

**REPORT  
FROM THE  
INSPECTORATE**

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# **Boston College**

**February 1997**

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**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

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

### **College grade profiles 1993-96**

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

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# FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 07/97

**BOSTON COLLEGE**  
**EAST MIDLANDS REGION**  
**Inspected May-November 1996**

## Summary

Boston College is a general further education college serving east and south Lincolnshire. The governing body has a clear understanding of its role and responsibilities. The strategic planning cycle involves staff at all levels. A maturing quality assurance system operates at course and programme level. Links with partner schools, the Lincolnshire TEC, public and private bodies and sponsoring employers are strong. Student services are comprehensive and effective. The quality of teaching is high and students' performance in examinations is generally satisfactory. Attendance is rigorously monitored at programme level. The implementation of the college's accommodation strategy has led to improvements in accommodation. The college should improve success rates in some areas of work and make better provision for students to the north of Boston. Other issues to be addressed are: the variable quality of tutorial support; the co-ordination and use of management information; and the specialist diagnosis of learning support needs for some students.

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

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

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Science and mathematics	2	Hair and beauty	1
Construction	2	Health and social care	2
Engineering	3	Arts and design	2
Business, secretarial and management	2	Humanities	2
Catering	2	Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	2

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1 Boston College was inspected between May and November 1996. Inspectors observed 191 classes, inspected students' work and examined college documents. They held meetings with governors, college managers, teachers, support staff, and students, with representatives of industry, the local training and enterprise council (TEC), and with members of the local community.

## **THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS**

2 Boston College is a general further education college serving east and south Lincolnshire. Its catchment area includes several small towns such as Boston, Sleaford and Spalding and a number of small widely-dispersed communities. The population of this area is approximately 250,000. Current unemployment rates in the local districts range from 3.9 per cent in South Holland, to 5.5 per cent in Boston and 8 per cent in East Lindsey. These rates vary significantly in response to the seasonal demand for workers in the agricultural, food processing and tourist industries. The economic forecasts for the region suggest that the present slow decline in the number of people employed in manufacturing will continue until the end of the decade, while the numbers employed in public administration and other service industries will rise.

3 The college is the largest provider of post-16 education and training in east and south Lincolnshire, with courses in all the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) programme areas except agriculture and at all levels from foundation to higher education. It has a variety of general national vocational qualification (GNVQ), national vocational qualification (NVQ) and other vocational programmes. It also offers 32 subjects for the general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) and 29 subjects for the general certificate of secondary education (GCSE). In the academic year 1995-96 the college enrolled 11,182 students. Of these, 1,773 were full-time students and 9,409 were part-time students. 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.

4 The nearest alternative further education colleges are over 30 miles away. The secondary education system in the region is selective, comprising 11 to 18 grammar schools, most of which are single-sex institutions, and secondary high schools which are mainly for 11 to 16 year olds. Some of the secondary high schools are planning to establish sixth forms. The number of school-leavers in the region declined by about 20 per cent between 1987 and 1995 but it is predicted to remain fairly constant over the next few years.

5 The college recruits some students from overseas, notably from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Greece. Higher education courses offered in association with De Montfort University serve local needs and also attract students from outside the college's normal catchment area. Many students live at a considerable distance from the college and public transport is limited.

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Transport for 16 to 19 year old students is funded by the local education authority (LEA). At present, there is a pilot transport scheme for students travelling from Skegness. Those over the age of 19 pay one-third of the transport cost, the college one-third, and the bus company one-third.

6 The college has leased or rented accommodation in 20 towns and villages and uses a total of 50 buildings. The three main sites are in Boston. The Rochford site was purpose built between 1964 and 1984, and residential accommodation for 134 students, built on adjacent land, was opened in 1993. A new access road and a much-needed car park were constructed in 1994. In 1992, the college acquired a secondary school. It has since rebuilt the main buildings, creating the architecturally exciting De Montfort building in a parkland setting. The college's third site in Boston is an eighteenth-century, Grade I listed building which was formerly three riverside warehouses. The Sam Newsom Centre on this site is an imaginative conversion providing excellent facilities for music courses and a centre for performing arts.

7 There are seven curriculum programmes organised within three faculties. The programmes are: business and secretarial studies; catering and social care; construction, computing, technology and foundation studies; creative studies; GCSE and recreation; GCE A level; and management and professional studies. The college has 151 full-time equivalent teachers and 110 full-time equivalent support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4. The college in its mission statement claims to be 'committed to providing the best opportunities for learning and personal development for all, within a caring, supportive and open environment'.

#### **RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION**

8 The college aims to meet the needs of all students in the area which it serves but it does not fully achieve this for students outside Boston. The focus of the college's activity is the provision of courses on the three main sites in Boston. There are also promotional activities intended to stimulate interest amongst potential students across the county. For example, there is an 'opportunity shop' at Spalding and an information shop at Sleaford where full-time staff provide advice and information about the college and its services. A centre in Skegness, operated in conjunction with East Lindsey Training Services, provides business links, advertising and enrolment services. The college has a marketing plan under which it aims to improve its market research and to increase enrolments by at least 5.4 per cent in 1997-98. In particular, the college aims to attract an increasing number of mature students by providing 'return to learn' courses, flexible patterns of study, greater freedom for students over the dates on which they can start courses, childcare facilities and a fees policy which is attractive to adults. The main college brochures encourage applications from mature students, and there is a video in which adults talk about their experiences at the college.

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9 The college year is split into two semesters; 15 full-time courses have been organised so that students can join at the start of either semester. Some courses in secretarial studies, construction, catering, welding, computing, and information technology go further than this in allowing students to start at a time convenient to themselves. In 1995-96, 20 courses were offered on Saturday mornings as part of a 'Saturday College'. Over 250 students took part in open learning programmes. A 'women into management' course has been offered since 1991-92. A number of bids have been made to the European Social Fund to support courses such as 'caring professions for men', 'women into financial management' and 'rehabilitation of ex-offenders through NVQs'.

10 The college is an associate college of De Montfort University, Leicester. In 1995-96 there were 661 enrolments on higher education programmes of which 240 were for full-time degree or higher national diploma programmes. These programmes include combined studies, arts and humanities, combined science, computing, business and finance, and engineering. Half the higher education students live at home, half are from outside Lincolnshire. Most undertake the first year of their programme in Boston before going on to Leicester. Some study for two years in Boston, a feature of the arrangements which is particularly attractive to adult students who live locally. There are 30 students on part-time diploma or certificate courses in management studies. The relations between De Montfort University and the college are good and the college responds quickly and effectively to the requirements of the university.

11 There are close links with those employers who sponsor students at the college. Employers receive a form annually which allows them to comment on the quality of the college services. Those interviewed during the inspection were satisfied with the range of skills acquired by students during their time at college. Formal contact mechanisms, such as employer liaison committees have varied in their effectiveness. As part of the strategic planning process, the college writes annually to a wide range of organisations, inviting comments on its provision. In conjunction with the local chamber of commerce and the Lincolnshire TEC, the college has held information sessions for employers in Boston, Skegness and Spalding. There has been little development of work-based assessment services and the provision of NVQs on employers' premises.

