

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Beverley College of Further Education

July 1996

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

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

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

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GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

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

College grade profiles 1993-95

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

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 97/96

BEVERLEY COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION

Inspected May 1995 – April 1996

Summary

Beverley College of Further Education has achieved sustained growth since incorporation. It is making a strong response to national targets by increasing its range of provision and establishing effective measures to attract students from a wider cross-section of the community. The governors are committed to the aims of the college and have a productive working relationship with college managers. The college has effective arrangements for the admission and induction of students. Staff make a thorough assessment of, and provide good support for, individual students' learning needs. Teachers have positive relationships with students. There is a programme of staff appraisal linked to training and development. The college has a wide range of information technology equipment. The majority of students are adults who achieve good examination results; examination pass rates for 16 to 18 year olds are poor. The college makes little use of performance indicators and the course and faculty review process lacks rigour. Links with employers, the TEC and other agencies are not yet fully exploited. There are some gaps in specialist teaching qualifications. Some of the college's accommodation is of poor quality.

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

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics and information technology	2	Health and care	2
Motor engineering	2	Art and design	3
Business administration and management	3	Humanities	3
Hospitality and catering, leisure and tourism	2	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	3

INTRODUCTION

1 Beverley College of Further Education was inspected mainly during the period March to April 1996. Prior to this, health and care provision had been inspected in May 1995. Ten inspectors spent a total of 30 days inspecting specialist subject areas. They visited 101 classes, examined students' work and held meetings with teachers. In the week beginning 15 April 1996, six inspectors spent 28 days inspecting aspects of cross-college provision. They held discussions with college governors, senior managers, teachers and students, employers, headteachers from local schools, and representatives of the careers service, the Humberside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and the wider community.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Beverley College of Further Education is a small general further education college serving the rural area to the north of Hull. It has a main site close to the town centre and a smaller site, Grovehill, two miles away. The college provides courses in eight curriculum areas: art and design, humanities, business, motor engineering, mathematics and information technology, health and care, catering and leisure and beauty therapy. There is provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college's substantial provision of non-vocational education for adults amounted to 25 per cent of enrolled students in 1995-96. Education and training at Her Majesty's Prison Full Sutton is also provided by the college.

3 The area served by the college has a population of 140,000 spread over a wide area. The college attracts students mainly from the market town of Beverley, the smaller towns of Driffield and Market Weighton, and some smaller villages. Most students live within five miles of the college but this is beginning to change as more courses are provided in village locations to the north and west of the town. Public transport services are infrequent and travel is difficult for some students. Within Beverley, most employment is associated with public administration, education, health, and retail and financial services. Unemployment in the area is 8 per cent. Part-time employment and flexible working, together with a rise in the number of vacancies filled by women, have become increasingly characteristic features of the local labour market.

4 Since its incorporation in 1993, the college has grown steadily and achieved an increase of 14 per cent in funded units. At the time of the inspection, the college had 5,318 students accounting for 7,871 enrolments. There is strong local competition within a two-mile radius of the college from three secondary schools with sixth forms and a college of agriculture which is diversifying its provision. Hull College, a large general further education college, is situated nine miles away, as are two sixth form colleges. The college is responding to this competition in a positive way by seeking partnership arrangements with schools for 16 to 18 year old students and expanding its provision for adults. In 1994-95, 70 per cent of school leavers in the Beverley area continued in full-time education, 23 per cent of them in further education or sixth form colleges.

5 The college has a tradition of providing for adults and there is strong demand for general adult education courses. Seventy-one per cent of all students and 58 per cent of those on vocational courses are over 25 years of age. However, the number of full-time adult students is low. In 1995-96, there are 542 full-time students, amounting to 10 per cent of enrolments, and 98 per cent of these are aged 16 to 18 years. At present, 69 per cent of students are women. Less than 0.5 per cent of the students come from minority ethnic groups; this mirrors the population profile in the area served by the college. Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

6 The college employs 94 full-time equivalent staff excluding those at Her Majesty's Prison Full Sutton. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4. The management structure has been in place since 1994 and is under active review by the governors to ensure effective deployment of staff. The college executive group comprises the principal, vice-principal, the heads of the two faculties, the heads of corporate services and external affairs, the college accountant and the personnel manager. Within the faculties, eight programme managers have responsibility for the curriculum areas.

7 The college's stated purpose is to respond to the needs of the local and regional community by providing access to quality education and training. The college aims to 'be the market leader in education and training in Beverley and the surrounding area', and to provide broadly-based further education. The college plans to grow and to ensure that financial resources are available to fund this growth. It aims to integrate with its community and to respond to the labour market in a dynamic and creative way. The college mission statement includes the aim of valuing each member of the college community.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 The college provides a wide range of courses extending from foundation level to higher education in eight programme areas. In support of the national targets for education and training, the college has an increasing programme of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) offered at two or three levels in each of eight vocational areas. General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) are provided at intermediate and advanced levels in four areas and at advanced level in one. The college provides courses in seven General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) subjects and 15 General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects. There is a wide range of computing and information technology courses. In response to student demand, the college has recently developed media studies and beauty therapy courses, and plans to develop hairdressing and sports studies. Gaps in provision include foundation level GNVQs and NVQs in leisure and tourism. The college provides few opportunities for students to achieve science or professional body qualifications.

9 The college has achieved sustained growth over the last three years. It has maintained its share of the 16 to 18 year old cohort and the number of full-time students has remained stable. The college has implemented some effective measures aimed at recruiting students from a wider cross-section of the community and has achieved an increase of 52 per cent in part-time student enrolments since 1993. Building on its programmes for adults, 85 per cent of students are now aged over 18 years. The college plays an active role in the promotion of adult learners week. There is well-established provision for students of all ages with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although the range of vocational options available for students on these courses is narrow. An increasing number of short courses are provided in rural schools. One such course is designed for women returning to further education.

10 The college has made some progress in developing a flexible, accessible and modular curriculum, which is one of its corporate objectives for 1995-98. Three learning centres provide core skills support for students in communication, numeracy and information technology. Night workers have the opportunity to gain credit towards qualifications based on observations carried out by college tutors in the workplace. The college is beginning to introduce modular curricula in hospitality and catering and in art and design. Open learning opportunities are available in humanities subjects and business administration, although the number of students studying in this way is very small. There are still few opportunities for students to begin a course at times of the year other than September. The amount of summer provision is minimal.

