

# The Calderdale Colleges Corporation

**REPORT FROM  
THE INSPECTORATE  
1997-98**

**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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## Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

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

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

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

## Retention and Pass Rates

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

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

# Summary

## The Calderdale Colleges Corporation

### *Yorkshire and Humberside Region*

#### Inspected December 1997

The Calderdale Colleges Corporation is a general further education institution in West Yorkshire. It produced a rigorous self-assessment report using methods which were based upon many of the FEFC's own inspection activities. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the report which included a comprehensive action plan that is being implemented.

The Calderdale Colleges Corporation offers a range of courses covering all of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Provision in four of these areas was inspected, together with aspects of cross-college provision. Community partnerships are effective but links with secondary schools have been difficult to form. Standards of teaching are generally sound. Students' achievements are satisfactory. There is good support for students; they receive suitable advice before entry, an appropriate induction, and regular reviews of progress. Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience to the work of the institution. They have been closely involved in the revision of the

institution's mission and the restatement of its core values. Targets for funding units and student numbers have been met consistently. Thorough consultation is carried out on all aspects of strategic planning. Communications within the institution are effective. A comprehensive and well co-ordinated framework for quality assurance has been established: course reviews are well structured; good use is made of feedback from students; and a range of service standards has been agreed. Staff development and appraisal processes are effective. There have been substantial improvements in accommodation and learning resources since the last inspection; much of the accommodation is of a high standard. The institution should: improve the quality of some teaching; further develop links with employers; improve the poor retention and achievement rates on some courses; ensure appropriate specialist support is available where it is needed; improve the monitoring of academic performance by governors and managers; resolve shortcomings in the management information systems; ensure operating plans consistently reflect core values; increase the rigour with which provision is evaluated annually; and continue to improve further the quality of the accommodation.

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

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Business and management	3	Support for students	2
Catering and leisure	2	General resources	2
Health and social care	3	Quality assurance	2
Hairdressing	2	Governance	2
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education	3	Management	2

## The Institution and its Mission

1 The Calderdale Colleges Corporation (the institution), formerly Calderdale College, was established in 1893 to serve the education and training needs of the local textile and engineering industries. Following the decline of these and other industries, the institution has diversified its provision. It serves the catchment area of Calderdale, and has its campus in Halifax. Most students are recruited from the Calderdale metropolitan borough but some come from nearby towns, for example Keighley and Bradford. Community education is provided at 50 sites across the Calderdale area and beyond. The institution provides courses in all 10 of the Further Education Funding Council's (FEFC's) programme areas. Within a radius of 10 miles there are five other further education colleges. In the borough there are 12 schools with sixth forms and two 11 to 16 schools.

2 The Calderdale Colleges Corporation comprises:

- Calderdale College, which consists of the five schools of administration and computing, management, customer services, foundation studies, and health, care and teacher education
- Halifax New College, the sixth form centre
- Halifax School of Integrated Arts, which includes courses in art, design, performing arts, crafts and construction
- Local Learning, the institution's provision for community education
- Calderdale Associates Ltd, a private limited company owned by the institution.

3 The institution works in partnership with the Calderdale Local Education Authority (LEA) to offer community provision. It provides courses in partnership with Huddersfield University. Professional links have been developed in Finland, Spain, Portugal, Russia and other countries from the former Soviet Union. The institution offers: courses leading to the general national vocational qualification

(GNVQ) at intermediate and advanced levels in six curriculum areas; 28 subjects at general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level); 29 subjects leading to general certificate of secondary education (GCSE); and courses that can provide access to higher education. A large number of additional courses lead to national vocational and other qualifications, and to employment.

4 There has been a steady improvement in the local economy since 1993. Two-thirds of employees in the Calderdale area work in the service sector which reflects the continuing decline in opportunities for employment in manufacturing, and the increase in the availability of work in the service sector. In 1997, the unemployment rate for Halifax and its travel-to-work area was 5.2 per cent compared with the national rate of 6.5 per cent. The percentage of the population from minority ethnic backgrounds in Calderdale is almost 5 per cent; in the wards immediately surrounding the institution the proportion increases to 51 per cent. About 12 per cent of the student population comes from minority ethnic groups. In the Calderdale LEA, 38 per cent of the pupils aged 16 achieved five or more GCSE subjects at grade C or above in 1996. This achievement rate is below the national average of 44.5 per cent.