12 The college has strong relationships with other organisations in the area such as the TEC, local councils and the chamber of commerce. It co-operates effectively with, and is supportive of, TEC programmes and initiatives. In conjunction with two other Lincolnshire colleges, it has a TEC contract for 'start-up' business counselling. Using FEFC funding, the college has extended this to offer a 120-hour course on 'starting your own business'. The college has a contract to provide support and advice for established businesses, a contract for the job club in Sleaford and a rehabilitation programme contract to co-ordinate training and resources



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for students with physical disabilities. However, the college has lost contracts for the job clubs in Boston and Spalding and the contract for the restart programme. Adult guidance is provided as part of the TEC guidance programme for the Boston area. The college holds a 50 per cent share in the Boston Training Agency along with the Boston Chamber of Commerce. The Boston Training Agency has youth and modern apprenticeship training contracts from the Lincolnshire and Greater Peterborough TECs. The college is the major provider of training for this agency. In addition, the college has its own contracts with TECs for youth training and modern apprenticeships.

13 Boston College co-operates with other colleges in Lincolnshire on programmes such as the 'flexi-tech' project, using TEC competitiveness funding, and the Lincolnshire Enterprise project to provide business training. Joint meetings are held between the colleges and the TEC on education policies. College courses for which industry meets the cost have been run through a college company, Eastern Training Consultants. In 1995-96, a relatively small income of about £65,000 was generated and the operation of such courses is now under review. The college has a contract with Lincolnshire LEA to provide adult education within the Boston area. The college franchises its vocational work for the South Holland area and is a sponsoring institution for the Skegness area. In these areas, these contacts allow the college to promote vocational work in a variety of locations. Without similar contacts in the area to the north of Boston, the college has less influence there.

14 The college has the contract to provide education services to the local open prison. Programmes offered include adult basic education, information technology, English and arithmetic, job search skills, personal social education and assistance in applying for jobs. There are approximately 200 inmates of whom about 80 attend at least one session (three hours) of education a week. Thirty are on full-time education programmes. The college claims that the prison service rates its provision to be in the top five for efficiency (out of 140 prison education contracts). The college is one of the biggest employers in Boston and has close links with Boston Borough Council. The Boston Business Link Centre is jointly managed by the borough, the college and the chamber of commerce. The De Montfort site is used for local residents' association meetings and the Sam Newsom Centre is used for staging public performances.

15 The college publishes a range of informative and attractively presented guides and handbooks for different groups of students. Displays in local libraries and in the college shops in Spalding, Sleaford, Boston and Skegness are used to publicise college courses. Advertisements have been shown in local cinemas, on banners across roads and on the Internet. Publicity tends to focus on the provision at Boston and there is not enough analysis of the impact of publicity on particular sectors of the college's market.

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## **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

16 The corporation board has 18 members including two staff nominees and one student. The director of studies is a co-opted member. The board's combined membership provides an appropriate range of experience and is representative of the geographical region which the college covers. Members apply their general management experience, specialist knowledge and community involvement in an effective way. The board has a group which is responsible for planning members' development and training. Public advertisements were used to attract suitable candidates for a recent vacancy. The clerk to the governing body is also the college's director of finance and services. The clerk's job description is brief compared with the guidelines provided by the FEFC.

17 The business of the board and its committees is well prepared although the board itself recognises that agendas are too long bearing in mind the time available for meetings. Procedures are sound; papers and supporting documents are clear and additional information is supplied on request. Meetings often include short presentations by college managers and members have the opportunity to ask pertinent questions. A regular newsletter for governors keeps them informed about national issues and the affairs of the college. The board has set itself performance targets which are reviewed each year. Its target of an average 75 per cent attendance at meetings has been achieved. An agreed code of conduct and a comprehensive register of interests are in place. Relationships between board members and between the board and senior managers are excellent. There is a clear understanding of the separate functions of the corporation and senior management. Committees of the corporation have clear terms of reference. There are two standing committees: a finance and general purposes committee, which also has responsibility for employment and remuneration, and an audit committee. Unusually, the academic board is also designated as a full committee of the corporation, the governors valuing its advice on academic matters.

18 The leadership provided by the senior management team is effective and highly valued by the staff and governors. There is a clear recognition of the value of teams and individual members of staff are given freedom to manage their own areas of responsibility. The complex management structure makes the lines of communication and accountability appear convoluted. However, staff understand the structure and respond to it effectively. The strategic objectives of the college are clear to all staff and these form the basis of planning at various levels of the college. There is an established planning cycle which involves staff at all levels in the development of the strategic plan and the annual operating objectives.

19 The senior management group, comprising the principal, the vice-principal who is also the director of studies, the director of finance and services, and the three deans of faculty, has a strategic planning and executive management function. Each faculty comprises a group of

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curriculum programmes and resource units. Deans are responsible for their faculties and for specified cross-college functions such as marketing, site management or external contracts. They are accountable to the principal for cross-college functions, to the director of studies for curriculum matters and to the director of finance and services for resources. The operational management team comprises the senior management group together with the senior administrative officer, the assistant directors, the college accountant, the student services manager, the quality manager and the services manager. The college accounts are presented monthly to this group. The joint management team brings in programme managers and resource managers who are in day-to-day contact with teaching staff and able to provide effective channels of communication between teachers and managers. The team is chaired by middle managers, rotating on a termly basis.

20 The curriculum programmes are headed by programme managers and the resource units by resource managers. The programme managers are responsible for courses and students. The resource managers are responsible for meeting the physical and human resource requirements of the programmes. Five resource managers and seven programme managers liaise with section leaders and individual teachers. The section leaders are responsible for co-ordinating the staff team, managing the provision, monitoring quality and developing the curriculum. Some perform this task well. Others require support and opportunities to develop their skills. Variability in the relative size and composition of programme areas, sections and resource units within the current structure has been recognised as a matter requiring further consideration. The strong sectional focus of many aspects of the work means that good practice is not always shared across faculties and programmes.

21 Staff communicate effectively. Meetings have clear objectives and the outcomes are minuted. Common formats have been adopted for each type of formal meeting. Meeting times are identified on the college timetable and part-time staff are paid to attend where appropriate. There is a weekly staff newsletter covering standard items of information. A more extensive termly publication, 'See, Hear', includes a distillation of topics from the corporation and other relevant senior meetings. Awards are made annually to individual staff or groups of staff for consistent achievement and contribution to the college. These achievements are reported to the board of the corporation. There is a bonus scheme for senior postholders involving targets which are negotiated with the remuneration committee of the board. All managers in the college on management spine conditions or their equivalent are on a system of performance related pay. The performance targets are set in the context of the college's strategic objectives and are agreed with line managers.

22 The college has a provisional average level of funding for 1996-97 of £19.31 per unit of activity, compared with £19.47 per unit in 1995-96.

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In 1996-97, the median for all general further education and tertiary colleges is £17.97 and for all sector colleges £18.66 per unit. The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1995 are shown in figures 5 and 6. Sixty-three per cent of funding was from the FEFC. Regular budgetary reports are prepared for the board and for all budget holders. There is a clear understanding of how budgets are allocated and the system works well. Resource managers and section leaders are responsible for ensuring that staff have full teaching programmes.

23 The college has not achieved its target number of units of activity for the last two years. Contingency plans were made against a possible shortfall and prudent financial management has ensured the financial stability of the college. The college has a number of systems for collecting management data; some operate independently and some are not computerised. Some of the information collected and held at section and programme level is not brought together centrally. A series of monthly reports are circulated to managers and special reports can be requested through the registry. Further reports are being developed, but there is a lack of overall co-ordination. A review should be undertaken of the data currently collected and the use made of these data. They should be centrally collated through a single management information system.

