

# Cornwall College

**REPORT FROM  
THE INSPECTORATE  
1997-98**

**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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## Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

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

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

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

## Retention and Pass Rates

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

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

# Summary

## Cornwall College

### *South West Region*

#### **Inspected November 1997**

Cornwall College is a large general further education college with its main centre at Pool, near Camborne. It has sites across the county of Cornwall including Duchy College, an agricultural college, and has established a wide range of partnerships, mainly within Cornwall. The college produced a self-assessment report which is comprehensive and generally evaluative. The process involved all college centres and considerable attention was given to the individual self-assessments of partner organisations. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the report, but some weaknesses were understated. Some judgements were insufficiently supported by evidence; for example, there was little lesson observation to support the assessment of teaching and learning.

The college offers a wide range of courses in all the FEFC programme areas. Provision in six of these areas was inspected, together with aspects of cross-college provision. The college benefits from effective governance and clear leadership and direction from senior managers. Strategic planning is clearly and closely linked to financial planning. Collaborative approaches have created good external links with partners and the community and good learning opportunities

for students. There is much effective teaching and learning. On some courses, there are high levels of students' achievements. There is much good support for students. The quality assurance system is thorough and generally effective. There is some good accommodation which is well maintained. The college should: focus on the quality of teaching and learning to improve the weaker practice observed; address attendance and retention issues on many courses; produce accurate students' achievements data which are more closely linked to the quality assurance system; improve the monitoring of tutorial support and learning support; strengthen careers education: improve access for those with restricted mobility; increase students' access to IT; and upgrade its poorer accommodation.

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

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Agriculture	3	Support for students	2
Engineering	3	General resources	3
Business	2	Quality assurance	2
Health and social care	2	Governance	1
Art and design	2	Management	2
Basic education	2		

# Context

## The College and its Mission

1 Cornwall College opened as Cornwall Technical College in 1928 with day classes organised in collaboration with the Camborne School of Mines. The college operates on six sites in the county. The main site is at Pool, between Camborne and Redruth. The Duchy College, a residential agricultural college which is part of Cornwall College, has its main site at Stoke Climsland, 59 miles from Pool. Smaller sites at Rosewarne, the Royal Cornwall Show ground at Wadebridge and at Portreath also house horticultural and agricultural courses. A campus in Falmouth houses the Falmouth and Penryn College, which offers courses in several programme areas, and also the centre for marine studies. The college maintains offices in Exeter, Birmingham, Truro, Falmouth and Swindon, which are concerned with conference organisation and in-company recruitment and training. It also operates a college company, Cornwall College Management Services Limited. Cornwall has a population of nearly half a million and is essentially a rural county with no large centres of population. The unemployment rate for the Redruth and Camborne area is 9.4 per cent which is well above the national average. Over 90 per cent of companies employ less than 10 people and 52 per cent less than 5 people. Manufacturing produces 30 per cent of the gross domestic product, but the service sector employs 76 per cent of the employed population. Minority ethnic groups comprise less than 1 per cent of the population of the county.

2 The college has formed strategic partnerships with a wide range of organisations, including schools and public and private sector training providers. There are sixth forms in schools at Camborne, Redruth and Helston which compete with the college's Pool site for school-leavers. The nearest further education colleges are at Truro (10 miles) and Penzance (15 miles).

3 The college's main focus is on vocational education and training. In 1996-97, there were 34,718 students, of whom 87 per cent were part time. Sixty per cent were on foundation level programmes and 5 per cent on higher education programmes. The college includes the Duchy College and employs 664 full-time equivalent staff, of whom 269 are teachers and 78 directly support learning.

4 Senior management consists of a directorate of five: the principal, deputy principal who is also principal of Duchy College, and three directors of operations, finance and programmes, respectively. Teaching is based in 17 academic centres each managed by a centre head.

5 The college aims to contribute to the prosperity of Cornwall through the provision of quality education and training. In addition to serving the needs of local industry the college is one of the major employers in the county. The initiatives which it undertakes outside the county are often used to bring funding into Cornwall to improve its provision for the local community.

# Context

## The Inspection

6 The college was inspected during the week beginning 24 November 1997. The inspection team had previously studied the college's self-assessment report. The college submitted data on students' achievements for the three years 1995 to 1997. There were some significant differences between data held centrally by the college and data held in centres. The inspection was carried out by 16 inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 61.5 days. Inspectors observed 124 lessons, including tutorials, and examined students' work and college documents. Meetings were held with governors, managers, college staff and students.

7 Of the lessons inspected, 61 per cent were outstanding or good and 10 per cent were less than satisfactory. This compares with 61 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, for all lessons observed during 1996-97, according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of attendance was 75 per cent. The following table shows the grades awarded to lessons inspected.

### Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	0	4	1	2	0	7
GNVQ	3	7	8	3	0	21
NVQ	0	8	1	0	0	9
Other vocational	7	28	21	6	0	62
Higher education	2	3	0	0	0	5
Other*	1	13	5	1	0	20
Total	13	63	36	12	0	124

\*includes GCSE

# Curriculum Areas

## Agriculture

### Grade 3

**8 Inspectors observed 23 lessons. They agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses described in the self-assessment report. However, the inspection identified some significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning not acknowledged in the self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- wide range of courses appropriate to the needs of local industry
- good links with local industry
- high standards in much of the practical teaching
- effective links between theory and practice in most lessons
- some good achievements by students on full-time courses
- coursework and assessment processes generally well managed
- some good specialist facilities

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient attention paid to the differing needs and abilities of students
- weak organisation and management of some lessons
- some poor pass and retention rates
- some weaknesses in curriculum management
- insufficient feedback to students on standards of spelling, grammar and numeracy
- shortage of library books and other materials in many areas

9 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that a wide range of courses in agriculture, horticulture and equine studies is provided which is well matched to the needs of

local industries. This range enables students to select either full-time or part-time courses to suit their circumstances. Many students continue to study at the college for several years. As their training needs change, they are able to move between full-time and part-time study.

