

North Area College

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1997-98**

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education according to a four-year cycle. It also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum, disseminates good practice and advises the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circulars 97/12, 97/13 and 97/22. Inspections seek to validate the data and judgements provided by colleges in self-assessment reports. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in the work they inspect. A member of the Council's audit service works with inspectors in assessing aspects of governance and management. All colleges are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

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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 which 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

North Area College

North West Region

Inspected September 1997

North Area College is a sixth form college in Stockport, Greater Manchester. The college's self-assessment report was not based on its routine quality assurance arrangements. Instead, groups of staff evaluated each main course and function of the college during the summer term 1997. These evaluations were not brought together to form overall judgements. Three successive versions of the report were submitted to inspectors and supporting evidence for some of the judgements was difficult to obtain. The inspection team considered the college to be overgenerous in its judgements of the provision assessed during the inspection.

The college offers GCE AS/A level and GCSE courses, a wider range of vocational courses than many other sixth form colleges and evening courses for local residents. There are useful progression routes from foundation to advanced level courses. It has created a secure and pleasant environment in which students and staff can work and the image of the college within the community is an attractive one. Most of the curriculum provision inspected is satisfactory. In health and childcare provision is good. There are effective arrangements for reporting of students' progress to parents and guardians. Governance of the college is

satisfactory. Governors have a wide range of skills and expertise in areas of value to the college. The college should address: the poor provision in humanities; the overall quality of teaching; poor retention rates and low level of achievement on many courses; the fragmented management and weak monitoring of support for students; and weaknesses in management and quality assurance.

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

Curriculum areas inspected	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Science, mathematics and information technology	3	Support for students	3
Business	3	General resources	2
Catering and leisure	3	Quality assurance	4
Health and care	2	Governance	3
Humanities	4	Management	4

Context

The College and its Mission

1 North Area College is a small sixth form college in Stockport, a metropolitan borough in Greater Manchester. The college lies close to the boundary between the town and the city of Manchester. It offers a wider range of vocational courses than many sixth form colleges and in many respects resembles a small tertiary college. The college operates on a pleasant single campus in a residential area of the town. The population of Stockport is 292,000, of whom 13,500 (4.6 per cent) are in the 16 to 19 age group. Despite diversification during the 1980s, Stockport still has a number of large employers in the manufacturing sector, particularly in engineering. The unemployment rate in the borough of Stockport is currently 5.8 per cent compared with 6 per cent for the Manchester travel-to-work area and an average of 6.6 per cent for the North West region. In 1994, almost one-third of Stockport's unemployed were in the 25 to 34 age group. There is a small minority ethnic population in Stockport made up principally of members of the Indian and Pakistani communities. These groups represent 2 per cent of the resident population. The adjoining areas of south Manchester have much larger minority ethnic communities and the college recruits significant numbers of students from these groups. The college serves a number of areas of relative poverty.

2 The educational achievements of school-leavers in the areas from which the college draws most of its younger students are generally comparable to, or below, those in other areas of Greater Manchester. The college tends not to attract those with higher general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades. Recruitment to general certificate of education advanced supplementary/advanced level (GCE AS/A level) courses represents 29 per cent of college enrolments, but increasing numbers of students are choosing to study vocational and other programmes rather than GCE A levels. In 1994-95, 76 per cent of the students in Stockport remained in full-time

education after the age of 16. This was above the average for England (71 per cent), for Manchester (62 per cent) and for the North West as a whole (62 per cent). There is strong competition for students in the locality.

The college is one of 12 providers of post-16 education in Stockport, including four colleges in the further education sector. A large further and higher education college is less than two miles away. There are additional further education providers within daily travelling distance in Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Derbyshire.

3 At the time of the inspection, the college management team was led by an acting principal, formerly the director of curriculum. Governors intend to make a substantive appointment for January 1998.

4 In July 1997, there were 1,856 students on roll, including 815 (44 per cent) aged 16 to 18 years, many of whom were attending the college full time during the day. Of the remainder, 1,018 students were over 19 years of age, some attending college during the day and many attending in the evening as part of the college's community provision. There were 762 students (41 per cent) on advanced courses and 426 students (23 per cent) on non-schedule 2 (leisure and recreation) courses. About 54 per cent of students were from Stockport, 41 per cent from south Manchester and 5 per cent from other metropolitan areas in Greater Manchester or the adjoining counties of Cheshire and Derbyshire. At the time of the inspection, in September 1997, 2,489 students were enrolled, which is more than at the same time in previous years. The college employs 116 full-time equivalent staff, of whom 60 (52 full-time equivalent) are teachers, including senior managers. About 16 full-time equivalent staff are on fixed-term contracts. At the time of the inspection, the college was divided into six areas of work: business studies and information technology; community education; health and community studies; hospitality and leisure; science and humanities; and visual and performing arts. Five of these areas were inspected.

Context

5 The college's statement of purpose is 'to stimulate demand for, and to deliver, high quality education and training to enable clients to achieve their education-related goals, whether these be career or leisure focused.' The mission is 'to be the best at what we do, adding value step-by-step, achieving added value standards above the national average'. The key strategic issues identified by the college are: income growth and diversification; quality of product and service; value for money gains; establishing a business and commercial culture which is client focused; and operating from a secure financial base.

The Inspection

6 The college was inspected during the week beginning 29 September 1997, the third week of the academic year. The inspection team had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and information about the college held by other divisions of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The college was given an indication of the areas of provision to be inspected about two months before the inspection. It submitted data on students' achievements, mainly for the two years 1995 to 1997 and these were validated by inspectors against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies. The inspection was carried out by 12 inspectors working for a total of 41 days and an auditor

working for five days. Inspectors observed 65 lessons, inspected students' work and examined a variety of college documents. They met members of staff responsible for compiling the self-assessment report and discussed with them the process by which the report had been produced. Inspectors evaluated, with college staff, the contacts which the college has with external bodies such as the Stockport and High Peak Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), local employers, local secondary schools, the local education authority and community groups. A telephone conference was held with a representative of the TEC. Meetings were held with governors, managers, college staff and students.

