Reserves	£1,195,000
Net Current Assets	£209,000
Current Ratio	2.5:1
Cash Days in Hand	18 days
ALF	£17.80

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

## DISCUSSIONS WITH INTERESTED PARTIES

79 This section summarises the discussions held during the course of this review with those mentioned in paragraph 6. Additionally, many of those with whom we spoke provided documents and data that are drawn on in the body of this report. These are listed in the bibliography.

80 A number of common themes underpinned the evidence of many of those with whom we spoke. At the city level, there was criticism from the individuals we met that Shena Simon College had:

- not worked sufficiently closely with the LEA
- not consulted widely on its intention to reduce its provision for 16-18 years olds through its withdrawal from large tranches of its GCE A level work
- a poor relationship with feeder secondary schools<sup>1</sup>, some of whom were critical of Shena Simon College's poor retention of students aged 16-18 year-olds enrolled on academic courses
- sold off assets that should have been devoted to post-16 education in a city with a low level of education achievement amongst its population<sup>2</sup>
- taken a short term approach to its current difficulties and had failed to call in all the local help available to enable it to take a more strategic approach to its future that was more in keeping with Manchester priorities
- lost credibility with the LEA, secondary school heads, parents and pupils and its peers in the further and adult education services.

81 In spite of this, most people with whom we held discussions did not think that Shena Simon College's position was irredeemable. If the college is to be a viable institution, people with whom I met suggested that there were a number of challenging issues which it will need to address namely:

- the college needs to generate sufficient income from education activity to ensure its financial viability

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the inspection report for Shena Simon College commended the college for its good links with local schools, recruiting from over 50 in the Manchester area. The report states that the college organises a range of 'taster' activities, summer schools, theatre road shows and open evenings and attends schools careers evenings.

<sup>2</sup> The college consulted locally on its accommodation strategy, including the local education authority and local schools, and sought Council consent before selling the lease on an under-utilised part of its building for residential development. The proceeds were used to modernise and refurbish part of its building.

- the college will need to refocus its core business based on the educational needs of Manchester and its citizens through:
  - strengthening, not reducing, its 16-18 year-old student base and the breadth of its 16-18 curriculum
  - continuing to expand its adult education provision
  - continuing to offer performing arts and related provision
  - exploring the possibility of working with local commercial firms and employers to identify niche work-based education and training markets associated with its excellent city centre location
- take steps to improve college management at all levels
- ensure that there are no further industrial relations difficulties and deal effectively with the uncertainties faced currently by staff
- improve the college's image and status throughout the City
- maintain and continue to work collaboratively with its various partners including the LEA, potential feeder secondary schools, the Manchester Adult Education service, *learnirect* and other colleges.

82 Most with whom we spoke regarded Shena Simon College as a valuable, although presently under-utilised, education asset within the City of Manchester that they felt had failed to deliver its 16-18 mission, to the detriment of Manchester and its young people. They emphasised that the college is located in a fine building of significant value and enjoys excellent transport links. People were aware that the college offered some excellent ESOL provision and that its performing arts courses are extremely popular. It appeared to me that the college has the goodwill, if not yet the confidence, of key opinion formers such as local Members of Parliament and City councillors and officials. There is no doubt that it is receiving a great deal of support from both Council officials and inspectors and external consultants. In this climate, in my view, it has a one-off chance to put its house in order.

83 The views of college staff with whom discussions were held fell into two categories. Those staff who had been declared redundant, and a minority of those remaining, who were highly critical of the college's governance and management, its handling of disciplinary matters in the past and its general industrial relations record. Staff from the performing arts/art and design and ESOL areas were much more positive. Following the redundancy exercise, these staff now represent 80% of the staff of the college. The inspiring and enthusiastic attitude of those who taught ESOL was a joy to behold. Students from these two areas of provision were also extremely positive about their Shena Simon College experiences.

84 It will fall to the governors of the college in partnership with the City Council, the

LEA, the Council, and soon the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council, to ensure that the opportunity provided by this review to refocus the college's work and build on its strengths, is not squandered. In reacting to this challenge, the college will need to carry out an in-depth strategic planning exercise and in so doing address the strategic issues outlined in the next section of this report.