11 A recently-established external affairs team is developing the concept of 'the external college' and maximising the volume of off-site provision. Staff are establishing links with employers, primarily for the delivery of short courses and NVQs. Programmes have been designed to meet the needs of the food processing sector, the health and care sector and motor engineering training groups. These programmes amount to 28 per cent of enrolments in 1995-96. The college is a leading partner in the Beverley Care Consortium which, in 1995-96, is providing NVQs for 180 candidates and 125 assessors in an area stretching from Bridlington to Grimsby. The college is an active member of the Beverley Education Business Partnership. In other ways, the college does not fully exploit the potential for liaison with employers. There are no subject or programme area advisory panels on which employers are represented and little involvement of employers in college activities. A college advisory group meets once a term but employers who are members have a poor record of attendance. There are no surveys of employers to establish training needs.

12 The college has a co-operative relationship with the Humberside TEC and other agencies. TEC-funded projects include training access points and the development of flexible forms of learning. However, TEC contracts are small and mainly related to the Further Education Development Fund and youth training provision; the college has 112 trainees in six different

programme areas. The college's bid to the competitiveness fund this year has not been successful. Full-cost provision is small; it is comprised mainly of contracts with schools. The college has a home office contract for education and training provision at Full Sutton Prison and a contract with the local education authority (LEA) for non-vocational adult education.

13 The college has good relationships with local schools. In all, there are links with 11 secondary schools, four special schools and two public schools. There is some joint planning and publicity within the Beverley consortium comprising the college and three local schools and some pupils in years 10 and 11 come to the college twice each week for a business administration course. College staff teach subject specialisms at two schools on a contract basis. A secondary school in Hull buys learning materials, assessments and staff consultancy from the college in order to teach its own Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) foundation diploma in engineering.

14 The college promotes itself effectively. Courses are well publicised in an attractive prospectus, in course leaflets and through advertising on local radio. The college is successful in focusing on specific groups of customers. For example, staff have raised awareness of the range of vocational qualifications capable of being achieved in the workplace. Customers speak favourably of the fast and friendly response to enquiries. Market research is in the early stages of development. The college is beginning to collect and use labour market intelligence but otherwise relies heavily on informal information gathered from teachers and existing students. There is some confusion about the respective functions of the student services and external affairs teams and this results in inadequate analysis of the needs of existing and prospective students. Links between market research, management information and planning are not, as yet, fully developed.

15 Staff and students are made aware of the college's equal opportunities policy and associated issues during their induction to the college. There has been some staff training to support the policy. Monitoring and review mechanisms are still being developed. At the time of the inspection, there was no senior postholder with explicit responsibility for equal opportunities, no criteria had been agreed for assessing the implementation of the policy and there was no committee to oversee the monitoring of the policy. A policy dealing with personal harassment has been introduced recently.

16 The college provides an access course leading to the higher education foundation certificate. In 1995-96, 48 students enrolled on the course. Twenty students are following the higher national diploma course in business management which is franchised from the University of Humberside. The college offers a certificate in counselling skills which has been developed in collaboration with Hull University. The college provides opportunities for employees to achieve management NVQs up to level 5 by developing their portfolios at their places of work.

17 The college has a few international links. There are currently five Japanese students attending the college and the intention is to extend this link by hosting 20 students for vocational training in motor vehicle engineering in collaboration with the Nihon Automobile Training School in Tokyo. Some students on the National Nursery Examinations Board (NNEB) course visit Holland annually.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

18 The Beverley College of Further Education corporation has 17 members, eight of them experienced in business and industrial areas which are relevant to the college's activities. The corporation also includes a representative from the Humberside TEC, the principal, one nominated member, two staff and one student. At the time of the inspection there were three vacancies. The current membership does not fully reflect the range of provision in the college and the search committee is attempting to ensure that this is corrected by the appointment of new members. It is acknowledged that women are under represented on the corporation.

19 Following the retirement of the principal in 1992 and the departure of his successor less than a year later, the corporation provided effective support to the college executive group and staff. The current principal has been in post since 1993. In deciding the members of its committees, the corporation makes good use of governors' experience and expertise. Corporation meetings are held once a term; they are well attended and members are provided with appropriate documentation. The respective functions and responsibilities of the governors and the college's executive group are clear. Governors support the college's mission statement. They are closely involved in strategic planning, have a clear view of the role of the college and take an interest in its academic activities. The corporation has agreed a code of conduct and is compiling a register of interests for members. They are in the process of agreeing targets for their own performance. Governors are well informed about the college's financial position; they receive regular information on cash-flow forecasts and budget variance. The corporation does not receive annual reports from the college's executive group to enable it to monitor and review the implementation of policies such as equal opportunities and health and safety, for which it has a responsibility. At the time of the inspection, it had not considered a report on students' achievements for the academic year 1994-95.

20 The heads of faculty and programme area managers are responsible for the delivery of the college's academic programme. Heads of faculty and their deputies also have cross-college responsibilities for implementing college policies. Most programme area managers have a full teaching commitment in addition to their management responsibilities and this has resulted in the heads of faculty having to perform some of the duties allocated to programme area managers. Teachers and support staff have ready access to managers. There is a timetabled period for weekly

meetings which facilitates administration and the flow of information across the college.

21 Managers and teachers are effectively involved in the strategic planning process, support staff less so. Both faculties produce development plans but there are inconsistencies in the way these are disseminated to teaching and support staff. Neither faculty has an annual operating plan to support the implementation, monitoring and review of its development plan. The college executive group has set few performance targets for managers and staff. Meetings within faculties are generally well documented. They assist managers and teachers in the implementation, monitoring and review of the curriculum. Some programme areas meetings are too infrequent and inadequately documented. For example, the GCE A level course team has not met since June 1995. The high proportion of part-time to full-time teachers creates some operational difficulties in managing the curriculum. Part-time teachers are not always able to attend course team meetings.

22 Enrolment targets are set for the college as a part of the strategic planning process. The college has achieved a 5.6 per cent growth in funded units during the current academic year. The college's average level of funding for 1995-96 is £15.05 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £17.84. The college receives 60 per cent of its income from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The college's estimated income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

23 Budgets for part-time teachers' salaries and consumable items are delegated to the heads of faculty. Separate delegated financial budgets exist for administration, the library, the college restaurant and for prison education. Budget allocations are made on the basis of past funding and agreed targets for student growth. The college is developing a system for calculating the unit costs of course provision by programme area for use in its planning. The college's computerised management information service provides a limited number of regular reports to managers and teachers. Staff have confidence in the accuracy of the reports produced. There is no management information policy nor a users group.