7 Of the lessons inspected, 43 per cent were good or outstanding and 17 per cent were less than satisfactory or poor. This profile is much weaker than the average for all colleges inspected in 1996-97, according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of attendance at classes was 83 per cent, higher than the annual average of 77 per cent for the sector, but not exceptional for the time of year. The highest average level of attendance (86 per cent) was in health and community care, whilst the lowest (71 per cent) was in hotel and catering, and leisure and tourism. The following table summarises the grades given to the lessons inspected.

Lessons: Inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE AS/A level	0	6	6	6	1	19
GCSE	0	2	2	2	1	7
GNVQ	2	5	12	1	0	20
NVQ	0	3	4	0	0	7
Other vocational	1	9	2	0	0	12
Total	3	25	26	9	2	65

Curriculum Areas

Science, Mathematics and Information Technology

Grade 3

8 The inspection included the observation of 11 GCSE, GCE A level and general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) lessons across the programme area. The college's self-assessment report graded individual subjects, whereas inspectors provided a single grade for the whole programme area. Overall, the college's self-assessment report rated the quality of provision in science and mathematics more highly than did the inspectors. There was agreement on the quality of courses in information technology.

Key strengths

- good-quality learning support materials
- effective support for individual students, including frequent questioning by teachers to establish students' understanding of topics
- regular setting and marking of homework
- pass rates in GCE A level physics, chemistry and mathematics at or slightly above sector averages for the last three years, and above the grades predicted for students
- regular monthly reports to the principal by resource centre managers which include data derived from performance indicators
- information technology rooms which are well furnished, and equipped with over 100 networked workstations

Weaknesses

- inadequate feedback on students' work provided by some teachers
- low weekly class contact hours for individual subjects

- poor levels of retention
- relatively few GCE A level passes at the higher grades
- students' achievements on GNVQ programmes, which are mainly below sector averages
- lack of training and development lead body awards among staff teaching on vocational programmes
- unsatisfactory specialist laboratories

9 The college offers a wide range of provision in science, mathematics and information technology. Science and mathematics are managed by a resource centre manager who also has responsibility for GCSE and GCE A level provision in the humanities. Information technology courses are the responsibility of the resource centre manager for business studies and information technology. Most courses are managed effectively but the quality assurance procedures for GNVQ programmes in science are not working effectively.

10 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In most classroom sessions, students receive effective individual support. Frequent questioning by teachers establishes the students' understanding of topics. Oral work in classes is generally good. The college's self-assessment report contained little detail on teaching and learning. Homework is set and marked regularly although there is some laxity over deadlines for the submission of completed work. The best work of second-year students is of a high standard.

11 Examination pass rates in most GCE A level subjects have been close to, or better than, sector averages for the last three to five years. The pass rate in GCE A level biology in 1995 was about 10 per cent below average. In 1996, results improved but were still below average. Examination results in GCSE mathematics have been poor for the last two

Curriculum Areas

years. In 1996, 34 per cent of the 62 students completing GCE A level computing, science and mathematics subjects achieved grades higher than those predicted by their GCSE performance. Only 13 per cent of students were awarded grades below their predicted performance. Retention rates are low in all subjects. For two-year courses in science, retention varies from 36 per cent to 80 per cent.

12 The college's general provision in information technology is used to provide

specialist facilities for mathematics, science and information technology students. The specialist science laboratories require refurbishment. Some benches are too close together to allow students and teachers to move freely between them. Rooms are equipped with whiteboards which are too small and so require frequent cleaning. In mathematics in particular, this sometimes limits the teacher's ability to develop a mathematical argument on the board and then review the whole process for the benefit of students.

Examples of students' achievements in science, mathematics and information technology, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level	Retention (%)	*	69.00	49
	Pass rate (%)	*	71.00	72
GCSE	Retention (%)	80	72.00	65
	Pass rate (%)	29	38.00	27
Advanced vocational (GNVQ, national diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	*	50.00	86
	Pass rate (%)	*	100.00	55
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ, first diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	*	48.00	(100)**
	Pass rate (%)	*	55.00	11
Foundation vocational	Retention (%)	*	96.00	(100)**
	Pass rate (%)	*	2.27	0
Other vocational	Retention (%)	*	75.00	(100)**
	Pass rate (%)	*	47.00	6

Source: college data

*college unable to provide data

**roll on, roll off enrolments

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 3

13 The inspection of business provision in the college covered a sample of GNVQ advanced and intermediate level programmes, GCE A level courses, Association of Accounting Technicians courses and provision leading to awards of the RSA Examinations Board (RSA). Inspectors consider that the college's self-assessment reports for this programme area underestimated some key weaknesses.

Key strengths

- well-planned and effective provision
- staff who provide helpful guidance and support to students
- appropriate arrangements for assessing students' work and reviewing their progress
- the levels of achievement on GNVQ advanced and intermediate level programmes
- staff who meet regularly to review provision and to set targets
- good accommodation and resources for information technology

Weaknesses

- monitoring of students' progress which is not always effective
- unproductive use of time during long lessons
- teaching styles which sometimes lead to dull and unimaginative lessons
- work experience which is not planned or organised effectively
- poor retention rates on some programmes
- the failure of more than one-third of students to reach the GCE A level grade predicted on the basis of their performance in GCSE examinations

14 The college has recruited large numbers of 16 to 19 year olds to its business programmes. Adult students attending in the evening are provided with programmes in accounting, business administration and wordprocessing. Clear progression routes enable students to move from foundation to advanced level programmes in most subject areas. Provision is well planned, and a cohesive and dedicated team of staff work together to support students. Regular meetings take place at departmental and course levels to review provision and to set targets. However, links between strategic planning and development at departmental level, and the use of course review and quality assurance procedures to support the management of provision, are weak.