10 Teachers use a wide range of appropriate teaching methods. Inspectors agreed with the college that teachers make good use of the college estate and specialist facilities to apply theory to practice. In the best lessons, students are encouraged to analyse their work critically. Much of the practical teaching is of a high standard. In poorer lessons, objectives are not clear and weaknesses in classroom management result in poor practice and student inactivity. Many schemes of work and lesson plans are insufficiently detailed to provide a sound basis for curriculum planning and teaching. In some lessons, students spend much of their time copying notes which distracts them from the teacher's exposition. The late arrival of students disrupts some lessons. Most assignment briefs clearly explain what students are being asked to do, but some are less clear about the criteria for assessment. Teachers generally provide good feedback on the technical content of assignments, but they often provide little comment on the standards of spelling, grammar and numeracy attained by students.

11 There are productive links with industry. Employers provide facilities for students' practical work, projects and work experience. Their views are sought through advisory committees. On some courses, students are placed on the college estate duty rotas which give them a better understanding of industrial practice. In one example, farm staff assess students' personal qualities and competence which helps to inform them about their likely performance in the work place.

12 Most assignments are well researched and clearly presented. Students are able to gain qualifications in addition to their main award.



# Curriculum Areas

On most full-time courses students' achievements are good. There have been consistently high pass and retention rates on national certificate courses. Recently, there were poor pass rates for the horticulture and animal care courses. Retention rates and pass rates for part-time courses vary widely and some are poor. This was acknowledged in the self-assessment report. Achievements on the certificate of agriculture and Royal Horticultural Society courses have been poor. Some students continue their course for longer than the one or two-year period and some subsequently gain the award. On agriculture courses the final pass rates are high.

13 Teachers have good links with the industry which enable them to keep in touch with current developments. Specialist facilities are generally good and provide a realistic working environment for practical work and projects. The farm at Stoke Climsland carries a range of commercial-size units typical of those in the area. These are well maintained and provide a good example for students. The estate and farm

are used extensively by students for practical work and assignments. A considerable range of data is available from the farm to support teaching, but this information is not always readily available to students. Some specialist farm machinery used by agriculture students is outdated. This was acknowledged in the self-assessment report. At Rosewarne the horticulture resources are adequate for the range of courses offered. Animal care resources are only just sufficient for current demands and will be inadequate to support planned course developments. There are insufficient specialist books and some are outdated.

## Examples of students' achievements in agriculture, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
National diplomas	Retention (%)	*	59	82
	Pass rate (%)	*	81	65
Other advanced vocational	Retention (%)	*	77	41
	Pass rate (%)	*	44	29
National certificates	Retention (%)	87	88	79
	Pass rate (%)	98	81	96
Intermediate vocational	Retention (%)	89	80	71
	Pass rate (%)	62	72	57
Foundation vocational	Retention (%)	89	76	92
	Pass rate (%)	90	74	59
First diploma courses	Retention (%)	82	79	84
	Pass rate (%)	81	95	90

Source: college data

\*data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Engineering

### Grade 3

**14 Inspectors observed 21 lessons in engineering, automotive engineering and marine engineering. The self-assessment report identified many strengths and weaknesses which were confirmed by the inspection, but contained little comment on the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors considered that the college overstated the strengths of the provision, particularly with regard to teaching and students' achievements.**

#### Key strengths

- good practical teaching
- very good motor vehicle resources
- opportunities for students to do a practical course alongside their main programme
- alternative approaches to vocational training for local employees
- good retention rates on City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) courses

#### Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on many courses
- poor retention on advanced vocational programmes
- failure of teachers to use an appropriate variety of teaching methods
- inadequate schemes of work and little use of lesson plans
- failure to involve students actively in some lessons

15 The self-assessment reports produced by each engineering centre did not identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Teaching in practical and workshop lessons is generally good. Students are enthusiastic and teachers encourage and

support them to achieve good levels of skill. In some practical lessons, students benefit from the current specialist experience of part-time teachers. Theory lessons are often dull and uninspiring. Although most teachers use schemes of work, many of these are little more than lists of topics and there is little use of lessons plans. Many teachers do not involve students in discussion or check their understanding of the work by asking them questions.

16 Teachers set clear assignments, although some assignment briefs do not include an adequate explanation of the assessment criteria. Students' work is carefully marked and constructive comments are made. Courses are well organised. Course teams meet regularly and decisions about points for action are recorded. Annual course reviews are completed by programme managers in accordance with the college's quality assurance procedures.

17 Pass rates on many engineering courses are below the averages for colleges included in the Further Education Funding Council's (FEFC's) national engineering survey in 1996. This was not sufficiently recognised in the self-assessment report. Student retention on foundation engineering courses is good but, although the pass rates have improved in each of the last three years, they are still below the averages in the national survey. Retention and pass rates of students on full-time and part-time advanced vocational programmes are poor and the number of students achieving the qualification for which they enrolled two years earlier is low. A significant number of students on higher national certificate courses come from the military bases in the area. Retention rates on these courses are adversely affected by students taking up new postings elsewhere.

18 Students on all full-time advanced vocational courses are able to study for a second, practical qualification. For example, students studying for the national diploma in

# Curriculum Areas

marine studies are encouraged to attend a course in yacht and boat building. Those on the full-time national certificate in motor vehicle engineering attend the C&G motor vehicle competences course. These courses provide many students with the skills required to obtain work after they have finished college. The college has introduced a new programme, the Nanpean initiative, which enables engineers working in companies in Cornwall to improve their qualifications and experience. Teachers visit their place of work for essential core units of engineering science and mathematics. Other specialist subjects are taught by suitably-qualified managers from companies involved in the scheme.

19 All engineering teachers have had industrial experience but, for most, this was some years ago. The need for teachers to update their industrial knowledge is highlighted in the college action plan. There is an extensive range of specialist engineering and marine equipment and facilities to support the wide range of courses offered. These include modern computer numerically-controlled machining centres, modern cars supplied by a major manufacturer, computer-aided design computers, and very good motor vehicle and boat-building workshops.