#### **STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

24 Firm links exist with most local secondary schools. The college has a schools liaison committee and there is an identified college contact for each school. Parents evenings and 'taster' days are held regularly at the college. A leadership training programme was run for prospective school prefects using the college's residential accommodation. College staff attend careers events and exhibitions. One head teacher is a member of the college's governing body. Six members of the college staff serve as governors of local schools. The college, as a key member of the Boston technical and vocational education initiative, has encouraged collaboration with schools on a range of activities including the provision of work experience. It has regularly hosted a technology week involving up to 800 pupils from eight local schools who take part in industrial case studies, planning making and marketing products. Compacts exist with five schools in the catchment area, under which the college guarantees pupils places on suitable programmes.

25 Prospective students are provided with information and impartial guidance to enable them to make an informed choice of studies. The student services unit is located in a pleasant open-plan centre, off the foyer at the main campus site. Its staff are well managed and operate as a coherent team. They deal with admissions, guidance and support and provide frontline information services. Responses to enquiries are efficient and prompt. All applications are screened by the student services manager. Those requiring general guidance are handled by student

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services staff. Those requiring a course admission interview are handled by members of the specialist programme teams. Course managers receive regular reports on the progress of recruitment. School-leavers are encouraged to bring parents to their interviews and to have with them their records of achievement. Interviews are carried out carefully, using established procedures. Interviewers refer to a helpful checklist of the matters to be covered. Each specialist interview leads to a conditional or unconditional offer, or a further guidance session to enable the student to find out about other more suitable courses. Student services also provide college-wide guidance to staff on a range of policies and codes of practice.

26 In September, following publication of their examination results but before courses start, prospective students are invited to college to receive further guidance and to discuss the programme of complementary studies. The college's large programme of complementary studies includes academic and vocational qualifications, GNVQ additional and optional units, sport and recreational activities and opportunities for additional learning support. Participation in the programme forms part of the learning contract for full-time students. All full-time students are expected to have a 22-hour timetable each week which means that most are required to choose at least two complementary studies options. Owing to the poor attendance at complementary studies sessions in the past, the college is placing greater emphasis this year on the motivating value of vocational studies. For example, at their September interview, many computing students chose a programming option, business students an accountancy or marketing option and motor vehicle students an option in mechanical engineering and welding. Students were given individual advice and had plenty of time to check if they were on the right programme, identify possible future career options, and to choose these options. Staff kept a record of students' choices but students left the interview with no record of their own.

27 All full-time students have an induction programme at the start of their course. Tutors have an induction and enrolment handbook which includes a checklist of what is to be covered during induction. Training and planning for induction is built into staff-development time during the preceding year. Generally, the programme was well delivered, although in some sessions students were not given enough opportunity to ask questions of their own. There was a relevant emphasis on the student handbook, on the learning agreement and on ensuring that the items on the induction checklist had been covered. Staff from student services provide a late induction service for students enrolling at times other than the start of a semester. The student handbook is a good-quality publication containing relevant information and named contacts for key-college services. The college is developing procedures at course level to accredit students' prior learning.

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28 All full-time, and the majority of part-time students are allocated a personal tutor. On average, full-time students are allocated one hour a week tutorial time. The college's policy on personal guidance and support sets out tutors' responsibilities, which include maintaining a file, provided by student services, for each student. The file contains the learning agreement, induction checklist, action plan, sport and leisure notes and student handbook. The tutorial programme is flexible and individual tutors develop it in a number of ways. Departmental handbooks for tutors help to focus the work which is carried out in tutorials. Most staff complete the required action plan for learning with their students, although the standard of recording varies. Students receive written reports about their progress and, where appropriate, parents are invited to a termly consultation evening. Transfers to other courses are arranged up to the first half term of a student's programme. Student services will help students to upgrade their record of achievement. However, this service is not publicised and many students fail to take advantage of it. Tutorial support is variable in its rigour and effectiveness, a view confirmed by students' responses to a questionnaire on the effectiveness of their tutorial programme. Students' attendance is rigorously monitored at course level. There are rewards for good attendance and disciplinary procedures for dealing with poor attendance.

29 Students who recognise their own need for learning support, or who are referred by teachers or tutors, agree an action plan with specialist support staff. Support is arranged in the newly-developed learning centres either at the Rochford or De Montfort site. The college has introduced Basic Skills Agency tests in literacy and numeracy for students at or below NVQ level 2 or its equivalent. Half of the 380 students tested in the current year are in need of additional support. The college made a decision to enrol all full-time students requiring such support on wordpower and numberpower programmes. However, by the end of the inspection in the eighth week of term, 20 per cent had still to be placed on these programmes. Further, specialist diagnosis is required for some students to ensure that learning support meets their specific needs. Part-time students had their expectations raised by the screening exercise, but none have been allocated additional support.

30 There are effective arrangements for careers guidance on both sites. This is provided by college staff and by the LEA with whom there is a service level agreement. A popular and effective confidential counselling service is provided by three qualified part-time counsellors. From January to June this year there were 363 appointments. The college is part of the Lincolnshire Ecumenical project for chaplaincy in further education. A chaplain has been part of the college counselling team for some years.

31 The college has 134 residential places in modern, single-study bedroom accommodation. Although the majority of residential students are over 18, there are 20 who are under this age. There is a night security

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guard on duty around the campus and a non-resident warden. A full-time resident warden has recently been appointed.

32 The student union committee was elected in the week before the team inspection. The student services unit provides direction and support to the committee, which in turn represents students' views and organises a wide range of social and sporting activities. Students are represented on all appropriate committees within the college.

### **TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING**

33 Of the 191 teaching sessions inspected, 74 per cent had strengths which outweighed the weaknesses. This compares with a figure of 63 per cent for the sector as a whole in 1995-96, as reported in the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. Less than 6 per cent of the sessions had weaknesses which outweighed the strengths. The grades awarded to the sessions inspected are shown in the following table.

#### **Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study**

<b>Programmes</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Totals</b>
GCE AS/A level		11	17	7	2	0	37
GCSE		4	5	10	2	0	21
GNVQ		4	9	6	0	0	19
NVQ		8	14	4	2	0	28
Other vocational		13	26	10	2	0	51
Other		14	17	2	1	1	35
<b>Total</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>191</b>

34 Attendance at the lessons observed was 83 per cent of those registered, compared with an average of 73 per cent for all general further education colleges inspected during 1995-96. The average number of students present in the lessons inspected was 12.6. Levels of attendance ranged from 94 per cent in programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to 72 per cent in health and social care. Other programme areas with attendance levels of 80 per cent or below included science (80 per cent) and hair and beauty (76 per cent). Art and design and business studies sessions had average attendances of 88 per cent. The college does not currently produce an overall figure for attendance as one of its performance indicators.

35 Some part of each programme is delivered through methods of learning which involve students working on their own using resources designed for the purpose. There is a learning centre on two of the main sites. A number of programme teams have also established resource centres within their specialist accommodation. The college is developing materials for courses such as numberpower and wordpower which

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students can work on by themselves at their own pace. Key skills are integrated effectively with other elements of GNVQ courses. NVQ catering students are provided with opportunities to improve their key skills but these are not widely exploited. In science, students' work is hindered by inadequately developed communication and numeracy skills and in business studies, there are examples of poor communication and numeracy skills in lessons and in written work.