## **STRATEGIC ISSUES**

85 Manchester is a changing and developing city. During the past ten years relatively high (3.3%) investment levels have been achieved. As a consequence, major capital injections, including significant construction projects, have transformed the City. Paralleling this increase in investment has been a decline in the City's primary manufacturing base, a low survival rate for new businesses, a geographical concentration of employment and significant growth in high technology industries that attract employees from the Greater Manchester conurbation.

86 The high technology industries that are blossoming in Manchester require a highly educated and skilled workforce, the majority of whom will need to be qualified to level 3 and above. Table 1 reveals that Manchester's adult population is relatively well qualified at levels 3 and above. However, this stems more from the fact that the city has three universities, than from the achievements of its schools, further education and training services. It is at the lower qualification levels that Manchester lags seriously behind the rest of the country. Only 30% of its 16 year-olds obtain 5 or more GCSEs grades A\*-C; only 69% of its 19 year-olds hold level 2 qualifications; and only 43 % of its 21 year-olds hold level 3 qualifications. These compare with national average figures of 48%, 74% and 52%, respectively, and national targets for 2002 of 50%, 85% and 60%, respectively. Manchester's schools, colleges and training providers have a challenging few years ahead if the education and skills of the city's young people is to be raised to levels acceptable to employers and those who invest in Manchester.

87 The data in the above paragraph help to define both the pre-and post-16 education and training agendas for Manchester's education and training providers. At the school level, there is a need to raise both the aspiration and achievement levels of the Manchester's school pupils. It is not the purpose of this review to consider such matters. However, the achievements of school pupils are pertinent to this review since Manchester's further education and training institutions need to offer curricula that recognize students' prior achievements and future needs.

88 There are a number of strategic issues which the City Council and its Education Committee will need to address. These include:

- the LEA's response to, and relations with, the local and national Learning and Skills Councils
- the LEA's role in the organisation, funding and delivery of education and training for

- 14-16 year olds
  - 16-18 year olds
  - adults
  - the re-training and re-skilling of adults
- LEA support for
    - employer-led demand
    - the educationally deprived
    - groups under-represented in post-16 education.

89 It follows, from the issues raised in the preceding paragraphs, that the key elements of Manchester's pre- and post-16 education and training strategies over the next few years should be:

- to make good schooling deficiencies and improve the performance of its school-leavers
- widen participation
- raise the education and training levels of the population and create a lifelong learning culture throughout the City
- ensure the appropriate delivery of Curriculum 2000 through making full use of all its post-16 education provision
- support re-training and re-skilling with flexible education programmes
- tackle educational deprivation in parts of the City
- encourage collaboration between key education and training providers
- respond effectively to both OFSTED and Council inspection reports.

90 In a city with so many under-performing schools and pupils it is essential that the LEA, in consultation with the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council, rethinks its 14-19 policy, particularly in those areas of the City without sixth form provision. Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT), in collaboration with Loreto College, and City College, Manchester have established sixth form centres working with local schools in areas of educational, economic and social deprivation. It is essential that such a collaborative agenda continues to be pursued with the twin aims of maximizing the use of the City's resources and raising the achievement levels of its young people.

91 Throughout the city there is a need for a concerted effort to widen participation,

particularly for those who have not yet achieved qualifications at or below level 2. In doing this the city and its education and training institutions will need to make full use of the opportunities offered by *learnirect*, develop information and communications technology as an aide to the delivery of learning programmes, and promote imaginative curriculum delivery strategies to help tackle education deprivation.

92 If the participation levels of Manchester's young people in post-school education are to be raised to national average levels, and recent improvements in the GCSE performance of Year 11 school-leavers makes this a distinct possibility, about 1,000 additional 16-18 places will be needed in the City. In these circumstances, the loss of Shena Simon College as a potential major provider of 16-18 education could be both serious and costly.

93 In mapping out a future for Shena Simon College, it is essential that the college's governors consider, in partnership with the LEA and the Council, a broader City-wide, post-16 education and training agenda and Shena Simon College's place within it.