15 Twelve lessons were observed. Overall, the quality of teaching in business is satisfactory but some lessons are dull and unimaginative. This weakness is not clearly identified by the college's self-assessment report. Students are informed of the aims and objectives of programmes, and are aware of the intended learning outcomes and assessment criteria for assignments on GNVQ programmes. The marking of students' work is thorough, and good feedback from teachers helps them to improve the standard of their work. A review of students' work takes place at the end of each 30 hour unit. During long teaching sessions, the progress being made by individual students is not always checked. Teachers place too much emphasis on the use of a few textbooks. Students rarely use the library for research because the bookstock is inadequate. As a consequence, their knowledge of some topics is based on a narrow range of sources.

16 Students on GNVQ advanced programmes produce good work, attractively presented in their portfolios, which provides evidence of their understanding and their acquisition of key skills. Students' levels of achievement on GNVQ intermediate programmes are well above the national average, with many students

Curriculum Areas

progressing to GNVQ advanced level programmes. Levels of achievement on GNVQ advanced level courses are slightly above the national average. Examination results of students taking Association of Accounting Technicians and national vocational qualification (NVQ) awards in business administration are good. In 1996-97, the retention of students on GCE A level courses was very poor, and retention on GNVQ advanced and intermediate programmes was low. While pass rates on GCE A level courses were similar to national averages, over one-third of students achieved grades which were below the grade predicted on the basis of their GCSE performance.

Examples of students' achievements in business, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced academic (GCE A levels)	Retention (%)	*	91	29
	Pass rate (%)	*	73	89
Intermediate academic (GCSEs)	Retention (%)	65	+	+
	Pass rate (%)	23	+	+
Advanced vocational (GNVQ, national diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	*	92	67
	Pass rate (%)	*	65	55
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ, first diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	78	64	65
	Pass rate (%)	64	91	58
Foundation vocational	Retention (%)	+	100	100
	Pass rate (%)	+	100**	0***
Other vocational	Retention (%)	90	59	74
	Pass rate (%)	19	33	57

Source: college data

*college unable to provide data

+course not running

**three students

***six students

Curriculum Areas

Catering and Leisure

Grade 3

17 The inspection covered all aspects of the college's provision in hotel and catering, and some aspects of provision in leisure and tourism. The college provided several self-assessments reports for the programme area, including grades for provision. Inspectors agreed with many aspects of the self-assessment. However, some weaknesses and strengths were omitted and the significance of some major weaknesses was not appreciated.

Key strengths

- most teaching of a good standard
- students' good levels of achievement in gaining hospitality and catering awards
- realistic working environments which enable students to experience a balance of teaching and commercial activities
- teachers' helpful written guidance on work and their support for students in practical lessons
- recognition of, and provision for, individual learning needs
- well-managed hospitality and catering provision

Weaknesses

- poor examination pass rates on most leisure and tourism courses
- low weekly class contact hours for leisure and tourism and for hospitality and catering, when compared with those in other colleges
- unsatisfactory teaching accommodation areas for leisure and tourism courses
- some students' insufficiently developed culinary skills
- some poorly planned lessons
- some teachers' lack of recent industrial experience

18 Thirteen lessons were observed in hospitality and catering, and leisure and tourism. In most cases, teaching standards are high and styles of teaching sustain students' interest. Individual learning needs are recognised and catered for. In practical lessons, students work competently and receive good support from teachers and other staff. On hospitality and catering courses, there is a strong emphasis on hygiene. Most schemes of work reflect the appropriate examination syllabuses and the requirements of GNVQ and NVQ units. Assignment briefs are clearly written and can be easily understood. Teachers provide students with helpful written comments on their coursework.

19 Students' achievements in hospitality and catering over the past three years are generally good. On most courses, examination pass rates are significantly above national averages. In contrast, examination pass rates for leisure and tourism courses are poor. Examination results for GNVQ intermediate level programmes are significantly below the national average. In 1996, the pass rate for students on GNVQ advanced level programmes in leisure and tourism was 29 per cent, a low figure, and this fell further to 26 per cent in 1997. The self-assessment report indicates that the college recognises this as a matter of concern, and changes have been introduced which are intended to improve the pass rate.

20 Retention of students on hospitality and catering, and leisure and tourism programmes was generally satisfactory, although a few programmes had low retention rates, around 50 per cent of initial enrolments. Students' progression to employment in the hotel and catering industry is good. Most students produce good portfolios of work which demonstrate their achievements. Some students' culinary skills are underdeveloped. Hospitality and catering students pay appropriate attention to hygiene in their work although some students' uniforms were incomplete or untidy.

Curriculum Areas

21 The management of hospitality and catering courses is effective, as claimed in the self-assessment report. The course documentation is good and the curriculum well managed. There are regular meetings of leisure and tourism teachers but the management of the provision is not as effective as it might be.

22 The college offers an appropriate range of courses in hospitality and catering, and leisure and tourism. Students have access to a good range of additional awards. In leisure and tourism, an area which has unsatisfactory pass rates, the class contact hours are more than 30 per cent below the level usually found in colleges.

23 There is a fully-working travel agency in the college. It is well equipped with a good range of materials, including information relating to travel and tourism, and is linked to the main booking system of a local travel company. A training kitchen and restaurant are equipped to an adequate level although the layout of the training kitchen is unsatisfactory for both the teaching of skills and food production work. Although most staff in hospitality and catering are appropriately qualified and have experience in the subjects they teach, there is no member of staff with a leisure and tourism qualification or significant experience of the tourism industry.