5 The institution's mission statement aims to provide high-quality education and training for the students, their communities and local companies. The mission statement is supported by values which commit the institution to provide:

- 'an appropriate range of courses
- quality of provision
- value for money
- an environment that helps to stimulate learning
- a flexible and adaptable curriculum which prepares students to contribute to their community'.

# Context

6 In its mission, the institution also aspires to be a good employer and to contribute to local economic and social success.

## The Inspection

7 The inspection took place during one week in December 1997. Inspectors had previously analysed the institution's self-assessment report and information held by other divisions of the FEFC. The institution submitted data for its students' achievements from 1995 to 1997, and these were validated by inspectors against primary sources such as registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies.

8 Eleven inspectors and an auditor spent a total of 46 days in the schools and colleges of the institution. Meetings were held with governors, managers, other staff, students, and representatives from the Calderdale Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), and from local secondary schools. Inspectors observed 66 lessons, examined samples of students' work and studied a variety of institution documents.

9 Of the lessons inspected, 48 per cent were rated good or outstanding, and 24 per cent were less than satisfactory or poor. This profile is below the average for all colleges inspected in 1996-97, according to *Quality and Standards in*

*Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of attendance in the lessons inspected was 71 per cent, which is similar to the average for general further education colleges in 1996-97 according to the same report. The highest attendance rate was in lessons for leisure and tourism (81 per cent) and the lowest in lessons for health and social care (53 per cent). The average class size is nine students per class. The average recorded class size in the chief inspector's annual report for 1996-97 was 10.8. The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected.

### Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GNVQ	1	6	3	5	0	15
NVQ	4	8	4	1	0	17
Other vocational	1	3	4	3	0	11
Basic education	3	5	1	1	0	10
Other*	0	1	6	5	1	13
Total	9	23	18	15	1	66

\*includes GCE A/AS level

# Curriculum Areas

## Business and Management

### Grade 3

**10 Courses in business at intermediate, advanced and higher levels for both full-time and part-time students were inspected. Eleven lessons were observed by inspectors. The self-assessment report for the curriculum area identifies many of the strengths found by inspectors and specifies areas for development. Some additional weaknesses were identified by inspectors.**

#### Key strengths

- high standards in some teaching
- reliable assessment procedures
- most students' work of a high standard
- good pass rates on intermediate vocational and professional courses
- the range of curriculum provision

#### Weaknesses

- a failure to challenge some students or to check sufficiently on their progress
- lesson plans of variable quality
- the poor note-taking skills of some students
- inaccurate or out-of-date information provided for students in some lessons
- poorly co-ordinated links with employers

11 Business and management studies courses are taught in the school of management, the school of administration and computing, and in Halifax New College. A range of courses is offered from levels 2 to 4, meeting the needs of the local community. In order to maintain appropriate courses for students and to provide for access to higher levels of study, some courses such as the national certificate continue to run even though student numbers are low. Course leaflets and handbooks provide appropriate information for students.

12 Course management is generally good. Where different courses leading to GNVQs are taught in different schools, there is no joint forum where all the staff can meet to discuss the curriculum issues which they have in common. Although individual links with employers exist at course level, there is no advisory committee for business studies to co-ordinate the activities of the two schools and Halifax New College.

13 Most teaching is satisfactory. The self-assessment report identified an improvement in the planning of lessons. However, lesson plans vary in quality and are inadequately reviewed by school managers. Work experience is an integral part of most courses. Teachers made good use of students' work experience to achieve lesson objectives. They did not always make effective use of question and answer techniques to encourage students to contribute to group discussions. In a few lessons students were insufficiently challenged and teachers did not always check that learning was taking place. In some lessons, teachers provided students with inaccurate and out-of-date information. This issue was recognised by the institution in its review of teaching and learning.

14 Inspectors agree with the institution's assessment that most students' work is of a high standard. Teachers provide a detailed analysis of the quality of each student's work which helps students to improve. Most students' portfolios are well presented and provide impressive evidence of progress. In several classes students demonstrated poor note-taking skills. Some students achieve notable success which, in the Halifax New College, is recognised at the annual prize-giving. Currently 11 students from the former Soviet Union have progressed from the intermediate level of the GNVQ to the advanced level.