24 Information on the destinations of full-time students is obtained by questionnaire and collated by Beverley Careers Service. Few course teams have analysed the data on students' destinations in order to assess the relationship between course outcomes, and students' careers. Student retention is monitored on a weekly basis by the college executive group. Information provided by the college for the academic year 1994-95 shows a retention rate of 84 per cent for full-time students and 85 per cent for part-time students.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

25 The student services team is managed by the director of corporate services. The team has established clearly-defined procedures for its work. There is impartial pre-enrolment guidance for students. Subject information sheets are available but, in some instances, they lack sufficient detail. Staff provide a programme of briefings, open days and evenings during the summer term which enables prospective students and their parents to meet tutors and receive advice. The student services team monitors its own activities. Targets have been set for measuring its performance. For example, prospective students should be interviewed within four weeks of the receipt of their application and they should receive a decision on their application within a week of the interview. Guidance packs for interviewers help them to work consistently. However, student services staff are not kept up to date on course developments.

26 Staff liaise effectively with a number of schools in the area and provide advice to pupils and parents. The strong links with local special schools and with agencies such as social services help students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A comprehensive advice service is provided jointly by the local careers service and college staff. Liaison between the careers service and careers advisers within secondary schools is good. Careers staff participate in induction sessions. Support for students wishing to develop their job search skills is particularly effective. Applications to higher education are co-ordinated by student services. A recent initiative has increased the amount of materials in the careers library. The learning resources area now houses a good stock of relevant careers resources.

27 All students, including those attending evening classes, receive an induction. The programmes are comprehensive and well structured. Personal tutors receive guidelines about the topics which should be covered and they devise programmes which reflect the needs of their students. Student services staff arrange introductory talks on the college library, learning support and the counselling and guidance services. They also monitor the content of individual programmes. During induction, tutors meet students individually and help them to draw up their learning agreements and action plans. Students are advised of their rights and responsibilities. All full-time students receive a copy of the student handbook, which contains useful information on the college, and the college charter. Copies of both documents are available in the learning resources centre for part-time students to consult. Surveys indicate that students value induction programme.

28 In some programme areas, teachers make effective use of opportunities to accredit students' prior learning. It is an important part of the college's provision of NVQs in the workplace, particularly for employees in the health and care and business and management sectors. There is a need for further staff training in other vocational areas and for staff involved in handling enquiries, applications and enrolments.

29 The college has a systematic approach to the provision of learning support for full-time students. When they start their courses, full-time students are assessed using tests produced by the Basic Skills Agency and the college. Learning support staff review the results of these tests and advise tutors on the most appropriate type of support. The support provided is fully documented and students speak about it positively. Staff receive regular reports on individual students' progress and their attendance at learning support services. Additional support for part-time students is underdeveloped. At the time of inspection, over 80 full-time and 10 part-time students were regularly making use of the support provided.

30 There is an established tutorial system and most tutors demonstrate a high level of care for students' progress. A tutors' handbook describes key elements of the system. All full-time students are entitled to a weekly tutorial where they meet their personal tutor either as an individual or as a member of a course group. Part-time students have a designated tutor but there is no entitlement to individual tutorial support. Students' tutorial experience varies substantially from course to course; for example, in the extent to which they are encouraged to plan their learning programmes and complete their records of achievement. Some students have learning objectives which are inappropriate and some have learning plans which are insufficiently detailed. Progress reports for all full-time and substantial part-time students are issued three times a year. There are progress review evenings for parents of full-time students. Confidential counselling is available to all students.

31 The college has introduced improved arrangements for monitoring and recording students' attendance and withdrawals from courses. The effectiveness of these has yet to be measured. The college policy on attendance specifies that action should be taken after two consecutive unjustified absences. Staff within the college information services unit check registers daily. Counselling service staff, in consultation with the personal tutor, contact students to establish the reasons for their absence.

32 There is a students' association. Working closely with student services, it provides an additional source of help and advice for students. The college does not provide organised extra-curricular activities for students. For example, there is no recreation and leisure programme or other opportunities for enrichment. The college has recently appointed a member of staff to develop such provision.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

33 Of the 101 teaching sessions inspected, 56 per cent were judged to have strengths which clearly outweighed the weaknesses. In 11 per cent of the sessions, weaknesses clearly outweighed the strengths. The following table summarises the grades awarded to the teaching sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCSE and GCE AS/A level		0	3	4	3	0	10
GNVQ		1	8	9	2	0	20
NVQ		1	7	1	0	0	9
Other vocational		6	21	14	3	0	44
Access to higher education/higher education		2	1	3	3	0	9
Other including non-schedule 2		0	7	2	0	0	9
Total		10	47	33	11	0	101

34 Courses and lessons generally have clear aims and objectives. In most lessons, teachers give clear instructions and explanations to their students. There is good individual support for students, particularly for adults. The relationships between teachers and students are positive. Some teachers do not make sufficient checks on students' understanding or fail to use appropriate teaching methods. On some courses, assessment criteria are imprecise or students are given inadequate feedback in their work. Core skills, although generally well developed, are not integrated effectively with other aspects of work in the vocational curriculum. There is insufficient work experience for full-time students in most programmes, and no central co-ordination of the placements.

35 In computing and information technology, lessons are well planned, effectively taught and include a high proportion of well-organised practical work. For wordprocessing, lecturers have a folder of exercises, assessments and student records to guide their work. In classes for adults, many of whom are returning to study, the work is arranged to build up students' confidence. Students are able to discuss techniques amongst themselves and to offer much mutual help and support. In the better lessons on full-time courses, teachers use a variety of methods to sustain interest. In mathematics, teaching operates mainly through a guided programme in which students work through exercises in commercial texts, receiving individual help from teachers. Few opportunities are provided for group work on mathematical debate. Learning centre facilities to support the development of students' core skills in mathematics are inadequate.

36 In motor engineering, lesson plans are closely related to schemes of work. In most lessons, the teaching is conducted at an appropriate pace and takes good account of the needs of students with differing abilities. There is a satisfactory blend of theoretical explanations and demonstrations of practical work. Task sheets and information handouts are of high quality. Teachers make good use of question and answer

techniques and short tests. For most classes, teachers provide written feedback to students following the completion of their assignments. Teachers design assessments which are fair. After a process of internal moderation, results are recorded and made available to students. Students and teachers develop new learning plans after the assessment is completed. There is effective liaison with employers. In demonstrating practical work, teachers often focus on the needs of adult students to the detriment of younger students. Occasionally, teachers make assumptions about students' knowledge which are not checked. There is an inadequate level of technician support for the preparation of engineering experimental work.