This deficiency was not identified in the self-assessment report.

Examples of students' achievements in catering and leisure, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCSE	Retention (%)	100	+	+
	Pass rate (%)	29	+	+
Advanced vocational (GNVQ, national diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	+	68	56
	Pass rate (%)	+	50	30
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ, first diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	100	54	85
	Pass rate (%)	43	31	14
Foundation vocational	Retention (%)	14	+	+
	Pass rate (%)	0	+	+
Other vocational	Retention (%)	89	73	86
	Pass rate (%)	9	71	34

Source: college data
+course not running

Curriculum Areas

Health and Care

Grade 2

24 The judgement of inspectors accords broadly with the college's judgement in its self-assessment report, and its analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- standardised comprehensive and effective course planning documents
- rigorous record keeping
- well-managed work placements for full-time students which help develop their vocational skills and strengthen the work which they undertake at college
- a variety of relevant teaching methods and learning activities
- clear assessment schedules and effective monitoring of students' progress
- high examination pass rates on most courses
- well-qualified and experienced teachers who work well together as a team

Weaknesses

- over-long presentations by teachers in a few lessons
- insufficient checks on students' understanding and progress in a minority of sessions
- ineffective use of learning resources on a few occasions
- a less than satisfactory overall retention rate for health and childcare courses

25 The college offers full-time courses in nursery nursing and child education and GNVQ programmes in health and social care at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. Part-time courses in child studies and GNVQ intermediate level programmes are offered at times which fit in with adult students' domestic

and childcare responsibilities. This year, the college has introduced part-time diploma courses in reflexology and body massage, and these have recruited well. Students progress from foundation to advanced programmes. In 1996, 63 per cent of the students who achieved a GNVQ advanced level award went to higher education. All students are encouraged to achieve additional qualifications which complement their main course of study. Examples of additional awards gained by students over the past year include certificates in hygiene, first aid and information technology.

26 Courses are well managed. Course planning, recording and student monitoring is standardised across the department. Lesson plans have a common format and staff who teach on more than one course find this helpful. All courses are organised in 30 hour units. Detailed study guides inform students about the content of each unit, and the related assessments and assignments. Students value the study guides and the student logbooks. All the teachers are full time, experienced and well qualified for the courses they teach. In its self-assessment report, the department identified the poor quality of its teaching accommodation. It has taken steps to redress this weakness, and now both the general teaching rooms and the specialist base room are well equipped, well-furnished and contain attractive displays of students' work.

27 Inspectors observed 11 lessons. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Students at all levels experience a range of learning activities, many of which contribute to the development of their key skills. Full-time students on a foundation level course analysed an illustrated newspaper article and used the outcomes to consider aspects of diet and nutrition, as preparation for a practical task. Students on an advanced level course were studying research methods. Working in small groups, they considered the benefits and limitations of various ways of carrying out surveys or

Curriculum Areas

investigations into course-related topics, and then shared their learning by presenting their findings to the whole class. In a few cases, classroom presentations were too long to sustain students' attention. Not all teachers checked students' understanding and progress.

28 All full-time students benefit from well-managed and well-supervised work placements. The college co-ordinates its vocational placements with two neighbouring colleges, which involves working closely with placement providers to agreed operating and quality standards. Teachers plan lessons and assignments so that students can relate their experience in the workplace to class work and coursework, to help them develop relevant vocational skills.

29 The quality of students' written work is generally good. Written work is carefully marked by teachers, who provide detailed comments and guidance on how students can improve the quality of their work. In its self-assessment report, the department identified a lack of opportunity for students to develop their key skills. There are now weekly timetabled classes in which the current course topic is used to develop key skills. Examination pass rates on all courses improved in 1996-97; in most cases, they were significantly above national averages. On many courses, retention is a cause for concern, a matter identified in the self-assessment report. The overall retention for health and childcare courses is poor. It has fallen progressively from 81 per cent in 1995 to 73 per cent in 1997.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCSE	Retention (%)	60	+	+
	Pass rate (%)	8	+	+
Advanced vocational (GNVQ, national diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	91	75	75
	Pass rate (%)	90	94	94
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ, first diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	80	77	78
	Pass rate (%)	94	65	79
Foundation vocational	Retention (%)	+	68	77
	Pass rate (%)	+	69	80
Other vocational	Retention (%)	93	100	60
	Pass rate (%)	100	33	67

Source: college data
+course not running

Curriculum Areas

Humanities

Grade 4

30 The inspection covered GCSE and GCE A level courses in humanities subjects and the college's modern foreign language provision leading to other qualifications. Inspectors did not agree with the college's assessment of provision. Some of the strengths of individual subjects, identified in the self-assessment reports, did not stand up to scrutiny and some of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were not included in the college's reports.

Key strengths

- good-quality learning materials for some courses
- lively and enthusiastic teaching of language courses for adults
- good arrangements for reviewing younger students' progress with them and their parents

Weaknesses

- examination pass rates in most subjects which are below national averages, and individual grades which are lower than those predicted by students' previous performance in GCSE examinations
- poor retention rates in most subjects
- poor attendance rates in most subjects, which are well below college targets
- inadequate development, assessment and accreditation of key skills
- the weak study skills of many students
- ineffective curriculum management at subject level
- inappropriate teaching methods

31 Curriculum management is ineffective and there is a lack of detailed course planning. In many subjects, there are only one or two teachers, often working on a part-time basis. This limits the opportunity for teachers to meet

and work together, develop the curriculum and agree strategies for teaching. Teachers have not adapted their teaching styles to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse groups of students the college now attracts. The development of students' key skills, including study skills, appears to have a low priority. Consequently the skills of some students, particularly their information technology skills, are poor. The failure to integrate information technology skill development with course planning is identified in the college's self-assessment report.