## Examples of students' achievements in engineering, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced vocational	Retention (%)	*	56	48
	Pass rate (%)	*	69	61
Intermediate vocational	Retention (%)	86	50	80
	Pass rate (%)	30	76	53
Higher national certificate	Retention (%)	*	69	80
	Pass rate (%)	*	72	44
C&G part 1 engineering courses	Retention (%)	82	83	84
	Pass rate (%)	47	46	65

Source: college data

\*data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Business

### Grade 2

**20 Inspectors observed 21 lessons in professional and management courses, secretarial and business administration, general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) courses in business studies and BTEC public services. Inspectors generally agreed with the judgements made by the college in its self-assessment report, though they differed on some matters of detail.**

#### Key strengths

- excellent working relationships between staff and students
- generally well-planned lessons
- relevant assignments at an appropriate standard
- effective integration of students from a variety of backgrounds and ages
- generally good achievement rates, especially on management programmes
- effective course organisation
- good opportunities for students to progress to higher level courses

#### Weaknesses

- little systematic collection and analysis of data on students' achievements
- poor attendance at many lessons
- some poor achievement on secretarial courses
- few opportunities at foundation level

21 Teaching is effective, with the great majority of lessons assessed as good or better. Inspectors agreed with the college that teaching is generally well planned. Schemes of work and lesson plans generally give a clear indication of objectives and teaching methods, though for a minority of courses schemes of work are little

more than a list of topics. Teachers generally provide a range of activities which are appropriate to the needs of students but this was not the case in many finance lessons. Teachers regularly check that students are learning and understanding the work, although in a minority of lessons some students were not effectively drawn into discussion. Written feedback to students is generally thorough. The college's assessment that students studying by distance learning routes receive good support was confirmed by inspectors. In particular, the feedback from tutors to students taking management programmes by distance learning routes was detailed and informative and encouraged students to think about the development of their personal management skills. However, on some courses students received only perfunctory comments on their work. National vocational qualification (NVQ) portfolio building and assessment is well organised in both management programmes and business administration. At Stoke Climsland, students valued the additional support that was given for their learning.

22 The training office provides a busy and realistic work environment for secretarial students. It also offers some specialist training, for example in telephone techniques, to local companies. Some provision has been organised for local companies; for example, training for local retailers has grown rapidly. The inspection confirmed that employers are closely involved in the design and delivery of public services courses. An effective key skills session was observed which involved students reviewing their research at a local engineering company. The students analysed their findings, amended schedules and wrote a letter to the company.

23 Students' achievements on GNVQ advanced and intermediate programmes are generally similar to the national rate for colleges of further education, although there are some poorer results at one centre. BTEC national and first diploma and certificate programmes have pass

# Curriculum Areas

rates which are generally above 80 per cent. Inspectors agreed with the college that management and professional studies generally have good results. Pass rates for marketing courses exceed the national rate. Most secretarial students achieve some skill qualifications, but the number of students achieving their full qualification was low on several programmes in 1996-97. Retention rates vary from under 60 per cent on some programmes to over 90 per cent on some public services and management courses. Attendance varied across the lessons inspected, averaging 70 per cent. There was good attendance at lessons at the Stoke Climsland site. Students' work is generally well produced, often to professional standards. NVQ portfolios are of a good standard. Most students completing secretarial and public services programmes gain employment when they complete their courses.

24 Inspectors agreed with the college that business courses are well managed. There is a wide range of provision, particularly at advanced levels and above. At foundation level, there is only a secretarial programme, Skills

2000. Some students are unable to take part in the enrichment programme because of timetabling difficulties. Team meetings are generally effective and there is a ready response to issues raised by students in their termly reviews. There is little effective sharing of good practice between teams of teachers in different centres.

25 Computer rooms are generally well equipped and furnished. There is an appropriate range of industrial standard software. Teaching staff are generally well supported by qualified technical and administrative staff. Many teaching staff recognise that they need training to develop their understanding of teaching key skills.

## Examples of students' achievements in business, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ advanced	Retention (%)	*	84	83
	Pass rate (%)	*	81	58
GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	86	72	92
	Pass rate (%)	39	83	84
Marketing certificate	Retention (%)	100	88	98
	Pass rate (%)	25	38	56
Secretarial skills course	Retention (%)	*	*	*
	Pass rate (%)	*	87	84
Chartered Association of Certified Accountants	Retention (%)	*	95	84
	Pass rate (%)	*	69	92

Source: college data

\*data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Health and Social Care

### Grade 2

**26 Inspectors observed 22 lessons, including three lessons at Treリスケ Hospital. The judgements in the self-assessment report are comprehensive in coverage and effectively summarised, though occasionally there was a lack of evidence for the strengths claimed.**

#### Key strengths

- well-planned and effective teaching
- clear information regarding course content and assessment
- good assessment procedures and internal verification
- well-organised work experience
- innovative arrangements to allow students to study at times of their own choosing
- generally good students' achievements
- well-developed enrichment programme
- efficient and effective management

#### Weaknesses

- lack of attention to key skills in some assessments
- little foundation level provision
- some poor retention and attendance
- some inadequate feedback to students regarding the quality of their work

27 There is a wide range of programmes in health and care, including studies at intermediate, advanced levels and higher national certificate level. Many courses are offered through collaborative partners at sites away from the college. Students who successfully complete studies at intermediate level frequently progress to advanced level. Advanced and higher national certificate students progress either to work or to higher

education, often in the Institute of Health Studies based on the Pool site.

28 Most of the teaching is good. Most lessons were judged to have more strengths than weaknesses. Lessons generally involve a range of interesting activities. Teachers are skilled at creating effective learning environments. Students' learning is frequently extended by a well-organised programme of work experience. In a few lessons, teachers do not provide work which sufficiently challenges the students. In some smaller classes, there are too few students to enable effective discussions to develop. Students are helped to develop the key skills necessary for their courses, but these skills are not sufficiently incorporated into the assignments they are set. Course content and assessment requirements are clearly explained. Inspection findings confirmed the college's view that students are fairly assessed and understand the role of internal verification in maintaining this fairness. Most students receive regular feedback from teachers about their work and progress. However, some do not receive sufficient information to enable them to improve their performance.