37 On business administration and management programmes, teachers use a variety of teaching and learning methods to maintain students' interest. Appropriate use is made of teaching and office equipment and teachers make effective use of part-time students' work experiences to extend their learning. Although the content of learning materials is suitable for students, such materials are often poorly presented. In the commercial workshop, students work at their own pace and at different levels of NVQ competence. Students generally comment favourably about the rapid return of assessed work. On business studies programmes, much of the teaching lacks variety; students spend too much time copying notes or listening to teachers, many of whom talk too fast. In some lessons teachers allow a few students to dominate discussions. On the higher national certificate course, students are not sufficiently extended.

38 Teachers in the two areas of hospitality and catering, and leisure and tourism, are responding well to curriculum change and new systems of assessment in the NVQ and GNVQ programmes. There is sound planning, accurate interpretation of standards and effective development of core skills through varied learning activities. Teachers introduce GNVQ assignments which have relevant vocational contexts and encourage students to work on their own. There is strong support for students through regular tutorials. The realistic learning environments provided for food production, food service and hotel front office activities promote good opportunities for training and assessment. However, in some GNVQ classes, particularly in sessions using flexible forms of learning, teachers made insufficient demands of students. Students' assignments are not sufficiently co-ordinated throughout the year. In GNVQ programmes, there are few opportunities for vocational and core studies teachers to collaborate in preparing the work for students.

39 Health and care teachers use an appropriate variety of methods of working, including question and answer techniques, small group work and role-play. They encourage students to participate in discussion. Teachers set regular assignments for students, but poor planning of the assignment programme leads to uneven workloads for some students. Teachers mark assignments thoroughly and provide supportive feedback. There are appropriate work experience placements and students are

encouraged to relate their practical experience to theoretical discussions. Some effective learning strategies are used. For example, in a BTEC continuing education class, students were encouraged to respond to music by drawing and communicating their feelings silently. They were later encouraged to articulate their responses and to relate these to work in the caring environment. Teaching and learning on GNVQ advanced courses are less effective than on other courses. Assessment policy and practice is not yet fully developed. Some GNVQ programmes lack an assessment schedule and some have no agreed timetable for returning marked assignments.

40 Teachers in the area of art and design are committed to curriculum development. Much teaching is sound and students are provided with a variety of learning activities. Teachers prepare detailed and informative briefs for students to work to and students are provided with regular feedback on their progress. Teachers set work which encourages students to develop their full potential. They are encouraged to comment critically upon their work and the work of other students. The best teaching produced positive responses from the students. On some courses, there is insufficient input from specialists. Teaching on GNVQ programmes is not always at the most appropriate level. It sometimes lacks structure and students spend too little time developing their technical skills. Students are encouraged to work on their own but this does not always ensure that the less able students make sufficient progress. There are limited opportunities for the development of observational drawing skills. In a minority of classes, assignments are not sufficiently challenging.

41 Humanities teachers have a relaxed and positive relationship with their students. Learning activities are well structured and varied. Teachers encourage students to think, analyse and express their views. Assignments are effective and teachers make helpful comments on students' work. There is good use of group work and work in pairs. Teaching on the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) 730 teacher training courses was lively and thorough. On the access to higher education course, students in English and history were challenged to think critically and to put forward arguments in a coherent way. The full-time GCE A level programme has a low number of taught hours per subject, lacks adequate facilities and guidance for resource-based learning outside the classroom, and does not provide a satisfactory educational experience for students. In the better lessons, teachers transmit their own enthusiasm for the subject and encourage students to express their own views and to discuss issues. In the weaker lessons, the teaching is not sufficiently structured or not varied enough. Worksheets or overhead transparencies are often used in an unimaginative way.

42 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught by strongly committed teachers. In some classes, they are involved in stimulating work which gives them full opportunity to demonstrate their skills. In most sessions, there is appropriate variety of learning activities

to maintain students' interest. Assignments are of a suitable standard. The vocational elements of the courses, although narrow in scope, provide opportunities for students to develop the practical skills and personal skills which are required by employers. However, some teachers emphasise the requirements of accreditation to the detriment of effective learning. In many of the classes, insufficient demands are made of the students and there is some repetition of course content. Some learning materials fail to provide an appropriate adult context and students do not understand the relevance of some activities. In some sessions, teachers give insufficient attention to the learning needs of individual students. On some GNVQ programmes the opportunity for students with less severe learning difficulties to progress to mainstream courses is unnecessarily delayed.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

43 Fifty-seven per cent of the 116 students, aged 16 to 18, in their final year of study on the vocational courses included in the Department for Education and Employment's 1995 performance tables were successful. This places the college in the bottom 10 per cent of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure. Forty-seven students aged 16 to 18 entered for GCE AS/A level examinations in 1995 scored, on average, 1.6 points per entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2). This also places the college in the bottom 10 per cent of colleges in the further education sector, based on the data in the 1995 performance tables published by the Department for Education and Employment. However, results for 1995 show a significant improvement on GCE A level performance in 1994, when there was an average score of 0.8 points per entry.

44 The examination achievements of 16 to 18 year olds is poor. However, most of the college's students are adults, and these students enjoy higher levels of success. Many vocational courses have overall pass rates which are equal to, or above, the average pass rates for further education colleges, published by C&G and BTEC. Some courses, for example, in the motor engineering and hospitality and catering programmes, have 100 per cent pass rates.

45 In computing and information technology, adults achieve high standards and the full-time course for people returning to study has good retention and progression rates. Although pass rates on the national diploma in information technology have improved, recruitment has fallen. In mathematics, students aged 19 and over do well at GCSE but other students have low pass rates. There are good facilities for the development of information technology core skills in GNVQ programmes, but few students take advantage of them.

46 Motor engineering students produce good responses to internal assessments. Students' achievements are recorded and they have access to their records. The pass rates in BTEC diploma and certificate courses

range from 83 per cent to 100 per cent, and these compare favourably with BTEC national averages. In 1994-95, two students were selected by the Institute of Road Transport Engineers in Yorkshire and Humberside as 'students of the year'. Younger students do less well than adults and often fall behind with assignments and other assessed work. Mathematical skills are generally weak.

47 Business administration students carry out practical work competently and develop study skills and skills in information technology which are appropriate to the stage and level of their courses. They demonstrate competence in a range of commercially relevant software. High pass rates are achieved by students on NVQ administration programmes. In business courses, students' written work is well presented and shows a good grasp of the business world and a sound application of knowledge and understanding. In the higher national certificate for business and finance, 75 per cent of students achieved the award. Over 53 per cent of students who entered the GNVQ advanced course achieved the award. Pass rates for GCE A level economics and business studies are less satisfactory; results are significantly below the national average for general further education colleges. The examination results for the Association of Accounting Technicians at intermediate level are poor.