15 Inspectors agree with the institution's own assessment that there are insufficient staff to cover all the specialist areas in management and finance. They also agree that most



# Curriculum Areas

accommodation is appropriate and helps students in their work. Classrooms are well appointed and provided with whiteboards and overhead projectors. Students have good access to the campus library and learning centre which has specialist facilities for information technology (IT) including the Internet.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced vocational (national certificate, GNVQ)	Retention (%)	65	57	57
	Pass rate (%)	59	79	80
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ)	Retention (%)	+	100	60
	Pass rate (%)	+	62	100
Professional courses	Retention (%)	+	90	81
	Pass rate (%)	+	63	74

*Source: college data  
+course not running*

# Curriculum Areas

## Catering and Leisure

### Grade 2

**16 The inspection covered the divisions of leisure and tourism, and catering and hospitality. Seventeen lessons were observed. The inspection broadly confirmed the institution's self-assessment report, although some strengths were overstated in the report, and some weaknesses overlooked.**

#### Key strengths

- teaching generally of a high standard
- levels of achievement on or above the national averages
- good progression for students, especially on leisure and tourism courses
- effective monitoring and recording of students' progress
- the high standard of most coursework
- effective arrangements for work experience

#### Weaknesses

- underdeveloped work on key skills in catering and hospitality
- insufficient external contributions to full-time programmes
- some low rates for retention and achievement

17 The range of courses in this area covers levels 1, 2 and 3, and includes some GCSE provision as well as courses leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and GNVQs. The GNVQ advanced programme in catering did not recruit enough students for it to run in 1997-98. The two divisions are managed within the school of customer services. Communications within each division are good, and courses are generally well managed and documented. Teaching staff meet regularly. Staff are involved in course planning and target-

setting, although insufficient attention is paid to some performance indicators.

18 The better lessons are well planned and involve a range of activities. Teachers encourage students to respond positively to the work. They present information clearly, and give students sound guidance. Most teaching sustains students' interest. In practical lessons, students work competently and receive effective support from teachers and other staff. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the help given by learning support assistants in both practical and theory lessons. In the poorer lessons, the tasks set for students and the questions asked fail to challenge. The inspection team agreed with the institution's assessment that the teaching of the key skills of numeracy, communication and IT is underdeveloped.

19 With few exceptions, students' achievements are at or above national averages. In catering and hospitality, part-time students achieve pass rates significantly higher than the average. Inspection judgements on this accord with those of the institution. Assignment briefs for students' work are clearly written. Most students' coursework reaches a good or excellent standard. The portfolios of evidence in some NVQ work are not always adequate and contain few examples of independent work. Assignments and coursework are returned promptly, and marking is accurate, but written comment lacks sufficient detail. Health and safety standards are observed in catering and hospitality. Progression for students completing the course is good; the majority of students progress to further or higher education, or to employment. Retention rates are poor on some courses.

20 The general standard of accommodation and facilities in this area is good. The restaurant is newly built and provides a range of realistic work environments. It also offers conference facilities for the local community. A new travel agency has been established in

# Curriculum Areas

conjunction with a local travel company. Work experience is generally well managed and documented. Insufficient use is made of visits or external speakers who can contribute effectively to the learning programme.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Leisure and tourism – GNVQ advanced	Retention (%)	89	58	81
	Pass rate (%)	63	100	76
Leisure and tourism – GNVQ Intermediate	Retention (%)	90	71	57
	Pass rate (%)	47	56	50
Catering and hospitality – NVQ level 1 (full time)	Retention (%)	+	100	90
	Pass rate (%)	+	38	61
Catering and hospitality – NVQ level 2 (full time)	Retention (%)	92	96	56
	Pass rate (%)	83	64	50

*Source: college data  
+course not running*

# Curriculum Areas

## Health and Social Care

### Grade 3

**21 Full-time and part-time courses from foundation to higher levels were inspected. Ten lessons were observed. The inspection confirmed the judgements about this provision included in the institution's self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- a range of effective teaching and learning methods
- well-integrated work placements
- the thorough marking of students' work, and constructive feedback
- high achievement on GNVQ programmes
- strong links with employers

#### Weaknesses

- erratic attendance and punctuality which disrupt teaching
- some poor achievement in childcare and nursery nursing
- poor retention rates on some courses
- a failure to share aims and objectives with students
- a failure to challenge students and check on their understanding

22 The school of health care and teacher education offers a range of full-time and part-time courses which provides progression from foundation level to higher education. Part-time courses and some full-time ones are designed to accommodate the needs of mature students, and are timed to fit in with their domestic and working arrangements. There are strong links with local education and care services which offer a range of work experience placements. Employer links are well developed and enrich teaching on courses leading to NVQs.