### **OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF SHENA SIMON COLLEGE**

94 Following the critical inspection report on Shena Simon College, the college governors moved quickly to withdraw from its weak GCE A-level provision. There is no requirement on a college to consult on its curriculum offer, however, I could argue that local consultation would have been well-received and could be regarded as best practice. They also set in train a massive staff redundancy programme, stemming from changes to its curriculum, that resulted in about three-quarters of the full-time teaching staff being declared redundant.

95 The governors' intention is that the college should continue to operate as an independent entity with a curriculum offer comprising of second year GCE A-level completers (for one year only), art and design and performing arts, ESOL, basic skills, key skills, learning support and adult evening work.

96 Outstanding though the college's ESOL work is, and good though its art and design and performing arts work is assessed by the college to be, one is left with a worrying question: if we were starting from scratch with a prime city centre site, which is effectively the case now, would the curriculum offer being proposed for the future by the college be the chosen way forward? Probably not, although I do appreciate that hindsight is a wonderful thing and many other colleges would like to be able to start again with a blank sheet of paper.

97 It appears to me that the college's proposal for its future takes insufficient account of the government's strategy to increase the participation of 16-18 year olds in further education. This steer was given to the sector by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment in his letter to the chairman of the Council of 23 November 1999. In his letter, the Secretary of State indicated that he was looking for a significant increase in participation of young people in further education, as well as an increase in adult

participation. In particular, he saw the need to raise significantly the proportion of young people engaged in learning beyond 16 and achieving at least level 2 qualifications and to increase the numbers of those moving on to achieve level 3 qualifications. The college does argue, however, that the secretary of state's letter was taken into account, specifically with regard to an increase in adult participation, and that this, coupled with the college's reduction in 16-18 student numbers, formed the basis for the diversification of its curriculum in order to meet the needs of the local community in terms of social inclusion and widening participation for adults.

98 Furthermore, with such a limited curriculum offer, reduced staffing, weak student support systems, inadequate management information, and flawed quality assurance arrangements, I am concerned that Shena Simon College will not be in a position to respond flexibly to the changing needs of the city or, for example, any changes to government policy with regard to the local settlement of asylum seekers and refugees. These weaknesses are exacerbated by concerns about governance and management to which attention is drawn in the recent inspection report and the outcome of the audit of the college by the Council. This is not meant to imply that Shena Simon College will not achieve sufficient enrolments in its chosen curriculum areas to meet its proposed recruitment targets in 2000-01. But rather that it will be unable to offer its students the full range of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities that Manchester's broader educational need for 16-18 provision require. The college has stated, however, that it feels its current curriculum does meet the needs of its present students.

99 What the college does have, and on which it can build, are a valuable site, some excellent ESOL work, and performing arts provision that recruit healthily. There is also a desire on the part of the governors to do that which is best for post-16 education in the City of Manchester and a willingness to consider and consult widely on the options for the continuing use of the Shena Simon College site for educational purposes.

100 Under these circumstances two options merit consideration as follows.

### **Option 1**

101 Option 1 would require the college to refocus its core business through:

- expanding its 16-18 provision to embrace entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced courses targeted at particular client groups in collaboration with the LEA and local schools
- continuing to offer art and design, performing arts and related provision
- expanding adult education provision with the support of the Manchester Adult Education Service with an emphasis on ESOL, basic skills and leisure type programmes

- developing foundation type degrees with the support of the Manchester Metropolitan University
- exploring partnerships with the Manchester LEA, secondary schools and private training providers.

102 This is a challenging but achievable option. Two highly regarded sixth form colleges on the Manchester city borders in the current year claim to have waiting lists of 400 and 100, respectively and both Loreto and Xaverian Colleges with their good reputations recruit healthily. The expected increase in Manchester staying-on rates for Year 11 leavers over the next few years, as the City's education service strives to meet national targets, will probably result in an additional 1,000 young people aged 16-18 year-olds remaining in the City's post-16 educational institutions.

103 The college's outstanding ESOL provision should provide a sound base for expanding adult education provision in Manchester, possibly in partnership with the Adult Education Service that is keen to co-operate.

104 The new foundation type degrees also provide an opportunity for a well-located, city centre college such as Shena Simon College to participate in this development in collaboration with, for example, Manchester Metropolitan University.