48 Hospitality and catering courses have seen the introduction of NVQs and GNVQs and a phasing out of BTEC and C&G diplomas and certificates. Students' retention and completion rates suffered in the transition to new forms of accreditation, but achievements are improving. On NVQ levels 2 and 3, students achieve appropriate standards of culinary skills, safety and hygiene and demonstrate a good understanding of products and processes. Students' achievements are above the national average for those completing GNVQ and NVQ programmes within the standard time. GNVQ students receive training to industrial standard in the use of a computerised hotel reception system. Students use the reception area of the college for realistic training. Leisure and tourism is a relatively new and expanding area of provision and only a small number of students have so far completed their programmes. The percentage completing within the standard time is above the national average. Students on all courses are developing their core skills well and are confident in their use of information technology.

49 Students on health and care courses develop an appropriate level of knowledge and skills, enabling them to progress to further areas of study or related employment. Their written and verbal responses to tasks and assignments are good and they develop appropriate skills in information technology. External verifiers' reports have expressed concern about the recent levels of students' assignment work on GNVQ advanced courses. The inspection of this area was undertaken almost a year ago, in May 1995. In 1994 the pass rate on the NNEB diploma was 87 per cent and 94 per cent on the BTEC national diploma in health and caring. The BTEC

first award course had a low retention rate, and only 47 per cent of students achieved the award in 1994.

50 The quality of work achieved by most students in art and design is satisfactory. On the foundation programme, most students achieve their qualification and progress to higher education. On GCSE photography courses, pass rates are high. In both art and media, students develop their imaginative and analytical skills well and are able to speak fluently about their own work and the work of other students. At GCE A level, few students achieve the higher grades. Many students in the second year of the GCE A level programme have not reached the expected stage of development in their work. In many instances, drawing skills are insufficiently developed. On GNVQ courses, levels of achievement are below national averages.

51 In the humanities area, adult students achieve good results in English and on the C&G teachers' training courses. Generally, the oral work of adult students is of good quality and some of their assignment work provided evidence of well-developed presentational skills and original research, particularly on the GCE A level psychology course and the access to higher education course. However, examination results in humanities are generally poor. For example, across all seven GCE A level humanities subjects the average pass rate of 56 per cent in 1994-95 was below the national average for general further education colleges. Full-time GCE A level students are encouraged to attend the information technology workshop but few do so.

52 Many of the courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities lead to nationally recognised awards. Some students are receiving learning support which enables them to achieve appropriately on a wide range of mainstream courses. Students engaged in the catering modules make products for sale each week. Students are aware of basic health and safety issues and of hygiene requirements. Students work well in small groups. In information technology sessions, some students were unclear about why they were using computer equipment.

53 The punctuality of students was poor in many of the classes which were inspected. The average attendance at all of the observed classes was 77 per cent, although attendance in some programme areas was much lower. In the classes inspected in art and design, the average attendance was 62 per cent, and in humanities subjects students' attendance was below 50 per cent on some of the courses inspected. The college reports that the retention of students on their courses is good but, during the inspection, it was observed to be variable and below 50 per cent in some instances.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

54 The college's charter and strategic plan contain commitments to maintain and improve quality assurance. A quality assurance policy and

framework have recently been developed and were approved by the corporation during the inspection. As a part of the quality assurance policy, a quality management team has been established to put the framework into operation. Central to the framework is the existing course review process which requires course teams to provide a commentary and points for action against the seven headings of the FEFC inspection framework. The course reviews are aggregated into programme and faculty reviews, respectively. The academic board receives and approves the faculty reviews.

55 Some course reviews, for example those in health and social care, motor engineering, and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are rigorous. Heads of faculty are expected to take action to address poor performance and have done so for GCE A level provision and the intermediate programme in health and social care. In general, however, the design of the course review sheets does not allow for a detailed level of analysis. For example: under the heading of induction, there is no requirement to record the key outcomes of the survey of students' views on induction; under attendance, there is no requirement to record the average levels of attendance on a course; and under team meetings, the number and frequency of minuted team meetings do not have to be listed. Consequently, comments are not always based on evidence and are sometimes descriptive rather than analytical. In addition, there is no requirement to provide a summary of points for action to inform an overall course action plan.

56 Although the two 1995 faculty reviews were approved by the academic board, one did not identify the actions to be followed and neither reviewed the progress being made towards completing targets set the previous year. Programme and faculty reports are composites of course reviews and do not provide a rigorous evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of courses. They are not supported by quantitative performance indicators. The reviews are completed in the July of an academic year which is too early for the action plan to incorporate an analysis of students' achievements in external examinations. The college, through its information system, is now able to produce regular reports on enrolments and retention. It is intended that a number of key performance indicators will form part of the 1995-96 review process.

57 Questionnaires are issued to students after their induction, while they are on their courses and at the end of their course. They allow four levels of response which can be aggregated to provide course, programme, faculty and college statistics. So far, because of problems with a recently-purchased optical mark reader, the aggregations have been difficult to produce. Only one, relating to the 1996 questionnaire to students while on course, has been completed. This shows that students are generally satisfied with the quality of teaching and pastoral support. For FEFC-funded company training, review sheets are completed by

employees, although the summary sheets compiled by the college external affairs unit do not allow for a detailed quantitative analysis or the aggregation of statistics which might subsequently inform an annual report.

58 The college was one of the first in Humberside to achieve the Investors in People standard in January 1995. As part of its approach to investing in people, the staff appraisal system covers both teachers and support staff, involves line managers as appraisers and includes an element of performance monitoring. For teaching staff, lesson observation forms part of the appraisal process. The staff-development budget represents about 2 per cent of staffing costs. Training needs are identified through the appraisal system. Approved training is linked to strategic priorities and the evaluation of activities is a condition of funding. Proposals for dissemination are included as part of the evaluation process and heads of faculty monitor the extent to which this takes place. All staff new to the college receive an induction and those new to teaching are assigned a mentor during the first year. A cross-college internal verification group has been established to monitor and compare the standards achieved on vocational courses. It currently meets twice a year.

59 The college charter contains detailed statements on a series of commitments which are made to students; it also includes a short section on the entitlements of employers. It is endorsed by the principal and students' association and produced in both written and audio formats. The charter is distributed to students as part of their induction programme. Currently, the charter is being revised by the director for corporate services. No working group has been established to support this process.