36 Computer literacy and information technology courses are well organised. The learning materials developed are suitable for use by students with a wide range of expertise and interests. About 90 students from the GCE A level and GCSE programmes take such courses. Information technology is also offered to GNVQ students and NVQ level 3 students. Staff have prepared a range of exercises to suit the particular courses which students are following. For example, construction students carried out an exercise on earthquakes and in engineering a student, assuming the role of storeman in the motor vehicle workshop, used a computer to enter a list of tools against each name in the class. GNVQ business students make use of a graphics package; GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism students use information technology to produce a newsletter; and foundation students produce posters and a Christmas card. Specialist information technology in science includes the use of a statistics package in biology and data handling programmes in physics. In sports science students are required to produce their assignments on a wordprocessor. Computing students are sometimes required to return work for assessment through electronic mail. Some material designed for students to work on by themselves provides instructions on wordprocessing, spreadsheets and electronic mail packages.

37 In mathematics, common schemes of work are used across the section. GCE A level teaching is generally good. Students' knowledge and skills are being developed satisfactorily. Teachers regularly check to ensure that learning has taken place and support for individual students is generally effective. In a majority of GCE A level lessons good use is made of questioning. GCSE teaching is not always effective. For example, more advanced topics are introduced before students have grasped the principles of basic algebra and teachers make little use of teaching aids to help develop students' understanding. In science there is particularly good practice in the teaching of laboratory safety and risk assessment. Teachers motivate students by making clear the practical applications of science, notably in sports science where they draw on students' own experience. Practical work is well organised and effective.

38 Courses in construction are generally carefully planned and teachers use a suitable variety of teaching and learning methods. The teaching is matched to the abilities of the students and the requirements of the awarding bodies. Students' industrial experiences are used to enrich lessons and strengthen learning. Teachers are quick to correct poor



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practice by craft students, often by giving a demonstration themselves. High-quality course materials and handouts are a feature of many lessons. Learning packs, containing suitable reference material, enable craft students to work effectively at their own pace. In some lessons inappropriate use was made of imperial units.

39 Teachers in engineering develop positive relationships with students. Some teachers were successful in getting students to talk about their work experiences. Practical work was well organised in motor vehicle studies and electrical installation. The learning support materials used in pneumatics, robotics and computer-aided design workshops were well produced and effective, but those used in welding and fabrication were of poor quality.

40 In secretarial and business studies, teachers skilfully adjust their teaching methods to suit the differing needs of students. For example, in secretarial studies, where full-time and part-time students studying at different levels are sometimes taught together, flexible methods of working ensure that learning is effective for all. In some cases, good use is made of work experience. Much of the work experience provided for secretarial students, however, was not sufficiently realistic, particularly on NVQ courses. The teaching and learning in management and professional studies varies widely. At its best it is lively and challenging. For example, during a meeting in the workplace between a student, her tutor and an employer, a project was arranged which would be of value to both employer and student. In one or two of the worst classes teaching is stolid and time wasting.

41 Catering teachers set clear aims and objectives which they explain to their students. The knowledge gained in the classroom is effectively reinforced during practical work. During practical lessons, students are encouraged to help each other and this encourages the development of teamwork skills. Some practical classes occupy rooms which are too small and students are not always alerted to potential work hazards. Some good open learning packs have been developed for the NVQ level 2 course in food and drink service which enable work-based students to gain the qualification.

42 Teachers of health and social care plan and organise their lessons effectively. They make good use of their own vocational experience but part-time students sometimes draw too heavily on anecdotal evidence. Talks from practitioners, group visits and well-organised work experience all help to add realism to courses. The teaching of hairdressing and beauty therapy is particularly good. Staff work effectively as a team and communicate their enthusiasm to the students, many of whom produce work of a high standard. Assessment methods are appropriate and internal verification is rigorous.

43 Methods of teaching and learning in art and design are generally appropriate but not enough use is made of computer-aided techniques. In

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a second-year media class dealing with cinematic techniques, a lively and engaging presentation built on previous learning, enabled students to practise specialist vocabulary and provided a valuable preparation for future video production work. Individual tuition is generally more effective than teaching to large groups. There is relatively little formal co-operation on the curriculum between the three sections of fine art, three-dimensional design and fashion. The teaching of performing arts is of a very good standard. The national diploma in popular music places appropriate emphasis on the music business and encourages students to consider how they can earn a living through their skills. Students organised a concert at the Sam Newsom Centre, introduced the musicians and recorded the event. During a jazz class the tutor, playing piano, led the students' band through various approaches to playing jazz and a good standard of performance was achieved.

44 Most social science teachers have appropriate vocational experience and the team is strengthened by the use of current practitioners as part-time teachers. However, the team does not co-operate in the production of teaching materials and there is variable use of lesson plans. Appropriate attention is paid to ethical issues in subjects such as psychology. In English and communication studies, teachers have been successful at encouraging and enabling students to work effectively on their own. On some occasions, however, a more disciplined approach and tighter deadlines for the completion of work are required.

45 The overall quality of teaching for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is high. Teaching methods and learning activities which make use of 'real' materials and situations, are particularly appropriate. In most instances, staff have realistic expectations of their achievements. Occasionally, individual students are set tasks which are well above or below their capabilities. Some students with learning difficulties are integrated with students on vocational courses. For example, two such students are taking the NVQ level 2 course in food preparation and cookery and are provided with extra help in practical classes. Three students join practical office administration lessons in the business centre and are given tasks appropriate to their level of study (NVQ level 1). Students at level 3 supervise them and this helps both sets of students to develop their interpersonal skills.

### **STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

46 The 157 students, aged 16 to 18, who entered for GCE AS/A level examinations in 1994-95 scored, on average, 3.3 points per entry. This placed the college among the middle third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure, based on data in the 1995 performance tables published by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). The average points score per entry has increased from 3.3 in 1995 to 3.9 in 1996. For candidates entered for two or more GCE A levels the average points score in 1995 was 9.5 and in 1996 it was

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11.6. Students aged 19 years and over taking two or more GCE AS/A level examinations scored on average 8.4 points compared with an average score for England and Wales of 8.2 points. GCSE results indicate 760 entries of which 53.8 per cent achieved grades A to C compared with an average of 52.7 per cent for England and Wales.

47 In 1995, 64 per cent of students in their final year of study on the vocational courses included in the DfEE 1995 performance tables were successful, which placed the college among the bottom third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure. However, the figure rose to 89 per cent in 1996 and the equivalent figures for 1994 and 1993 were 73 and 79 per cent, respectively. Overall, 73 per cent of students who completed vocational courses in 1995 were successful. For GNVQ and precursor awards the pass rate was 58 per cent at intermediate level and 74 per cent at advanced level. For other awards the pass rate was 59 per cent at level 1, 64 per cent at level 2, 80 per cent at level 3 and 75 per cent at level 4. Two hundred and forty students achieved NVQ awards at levels 1 to 4.

48 Most students are punctual for lessons, industrious and work well with others. Many are confident and articulate in talking about their work. Mature students generally and those at level 3 in particular, are enthusiastic and well motivated.

49 Practical work is generally carried out competently and safely. When working with clients, students show a very professional attitude. Some students are not aware of the speed at which tasks have to be carried out in industry. Performing arts students achieved a particularly high standard of work in their assignments. In one music lesson, for example, students supported by their tutor set about writing a jingle for a fictional advertisement. Within an hour they had composed and played the jingle and were ready to record it in the second half of the lesson. Work folders on Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses and portfolios for NVQs and GNVQs are well ordered and neatly presented. The folders of written work produced on GCE A level English courses show that students can research effectively and sustain arguments.