23 The majority of classes are well planned and structured. Some lesson plans, however, are inadequate, and aims and objectives are rarely shared with students. An effective range of teaching and learning methods is used to develop skills and knowledge. Opportunities are created for students to take a full part in class discussion, although quieter students are not given sufficient encouragement to contribute. Students' understanding is not checked regularly. A variety of work experience placements helps students to develop practical skills. Teachers encourage students to apply their knowledge of theory to their practical work experience. In a creative lesson, GNVQ intermediate students produced a wall display as part of a group activity. The teacher effectively linked the activity to working with the elderly and children.

24 Inspection findings confirmed the judgements in the self-assessment report that assessments are well planned and managed, and include a number of different features. Detailed feedback helps students to identify areas for improvement. Regular tutorial sessions are used to monitor students' work and inform them of their progress. Students' attendance and punctuality are erratic on many courses and disrupt teaching. Staff have introduced procedures to monitor attendance.

25 Examination pass rates on the majority of full-time courses have improved and achievement rates on GNVQ programmes are well above the national average. In 1996-97, all the students completing GNVQ foundation courses in health and social care achieved the full award. On GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses, more than 80 per cent of students who completed the course achieved the full award. Achievement rates on the diploma in nursery nursing have continued to decline and are well below the national average. Retention rates have declined on some full-time courses. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment report, and actions have been taken to improve retention.

# Curriculum Areas

26 Overall courses are well organised and managed. Student records and course portfolios are maintained efficiently. Course teams are closely involved in target-setting and in monitoring progress on performance indicators. Course reviews clearly identify strengths and weaknesses. Appropriate action follows, and progress is monitored. Well-developed and well-managed procedures to assess and accredit prior learning have enabled mature students to achieve NVQ level 3 in childcare and education.

27 The teaching staff have relevant professional expertise. Course groups are allocated base rooms which house effective displays of students' work. Co-operation between teachers and library staff helps to strengthen provision. The library is well resourced with multiple copies of current books, CD-ROMs and videos, and students have easy access to IT. Students speak highly of the support and help available when using library resources to complete assignments.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Health and social care – GNVQ foundation	Retention (%)	67	53	53
	Pass rate (%)	100	100	100
Health and social care – GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	+	72	78
	Pass rate (%)	+	76	89
Health and social care – GNVQ advanced	Retention (%)	+	69	41
	Pass rate (%)	+	73	81
Certificate in childcare – education	Retention (%)	+	72	60
	Pass rate (%)	+	56	71
Diploma in nursery nursing	Retention (%)	+	51	97
	Pass rate (%)	+	50	43

Source: college data  
+course not running

# Curriculum Areas

## Hairdressing

### Grade 2

**28 The inspection covered courses leading to NVQs in hairdressing and beauty therapy. Ten lessons were inspected. In almost all cases, the judgements made by the institution in its self-assessment report are in line with those of the inspectors.**

#### Key strengths

- provision that is appropriate for a wide variety of learners
- good progression to higher level courses or employment
- the high quality of the commercial learning environment
- fair assessment processes
- thorough monitoring of students' progress
- high retention rates
- well-planned work experience
- effective management

#### Weaknesses

- underdeveloped teaching and recording of key skills
- insufficient clients to meet assessment requirements
- weak achievements in hairdressing NVQ level 2
- insufficient tutorials for individual students early in the course

29 The division of hairdressing and beauty therapy provides a range of NVQ courses at three levels, all of which offer the opportunity to progress to further study or to employment. Programmes are planned to be as flexible as possible to enable adult students to meet their other commitments. There are effective links with local employers who provide appropriate work experience during which the teachers assess the students' progress.

30 The division is well managed. The staff, many of whom are part time, are fully involved in decision-making. They work together effectively and find the induction pack for the division helpful. Course timetables are carefully planned. Course teams maintain detailed programme files and student records. The division does not use statistical data, for example retention rates and students' achievements, to monitor performance in the division year by year.