60 A self-assessment report was produced by the college in accordance with the requirements of Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It is comprehensive in its scope and there are action points, expressed as 'areas for development'. For a number of cross-college aspects of provision, the analysis contained in the report closely coincided with the judgements of inspectors. However, in some cases the strengths identified were not substantiated by the evidence gathered during the inspection.

RESOURCES

Staffing

61 A high level of enthusiasm and commitment is shown by all staff. Most teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. However, there are some gaps in specialist teaching qualifications amongst the full-time staff. For example, there are no staff with teaching qualifications for working with students with severe learning difficulties or dyslexia. Eighty-five per cent of full-time teachers have a formal teaching qualification. Fifty-six per cent have first degrees or their equivalent. Sixty-two per cent of full-time teachers have achieved relevant assessor and verifier standards. The 98 part-time teachers contribute significant

vocational expertise. Many are current practitioners with substantial and relevant experience. Twenty-two per cent of all teaching hours are delivered by part-time teachers. In some subjects, such as art and design, leisure and tourism, and languages, the reliance on part-time staff impedes the effective co-ordination and delivery of provision.

62 Technician and other support staff are well qualified and experienced. Support staff are well integrated into the life of the college. They provide flexible and effective support for aspects of cross-college provision and the curriculum. However, there is insufficient technician support for the motor engineering workshop and science laboratories, and there is little librarian support for students at the Grovehill site.

63 Some effective personnel policies and procedures have been established since incorporation. Staffing and employment related policies have been updated and a revised staff handbook is issued to all new teaching and support staff. The college is working towards the harmonisation of conditions of service for academic and support staff. There is only one female member of the college executive group of eight managers. Training and development opportunities enable teaching and support staff to obtain additional qualifications. However, there is no strategy for industrial and professional updating. A number of staff would benefit from secondments to industry.

Equipment/learning resources

64 The college has a wide range of modern information technology equipment and appropriate software. There are 148 workstations, of which 114 are networked at the main site, providing one computer for every seven full-time equivalent students. There are three information technology workshops on the main site which are used for group teaching and by students on a drop-in basis. Computer equipment and software is available to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Computer facilities are provided for art and design students at the Grovehill site. Additionally, portable computers have been purchased to support courses in the community and full-cost provision. Access to information technology equipment in some curriculum areas and in some general purpose classrooms is limited. The numeracy core skills workshop has inadequate learning materials.

65 Levels of equipment in classrooms are good. Most rooms have an overhead projector, screen, whiteboard and blinds. There is adequate access to audio and visual equipment. There are good standards of equipment in the majority of vocational areas and realistic work environments for catering and hospitality, beauty therapy, and art and design. The biology and science laboratory is fully equipped. However, in some cases, teachers do not have access to enough equipment. The motor vehicle workshops do not have sufficiently modern vehicles and there is a shortage of specialist languages equipment. The level of equipment for some students with learning difficulties is poor. There is no programme for upgrading or replacing capital equipment beyond the current year.

66 There is a well-managed library and learning resources centre on the main site. Staff provide effective support to students and there are productive links with curriculum areas. There has been significant expenditure on learning resources in the last two years. There are approximately 12,000 books and a range of journals and newspapers. Some computers have compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases. The provision of specialist books is poor in a number of areas, including motor vehicle engineering, art and design, and hospitality. Library facilities at the Grovehill site are poor and there are insufficient study areas.

Accommodation

67 The college occupies two sites. The main site is close to the centre of Beverley and occupies 8.9 acres. The original Victorian hall on this site accommodates the college reception area, senior management offices, the main administration offices, student services, the refectory and two information technology rooms. An adjacent Victorian house contains provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, staff accommodation, storage areas and a multi-gym. The Westwood building, also on the main site, is a brick-clad building constructed during the 1960s, housing a restaurant, three kitchens, beauty therapy provision and motor engineering workshops. The Grovehill site, containing facilities for art, design and media studies, is located in a leased industrial unit, approximately two miles from the main site. The college plans to relocate this provision to the main site during 1996.

68 On the main site, a range of comfortable and well-furnished teaching accommodation is provided in buildings which have recently been upgraded and refurbished. Realistic work environments have been provided for a number of curriculum areas. For example, the Longcroft Hall restaurant has recently been refurbished and the GNVQ hospitality and catering reception area provides realistic training for work. Some classrooms, however, are basic in appearance and the lack of display materials in a number of classrooms does nothing to improve the learning experience for students. The poor accommodation for modern languages restricts the scope of teaching and learning.

69 The main site is generally attractive. The grounds are pleasant, the entrance to Longcroft hall is welcoming, and there is good signposting around the buildings and site. There is good car parking provision. However, the only entrance road to the college is single-track in parts and poorly lit. The college has made significant efforts to improve access to the teaching accommodation for wheelchair users, but there is poor access through Longcroft Hall. The upstairs areas of the Westwood and Longcroft buildings are inaccessible to people with restricted mobility. Most accommodation is used flexibly and efficiently. Creative use has been made of limited space to develop the information technology workshop, and there has been a conscious effort to provide rooms for curriculum

bases. The library is situated in mobile accommodation on the main site, and is currently being extended. There has been major investment in a student services centre.

70 Some of the rooms used by teachers and office staff are too small for the number of staff using them. There are limited social and recreational facilities for students on either site. Catering facilities on the Grovehill site are poor and the refectory on the main site at times has difficulty coping with peak lunchtime demand. The management of site services is professional and effective. There is a well-organised and effective cleaning programme and a well-planned maintenance programme. Buildings and corridors are clean, and the site is free of litter and graffiti.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

71 The main strengths of the college include:

- the strong response to national targets through an increasing range of provision
- effective measures to attract students from a wider cross-section of the community
- sustained growth
- the commitment of governors and their productive working relationship with college managers
- effective admission and induction arrangements
- the thorough assessment of, and support for, students' individual learning needs
- the positive relationships between teachers and students
- adult students' high levels of achievement on many courses
- the linked programme of staff appraisal and staff development, which includes the monitoring of performance
- the wide range of modern information technology equipment.

72 In order to improve the quality of its provision, the college should address the following issues:

- the need to improve the quality of students' learning experiences on some programmes
- the low levels of achievement of 16 to 18 year old students
- links with employers, the TEC and other agencies which are not fully exploited
- the need for a more consistent approach to curriculum planning
- the restricted use of performance indicators
- the lack of rigour in the course and faculty review process
- gaps in the specialist teaching qualifications of some teachers
- the poor quality of some accommodation.