50 Pass rates in GCE A level mathematics are above the national average for further education colleges but few students achieve the higher grades A to C. Overall, GCSE mathematics results are similar to the national average. Science results are mixed. For example, in 1995-96, 80 per cent of the students entered for GCE A level biology achieved a pass compared with 38 per cent in chemistry. Generally, results in science fall a little short of the targets set by the college without being conspicuously or consistently poor.

51 Examination results in construction vary: some are above the national average, for example NVQ level 1 in construction occupations; some are below, for example NVQ level 3 in carpentry and joinery. A number of construction students have taken national prizes, including a female

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student who won the BTEC silver medal for construction. Engineering pass rates are poor on most courses. Although 80 per cent of students gained their BTEC first diplomas in electronics, in 1995-96, the pass rate for the BTEC first diploma in engineering was 50 per cent and for the national diploma 26 per cent. On part-time courses the highest pass rate was 79 per cent. All other part-time courses had pass rates below 60 per cent.

52 Students following the two-year full-time GCE A level course in business studies have achieved a pass rate higher than the national average for general further education colleges over the last three years. Pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate and advanced business courses and single subject secretarial examinations as a proportion of those completing, are also good when compared with the sector as a whole. Performance on NVQ 2 and NVQ 3 business administration is relatively poor. The majority of full-time secretarial students only complete part of their awards. The range of students' achievements in management and professional studies is wide. Results are good on National Examining Board for Supervisory Management courses and on Association of Accounting Technicians courses pass rates at foundation and intermediate levels of 50 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively, compare well with the national pass rate of about 20 per cent. However, at technician level the overall pass rate of 13 per cent is well below the national average. In GCE A level accountancy, pass rates are at or above the national average. In 1995-96, a student was awarded the best student award of the Chartered Institute of Management.

53 The rota system in catering gives students sufficient time to gain skills whilst keeping them motivated. The standard of work seen was good overall with deadlines for completion set and adhered to. Students work well to acquire appropriate levels of knowledge, understanding and skills. Particular attention is paid to practical skills for GNVQ students and food theory for NVQ students. Students work effectively both individually and as members of mixed ability teams; the more able helping the less able. In 1995-96 the retention rates on NVQ level 2 courses were 62 per cent for full-time students and 47 per cent for part-time students. On the GNVQ advanced course retention was 62 per cent. Success rates as a percentage of completion for both full-time and part-time NVQ level 2 students are high.

54 In health and social care, students' achievements were lower in 1995 than in 1994 and 1996. In hair and beauty the pass rates were at or above the national average and a college team was selected this year as one of three teams to carry out demonstrations at Salon International '96. There are low pass rates on some GCE courses in art and design. In performing arts, national diploma and GCE A level examination results are generally satisfactory but GCSE and first diploma results are unsatisfactory.

55 Most humanities students who complete the course achieve results at or above the national average. In English, 1996 GCE A level results show an overall pass rate well above the provisional national average figures

and there are a substantial number of A to C grades. GCSE English examination results are also good. Results in GCE A level sociology, however, were below average.

56 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve success on a wide range of courses including numberpower, wordpower, and the English Speaking Board examinations. Many progress to more advanced courses within the college. There is insufficient analysis of the progression and achievement of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

57 The destinations of students at the end of the college year 1995-96 are summarised below.

#### **Destinations of students 1995-96**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Further education (%)</b>	<b>Higher education (%)</b>	<b>Employment (%)</b>
Level 1	Four or more GCSEs grades A to G*	71	0	7
Level 2	Intermediate GNVQs	86	0	14
	NVQs	45	0	55
Level 3	Less than two GCE A levels	91	9	0
	Two or more GCE A levels	18	78	4
	Advanced GNVQs	15	70	15
	BTEC qualifications	4	53	43

*\*the destinations of 22 per cent of these students were unknown.*

58 In 1995-96, the overall retention rate for full-time FEFC-funded students at the college was 86 per cent, based on a comparison of enrolments on 1 November 1995 with enrolments on 1 May 1996. In business and secretarial studies there are generally high levels of retention on one-year courses but retention rates for two-year advanced programmes are poor. Some art and design courses also have high 'drop-out' rates. In 1995-96, the retention rates on NVQ level 2 catering courses were 62 per cent for full-time students and 47 per cent for part-time students. On the full-time GNVQ advanced course it was 62 per cent. In health and social care retention is good for two-year full-time and part-time courses, but poor on one-year courses. In English, the positive picture of achievement is somewhat blighted by the poor retention rates for GCE A level students between 1994 and 1996. The college has taken action to improve levels of retention, including introducing new syllabuses.

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

59 The college has a maturing quality assurance system at course and programme level. Although the system is complex, it works reasonably

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effectively and staff display a commitment to quality improvement. There is a comprehensive manual of guidance covering all aspects of the system, beginning with the quality assurance policy and operating statement. The academic board is charged with monitoring the implementation of the policy. One of its subcommittees monitors performance against the targets which are set at programme and course level, another monitors performance against college-wide targets and FEFC performance indicators. Faculty committees are charged with improving performance at faculty level and programme committees with achieving targets at programme level. In a further effort to ensure that procedures and standards are being implemented there is a programme of academic audits. The quality manager is responsible for the management of the audits and for reporting the outcomes to the relevant academic board subcommittee. A general weakness in the system is that the analysis of students' achievements focuses on performance in relation to those students who complete their courses. There is no analysis of the performance of student cohorts, from enrolment to completion, which means that issues relating to retention are relatively neglected.

60 Course reviews are generally thorough. Four course evaluation reports on induction and recruitment; learning and delivery; management and resources; and outcomes are required from each course at appropriate dates each year. Standard course review forms are completed. These require evaluative comment; documented evidence to show that charter standards have been achieved; performance targets for improvement; and self-evaluations. Action plans arising from the process must indicate the actions proposed, who is responsible and the timescale for implementation. Some reports are not sufficiently evaluative and self-critical and targets are not always well defined. Nevertheless, the process of course review is generally effective. A copy of each completed and authorised review document is sent to the quality manager, dean and appropriate co-ordinator. The information gathered and analysed during course reviews ultimately provides the academic board subcommittees with reports on quality assurance.

61 Students are kept informed about course reviews and the proposed actions in response to issues raised by student representatives on the course review teams, through the publication of news-sheets. Their views on provision are sought in a variety of ways, including the college-wide surveys of students' opinions which take place four times a year. Action is taken in response to issues which they raise and improvements have been effected. The quality manager compiles comprehensive summaries of students' responses to surveys. He also analyses responses to the surveys of employers' perceptions of the college and work placement surveys which are carried out annually, and feeds back information to employers.

62 Currently, all full-time courses and 82 per cent of part-time courses are subject to review. Learning support, tutorial provision and the complementary studies programme are not subject to any centralised

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evaluation and review procedure. All areas of the college concerned with administrative and learning support have set service standards and improvement targets. These are monitored by line managers and reviewed annually to assess the extent to which they have been achieved and to set targets for the following year. Quality audits are undertaken to check on compliance with service level agreements.

63 Classroom observation was introduced on a trial basis in March 1996 and is to become a permanent feature. Procedures for integrating this with other aspects of quality assurance and staff development have yet to be devised and implemented. A college quality assurance development plan has been drawn up identifying strengths and weaknesses in the existing quality assurance system as the college sees them. It is supported by an action plan and timetable to address issues identified. However, the development plan is not constructed from the analysis undertaken through the quality assurance process of review and evaluation. It is a parallel document and does not mesh with the system in place.