31 The quality of the teaching is good. An appropriate range of activities motivates the students and helps them to develop their professional skills to a high standard. Careful attention is paid to detail during lessons. Effective use is made of the students' work experience, particularly to bring a sense of relevance to theory lessons. Learning materials are of a good standard. A minority of lessons were less well organised. Sometimes the teacher talked too much, or had too few clients available to enable students to practise their skills. The recording and assessment of the key skills of numeracy, literacy, and IT, have yet to be developed. This weakness was correctly identified in the self-assessment report.

32 Retention rates are good; over the last three years almost all rates exceeded the target of 80 per cent. Pass rates are more variable. They are better in beauty therapy than in hairdressing. The division does not set targets for achievement. It is monitoring students' attendance much more closely. Formal individual tutorials begin some eight weeks into the course. Course portfolios are well organised and neatly presented. A number of students make good use of IT, although formal lessons are not provided; some teach themselves in the learning centre. Meticulous records are kept of students' progress. Students find the documentation for monitoring and assessing their progress easy to understand. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report on the strengths of this aspect of provision.

# Curriculum Areas

33 The accommodation for hairdressing and beauty therapy has recently been upgraded and provides a high-quality commercial environment.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
NVQ level 2	Retention (%)	82	96	78
	Pass rate (%)	58	50	55
NVQ level 3	Retention (%)	86	97	100
	Pass rate (%)	92	72	58

*Source: college data*

# Curriculum Areas

## Provision for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities and Adult Basic Education

### *Grade 3*

**34 The inspection covered adult basic education, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), family literacy programmes and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Eighteen lessons were inspected. Inspectors agreed with some of the judgements in the self-assessment report, but not with others.**

#### **Key strengths**

- the growing confidence and self-esteem developed by students
- an appropriate range of basic education courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications
- good links with local primary schools
- some well-planned lessons

#### **Weaknesses**

- teaching that is inappropriate for some students including students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- insufficient use of IT as a learning resource
- underdeveloped links with employers
- some variable achievement and retention rates
- ineffective co-ordination of the cross-college provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

35 The institution offers a broad range of basic education programmes leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Programmes for students for whom English is a second language are provided at a variety of

community centres, as well as English and mathematics workshops. Good links have been developed with local primary schools and a successful family literacy scheme has been established. Links with employers and the LEA are underdeveloped. The institution has a strong commitment to the development of an inclusive learning environment and welcomes students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including students who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Currently, most of the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is based within one school. Insufficient thought has been given to establishing routes from the specially-designed provision to pre-vocational programmes at foundation level. This weakness is acknowledged in the institution's self-assessment report.

36 The quality of teaching and learning varies. Teachers have developed positive working relationships with their students. Within basic education and ESOL programmes, initial assessment procedures are effective and many students follow programmes which are appropriate for their needs. Lessons are well structured and schemes of work for family literacy and pre-foundation programmes are effective. Lessons contain appropriate activities, but workshop sessions rely too heavily on printed materials. Within the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, too much emphasis is placed on enjoyment at the expense of learning. Initial assessments are ineffective and students' individual programmes do not always enable them to learn skills which will be useful to them in their adult lives. The self-assessment report did not fully reflect the weaknesses in this aspect of provision. Insufficient use is made of IT to support students' learning within classrooms. Across the programme as a whole, procedures for assessing and recording students' progress vary. Some teachers make good use of photographs and video to record the



# Curriculum Areas

progress made by students with learning difficulties.

37 Many students are eager to learn and have developed confidence and self-esteem through their studies. All students are working towards externally accredited qualifications but success rates vary. In some areas, such as ESOL, achievements are good. Success rates for qualifications in numeracy were more variable. Retention rates varied from 90 per cent for ESOL level 1 to 30 per cent for numberpower at foundation level. Overall, pass rates for students studying foundation level courses have improved over the past three years, but retention rates for these students have declined. The institution's self-assessment report correctly identified the strengths but did not identify the variation in pass rates and retention levels as a weakness. Some students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are underachieving. Their teachers' expectations of them are too low and lessons are insufficiently challenging.