29 Students who complete their course are generally successful in gaining the qualification they are seeking. Consistently high levels of achievement are recorded for courses on childcare. Students taking NVQs with the college's partner organisations also achieve well. NVQ portfolios are well presented and contain good-quality work. With a few exceptions, retention rates vary from satisfactory to good. Students are generally enthusiastic about their studies. This was particularly evident in a 'project maternal' group. This programme supports young pregnant women and single mothers and helps them to understand and care for their children. Many students are able to learn effectively on their own. They generally respond well to research assignments. Writing skills are appropriate for the level of their

# Curriculum Areas

studies. A few students need further development in numeracy skills. Absenteeism is a problem on some courses. This is acknowledged in the self-assessment report and the college is taking appropriate action. Attendance at the inspected lessons in this area was low, at 66 per cent.

30 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that the management of courses at the college and on other sites is effective. Team meetings monitor action resulting from the annual review process and from self-assessment. Performance indicators are standing items on course team agendas. The centre for health and community studies is innovative and responsive to students' learning needs. It has well-established partnerships and these have enabled the development of a range of NVQ care and childcare programmes. There are opportunities for staff to benefit from sharing ideas and joint curriculum development between sites and across courses, but these are at an early stage of development.

31 Teachers use their experience of health and care work to inform their lessons. Their role in

monitoring and arranging work experience brings them into regular contact with practising health care professionals. These contacts enable them to keep up to date with professional practice and standards in the workplace. General classrooms and laboratories are well cared for and offer a good working environment. There were many good examples of classroom display using students' work.

## Examples of students' achievements in health and social care, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ intermediate care	Retention (%)	83	78	65
	Pass rate (%)	84	50	57
National Nursery Examinations Board	Retention (%)	72	93	82
	Pass rate (%)	93	100	93
BTEC national diploma childhood studies	Retention (%)	82	96	84
	Pass rate (%)	100	82	100
BTEC national certificate health studies	Retention (%)	57	100	+
	Pass rate (%)	100	71	+
NVQ level 3 operating department practice	Retention (%)	*	*	86
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	67

Source: college data  
+no course running  
\*data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Art and Design

### Grade 2

**32 Inspectors observed 22 lessons across the range of art and design and performing arts courses. The college's self-assessment report was generally comprehensive and accurate. However, it omitted important weaknesses regarding the accommodation for performing arts.**

#### Key strengths

- generally effective teaching and learning
- high pass rates for students who complete their courses
- successful introduction of part-time higher national certificate programmes
- good standard of assessed work
- good information technology (IT) provision for media courses

#### Weaknesses

- assessment criteria not always clearly identified in assignment briefs
- poor discipline causing disruption in some performing arts lessons
- some low retention rates
- ineffective enrichment programme in performing arts and media
- poor accommodation for performing arts

33 Art and design provision transferred to Cornwall College from Falmouth College of Art in 1994. Since then there has been rapid development and inspectors agreed with the self-assessment that there is now a good range of programmes. A particular feature of the provision is the recent introduction of part-time higher national certificate courses. The college reintroduced the national diploma in general art and design to replace the GNVQ advanced art

and design, partly as a result of increased competition from schools.

34 There are many examples of effective teaching and learning, but inspectors also observed some poor practice. Relationships between staff and students are good; teachers give sound individual advice to students about their work. Lessons are usually well planned. Teachers generally provide work which takes account of the differing abilities of students, but in several lessons the work was insufficiently challenging for some of the students. In some performing arts classes, students are distracted by other groups working in the same performance space and this affects the quality of their work. Assessment methods are generally appropriate, although assignment briefs do not always contain sufficient detail about how the work is to be assessed.

35 Most students have practical skills which are satisfactory or better, although some performing arts students have not developed skills appropriate to the level of their course. In general, students' assessed work is satisfactory to good. The standard of students' work in graphic design and video production is especially high. Inspectors confirmed the assessment of the college that pass rates are high for those students who complete their courses. Retention rates have declined on the BTEC national diploma in performing arts. On other courses, for example the GNVQ intermediate in art and design, retention and pass rates have generally been good. Only small numbers of students take general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) or general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses in arts subjects. Retention rates are poor on some GCSE and GCE A level courses, but some good pass rates are achieved especially by older students. For example, the GCSE photography course had a pass rate of 91 per cent in 1997 compared with a national rate of 75 per cent.



# Curriculum Areas

36 Art and design programmes are well managed. Course handbooks are good. Communications with full-time staff are good, but less effective with part-time teachers. Schemes of work are generally satisfactory. Timetables provide students with good opportunities to use studio spaces and are suitable for their course of study. In some cases, however, students cannot take part in the enrichment programme since they are timetabled for other activities related to their course.

37 Accommodation and equipment for the courses in art and design is generally satisfactory as indicated in the self-assessment report. Some studio spaces for art and design are light and spacious. Media courses benefit from a well-equipped IT suite. Accommodation for the performing arts is poor; courses are located in an inadequate building which is untidy with clutter and does not meet the standards set by the college for other courses in the programme area. There is adequate technical support for the work in the programme area.

## Examples of students' achievements in art and design, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
BTEC national diploma in performing arts	Retention (%)	88	81	68
	Pass rate (%)	76	94	85
BTEC national certificate in media	Retention (%)	54	60	60
	Pass rate (%)	86	89	78
BTEC national diploma in media	Retention (%)	71	88	61
	Pass rate (%)	90	64	79
Higher national diploma in media	Retention (%)	*	*	*
	Pass rate (%)	67	89	85
GNVQ intermediate in art and design	Retention (%)	75	82	73
	Pass rate (%)	83	72	88

Source: college data

\*data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Basic Education

### Grade 2

**38 Fifteen lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses set out in the college's self-assessment report but considered that some weaknesses, particularly those relating to the impact of accommodation and equipment on teaching and learning, were not given sufficient weight in the report.**

#### Key strengths

- wide range of courses and progression routes
- good achievements by students
- much good teaching
- students' confidence in discussing their work and pride in their achievements
- sound management and effective teamwork
- many successful work experience placements

#### Weaknesses

- poor accommodation which sometimes impedes students' learning
- failure of some teachers to take sufficient account of adult students' individual learning needs
- some lack of access to appropriate equipment for pre-vocational courses
- separation of most pre-vocational provision from main college vocational areas
- lack of developed links between work experience and employment

39 Most provision for students with learning difficulties is managed within the centre for foundation studies. Some courses are run independently by other centres. Since the previous inspection, the college has developed a

wide range of courses which meet the needs of a very diverse range of students. The provision has been extended to include young people and adults who do not traditionally participate in further education.