64 The college's self-assessment report is based on the quality assurance development plan drawn up by senior managers. The report follows the headings set out in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Strengths and weaknesses are identified but some weaknesses have been omitted or understated.

65 All submissions for new courses are presented to the validation subcommittee of the academic board to ensure they meet defined college quality criteria. The format accepted for external validating bodies is used also for internal validation in order to avoid duplication of effort. The case for validation is presented in the form of a portfolio which shows how the quality criteria have been met. All submissions to discontinue courses must be submitted to the director of studies for approval.

66 During 1995-96, the college enrolled 601 students under franchise agreements. Some aspects of the management arrangements for contracts were not tightly controlled and contract compliance was not monitored sufficiently closely. The college has reviewed its franchise operation and is now concentrating on a smaller number of local contracts. It has recognised the need for stringent management arrangements for franchise work and a comprehensive guide has been produced. All franchise courses are subject to the college quality and validation procedures.

67 The college charter was devised after a consultative process. It is a detailed document, intended to set out the framework within which the college operates, rather than as a document for students. Some aspects of students' entitlements and responsibilities are covered elsewhere; for example, in student handbooks. Students are told about the charter commitments during induction and are aware of their rights and responsibilities and avenues for voicing their views or registering complaints. Procedures for auditing the college's compliance with charter standards on a four-year cycle were introduced in January 1996. Draft

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standards covering all areas of college activity were approved by the corporation during the summer term 1996.

68 All full-time staff are provided with an induction to the college which includes training on the strategic planning process and the system of target setting and review. Staff are supplied with a staff handbook. There is an induction checklist. During induction, staff complete a questionnaire seeking information about qualifications, areas of interest and expertise and relevant past experience. Staff qualifications are updated through the review procedure. Part-time staff are inducted less formally by their line manager. In September 1996, the college introduced a new, formal mentoring system.

69 The provision for staff development is good and linked closely to the college's strategic objectives. Staff have the opportunity to identify personal needs and requests. Some are selected for specific training and development. Staff are required to evaluate any activity undertaken and to disseminate the knowledge gained within the institution as appropriate. Staff and their partners can take any college course free of charge. The annual staff-development budget of £59,000 in 1995-96 represented 1.3 per cent of the staffing budget.

70 The college has a formal development and appraisal system called 'target setting and review' which applies to all staff. Teachers have personal targets against which their performance is reviewed. The performance of business support staff is reviewed against targets set for the team to which they belong. Line managers conduct these reviews annually. Staff-development needs arising from the reviews are related to the strategic plan, recorded and agreed. Activity is monitored and evaluated by the staff-development committee and an annual report is submitted to the senior management team and the corporation. There is little cost benefit analysis of staff-development activity. Increasingly, the college is moving towards an in-house programme designed to focus on the needs of the staff in relation to the institution. Staff take part in directed staff development in a timetabled slot on Friday afternoons. In addition, there is a two-week period in July focusing on strategic planning which has proved to be effective in building teams and promoting staff involvement in the planning and development process. The development of managers has been identified as a priority for staff development. The college achieved Investor in People status in August 1996.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Staffing**

71 The college has 261 full-time equivalent staff. There are 151 full-time equivalent teaching staff, of whom 114 are full time, and 110 full-time equivalent support staff of whom 58 are full time. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subjects they teach and are caring and supportive of students. They are generally well qualified for the work they are



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undertaking. Eighty-six per cent of the full-time teachers have degrees and 39 per cent of all teaching and support staff have one or more qualifications from the training and development lead body.

72 Staffing resources are allocated to the five resource unit managers on the basis of the funding units earned. Managers can switch resources between programmes but overall they must stay within their allocation. Of the support staff, 32 are directly engaged in the support of students' learning. The college operates its own cleaning and catering services. In general, the level and type of support staff is appropriate to the work of the college. Resources for support areas are allocated by senior management on the basis of need and the development plans of the college.

73 In line with the college's equal opportunities policy, the college monitors the selection and recruitment of staff. For existing staff, information on age and gender is available at resource unit level. However, it is not drawn together with other relevant personnel data in a systematic way and in a format suitable for senior management purposes. Monitoring of information on age, gender and ethnicity for all staff is made more difficult by the inadequacies of the personnel computer system. The college has set aside funds in this financial year to purchase a new system. Fifty-four per cent of all staff and 33 per cent of the senior management team are female. In 1995-96, expenditure on staff pay was 63 per cent of total expenditure which was in line with the college's target.

#### **Equipment/learning resources**

74 The college is generally well equipped. Health care has good specialist equipment and the fashion sector is suitably equipped for garment making. Science students have access to excellent learning materials. The music studio has state of the art professional recording equipment. In engineering and catering, some of the equipment is dated. Capital equipment funding is allocated centrally in line with strategic and operational objectives. There is a contingency fund to meet unexpected expenditure resulting from breakdowns of equipment. Resource managers can apply for capital funds if they identify a new development during the course of the year. If approved by senior management, the college lends money to the section with the agreement that it will be repaid over the next few years from income generated by the venture. Budgets for consumables are allocated on the basis of a fixed rate per learning unit, weighted to take account of differences in consumable costs for different types of work. Revenue funding can be carried forward into the next financial year.

75 Information technology services are delivered by the computer services unit which is responsible for the provision of hardware and software and for technician support. Computer resources are available at the Rochford and De Montfort campuses. These sites are networked and students can use industrial-standard software. On the De Montfort site, there is a large open access centre and four other computer suites which

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are for timetabled teaching. On the Rochford site, there is a small open access centre located in the library, three general purpose rooms and a learning centre with eight computers. Overall there are 225 computers and the college is linked to the joint academic network (JANET) and the Internet. The college has a comprehensive information technology policy which covers a number of areas including legal issues, capital expenditure plans and the management of the resources. There is an information technology committee which assists the computer manager to formulate policy, identify requirements, provide staff development and encourage the use of information technology in teaching and learning.

76 The college library is situated on the Rochford site. It is small for a college of this size. There is concern amongst some students about the lack of a library on the De Montfort site. The stock of 22,900 books is generally adequate. An annual review of the books and periodicals available is conducted by subject leaders working with the librarian. The outcome of each meeting is documented and lines of action are agreed. The library funding for books and periodicals in 1995-96 was £34,000. The college has put the library catalogue on the computer network. A specialist resource centre has been created in fashion. This is in a screened-off section of the fashion area, which holds current periodicals, fashion forecasts, technical files, reference books and a computer file. The resource is well used and students take responsibility for its operation. The operation and staffing of the library and the audio-visual aids service are currently being reviewed. The library needs redecoration; this is planned for 1997. The music section at the Sam Newsom Centre has a stock of specialist music books.

### **Accommodation**

77 The college has improved its accommodation in recent years. The calculation of space required against actual space suggests a 2 per cent excess of space, using the figures suggested in the FEFC publication, *Guidance on Estate Management*. The college has carried out a termly review of its use of accommodation. Further development work is being undertaken to refine the monitoring process. In line with the college's strategic plan and operating statement, the accommodation strategy provides for modifications of buildings to meet the changing needs of the college. There is a long-term maintenance plan, and a well-established system of day-to-day maintenance.

78 The Sam Newsom Centre provides high-quality accommodation for music students. There is a purpose-built auditorium, practice rooms and classrooms for music. Some sound proofing is needed in the downstairs rehearsal room. The converted accommodation on the De Montfort campus is of high quality and in good decorative order. Classes in the 11 demountable classrooms on the campus are sometimes affected by noise from the adjoining car park. The siting of boards and screens and

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the lack of blinds in some rooms occasionally make effective projection and board work difficult.