32 Inspectors observed 18 lessons. Language lessons for adults in the evening are lively and enthusiastic. In general, however, teaching and learning in humanities is not satisfactory. More than half the lessons observed had weaknesses which outweighed strengths. Teachers fail to ensure that lessons have positive and identifiable outcomes for students. Students are not encouraged to contribute to class activities. The teaching methods used provide insufficient opportunity for students to develop key skills. Teachers play too directive a role. In one lesson for example, the teacher asked a complicated question, went on to analyse the problem and then presented an answer without giving the students an opportunity to think through the problem for themselves.

33 Teachers have developed some good-quality learning materials. Handouts, for instance, are often attractively laid out and illustrated. In a few cases, inappropriate or dated material is used in study guides. Most overhead projector transparencies are of a good quality and enhance teaching. Students are able to borrow appropriate text books for the duration of their courses. Teachers regularly review the progress which individual students are making and help them to set learning targets. Students value this.

34 In most humanities subjects, examination pass rates are below national averages. In 1996, 11 of the 18 subjects offered at GCE A level had pass rates more than 10 per cent

Curriculum Areas

below the national average. The proportion of GCSE humanities students achieving grade C or above fell from 43 per cent in 1996 to 37 per cent in 1997. There were some exceptionally poor results in 1997: only 7 per cent of GCSE English students gained grade C or above, whilst only 48 per cent of 16 to 18 year old students passed GCE A level psychology. Retention rates on courses and programmes are also very low. Just over half the students completed their GCE

A level or GCSE courses in 1996 and 1997. Only one-fifth of enrolments in GCSE subjects lead to an award, a weakness which the college acknowledges in its self-assessment report. Attendance rates were claimed to be high in some subjects, but a check on class registers for 1996-97 found that this was not so. Most classes failed to meet the college target for attendance.

Examples of students' achievements in humanities, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level	Retention (%)	*	57	56
	Pass rate (%)	*	70	67
GCSE	Retention (%)	76	57	62
	Pass rate (%)	34	43	37
Other vocational	Retention (%)	+	100	38
	Pass rate (%)	+	19	100

Source: college data

*college unable to provide data

+course not running

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 3

35 The college has made good progress since the last inspection in improving its arrangements for the support for students. However, there remain weaknesses in the management and consistent implementation of these arrangements. Although there was a general agreement between the college's and inspectors' assessment of the quality of support for students, a number of significant weaknesses identified by inspectors were not acknowledged in the college's self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- vigorous and well-resourced publicity for the college and its courses
- wide-ranging and successful links with schools
- effective arrangements for reporting on students' progress to parents and guardians
- effective implementation of tutorial arrangements in a few curriculum areas

Weaknesses

- the absence of strategic and operational plans for students' support and guidance
- fragmented management and weak monitoring of support and guidance provision
- ineffective arrangements for providing and monitoring learning support
- insufficient time for personal tutorials in many curriculum areas
- the low numbers taking advantage of opportunities for careers education and guidance

36 The college's strategic and operational plans do not include aims, objectives or targets

relating to support and guidance for students. The role of resource centre managers in leading and monitoring the implementation of policies relating to support and guidance has recently been strengthened but the new arrangements are not yet fully effective. The college did not include a consideration of these issues in its self-assessment report. In view of the high drop-out rates from many courses, the college needs to give a higher priority to this area of its work.

37 The college publicises its courses widely, using attractive, professionally produced materials. The good relations and innovative curriculum links which the college has with a large number of partner schools have been successful in increasing recruitment. Teachers make frequent visits to schools to offer advice and guidance to prospective students. School pupils, their teachers and parents are welcome at open days and other events at the college, and many attend. The college provides adults with opportunities to visit and experience college life. There is a standard induction procedure, carried out by class teachers. The procedure was modified in 1997 in response to comments from students. The college has not provided evidence of having evaluated the effectiveness of its enrolment and induction procedures.

38 All full-time students have their skills in using information technology tested when they join the college. Those who need to improve their skills are offered the opportunity to do so, by enrolling on a computer literacy and information technology course. Students who have not achieved a grade C or above in GCSE mathematics or English take part in diagnostic screening tests during induction, so that their learning support needs can be assessed. At the time of the inspection, the results from these tests were available but learning support staff had not yet been appointed to the college and so little progress had been made in planning the appropriate levels of learning support. In

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1996-97, about three-quarters of the students who had been assessed as needing learning support neither sought nor received it.

The college acknowledges this weakness in its self-assessment report and is taking steps to remedy it.

39 Students on full-time courses are assigned to a personal tutor. The role of the tutor has recently been reviewed in order to align it more closely to the 'stairway to success' initiative in the college, a mechanism for providing regular, enhanced support and much closer monitoring of students' progress through a new tutorial system. Tutors have not been fully trained in their new roles and there is no standard programme for them to follow. They have very uneven workloads: in a number of curriculum areas the tutor groups are much too large and the time available too short for tutors to carry out all their duties effectively. The tutorial system operates most successfully in vocational areas, where a team of staff works with a small cohort of students for the greater part of the week. In health and social care, staff have used their departmental budget to support an assistant and help provide a full tutorial service to their students. In humanities, teachers maintain good records of review meetings with students. Some records, especially those in history are very full and show explicit targets which have been agreed with students. Monitoring of students' absence has improved. For the past year, all tutors have been responsible for reporting students' absence to the student support officer who then quickly contacts students or their parents if the reason for the absence is not known. The system has been effective in helping improve attendance rates.

40 The college has established good relationships with the local careers service. The college has no mechanisms for ensuring that all students who need careers advice and guidance receive it. However, professional careers officers, working with college staff, are

available most of the college day to provide advice and guidance to individual students on demand. All full-time students are expected to attend the well-organised annual careers and higher education fair held in the locality.