Disaffected 14 to 16 year olds, identified by their schools as likely to drop out of education, have the opportunity to sample vocational areas. Students with mental health difficulties, and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, take part in access courses which enable them to progress to other provision. Effective provision is made for adults with a range of learning difficulties who now live in the community after spending long periods in institutions.

40 Sound management and effective teamwork contribute to teaching. There is much carefully planned teaching which takes account of students' individual needs but this is not always the case. Students benefit from many successful work experience placements within the college and with local employers. Some successful small businesses run by the students, such as pizza production and delivery, sandwich making, ironing and car wash services, enable them to learn to work to exacting standards. A shop on the college site provides work experience for students with a range of learning difficulties. The lack of developed links between the successful work experience programme and employment means that students rarely find employment as a result of their experience.

41 Students' achievements are good. They are particularly successful in gaining confidence, appropriate social skills, and skills for every day life. Students with a wide range of difficulties are confident in discussing their work and take pride in their achievements. Many progress to higher level courses within the centre. However, as the self-assessment report acknowledges, the separation of the pre-vocational provision in the centre from the vocational provision in much of

# Curriculum Areas

the college creates some barriers to the progression of some students, and limits their achievements.

42 The poor quality of accommodation sometimes impedes students' learning and achievements. Most students on courses in the centre for foundation studies do not use subject specialist accommodation and equipment in the college. Specialist classrooms for subjects such as art, IT, catering, and media studies have been created in the hatted accommodation which houses most of the provision. These classrooms, which do not always contain appropriate equipment, do not provide a high-quality, adult environment for pre-vocational education.

The small training office which has been created for foundation studies students has to be used in conjunction with a classroom to accommodate a full group of students. This detracts from their experience of office practice and the achievement of appropriate behaviour for work. The college identified these weaknesses, but did not relate them sufficiently to teaching, learning and students' achievements.

43 Students with disabilities receive appropriate support to enable them to succeed in their studies. The county audiology service, which has a base on college premises, makes good provision for those with a hearing impairment. The college has qualified staff and appropriate equipment to support students with physical disabilities including the small number of those with visual impairments who apply to the college.

# Cross-college Provision

## Support for Students

### Grade 2

**44 The college identified many strengths and weaknesses relating to support for students in the curriculum sections of the report and in a cross-college summary. Inspectors agreed with most of the college's conclusions, but differed on matters of detail and the significance attached to some judgements.**

#### Key strengths

- high-quality initial advice and guidance for prospective students
- effective induction programmes
- well-established procedures to assess students' prior learning
- much good tutorial support
- effective delivery of learning support in many college centres
- good warden support for residential students
- generally good access to advice on finance, welfare and accommodation

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring of, and support for, tutorial work
- insufficient arrangements to ensure delivery of learning support
- inadequate access to trained counsellors on some college sites
- variable quality of careers education programmes

45 There is a good range of activities to help students find out about the college and its courses. The schools liaison officer organises an extensive programme of visits and open days. Publicity material is attractive and informative. Adult applicants are offered an interview with the adult education adviser. Procedures to

assess students' prior learning are well established and frequently used in some curriculum areas.

46 Induction programmes are effective. Teachers ensure that students understand their rights and obligations, and receive an appropriate introduction to their courses. Students find induction is helpful in confirming their choice of course and helping them to settle into college life. Not all the induction documentation given to students is of comparable high quality.

47 Students generally receive good support from their tutors. Residential students at Stoke Climsland are well supported by resident wardens. For full-time students, individual interviews for reviewing their progress and action-planning for learning are included in their tutorial programme. Inspectors observed a few examples of less effective action-planning in tutorials. College centres monitor the quality of tutor support at student review meetings. New or inexperienced staff are allocated a mentor to help them in their tutoring role. However, the arrangements to set and monitor standards for tutorial work across the college are insufficient. There is a useful tutors' handbook and there have been training events, but there is not enough support to assist tutors in fulfilling their role. There is little sharing of the good practice which exists in many parts of the college. While there are procedures for monitoring and following up students' absences, there was wide variation in the levels of attendance at lessons during the inspection.

48 All full-time and some part-time students are assessed at the start of their course to identify whether they need support with basic skills. Teachers are made aware of their students' learning support needs and discuss these with their students. Each college centre has a dedicated link tutor responsible for ensuring that students receive the support they need. College centres have adopted various

# Cross-college Provision

approaches to help students improve their basic skills. Students on health and care courses also have extra classes and they can attend an open access support session each week. In catering, significant staff resources are committed to ensuring that students are receiving the support they need. Much of this work is effective, although the college recognises in its self-assessment report that there are some centres where support is less effective. There is no systematic monitoring of course-based and centrally-provided learning support to ensure that all students identified as needing support are receiving it.

49 Students generally receive good careers guidance from tutors or college-based careers staff. There is more variation in the quality and extent of careers education as part of students' programmes. At Duchy College, which has achieved the Investor in Careers award, careers education is well established and generally effective. At Pool there is a good range of materials and support for careers education, but some students do not explore a sufficiently wide range of options as part of their course. The self-assessment report recognises that students are more likely to seek individual interviews following group activities. The number of group activities is increasing, but there are some college centres where these are uncommon. The college is committed to helping students to complete records of achievement. One hundred students are currently involved in a national pilot scheme to produce the new national record of achievement.

50 Students have good access to information and advice on finance, accommodation and welfare matters. A policy on drugs is supported by staff at each centre. Counselling is available by appointment, although access to counsellors is inadequate on some college sites. The college recognises this in its self-assessment report. At Pool, in response to concerns identified through the self-assessment process, the crèche has recently been enlarged to 50 places.

An enrichment programme consisting of sports, recreational activities and courses leading to qualifications is offered on some sites, although some students are prevented from attending by timetable commitments. Duchy College has an active student association which gives students representation on sports, social and house committees. At Pool there is a student association and a lively common room, staffed by youth workers.