79 The Rochford Centre has a higher proportion of small rooms than the De Montfort Centre and increasing class sizes means that rooms on this site are not always appropriate for the classes which use them. The approved code of practice for the gas installation area in construction is an outstanding facility. Some rooms used by engineering students, including a computer suite, provide high-quality learning environments. However, the welding workshop is cramped and cluttered. The motor vehicle workshop is well organised and shares a store with the adjacent mechanical workshop, but there is no reception area. The electrical installation workshop is well organised, containing benches and wiring boards and four newly-refurbished booths. In catering, the accommodation is good but is sometimes overcrowded. Both the restaurant and coffee bar have insufficient seating and tables. Drawn curtains, subdued lighting and candles improve the atmosphere in the restaurant. In hair and beauty, the accommodation is adequate. There is some disruption in one hair salon and in one beauty salon when other people require access. During lesson observations in science, management, business studies, social science, and art and design inspectors found that the size of some teaching rooms was too small for the class or the nature of the activity. The cramped accommodation contributed to some untidiness and inappropriate working practices.

80 Some of the accommodation in catering, science and mathematics could be made more interesting for students by displaying subject-related material or examples of students' work. One specialist engineering room would benefit from redecoration. The bodywork shop, sited in a mobile, is a drab environment. Refurbishment of the Rochford Centre is continuing and this should bring the accommodation up the standard of the other two buildings.

81 The Rochford site is accessible for students with physical disabilities except for one small area where wheelchair access is not possible. The ground floor of the De Montfort building is easily accessible but access to the first floor is more difficult. A chair lift has been installed on one of the staircases giving direct access to two classrooms and indirect access to others. There is good access to the demountable classrooms. The Sam Newsom Centre has wheelchair access through one entrance and there is a lift to all floors. It is physically impossible for wheelchair users to attend the sessions in the business centre.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES**

82 Particular strengths of the college are:

- an effective governing body with a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities
- a clear strategic planning cycle which involves staff at all levels

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- a largely effective quality assurance system at course and programme level
  - generally good-quality teaching
  - strong links with partner schools; the TEC; local, public and private bodies and sponsoring employers
  - comprehensive and effective student services
  - rigorous monitoring of students' attendance
  - generally good equipment and accommodation.

83 In order to build on its strengths and further improve its provision, the college should:

- improve poor retention and success rates on some courses
- improve contacts to the north of Boston in order to implement fully the college's mission
- strengthen the co-ordination and use of management information
- ensure that tutorial support is consistently effective
- ensure that students' needs for additional learning support are effectively diagnosed
- fully integrate all aspects of quality assurance.

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## FIGURES

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- 1 Student numbers by age (as at July 1996)

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

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

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

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  - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1995)

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  - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)

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

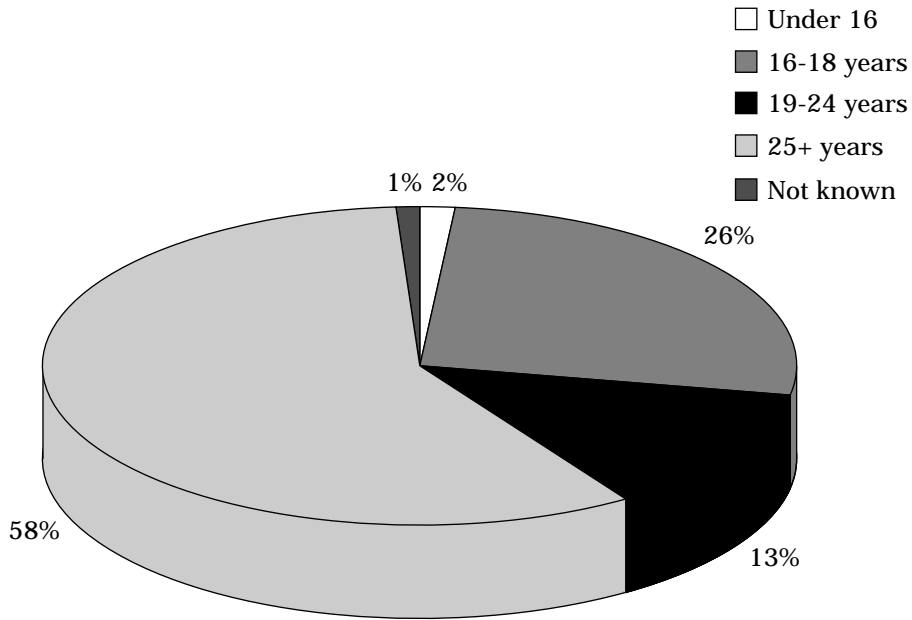
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**Figure 1**

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**Boston College: percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)**

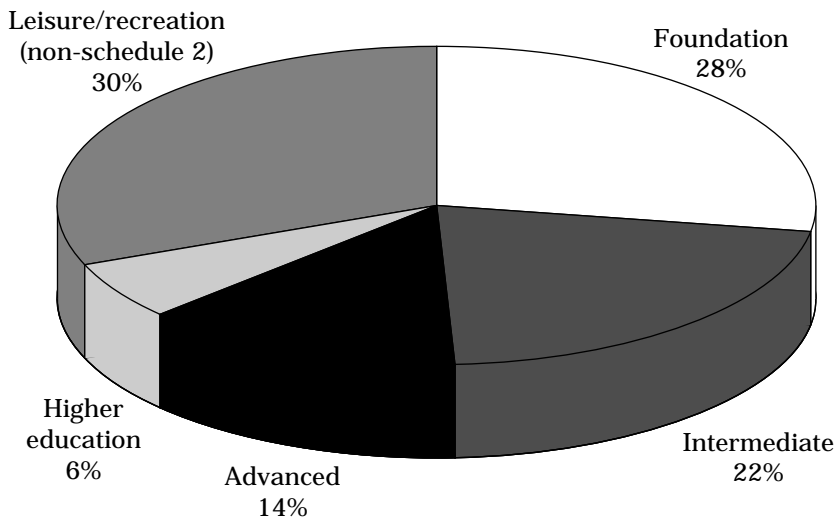


Student numbers: 11,182

**Figure 2**

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**Boston College: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)**