In conjunction with the TEC, the college has prepared four informative self-study packs for students on such topics as preparing curricula vitae. The use of these packs has not been monitored.

41 Students who need advice on financial or health issues seek it informally from their tutors, teachers or the college's student support officer. In some cases, they are referred to outside agencies. Providing advice on such topics is not part of the college's tutorial framework. Details of students' requests for help, and the college's referrals of students to outside agencies are not recorded or analysed.

General Resources

Grade 2

42 The college's self-assessment report did not cover all aspects of its general resources. Those judgements which were made were broadly in line with the judgements of the inspectorate.

Key strengths

- a secure, safe and pleasant environment in which students and staff can work
- a systematic programme of refurbishment of buildings
- a good careers information area which is open throughout the college day and staffed until early afternoon
- attractive, well-furnished and well-equipped information technology suites
- a good stock of periodicals in the college library

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Weaknesses

- insufficient social and study areas for students
- insufficient information technology workstations, specialist software programs and CD-ROM databases and inadequate access to the Internet for students
- inadequate library bookstock in some subjects
- lack of access to some rooms for people with restricted mobility

43 The college is housed in former secondary school premises, originally built in the 1950s and extended in 1970. It has set itself the target of creating a secure and pleasant place to work for students and staff, and it has largely succeeded. This achievement is recognised in its self-assessment report. There is a systematic programme of refurbishment designed to enhance the appearance of the college and to create an attractive, corporate image. Refurbishments have been carried out to a high standard. The few areas yet to be tackled are generally in poor decorative order. Many classrooms and corridors have displays of work, posters, photographs, and noticeboards containing useful information for students. There are unobtrusive security systems installed throughout the college. Room utilisation data are used to inform the college's accommodation strategy. The strategy identifies proposals for development which the college is unable to fund at present. Wheelchair access is good on the ground floor, where ramps have been installed, but there is no lift to upper floors which account for 20 per cent of the college's accommodation.

44 The only social area available to students is the refectory and this is very crowded at peak times of the day. Vending machines provide refreshments in the evenings. Responses to surveys of students' opinion include many criticisms of the refectory and the service it

provides. The careers area is a good facility which is open throughout the college day and staffed until early afternoon. The area contains information on employment and higher education. The college campus includes playing fields set out for team sports. These are used largely by students studying physical education or sport. There is a college nursery for the children of students and staff; it is also open to the general public if places are available. Some students with children expressed the view that crèche fees were prohibitively expensive.

45 Information technology provision in the college is in two large suites, one of which is used mainly for teaching students on business studies or information technology courses. These students are well served by the college's spacious accommodation and resources. The other suite is intended to be used mainly on an open-access basis, for example, to enable students to complete coursework and assignments. However, many workstations are timetabled throughout the day and in the evening, and students complain that it is difficult to gain access to computers when they need to do so. This weakness was not identified in the college's self-assessment report. Many full-time students choose to work after classes have finished in order to use computers for their assignment work. The two suites are used in the evening by large numbers of adult students on part-time courses. They are comfortably furnished and the worktops provide adequate space for books and papers alongside workstations. The computer equipment is of a good standard and there is access to up-to-date software. The college maintains good records of the use of equipment in the information technology suites.

46 Three full-time and two part-time trainers provide support for students in the information technology suites. Technical support comes from a network manager and 1.7 full-time equivalent network support officers. At some times of the day the trainers are in heavy

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demand and are unable to meet all the requests for help. This weakness was not identified in the college's self-assessment report. Trainers also mark students' computer-based assignments and provide feedback to them on their work. The computer network does not have a CD-ROM facility and there are few specialist software programs to support the needs of specialist curriculum areas. One workstation provides access to the Internet but this is not generally available to students.

47 The library is staffed by a full-time qualified librarian and a part-time assistant working 20 hours a week. There is no computerised catalogue but the college plans to develop one. There are only 58 study spaces for students in the library and no other study spaces in the college. This is unsatisfactory. Students say that one of the reasons they do not come into college when they do not have timetabled classes is the acute shortage of places in which to work. The library budget for 1997-98 is £8,000. The librarian is not involved in curriculum team meetings or those of the advisory board. Curriculum managers do not always inform the library of the anticipated needs of their students. For some curriculum areas, the library bookstock consists only of multiple copies of textbooks. For other areas, there are not enough books, or the books are largely out of date. The library has a good selection of periodicals, including back copies, to support work on most courses. Inspectors found that many students used relatively few sources of information, beyond textbooks and handouts produced by teachers. However, the poor range of library books and information technology resources makes it hard for them to do otherwise. The library is not open late for students attending classes during the evening. The college recognises the weakness of its library provision in its self-assessment report.

Quality Assurance

Grade 4

48 Although the college makes some realistic judgements about its quality assurance arrangements in the relevant sections of the self-assessment report, significant weaknesses are omitted.

Key strengths

- clearly defined policies and procedures of which staff are aware
- regular and systematic audits of college procedures which have led to some improvements in effectiveness and efficiency
- detailed analysis and full consideration of students' views on college courses and services, to help identify areas for improvement

Weaknesses

- a quality assurance framework which lacks coherence and fails to cover every aspect of the college's work
- few clearly-defined standards and measures to enable the college to judge its performance, including the extent to which it fulfils its charter commitments
- subject and course reviews which are not rigorous enough because of the failure to collect and analyse relevant data
- separate systems for internal inspection and appraisal which do not provide managers with sufficient information to effect improvements
- staff development and training which is not fully in step with strategic and curricular objectives and which is not rigorously evaluated

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- no overview of the findings emanating from various elements of the quality assurance framework, or overall analysis of students' achievements, to inform the self-assessment report or to provide a basis for planning

49 The college's self-assessment report consists of separate evaluations for each main course and function of the college. These were not brought together to form overall judgements which relate to the FEFC's framework for inspection and self-assessment, or in a way which could adequately inform senior managers or governors. A number of significant weaknesses in quality assurance arrangements and practice were not highlighted by the college in its self-assessment reports. The college did not generate its self-assessment report on the basis of evidence drawn from its quality assurance arrangements. Instead, the report was compiled as an additional activity by groups of staff during summer term 1997. Three different versions of the self-assessment report were submitted to inspectors in the period between June and September. Although the college's advisory board has a standards committee, it played no part in the preparation of the self-assessment report.