## General Resources

### *Grade 3*

**51 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements about general resources in the self-assessment report although weaknesses regarding access to computers on some sites were omitted.**

#### **Key strengths**

- overall good standard of classroom accommodation
- attractive and well-maintained grounds at each centre
- many good new facilities at Stoke Climsland
- generally good facilities for students
- well-managed property services

#### **Weaknesses**

- some unsatisfactory classroom accommodation
- some sites and specialist teaching accommodation inaccessible to wheelchair users
- inadequate bookstock and incomplete library catalogue at Stoke Climsland
- insufficient study spaces in the library at Pool
- low utilisation of accommodation

# Cross-college Provision

52 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that Pool is an attractive site with well-maintained grounds and buildings, and a wide range of facilities. The main reception and the adjoining student services area are well laid out and there are suitable rooms for guidance and counselling. Classroom accommodation varies in standard from the excellent Penhaligon building to some unsatisfactory huts.

In general, the rooms are satisfactory.

The college has made recent improvements to increase physical access to buildings, but there is still no access for wheelchair users to the upper floor of the library and to specialist teaching accommodation in several buildings.

There are generally good facilities for students, including a 50-place crèche for their children. Sports facilities include two football pitches and a sports hall, which needs refurbishment.

53 The library at Pool is small, relative to the number of students. However, there is a wide range of resources. The bookstock is satisfactory in most subjects and good in business and management. A recent user-survey showed high levels of satisfaction with the library service, but dissatisfaction with the number of study spaces. As a result of this survey, a further 40 spaces were quickly provided, but they are still insufficient for the number of students. At Pool there are over 500 computers for students' use. Seventeen in the library are available on an open access basis and some others are available elsewhere. Overall, there are sufficient up-to-date machines, but their deployment results in different levels of access for students on different courses.

54 The Duchy College centre at Stoke Climsland is attractive and well maintained. It includes a 280-hectare mixed farm, an equestrian centre, a sports hall and sports fields, gardens and greenhouses, and residential accommodation for 90 students and eight wardens. In the last three years, several new buildings have been constructed, including the sports hall, refectory, and a new teaching block

and library. All of the buildings are fit for their purpose and the new buildings provide good accommodation. In the new library there is a good stock of books for equestrian courses, but in other subjects it is poor. Many books have not been catalogued. Reception is poorly located well away from the main car park.

55 The Falmouth campus is well maintained but, as acknowledged in the self-assessment report, the buildings are inaccessible to wheelchair users and there are no parking spaces for students. The reception area is attractively decorated with plants, pictures and a large model ship. Classrooms are comfortably furnished and the library has sufficient study spaces and books. There is a good range of learning materials and teaching resources which are shared by staff. There is a pleasant refectory, a common room for adult students, a base room for student services, and suitable staff rooms.

56 Classrooms and general facilities at Rosewarne are suitable for their purpose. The library has an appropriate stock of books, videos and journals and enough open access computers to meet student demand. All buildings are single storey and accessible to wheelchair users. The attractive grounds are planted with a wide range of shrubs and exotic plants. The remaining two sites at Portreath and Wadebridge have seven and three teaching rooms, respectively. Neither has library, refectory or computing facilities. Access for people with restricted mobility is very poor at both sites. The college meets the needs of students based on these two sites in a variety of ways. For example, a minibus is provided to take Portreath students to Rosewarne for lunch, and a set of laptop computers is taken to each site on a regular basis.

57 Accommodation has been steadily developed and improved in recent years in accordance with a clear strategy. Property services are well managed. Service standards

# Cross-college Provision

and procedures define the relationship between property managers and site users. Maintenance requests are dealt with promptly. There is a planned maintenance programme for the main site at Pool. This service has only recently been extended to Stoke Climsland and Rosewarne. A recent accommodation survey showed low levels of room utilisation. The college's action plan outlines action to address this issue.

## Quality Assurance

### *Grade 2*

**58 In general inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment of quality assurance but considered some weaknesses were insufficiently recognised and that the evidence to support some judgements was sparse.**

#### **Key strengths**

- well-managed and regularly updated quality assurance procedures
- significant contributions by students to reviews of quality
- clear role for the academic board in quality assurance
- effective internal verification
- thorough checks on the quality of collaborative provision
- close links between staff development and the strategic plan

#### **Weaknesses**

- a minority of programme reviews superficial or late
- failure to follow up some issues identified in reviews
- underdeveloped value-added analysis
- little use of classroom observation in quality assurance

59 The quality assurance system is well established and regularly reviewed. It has been awarded registration to British, European and International Standards Organisation (ISO) 9002. The strategic plan sets overall objectives for quality assurance and provides a framework for their achievement throughout the college. Some significant improvements in provision have resulted from the effective application of quality assurance procedures, for example, changes in teaching styles and improved assessment methods. In a few cases, issues identified through the quality assurance process have not been followed up, and potential benefits have been lost. The self-assessment report acknowledges the need to improve training in the system for new and part-time staff.

60 The quality assurance manual contains clear and comprehensive policies, procedures and standard documents which apply to both teaching and support staff. These include set agendas for meetings, and specific guidance about the content of course management files. A quality assurance development unit is responsible for the operation and monitoring of the system. It applies firm and effective audit arrangements. Each course team produces an annual programme review. Most teams contribute useful reviews, but a small minority are superficial or submitted late.

61 The academic board oversees and regularly reviews the operation of the quality assurance system. It also considers external verifiers' reports and ensures that any necessary action is taken. It discusses any issues relating to quality which are identified in annual programme reviews. Each centre holds regular meetings known as boards of study. Minutes of their meetings are presented to the academic board, but some are not as detailed as they might be. A member of the academic board attends board of study meetings and reports back to the academic board. Academic

# Cross-college Provision

board reports are passed to governors and contribute to future planning.