38 The rationale for the range of specially-designed programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is unclear. Co-ordination of the provision across the institution is weak. The monitoring of the quality of the specially-designed programmes is poor. Within basic education, programme teams and heads of programme areas meet regularly and have contributed effectively to curriculum and strategic planning, the development of learning materials, the review of courses and the self-assessment process.

39 Accommodation on the main site is of excellent quality. Careful thought has been given to locating community classes on sites which enable students to gain access without difficulty. Some accommodation away from the main site is less attractive. Basic skills workshops are well stocked with worksheets. Most of these sheets are well designed but the quality of the photocopying is sometimes poor. Few teachers have qualifications relating specifically to the teaching of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A significant number of teachers are not sufficiently skilled in the use of IT.

## Examples of students' achievements for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Foundation level	Retention (%)	85	73	66
	Pass rate (%)	47	69	74

Source: college data

# Cross-college Provision

## Support for Students

### Grade 2

**40 Many of the key strengths and weaknesses listed in the institution's self-assessment of student support were confirmed by inspection.**

#### Key strengths

- strong informal support from staff
- effective impartial guidance before enrolment
- appropriate induction procedures
- the well-organised provision of support for literacy and numeracy
- the positive contribution made by the student support services
- well-established tutorial processes

#### Weaknesses

- some inadequacies in the provision of special support
- inconsistent delivery of the pastoral programme

41 The institution provides a welcoming atmosphere and students comment on their positive relationships with staff. All the support services are managed within the directorate of curriculum and academic affairs. Within this directorate the provision of support for numeracy and literacy and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed by the head of inclusive learning. A separate team for student support provides services such as specialist guidance and counselling and childcare; it also assists some student union activities. A student support committee has recently been reconstituted to take a more active role in monitoring support provision.

42 The student support services team is located in attractive and easily accessible

accommodation which includes a careers and higher education library and general information displays. The team provides impartial advice on courses and other matters and conducts initial interviews. There are good links with the Calderdale and Kirklees careers service partnership. The guidance team and the careers officer contribute to the student induction and tutorial programmes. Students speak highly of the service. Childcare is provided either in the campus crèche or at other locations and is available without charge to students on means-tested benefit. The institution significantly augments the funds provided by the FEFC to support students experiencing hardship.

43 Students benefit from a range of publications that are intended to guide them in their choice of course. They have the opportunity to attend open evenings and are interviewed before enrolment. A few instances of students enrolling on inappropriate courses were identified by inspectors. However, the results of a student survey, confirmed by inspection, indicate strong satisfaction with the entry procedures operated by the institution.

44 The institution experienced considerable difficulty in establishing formal links with most secondary schools in the area and has disbanded its schools liaison team. More specific links have been developed. For example, a TEC-funded project that was established with eight secondary schools last year has resulted in 30 students in year 11 at school who had not been progressing well attending the institution for two days a week over a 10-week period. This year the project is being repeated, but funded now by the schools. Other contacts are strong. There are good links with the careers partnership officers, and school careers evenings are attended where possible. There are also well-established curriculum links with the local special schools.

45 Students receive an appropriate induction to the institution's facilities, services, and

# Cross-college Provision

courses. Overall guidance is provided to staff on the conduct of induction, and learning materials are available to support teaching. Course teams modify the induction process to suit their specific needs. The results of a student questionnaire indicate general satisfaction with induction but reveal that some students did not receive important documents, for example course handbooks. Part-time students receive a shortened induction. A second induction period is provided for late enrollers. The self-assessment report recognises the strengths in the provision of induction.

46 Full-time students are screened to assess their skills in numeracy and literacy. Part-time students may opt to receive this screening. Students who are identified as needing support receive diagnostic testing and an interview. The 'essential skills' team establishes a suitable programme of work for each student and provides appropriate teaching. Students express strong satisfaction with the provision and the take-up of support by students is high. Overall, the provision is a positive feature of the institution's provision.

47 Additional help is provided for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including, for example, dyslexia, and hearing and visual impairment. Some students receive effective support. For example, deaf students on a catering course are allocated a signer, have extra classes, and receive special assistance in practical lessons. Other students, for example

those with visual impairment, receive less effective help; the self-assessment report identifies this weakness. In some classes poor use was made of the support staff.