105 The advent of the new learning and skills sector offers the possibility of developing productive partnerships with Manchester LEA, secondary schools and private training providers in delivering a wide range of post-16 education and training programmes.

106 To achieve this challenging transformation, it will be necessary for Shena Simon College to:

- take steps to improve its image and status as perceived by its local community
- develop its 16-19 curriculum in consultation with partners
- undertake a skills audit of the governing body
- restructure the college's organisation and management
- recruit new staff across the board to support the new curriculum
- improve its student support and quality assurance arrangements to address weaknesses identified in the inspection report
- work collaboratively with various partners, particularly the Manchester LEA
- establish good working relationships with the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council.

107 Such a restructured Shena Simon College, with a revised curriculum offer, would come into being on 1 September 2001.

108 In the meantime, the college will need to discharge its duties to its current students, through the effective deployment of its remaining staff, supported by appropriate consultants and agency staff and with the staff of those local colleges with whom the college is working collaboratively.

## Option 2

109 The quickest way of dealing with Shena Simon College's difficulties might be to move rapidly to merger with another college that is well-managed, has experience of carrying through successful mergers and has good student support, management information and quality assurance systems. There are four candidates within Manchester displaying these qualities in varying degrees. These colleges are City College, Manchester, Loreto College, MANCAT and Xaverian College. Inspection grades awarded to each of these four colleges during their last inspection by the Council are shown in Table 22. Funding and enrolment data relating to these potential merger partners are presented in Tables 23 and 24. Student numbers by level of study are shown in Table 25.

**TABLE 22 – Potential Merger Partners for Shena Simon College: Grades Awarded to each College during their most Recent Inspection**

AREA	CITY	LORETO	MANCAT	XAVERIAN	SHENA SIMON
Year of inspection	2000	1999	1999	1999	2000
<b>Cross-college</b>					
➤ Support for students	1	1	2	2	4
➤ Resources	2	2	2	3	3
➤ Quality assurance	3	1	3	3	4
➤ Governance	1	2	4 (3– reinsp)	3	3
➤ Management	2	1	3	3	4
<b>Curriculum</b>					
➤ Maths/science/IT	3	3	3	3	4
➤ Business	-	-	3	2	4
➤ Art and design	2	2	-	2	-
➤ Humanities	3	2 and 1	3	3	4
➤ Basic education	2	-	3	-	3
➤ ESOL	-	-	-	-	1
➤ Health and care	4	2	-	-	-
➤ Construction	-	-	3	-	-
➤ Leisure	3	-	-	-	-
➤ Hairdressing	2	-	-	-	-
➤ Agriculture/floristry	2	-	-	-	-

Source: FEFC inspection reports

**TABLE 23 - Potential Merger Partners for Shena Simon College: Funding Data 1999-2000**

Potential Partner	Funding (£million)	
	FEFC	Total
City College	16	28
Loreto College	3	3
MANCAT	18	27
Xaverian College	4	4
Shena Simon College	3	4

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

**TABLE 24 - Potential Merger Partners for Shena Simon College: Total Council-funded Enrolments by Programme Area and Percentage of 16-19 Year-olds Enrolments and Students 1998-99**

Programme Area	City	Loreto	MANCAT	Xaverian	Shena Simon
Sciences	6,575	795	4,053	1,352	1,017
Agriculture	1,139	22	57	0	0
Construction	34	54	8,649	0	0
Engineering	214	0	5,169	0	479
Business	3,962	198	14,209	303	181
Hotel and catering	1,006	48	606	65	23
Health and community care	7,647	1,376	5,158	158	195
Art and design	2,747	190	1,662	352	380
Humanities	6,443	4,264	5,554	3,821	1,260
Basic education	2,641	91	712	157	1,056
<b>Enrolments</b>					
➤ Total	32,415	7,038	45,829	6,208	4,591
➤ 16-19 year olds	17%	80%	10%	97%	40%
<b>Students</b>					
➤ total	18,041	2,131	34,608	1,244	2,304
➤ 16-19 year olds	11%	41%	6%	100%	31%

Source: The Further Education Funding Council – ISR16

**TABLE 25 - Potential Merger Partners for Shena Simon College: Student Numbers by Level of Study 1998-99**

Level Of Study	City %	Loreto %	MANCAT %	Xaverian %	Shena Simon %
Foundation	45	2	36	0	23
Intermediate	34	14	14	13	30
Advanced	17	84	17	87	45
Higher	3	0	7	0	0
Leisure/recreation	1	0	2	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: The Further Education Funding Council

110 Pen pictures of these four colleges are presented below. The suitability of each of these four colleges as a potential merger partner for Shena Simon College is also explored.