FIGURES

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

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

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

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

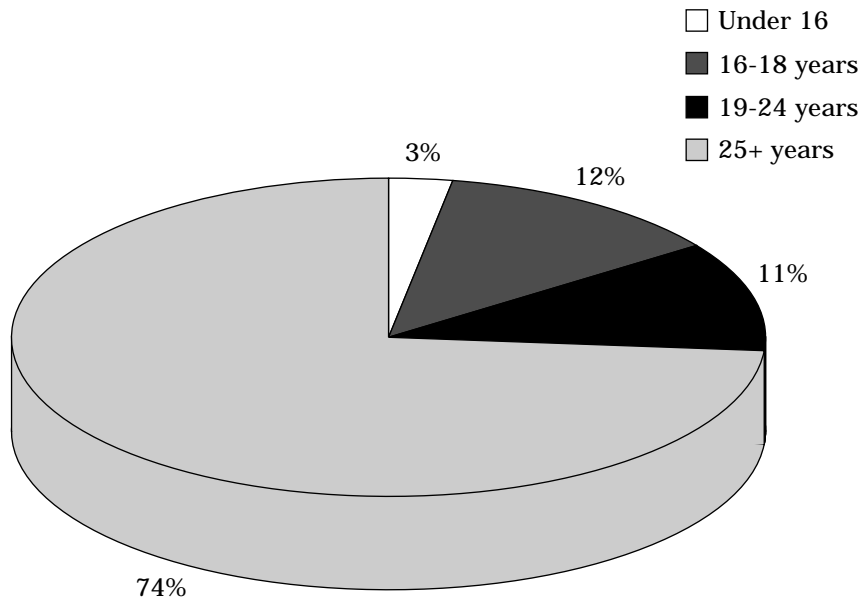
 - 5 Estimated income (for 12 months to July 1996)

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

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

Figure 1

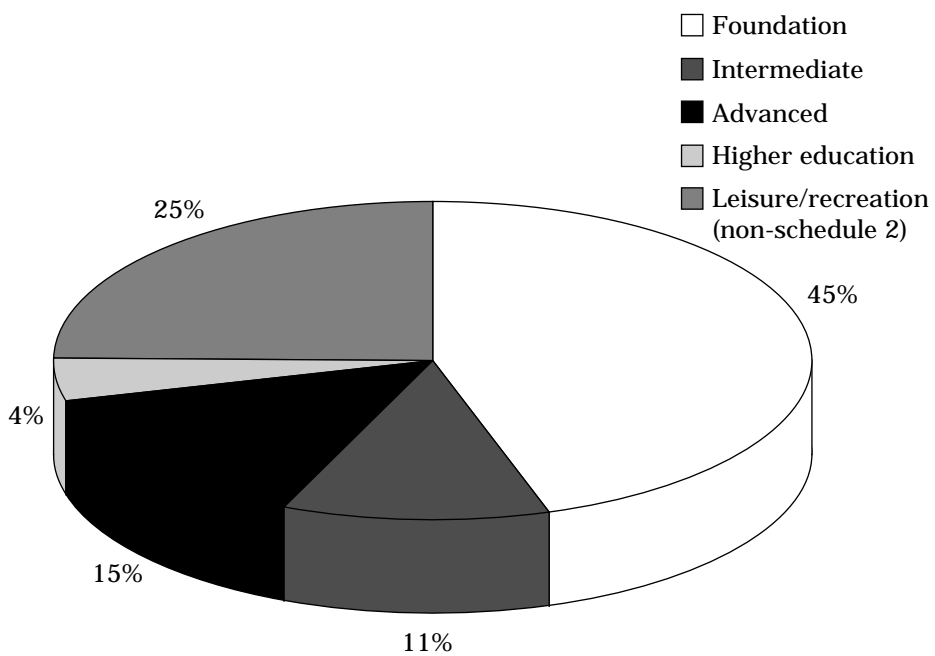
Beverley College of Further Education: percentage student numbers by age (as at April 1996)



Student numbers: 5,318

Figure 2

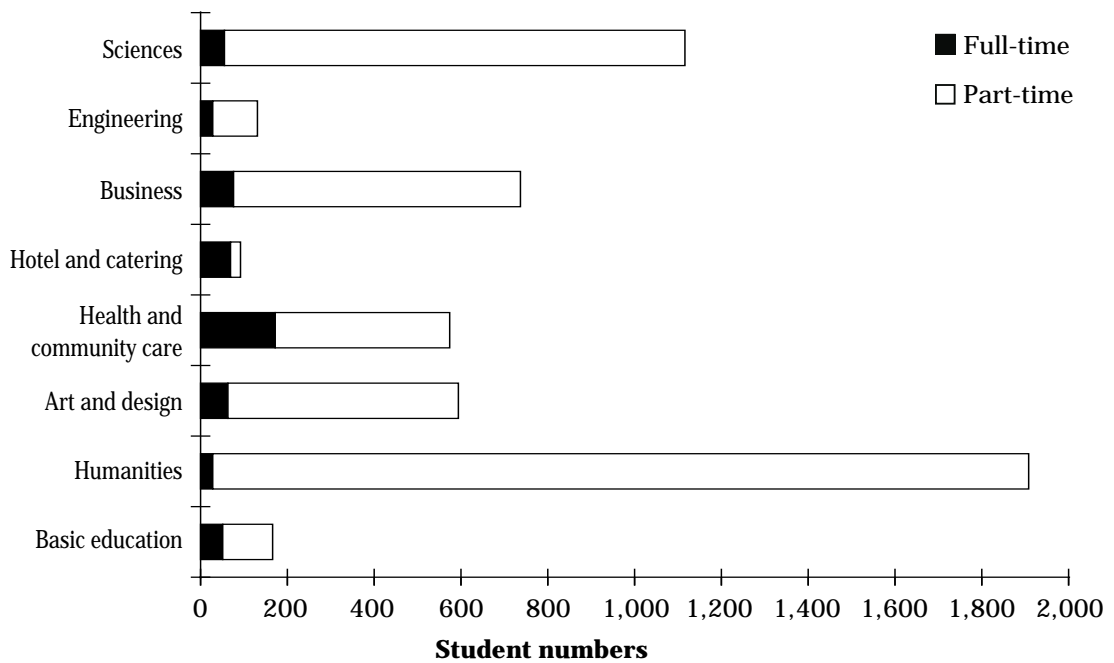
Beverley College of Further Education: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at April 1996)