48 Full-time students receive a weekly group tutorial and a termly review of their individual progress. There is a well-established pastoral programme, covering preparation for employment and personal and social development, for which learning materials have been developed. Course tutors can adapt the programme to suit their students' needs. The quality of teaching on these programmes varies. On some courses there are well-constructed schemes of work but other schemes are poorly developed.

49 The institution sets out to record the destinations of full-time students who achieve their intended qualifications. At the time of the inspection, a significant percentage of the destinations were unknown. The following table shows destinations as a percentage of the total number of students at each level who completed their courses in 1996.

## Students' destinations in 1996

Students leaving with the following qualifications	Number of students	Higher education %	Further education %	Employment %	Other %	Unknown %
Level 1	63	0	48	0	0	52
Level 2	248	0	29	15	2	54
Level 3	164	26	14	24	3	33
Level 4	2	0	0	50	0	50

Source: college data

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## General Resources

### Grade 2

**50 There have been substantial improvements to accommodation and learning resources since the last inspection in 1994. Inspection findings confirmed the judgements in the institution's comprehensive self-assessment report on resources.**

#### Key strengths

- many improvements to the accommodation and resources since the last inspection
- an effective maintenance and refurbishment programme
- easily accessible centres for reception and guidance, learning resources, IT and key skills
- an extensive range of modern computers and software
- good services and facilities in the campus library and learning centre
- positive consideration given to the needs of those with disabilities

#### Weaknesses

- the poor condition of the building housing the school of integrated arts
- inadequate liaison between some curriculum areas and the learning centre
- insufficient social areas for students

51 Since the last inspection there have been substantial improvements to the institution's accommodation. A 10-year maintenance and refurbishment programme is reviewed and updated annually. Regular monitoring ensures areas are kept clean. Most classrooms are bright, attractive and appropriately furnished. The Calderdale College building provides a particularly high standard of accommodation

and realistic working environments. Wherever possible, related programmes of study occupy space on the same floor; for example, a college shop, hair and beauty salons and a travel agency have been brought together on one floor in the school of customer services. The school of integrated arts is located in former craft workshops, which, although spacious, are inadequate. The institution recognises the poor quality of this accommodation. The quality of accommodation and facilities for off-site provision is varied. A computerised system to monitor the use of accommodation is not yet fully implemented.

52 The institution has worked hard to ensure that all the main entrances to its buildings are accessible to people with restricted mobility. For example, a sloping covered walkway leads from the road to Calderdale College, and ramps provide access to car parks. Lifts to all floors in Calderdale College are equipped with low level controls for wheelchair users and voice floor indicators. The lifts are not always reliable and can be crowded at peak periods. The institution acknowledges the problem. Toilet facilities for wheelchair users are provided throughout the institution. Special fire evacuation procedures include provision for those with hearing impairment. Tactile signs assist those with visual impairment. There is also a minicom facility. Voice recognition and large size screens are available in all computing areas. Colour coding of internal directional signs and rooms, which is matched to individual schools, assists movement. Parking provision is adequate and security is effective. A new crèche was constructed in 1996. On-site sports and leisure facilities include two football pitches, sports halls and a fitness centre. Social facilities for students are insufficient. Refectory facilities which have recently been modernised provide both counter service and vending machines throughout the day and evening. Service is slow at peak times and students consider that prices are high.

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53 The campus library and the learning centre provide a good service for staff and students. There are over 34,000 books and journals in the stock. Audio and video collections are extensive. Qualified library staff provide an effective information service for students. Usage is carefully monitored. Library co-ordinators liaise with teachers to seek to ensure that learning resources are appropriate and reflect changes in the curriculum. These procedures are not yet fully developed. Other facilities include access to the Internet, and an increasing range of CD-ROMs. Enhancement and replacement of IT equipment is closely co-ordinated. Nearly 600 high-specification computers with up-to-date software are available for students' use, a ratio of one machine for 7.3 full-time equivalent students. Staff have direct access to computers in dedicated work rooms and school offices. There is systematic upgrading of major equipment through capital replacement programmes. Central purchasing of consumable materials helps to secure value for money.