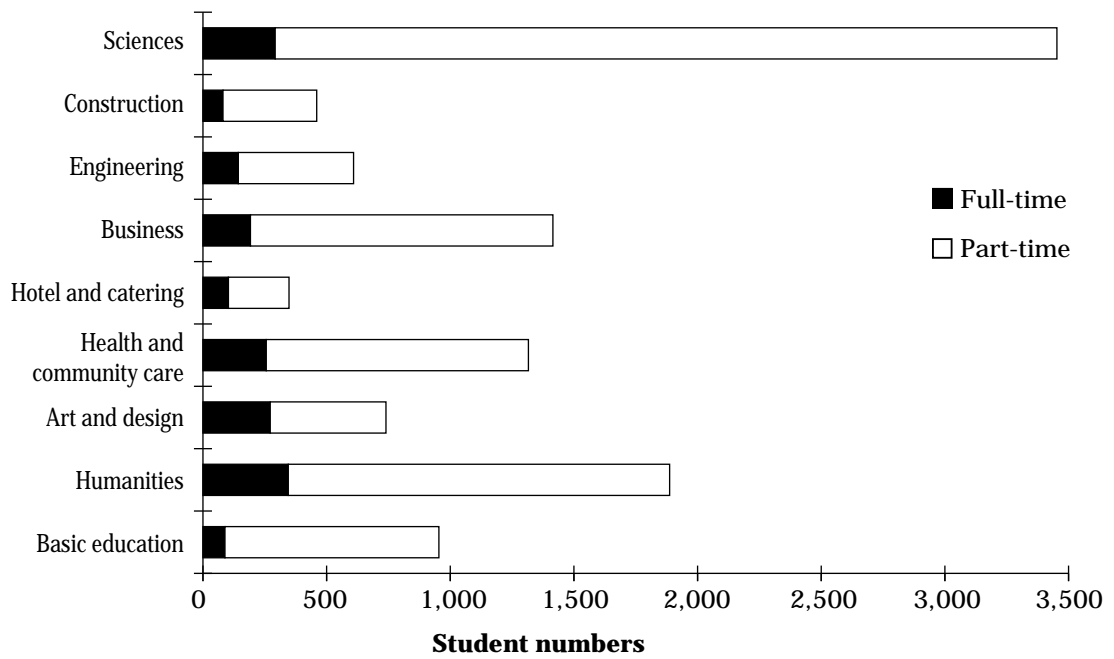


Student numbers: 11,182

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**Figure 3**

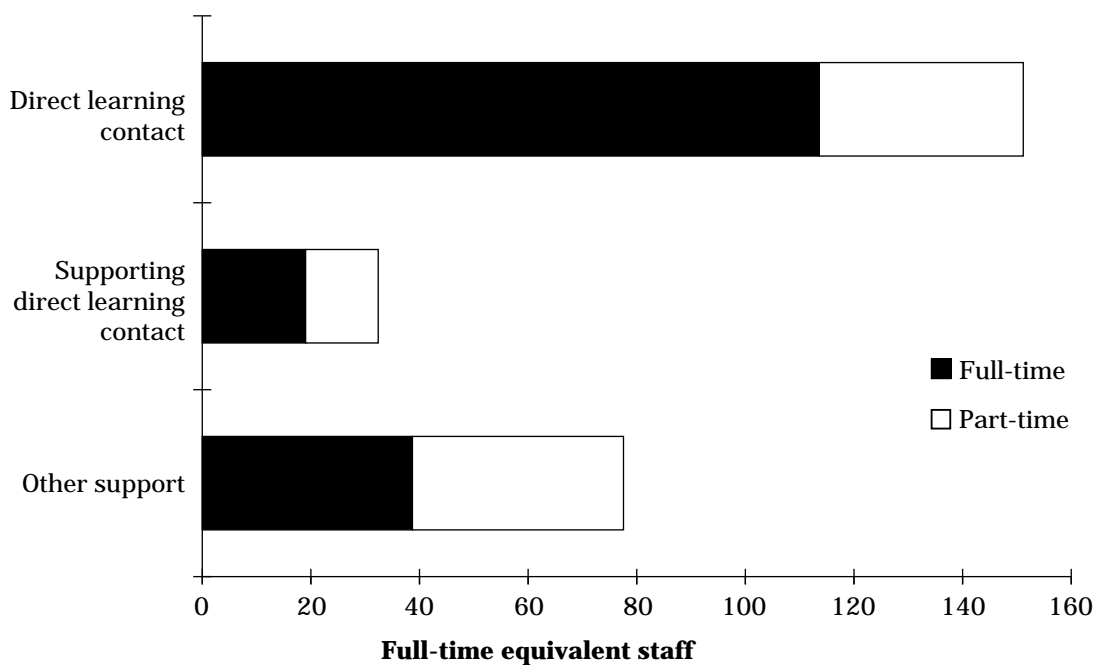
**Boston College: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)**



Student numbers: 11,182

**Figure 4**

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

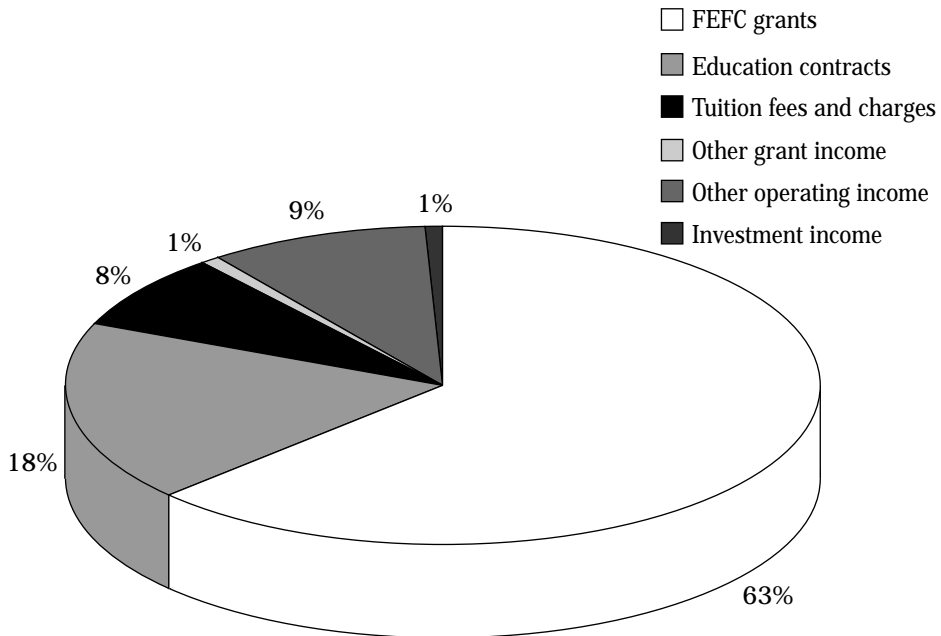


Full-time equivalent staff: 261

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**Figure 5**

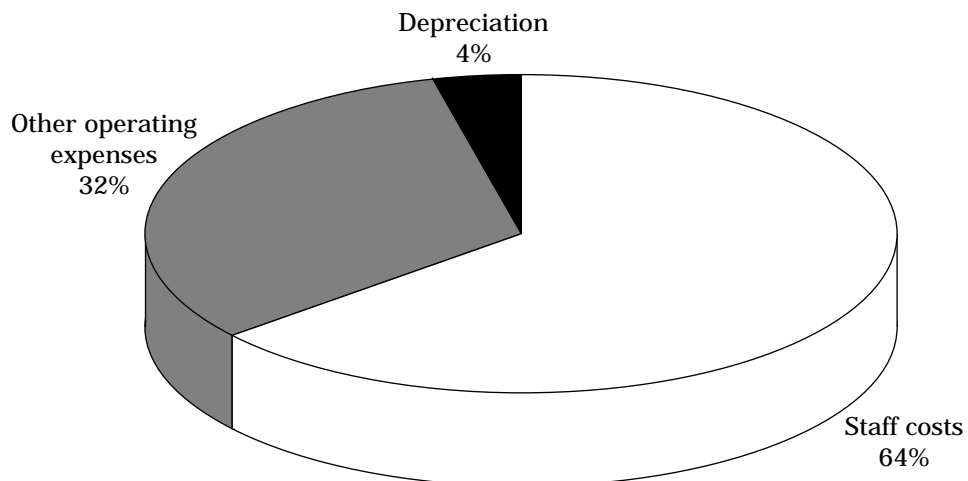
**Boston College: income (for 12 months to July 1995)**



Income: £7,547,000

**Figure 6**

**Boston College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)**



Expenditure: £7,317,000



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