#### City College, Manchester

111 City College, Manchester operates on four main sites: three in the south of the City, in Didsbury, Northenden and Wythenshawe and the Abraham Moss Centre in Crumpsall. Each of the three sites in the south has a specialism. The Abraham Moss Centre offers a broad range of provision. Nineteen per cent of the college's 24,000 students are full-time, 70% were aged over 24 years and 21% were from ethnic minority backgrounds. The college has over 500 students on higher education programmes. It also offers provision in 23 prisons. It has 19 franchise partners and provides courses in 29 community venues. The college offers a wide range of provision in nine of the ten curriculum areas funded by the Council. In some curriculum areas such as printing, horticulture, floristry, hairdressing, beauty therapy, and in some aspects of art and design, the college is a regional and national provider. The college intends to concentrate its provision in the south of the City on two major sites.

112 City College, Manchester has given a great deal of thought to how it would approach a merger with Shena Simon College. First, it would build on its own and Shena Simon College's strengths in the visual and performing arts to establish a centre of excellence in this curriculum area. A merger with Shena Simon College would enable City College, Manchester to rethink its intention to build theatre and performance space at its Arden campus and to transfer some music technology work to Shena Simon. However, City College, Manchester would not regard the Shena Simon site solely as a performing arts centre. It would propose to offer GCE A-levels at Shena Simon in collaboration with other post-16 providers to avoid unnecessary duplication of provision. Teachers from City College, Manchester's Fielden centre would staff GCE A-level provision. GCE A-level work currently delivered at the Fielden centre would be moved to the Shena Simon site. Other provision, including foundation degrees and courses that enable access for non-traditional students to higher education, would also be offered in partnership with local universities. City College, Manchester and Shena Simon College have been expanding their partnership activity; most notably, City College, Manchester is offering courses in business and computing using accommodation at Shena Simon College.

113 City College, Manchester has received recently a good inspection report from the Council in which it received grade 1 for governance and grade 2 for management indicating that it has both the governance and management experience and capacity to successfully implement a merger. City College, Manchester informed me that it has considerable experience in managing the process of assimilating provision and staff through 23 prison education contracts.

## Loreto College

114 Loreto College is a Catholic sixth form college located on a single site, in the Moss Side and Hulme wards of Manchester, close to the city centre. The college offers 34 subjects at GCE Advanced level, eight GCSE subjects, two national diploma courses, general national vocational qualifications (GNVQ), child care programmes, courses accredited by the Open College Network for students with learning difficulties, and programmes for adults. The college also teaches the foundation year of a bachelor of arts course in collaboration with another college. Sixty five per cent of the college's students are Catholic and 27% are from an ethnic minority background.

115 Loreto College is a Council accredited college that has many strengths. These include a sound financial base, outstanding management, excellent quality assurance systems, and outstanding student support arrangements. It has a clear view of how it would assimilate Shena Simon's resources if a merger were to take place. Its intention would be to use its present Moss Side site as its main 16-19 centre with the Shena Simon College site providing specialist performing arts and media facilities as well as providing its community education base. Such a merger would have the added advantage that it would allow Shena Simon College to build on its strengths of ESOL and community work and continue to attract students from disadvantaged areas. One possible disadvantage of such a merger would be that Manchester would no longer have a non-denominational sixth form college, although Loreto College does recruit non-Catholic students. Loreto College and Xaverian College recently ceased merger discussions.

## Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT)

116 MANCAT presently operates from three main sites: the city centre, Openshaw in the east, and Moston in the north. It also offers further education and training provision at venues throughout Manchester and further afield. These include four recently established post-16 centres run in conjunction with local schools; three dedicated Sixth Form Centres on MANCAT premises; a music and performance skills centre in central Manchester; and a specialist performing arts centre in Hulme. The college intends to sell most of its city centre site and to relocate at an expanded Openshaw campus and its Moston campus. It will however build new major accommodation (£6 million) on the remainder of the city centre site, which will provide facilities for, in the main, adult students. MANCAT provides courses in all ten programme areas funded by the Council and recruits a high proportion of its students from disadvantaged areas. Almost 90% of the college's students study on a part-time basis and two thirds are aged 25 and over.

117 MANCAT has a number of strengths that support its case as a merger partner for Shena Simon College. In collaboration with the LEA and local schools it has broadened its 16-18 year-old education base through locating its delivery points on school campuses throughout the City. MANCAT informed me that achievement rates for A level, GCSE and GNVQ for 1999-2000 were all above national averages, with an exceptional 91% at its Moston campus in the north of the City. In September 2000, the college has enrolled 1,059 full-time and 758 part-time 16-18 year olds and has recruited from 56 schools

within Manchester and its surrounding districts. Since 1997, under the direction of a relatively new principalship team, MANCAT has informed me that it has a sound financial base, a strong management team, improving quality assurance systems, experience of multi-site operation and has developed governance arrangements that allow local representation within the outlying centres.

#### Xaverian College

118 Xaverian College is a Catholic, sixth form college located in Rusholme, a deprived area of Manchester. It recruits 79% of its students from Manchester. A high proportion of its students are from disadvantaged areas and 22% have an ethnic minority heritage. Over half of its students are Catholic. The college offers 28 subjects at GCE A-level, 11 GCSE subjects and 7 GNVQ programmes.

119 Xaverian College has a good reputation in recruiting and retaining students from a disadvantaged background. In the event of merger with Shena Simon College, it has committed itself to preserving both Shena Simon's ESOL and performing arts work. Xaverian College states that a significant advantage of a merger with Shena Simon College would be the natural progression routes that would be formed from basic skills through to Xaverian College's existing level 2/3 programmes. Xaverian College also indicates that the performing arts provision would provide access to a wider curriculum for those students, in addition to their performing arts, and would correlate well with the Government's Curriculum 2000 agenda. However, its present limited curriculum offer raises questions about its capacity to develop the Shena Simon site along the lines that might be most beneficial to Manchester, namely increasing provision for 16-19 year-olds at level 2 and below. As in the case with Loreto College, a possible disadvantage of a merger between Xaverian College and Shena Simon College would be that Manchester would no longer have a non-denominational sixth form college. Forty per cent of Xaverian College's student population is non-Catholic with many being of other faiths. Xaverian College's inspection report of November 1999 commented that 'the college makes explicit its aims and identity as a Catholic college while welcoming students from other faiths and non faith backgrounds into a friendly community where individuals are valued'. Xaverian College has stated that there is no reason why this should not be continued into an expanded college.

#### **SHENA SIMON COLLEGE: NEXT STEPS**

120 Shena Simon College has had a traumatic six months. A poor inspection report, a massive redundancy programme, and widespread criticism of its strategic decision to pull out of the majority of its GCE A level work and reduce the breadth of its 16-18 year-old curricula, result, in my view, in the need for a strategic options feasibility study to assess the two options available to the college: whether it should merge with another institution; or whether it should refocus its core business by expanding its 16-18 year old provision and remain as an independent institution. The college should not assume that if it were to retain its independence it could do so with its current curriculum

offer. In my view, given the weaknesses highlighted in the inspection report, the management of a refocused independent institution would also need to be strengthened. What Shena Simon College must not do is to once again rush into hasty decisions. Rather, I suggest that, in collaboration with the Council, it should consult widely and formally on the two options outlined in this report. A strategic options feasibility study would also include a detailed assessment of the merits of all the potential merger partners, with the cost of the study met from the Council's rationalisation fund. Whilst this consultation is in progress the governors, again in collaboration with the Council, might wish to seek advice on the possibility, in the event of merger with another college, of placing the Shena Simon College assets in a trust to prevent future asset stripping by the merger partner. Whichever the outcome, a refocused or merged institution should be in existence in time for the new academic year 2001.