Student numbers: 5,318

Figure 3

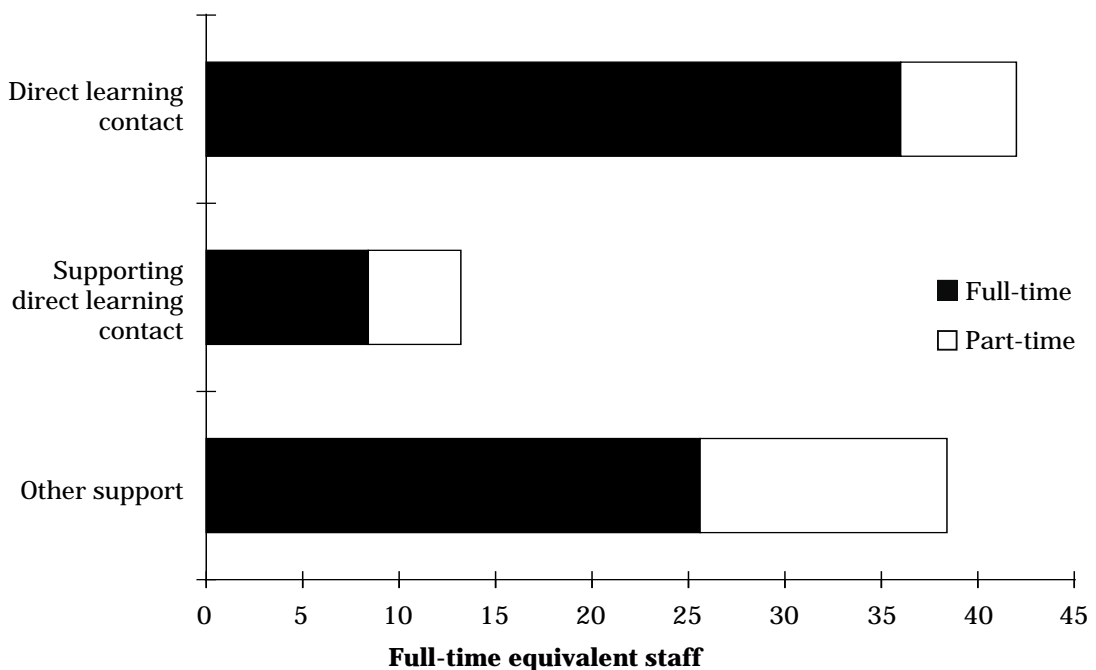
Beverley College of Further Education: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at April 1996)



Student numbers: 5,318

Figure 4

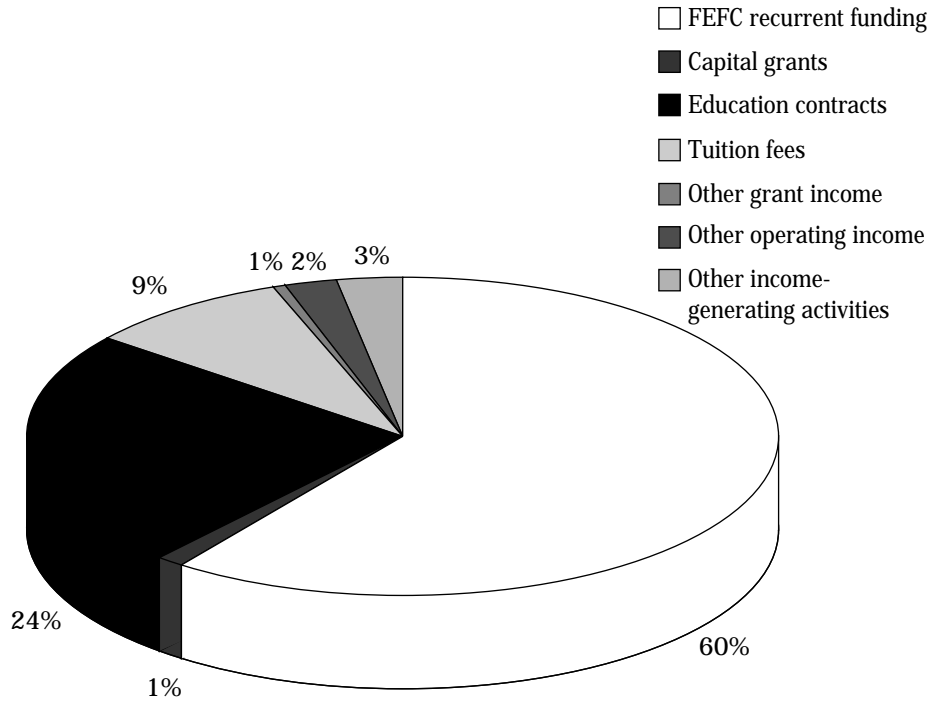
Beverley College of Further Education: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at April 1996)



Full-time equivalent staff: 94

Figure 5

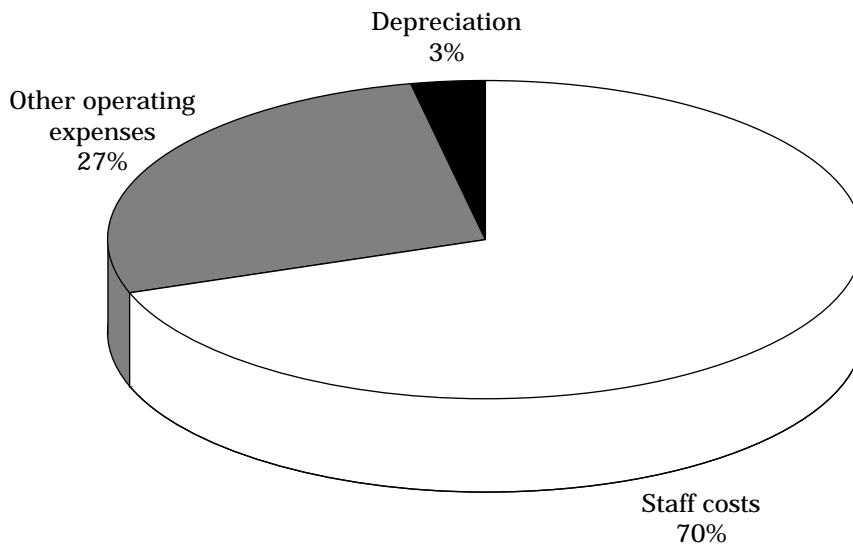
Beverley College of Further Education: estimated income (for 12 months to July 1996)



Estimated income: £3,534,000

Figure 6

Beverley College of Further Education: estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)



Estimated expenditure: £3,563,000

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