62 Systems to maintain standards across the college are generally effective, although lesson observations by trained assessors only began this year. There is an established policy and practice for internal verification. This has recently been revised to include senior verifiers. Their role is to ensure common assessment standards where similar qualifications are offered at different sites. These revised arrangements have begun to spread good practice, although they have not yet been included in the college's quality assurance manual. Methods of assessing the value-added achievements of students compared with their qualifications at entry are at an early stage of development. Qualified staff undertake detailed checks on provision franchised to collaborative partners, including unannounced visits to meet students. The checks have become progressively more thorough over the last two years, and give effective oversight of this provision.

63 Students contribute significantly to reviews of quality. There are regular questionnaires and termly student review meetings for all courses. The results of student questionnaires are analysed by staff in the quality assurance development unit. They feed back comments to the course team and require responses as appropriate. The results of students' questionnaires contribute to programme reports. Students are aware of their entitlements under the college charter which is distributed during their induction. The charter reflects the areas covered by the Department for Education and Employment's *Charter for Further Education* and provides some service standards. It is regularly updated after consultation with students and the agreement of the academic board.

64 As recognised in the self-assessment report, performance indicators have only

recently been agreed between curriculum centres and the directorate to enable the setting of retention and achievement targets.

Examination results are reported to the governors following summary comment by heads of centres and the senior manager for quality assurance. All centres are required to explain and address poor results on a course-by-course basis.

65 Staff appraisal is well established and respected by staff, but it does not include observation of teaching. It identifies individual training needs in the light of staff development priorities set by the college and is planned to meet operational objectives. The staff development plan is balanced and carefully funded, and the costs and benefits are evaluated.

66 The college produced its first self-assessment report in preparation for the inspection. The report was produced by the assistant director (curriculum and quality) and used many of the outcomes of the college's usual quality assurance processes. All college centres and college partners contributed a detailed self-assessment report on their own work. These included grades and were considered by a special committee which included staff, employers, college partners, Devon and Cornwall Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), higher education and school representatives and governors. The report was also considered by the academic board.

67 The outcomes of student questionnaires and the contents of strategic and operating plans are prominent in much of the report. The evidence to support the report was clearly referenced, though in some cases, it was small. For example, there had been little observation of lessons to assess the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors were unable to rely on much of the data on students' achievements presented by the college, particularly when the records held by heads of centre varied from



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those held centrally. The college's action plan, which accompanied its self-assessment report, focuses appropriately on the weaknesses identified. Most of the actions proposed relate well to the weaknesses they are to address, but some are too vague. There is little indication of how progress is to be monitored, although individual actions have deadlines for completion and responsibility for taking action is clearly identified.

## Governance

### Grade 1

**68 Inspection findings confirmed the significant strengths of governance identified in the college's self-assessment. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report that governance is a major strength of the college.**

#### Key strengths

- effective oversight of the successful development of the college
- full involvement in imaginative strategic planning
- effective financial monitoring
- considerable relevant expertise used to the benefit of the college
- appropriate range of committees with good reporting systems
- effective target-setting and performance-monitoring
- well-organised corporation business, supported by efficient clerking
- structured induction programme for new governors

#### Weaknesses

- over-reliance on informal systems for review of corporation performance
- insufficient co-ordination of links between the board and college academic centres

69 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is good. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC. The financial position of the college is closely monitored through the finance and general purposes committee. Monthly financial reporting is prompt and concise. It includes useful budgetary comparisons of the budget and actual income and expenditure, with updated estimates of the year-end position. Cashflow reporting is clear and there is effective budgeting and financial control of capital projects. The high standard of financial reporting to governors has helped them to maintain the college's financial position and make well-informed strategic decisions.

70 Clear and imaginative strategic decisions taken by the governors, with guidance and support from the directorate, have led to the successful development of the college. There has been a considerable expansion in the number of students; a large increase in the range of provision, including, for example, many new higher education courses; effective ventures with many collaborative partners; and significant investment in new buildings.

71 Governors have a wide range of experience and expertise in business, finance, law, local government and technology. There are 20 members comprising 13 independent members including a nominee from Devon and Cornwall TEC, two members from the local community, the principal, the deputy principal, two members of staff and one student. Four members are women. New members receive an appropriate induction programme and there are training events on specific topics identified by members.

72 There is an appropriate range of subcommittees with clearly-defined terms of

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reference. Most members belong to one or two committees. Their specialist expertise is effectively deployed. The governing body meets at least six times a year. Meetings of the corporation and its committees are well attended. Members of the executive attend corporation meetings. Papers presented by the executive are clear, and governors consider them carefully before reaching decisions. One important corporation subcommittee is known as the governing body of the Duchy College. The inspection confirmed the college's view that its specialist focus creates a well-regarded body which supports the college's work in the land-based industries.

73 The business of the corporation and its committees is well organised. Clerking is efficient and effective. Minutes and agendas are of high quality. The board has adopted a code of conduct and members complete a comprehensive register of interests. The board regularly reviews its procedures. It has also reviewed aspects of its performance, for example, in relation to its analysis of students' achievements, attendance at corporation meetings and the development of an ethical code. It would, however, benefit from a more systematic approach to this process. This was recognised in the self-assessment report. The principal has clear powers of delegation from the governors and a regular appraisal. Governors are involved in all appointments of senior managers.

74 Governors are closely involved in strategic planning. They have worked effectively with the directorate to ensure that significant growth has been achieved and, at the same time, is prudently managed. Risk factors, for example, in the expansion of collaborative provision, have been clearly identified. Imaginative forward thinking has enabled the college to take account of its isolated geographical position and the significant social and economic problems in the surrounding area. There is regular discussion of changes in educational practice which may

affect the strategic development of the college. The inspection confirmed the self-assessment claim that the board regularly monitors the attainment of the key targets which it has established for the college. The range of performance indicators covers financial targets, student enrolments, retention rates and examination pass rates. Governors are well informed about the work of the college. At every meeting the principal presents a detailed report on academic matters. This includes detailed information from college centres on course developments and aspects of students' achievements. They also receive a summary of academic board decisions, and a useful summary of external verifiers' reports. Individual governors have a good range of informal links with college academic centres; several are members of curriculum advisory committees. However, these links are not co-ordinated as effectively as they might be.