## **FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING ISSUES: GREATER MANCHESTER**

121 Although this report is principally about Shena Simon College and options for its future, much of the evidence that has been collected has wider implications for further education and training provision in Greater Manchester.

122 Amongst the key issues that the Learning and Skills Council will need to address are the generally low participation and achievement levels of Year 11 school-leavers in many parts of Greater Manchester. Only Bury, Stockport and Trafford have Year 11 leaver participation levels in full-time education above the national average, whilst areas such as Manchester and Salford have rates significantly below (Table 11).

123 In spite of the relatively low levels of participation in education and training across the Greater Manchester area there is no shortage of providers. There are 247 providers of further education and training in Greater Manchester. These include 12 further education colleges, 14 sixth form colleges, 9 external institutions, 3 higher education institutions providing further education, 49 schools with sixth forms and 160 training providers. These institutions provide for 300,000 further education students and about 20,000 trainees. The Learning and Skills Council might wish to map this provision and consider whether to review the scope for rationalizing this large number of providers.

124 The 38 further education type institutions providing for 252,000 students in the Greater Manchester area may offer little scope for further rationalisation, except perhaps in Salford, Stockport and possibly Trafford.

125 In the case of training providers there are 160 providers for only about 20,000 trainees (Tables 14 and 16 and paragraphs 49 and 52). The need for 45 providers of construction, 48 of engineering, 89 of business administration, and 87 providers of retail and customer service training (Table 15) should be reviewed.

126 The remit of this review did not provide an opportunity to consider school sixth form provision and performance in Greater Manchester but this is certainly an area that merits investigation.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

127 The author wishes to express his thanks to all those who gave written and oral evidence to the review. I also wish to express my appreciation for all the help that we received from Viv Bingham, the then chair of governors, Lynda Fairhurst, principal, and the staff of Shena Simon College and to Rachel Curry and other officials of the Council who provided much of the data used in this report.

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## **APPENDIX 1 – SHENA SIMON COLLEGE’S PRINCIPAL’S RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED WITHIN THIS REPORT**

### **Verbatim Record of the Submission to the Review by the Principal of Shena Simon College**

*“The college’s commitment to widening participation and social inclusion has been central to its mission and planning since the development of the three year Strategic Plan 1997-2000. This commitment is reflected in the College’s widening participation factor which is amongst the highest in the country and in the cultural diversity of the College community with over 50% of students coming from ethnic minority groups. In line with FEFC guidance and within the funding methodology at the time, the College developed its adult work whilst maintaining its focus on 16-18 full-time provision. Provision for adult students, especially those with basic skills and ESOL needs, has been a key area of development. This work has been developed to meet the needs of the local community as well as refugees and asylum seekers. This has been highlighted in annual Strategic Plan Updates, as has the change to the balance of provision between 16-18 and adult. However, it should be noted that the College has achieved significant growth in unit terms between 1996 and 2000 which has allowed the college to increase its adult numbers without a significant decrease in its 16-18 numbers.*

*Given the fact that over 80% of the College’s students come from areas of disadvantage and many enter with low or no qualifications, the College has diversified its curriculum portfolio for 16-18 year old students to include provision at entry and intermediate level as well as at advanced level. The College has also focused on the introduction of vocational provision given its student profile. Especially successful, in recruitment and achievement terms in the 16-18 area, has been the work in Performing Arts, Art and Design and Media. However, the College has endeavoured to maintain its full 16-18 programme, including a broad A level and GCSE portfolio. Our commitment to this provision has been identified in the extensive marketing and school liaison programme undertaken by the College. The bulk of the College’s marketing resource (finance and human) has been dedicated to this area as it has remained a key priority. Despite this, the applications to the traditional A level curriculum have declined year on year. This decline in applications to the academic curriculum must be seen in the context of the extensive provision offered within Manchester and in surrounding districts. The details of providers are given elsewhere in the report.*

*The College’s decision therefore, following the inspection, to withdraw from a full A level curriculum offer was based upon a range of factors which include:*

- *the restriction to recruitment following inspection which meant that the majority of A level courses were not viable either financially or on quality grounds*
- *the pattern of recruitment and enrolment over recent years*
- *the advanced level provision available elsewhere in the city*