50 The quality assurance framework is still being developed. Currently, the key elements are: regular audits of policies and procedures contained in the quality manual; surveys of students' opinions of provision; course and subject reviews; internal inspection; and staff appraisal. Most elements have been developed independently of each other. They do not form a coherent set of quality assurance arrangements for the college as a whole, nor are they drawn together by senior managers. To do so would provide a valuable overview of the college's strengths and weaknesses to inform strategic planning. Weaknesses in monitoring the extent to which the college is meeting its charter commitments are acknowledged in the self-assessment report.

51 To promote a culture of continuous quality improvement, the college has approved over 30 written policies and procedures which are included in a quality manual. Internal audits, carried out by the quality manager and the internal auditor, have helped the college to find out which procedures are followed closely as well as to identify those areas in need of improvement. For example, a new personal tutoring system was introduced in September 1997 to rectify weaknesses identified through recent audits. Surveys of students' opinions and meetings between the quality manager and groups of students are used to good effect. Employers' and parents' opinions of the college are not collected systematically, and this leaves the college under informed in these areas.

52 The self-assessment report concludes that teachers are not sufficiently critical of the quality of courses they provide for students. Course review procedures require the collection and analysis of data. Inspectors found that the annual, formal reviews introduced by the college are not universally nor consistently carried out by staff in all the curriculum areas. The reviews which are carried out rarely lead to clear action plans to rectify shortcomings in teaching and the promotion of learning.

53 The appraisal system encourages individual staff to evaluate their performance and to share their views with another colleague who does a broadly similar job. It does not involve classroom observation, and information from appraisal is not passed to line managers. To enable senior managers to judge the quality of teaching, a programme of internal inspections, including classroom observations, was introduced in 1996-97. Whilst this was being done, the appraisal process was postponed. Staff development needs are met in the main through five in-service training days for the whole staff, supplemented by activities identified from internal inspection and from appraisal, within an overall annual staff development budget of £7,500. Some staff

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development and training has not kept pace with curricular needs as the college has broadened its provision, particularly in vocational areas. In its self-assessment report, the college acknowledges that it has not evaluated the effectiveness of its staff development and training activities.

Governance

Grade 3

54 Inspectors concluded that a number of significant weaknesses in governance were not identified in the college's self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- a committee structure and arrangements to enable the corporation to discharge its duties
- governors' wide range of skills and expertise in areas of value to the college
- priorities for action which are based on a self-assessment exercise conducted by governors
- a clerk to the corporation who is independent and appropriately qualified

Weaknesses

- the poor standards of financial monitoring information received by the finance and business planning committee
- failure to provide the corporation with adequate information, which limits its ability to monitor the college's strategic direction and financial position
- governors' lack of direct involvement in the development of the strategic plan
- insufficient formal training or updating for most governors
- the job description for the clerk to the corporation which has not been approved by the corporation

- insufficient contracted time for the clerk to carry out all his duties

55 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is adequate. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government, and substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC. The corporation has established an appropriate committee structure to enable it to discharge its responsibilities. The corporation meets termly and receives reports from all its subcommittees: audit, disciplinary appeals, finance and business planning, personnel and staffing, and remuneration. The newly appointed clerk to the corporation is independent and appropriately qualified although his job description does not include all of the key functions set out in *A Guide for Clerks* and has not been approved by the corporation. At the time of the inspection, the clerk was contracted for insufficient time to carry out all of his duties.

56 Governors are committed to the college and support its mission. Attendance at meetings is generally good. The 13 governors between them have a wide range of expertise covering business, marketing, public relations, information technology, education, finance, law, personnel and property. At the time of the inspection, there were three governor vacancies. There is no training programme for governors. Longer serving governors are very experienced but have had no formal opportunity to update their understanding of developments in the further education sector. Induction procedures for new college governors have been introduced, though these are as yet untested. The college's self-assessment report acknowledges that opportunities for training should be more formal and explicit.

57 Reports and committee papers sent to governors are lengthy and information is often

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presented in a complex format. Information provided for governors is not always timely, accurate or referenced to agenda items. For example, the analysis of students' achievements in examinations, published in August and September 1996 was not presented to governors until their meeting in March 1997. There were inaccuracies in financial figures tabled at a recent meeting, which precluded detailed discussion of the issues. There is little communication between governors and college staff. The self-assessment report identified the need for agreement on the range of information and performance data to be reported to the corporation. Recently, at governors' request, financial reports were being restructured to include a clearer breakdown of statistical and financial data and a commentary on key issues.

58 Governors discuss and make decisions on important strategic issues such as merger proposals made by other colleges. However, they have not been directly involved in the development of the strategic plan. Senior managers present the plan to governors for their approval. Most governors were involved in a self-assessment of their work at a specially convened meeting of the corporation in April 1997. The resulting self-assessment report included priorities for improvement. Though governors discussed and approved their own self-assessment report, the college's self-assessment report was not submitted to the corporation for information or approval.

Management

Grade 4

59 The college's self-assessment of management matches in part the findings of the inspection team. Some additional strengths and weaknesses, not acknowledged in the self-assessment report, were identified during the inspection. Evidence to support statements in the self-assessment report was not always readily available in the college.