## Management

### *Grade 2*

**75 The self-assessment report provided a thorough assessment of management and inspectors agreed with most of the judgements. Many of the weaknesses identified by the college are in the process of being addressed.**

#### **Key strengths**

- effective leadership by the directorate
- generally effective communications
- successful collaboration with employers and other education and training providers
- comprehensive strategic planning process
- effective financial systems

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## Weaknesses

- less effective management in some areas
- lack of reliable data on students' achievements
- lack of rigour in some target-setting and performance monitoring by centres

76 The directorate effectively oversees the strategic and operational management of the college. The directorate's style of management is open and consultative. Staff are encouraged to adopt an entrepreneurial approach. Management structures and lines of responsibility are well defined and understood. Heads of centres and service managers have considerable autonomy over curriculum, finance and staffing matters. They operate within a system of strict budgetary control. While most centre and service areas are managed effectively, inspectors noted some lack of rigour in the collection and use of achievement statistics, some inefficient management of resources and some ineffective monitoring of teachers' performance.

77 Inspection findings confirmed the college's view that communications across the college are generally effective. Staff feel well informed. The directorate meets weekly and clearly records its decisions and action points. Issues raised at the directorate's meetings form part of the agenda for the weekly heads of centre meetings. Staff meet within centre, programme, and service areas. While some groups are well organised, others rely too much on informal arrangements, especially with part-time staff, and do not always keep records of agreed actions. Some staff belong to a number of teams and sometimes find it difficult to attend all meetings.

78 The college has successfully developed a collaborative approach to many of its activities. It is quick to respond to initiatives from other agencies. Recent developments include the

establishment of the Cornwall Business School and Institute of Professional Studies, and a trading company, Cornwall College Management Services Limited, which encompasses youth training, management training, recruitment and national conferencing for teachers. The college works in partnership with a variety of local organisations and community groups to increase the number of local people participating in education and training. Although the college has good relations with local schools, relationships with schools which have sixth forms are less strong.

79 There is a clear strategic planning process which involves staff at all levels. The strategic plan includes performance indicators and timescales within which recommended action should be completed. Performance indicators are linked to financial objectives. Operational plans for individual centres and service areas specify aims and objectives linked to the college's strategic aims and objectives. Centres and service areas vary in the rigour they apply to setting objectives and targets within their operational plans. Although the college identifies market research as an area of weakness, inspectors found clear links between the college's strategic and operational plans and its marketing initiatives.

80 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The finance team is led by a qualified accountant and has an appropriate number of suitably-qualified and experienced staff. Financial forecasts and strategic plans are consistent and fully integrated. Management reports are produced promptly and are closely monitored by the directorate. Financial regulations have recently been updated. The external and internal auditors have not identified any significant weaknesses. Procedures for formulating and allocating budgets are clear and widely understood. For example, staffing and non-staffing budgets for heads of centre are

# Cross-college Provision

calculated against targets which they set for their units of activities. Staff have a high level of financial awareness. Clear and accurate budget reports are produced each month for all budget holders.

81 The college has difficulty producing accurate information on students' achievements. The different management information systems used in the college are not fully integrated. The information held centrally does not always match that held by centre and programme teams. To cope with the inadequacies of the current arrangements, centre managers have maintained their own records because they are not confident about the accuracy of the data provided by the management information system. At the time of the inspection, the college was in the process of introducing new software and management arrangements to address the problem. The college identified this as a significant weakness in its self-assessment report.

82 Key policy statements, including health and safety and equal opportunities, are in place. Management responsibility for each is clear. Policies are reviewed by appropriate committees and reports are considered by the directorate and, where appropriate, governors. The equal opportunities committee has recently completed an audit which shows that many centres and service areas in the college are aware of equal opportunities issues relevant to their area of work and are trying to address them. In some areas, however, awareness is at an early stage of development.

83 Personnel issues and staff development are the responsibility of the college's personnel manager. Personnel policies and procedures are updated regularly. There is a human resources development plan which is linked to the strategic plan. Staff are generally deployed efficiently. However, in a minority of areas, their duties are not well matched to their qualifications and experience.

## Conclusions

84 All college centres and collaborative partners assessed their work as part of the self-assessment process. The college's quality assurance system was constructively used to support much of the work on self-assessment. Many of the judgements in the self-assessment report were confirmed by the inspection. In some cases, the detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses had not been aggregated clearly into key strengths and weaknesses. While this produced some problems for the inspection team, the level of detail in the report is useful for the college. In some areas, weaknesses were inadequately described; for example, weaknesses in teaching and learning were sometimes understated. Inspectors gave more significance than the college to some weaknesses in the report. Inspectors agreed with half the curriculum grades and with all the cross-college grades proposed by the college. In those cases where the judgements of inspectors and the college differed, inspection evidence indicated that the college had been overgenerous in its grading.

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

# College Statistics

## Student numbers by age (July 1997)

Age	%
Under 16	2
16-18 years	9
19-24 years	18
25+ years	71
Not known	0
Total	100

Source: college data

## Student numbers by level of study (July 1997)

Level of study	%
Foundation	60
Intermediate	13
Advanced	13
Higher education	5
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	9
Total	100

Source: college data

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

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	396	4,324	14
Agriculture	577	1,410	6
Construction	166	5,012	15
Engineering	734	1,133	5
Business	600	3,598	12
Hotel and catering	549	473	3
Health and community care	508	11,117	33
Art and design	402	619	3
Humanities	267	2,078	7
Basic education	131	624	2
Total	4,330	30,388	100

Source: college data

## Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (July 1997)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	263	6	0	269
Supporting direct learning contact	65	13	0	78
Other support	241	6	70	317
Total	569	25	70	664

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

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends

### Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£17,863,000	£21,400,000	£23,900,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£16.49	£16.54	£18.37
Payroll as a proportion of income	60%	56%	54%
Achievement of funding target	125%	118%	*
Diversity of income	39%	37%	*
Operating surplus	-£473,000	£344,000	£108,000

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

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

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

Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96)

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

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

\*data not available

### Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	111	121	161
	Average point score per entry	3.9	4.3	4.7
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	top third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	212	357	323
	Percentage achieving qualification	77%	70%	65%
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	bottom third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	272	191
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	44%	58%
	Position in tables	*	bottom third	middle third

Source: DfEE

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

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

\*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

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