- *the College's own strengths and specialisms*
- *the need to avoid wasteful duplication*
- *the plans of other colleges to expand their 16-18 provision in localities which are a direct threat to our own provision. This is particularly true of MANCAT's existing post 16 Centres in Schools and its recent strategic decision to establish a number of 16-18 Centres at key locations around the City.*

*The College has been mindful when restructuring its curriculum of the fact that adequacy and sufficiency of provision is not currently an issue and that the Learning and Skills Council will in future consider the quality of provision and duplication of provision when allocating funding. We are aware of the **potential future** growth in student numbers at 16 but have also considered the additional capacity which other providers will offer. We remain committed to 16-18 provision and intend to develop our curriculum in 2001-2002 and beyond. Given the current recruitment to our 16-18 provision, we expect to recruit at least the same numbers in 2001-2002 as in 1999-2000.*

*The College has been an active player in establishing collaborative links between colleges in Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford. The Principal chairs the FE Colleges' Group which has successfully bid for a range of collaborative projects and the College is also fully involved in the City Pride SLLP and Manchester LLP. We are committed to working with key partners in Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford. The College's genuine commitment to partnership and collaboration is illustrated by the fact that the Principal represents the Manchester Colleges in a number of key forums.*

*The College recruits from in excess of 40 schools and the quality of its schools links was identified as a strength in the recent inspection report. The College has not, however, entered into the kind of intensive partnership activity with individual schools which some other colleges have, as this has not been financially or practically viable given the number of schools we liaise with.*

*Through its accommodation strategy, the College has been able to invest in the refurbishment of the building for the benefit of students. The College has surplus space (even when significant growth had been factored in) which it long leased for residential use – the capital sum released being used to enhance the College environment. The College followed FEFC guidelines throughout and liaised with the local authority, the local community and local schools during the planning and development phase.”*

October 2000<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dr Melia would wish it to be known that this is a direct report of the views of the college principal, not his own.

**APPENDIX 2 - SHENA SIMON COLLEGE: PROPOSED CURRICULUM  
2000-01**

<b>ESOL AND BASIC SKILLS</b>	<b>ART AND DESIGN AND PERFORMING ARTS, ETC.</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> YEAR COMPLETERS, ETC</b>	<b>EVENING</b>
ESOL Part-time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginners</li> <li>• Elementary</li> <li>• Lower Intermediate</li> <li>• Intermediate</li> <li>• Upper Intermediate</li> <li>• Advanced</li> <li>• UET</li> </ul>	Art GNVQ level 2 Art GNVQ level 3 Media GNVQ level 2 ND Drama (Musical Theatre) ND Dance ND Popular Music ND Media ND Fine Art	Maths/Science:(1 <sup>st</sup> Yr) A level Biology (2nd Yr) A level Human Bio. (2nd Yr) A level Chemistry (2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr) A level Computing (2nd Yr) A level Maths (2nd Yr) A level Physics (2nd Yr)	GCSE Maths GCSE English IT courses A level Law A level Urdu
ESOL Full Time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starters</li> <li>• Beginners 1</li> <li>• Beginners 2</li> <li>• Elementary</li> <li>• Intermediate</li> <li>• Upper Intermediate</li> </ul>	ND Drama (Acting) First Diploma Performing Arts AS level Art AS level Theatre Studies AS level Media AS level Gov. Politics	Business:(1 <sup>st</sup> Yr) Bus.GNVQ level 3 (2nd Yr) A level Accounting (2nd Yr) A level Bus.Studies. (2nd Yr)	French Italian Japanese Spanish Turkish
Basic Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start up</li> <li>• Level 1</li> <li>• Level 2</li> <li>• Pre Univ. Foundation</li> </ul>	1st Diploma IT ND IT GCSE Maths GCSE English IT Courses	Humanities:(1 <sup>st</sup> Yr) A level Classical (2nd Yr) A level English Language (2nd Yr) A level English (2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr) A level Law (2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr) A level Psychology (2nd Yr) A level Sociology (2nd Yr)	Bookkeeping P. Arts NC A level Art A level Media A level Photography A level Film OCN Theatre

Source: Shena Simon College. Courses will only be offered if there are sufficient enrolments in September 2000.