Key strengths

- successful diversification of the curriculum, including the development of a large community education programme
- clear lines of communication and staff who are generally well informed of developments
- improving quality, regularity and consistency of the financial information
- the college's employment of an additional internal auditor to supplement the work of its primary internal auditors

Weaknesses

- lack of significant progress towards ambitious strategic priorities
- managers have yet to be trained in the use of the new management information system
- insufficient use of performance indicators
- managers' need for further training and the failure to share good practice in management
- the lack of a single assessment of audit needs, bringing together the work of the college's in-house auditor with that of its primary internal auditors
- monthly management accounts which are difficult to read, which contain some unnecessary detail, and which fail to include all the information necessary for effective financial monitoring

60 Inspectors concluded that the college's self-assessment report accurately claims that the management structure is understood by staff. The directorate, comprising the principal and four other senior managers, meets at least once a month to discuss key strategic issues, particularly financial issues. The larger senior

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management team also meets monthly to discuss a broader range of day-to-day operational matters. This team comprises the senior managers, five resource centre managers, the community education manager and the marketing officer. A paper setting out a range of performance indicators for use in the college was first discussed in 1995; managers now use a limited range of indicators to make monthly reports on progress in their areas of responsibility. There is little evidence that either the directorate or senior management team undertake a collective review of progress towards the targets set. Decisions taken at senior level are communicated to staff through team meetings and documents circulated regularly within the college. The college management has an advisory board which, together with its committees, is intended to allow staff the opportunity to be consulted on management decisions. Membership of the board is not representative. Staff with management responsibilities are members; all other staff who wish to do so can attend, but without affecting the quorum which applies only to management staff. Meetings of the board have often been used to inform staff of management decisions rather than to provide staff with opportunities to contribute to decision making. Insufficient training has been provided for some managers and there is little emphasis on disseminating good practice. The team management skills of a few managers provide good models for others to follow.

61 The college's strategic plan establishes ambitious priorities against a futuristic 'scenario 2005'. The plan is clearly informed by extensive information about the local market. The self-assessment report claims that the plan is fully resourced, is realistic and backed by divisional operating plans. However, elsewhere in the self-assessment report, the poor operational planning in the college is quoted as a weakness. Weaknesses in the operational planning and management of schemes funded by the TEC, some of which have now been

attended to, resulted in the college falling far short of the income targets it had set itself. There are also weaknesses in the management of student support across the college.

62 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the financial management of the college is adequate. Members of the finance team are appropriately qualified and experienced and the delegation of responsibilities is appropriate. College managers have budgeted for a small surplus in 1997-98 and have made contingency plans in the event of the college not achieving its targets for student numbers.

63 The college operates in a highly competitive market for students. A large proportion of the college budget is devoted to marketing and a new marketing director has been appointed. The community education programme has clearly benefited from the improved marketing effort. Enrolments have increased by around 50 per cent over the previous year. Over £112,000 of non-pay expenditure is budgeted for marketing during the current financial year, compared with £75,000 for consumables related to the curriculum and £40,000 allocated to the unitisation budget. The self-assessment report identifies marketing as having been a weakness. However, the high priority which has been given to marketing and the recruitment of new students compares unfavourably with the limited attention given to resolving the pressing issues of low retention rates and levels of achievement across the college.

64 The college presents the new management information system as a strength in its self-assessment report; inspectors consider that this judgement is premature. Improvements have been made through the purchase of new computer software but, overall, the system is still not adequate. Although external reports are generally produced to a high degree of accuracy, college managers have no direct on-line access to management information.

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The self-assessment report identified the need to develop a college-wide management information strategy. This should be undertaken alongside a more extensive review of the ways in which the data currently being collected are used.

Conclusions

65 The college assessed its own quality of provision more generously than inspectors did in the majority of areas. Some significant weaknesses in management and quality assurance were underestimated, and the fragmentation of the self-assessment process created difficulties for the college in arriving at summary judgements.

66 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	1
16-18 years	44
19-24 years	8
25+ years	46
Not known	1
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (July 1997)

Level of study	%
Foundation	17
Intermediate	19
Advanced	41
Higher education	0
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	23
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	44	338	28
Engineering	9	4	1
Business	110	106	15
Hotel and catering	140	18	11
Health and community care	126	30	11
Art and design	76	81	11
Humanities	17	284	22
Basic education	0	11	1
Total	522	872	100

Source: college data

Note: there are an additional 461 students not funded by the FEFC

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (September 1997)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	41	11	0	52
Supporting direct learning contact	4	2	0	6
Other support	45	13	0	58
Total	90	26	0	116

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£3,171,000	£3,449,000	£3,463,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	£18.66	£17.69	£19.39
Payroll as a proportion of income	67%	63%	67%
Achievement of funding target	110%	116%	*
Diversity of income	11%	15%	15%
Operating surplus	£332,000	£61,000	-£121,000

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), college (1996-97)

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

*published data not available

Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	177	141	185
	Average point score per entry	3.4	3.6	4.0
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	82	79	165
	Percentage achieving qualification	88%	81%	67%
	Position in tables	top third	top third	bottom third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	103	111
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	70%	44%
	Position in tables	*	top third	bottom third

Source: DfEE

*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

Students' achievements

		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Advanced academic	Pass (%)	*	72	72
	Retention (%)	*	62	31
Intermediate academic	Pass (%)	*	44	34
	Retention (%)	*	64	60
Advanced vocational	Pass (%)	*	73	72
	Retention (%)	*	71	71
Intermediate vocational	Pass (%)	*	55	24
	Retention (%)	*	64	75
Overall college figures	Pass (%)	*	56	47
	Retention (%)	*	67	66

Note: these figures do not take into account students on roll on roll off courses

Source: college data

*complete and reliable figures are not available for 1994-95

FEFC Inspection Report 01/98

**Published by the
Further Education Funding Council
February 1998**