## Quality Assurance

### *Grade 2*

**54 Inspectors confirmed the judgements about strengths and weaknesses in quality assurance contained in the institution's self-assessment report.**

#### **Key strengths**

- rigorous and accurate self-assessment
- a comprehensive and well co-ordinated framework
- the establishment and monitoring of service standards
- well-structured course review and evaluation
- effective use of feedback from students
- an effective appraisal system

- well-managed and appropriate staff development

#### **Weaknesses**

- inconsistent use of targets and performance indicators
- the variable quality of programme quality manuals and school annual reviews
- insufficient use of management information

55 The institution's quality assurance framework is comprehensive, and has proved effective in meeting the requirements of self-assessment. A strong lead is provided by the quality and accreditation unit, headed by the quality manager, who works closely with the heads of school and support units to ensure that quality procedures are carried out. The quality committee, which brings together representatives of all schools and support units, actively promotes quality assurance throughout the institution and monitors the implementation of policy. Inspection findings confirmed the strength of the institution's commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement, as noted in the self-assessment report.

56 A major feature of the quality assurance system is the use of quality manuals which specify the arrangements for review and evaluation. These arrangements are closely linked to the strategic planning cycle through a planning and quality calendar. All programme teams hold a series of review meetings throughout the year. They use set agendas and standard documentation. These meetings culminate in an annual self-assessment of provision and an action plan which is followed up in subsequent meetings. The set agendas include teaching and learning, students' achievements and support for students. Programme teams are required to use performance indicators. These indicators

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include retention rates and the achievements and destinations of students. Comparisons are made with the targets previously agreed with the heads of school, and with national figures. At Halifax New College, value-added data are used to compare students' GCE A level results with predictions based on their GCSE performance.

57 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that some quality manuals are incomplete and insufficiently evaluative. Some programme teams do not set targets for retention and achievement, and others do not use targets for annual review. School annual reviews also vary in quality. To improve the review process, the quality manager is holding further training for staff and undertaking an audit of the manuals. Data from the central management information system are underused in monitoring the effectiveness of quality assurance. The institution plans to increase the utilisation and accessibility of data through the appointment of a quality information officer.

58 The support units have identified standards, performance indicators and targets in order to evaluate the quality of the services they offer. Performance against the standards is closely monitored. Staff comment that the process has helped them to define their objectives more clearly and increased their sense of accountability. Each unit has drawn up a rigorous self-assessment report and an action plan for improvement.

59 The institution undertook its first self-assessment in preparation for the inspection. Procedures for self-assessment were rigorous and systematic, involving a wide range of staff. There were clear links to the established cycle of quality assurance and the institution's strategic planning process. Before the inspection, the self-assessment report was circulated amongst senior managers and debated at a meeting of the corporation. Evidence supporting the report was clearly referenced and included a wide

range of subsidiary self-assessments prepared by teaching teams and teams responsible for other functions. These assessments were of good quality and most were useful to inspectors. Evidence also came from lesson observations, questionnaires completed by the students, and analysis of the institution's achievements. The inspection team was able to place reliance on the data provided on students' achievements. The self-assessment report included a comprehensive and detailed action plan which effectively addressed areas of weakness. The institution had implemented a number of the actions by the time of the inspection.

60 The students' charter clearly sets out students' entitlements and responsibilities. It includes the locations and telephone numbers of personnel to whom students may address complaints or make suggestions, and a list of governors together with details of how they may be contacted. The employers' charter outlines what employers may expect from the institution. The charters are regularly reviewed and monitored. Monitoring shows, for example, that over the last year complaints have been dealt with more speedily, and that assignments have been returned more quickly to students.

61 Effective use is made of feedback from students. Questionnaires are issued three times a year to all students. The results are analysed by programme and published with the institution's response in the student newspaper. Discussion of students' responses forms part of the agendas for review meetings. Student representatives are encouraged to play a full part in review meetings and have been effective in promoting improvements. There are well-established procedures for considering complaints and encouraging suggestions. A questionnaire has recently been issued to an extensive range of employers to obtain their perceptions of the institution. The questionnaires have been designed to monitor the service standards laid down in the students' and employers' charters.

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62 A systematic process of staff appraisal and development, including lesson observation, was introduced in September 1997 to build on the previous arrangements for establishing training needs. Most full-time staff have been appraised by their line managers. The scheme has met with general approval from staff. Staff development needs are identified at individual level through appraisal, at curriculum level through the agendas of review meetings, and at institutional level through the establishment of a series of corporate themes. An extensive in-house training programme is widely advertised to staff. Staff development is well managed and evaluated. Induction for new staff includes a video and an extensive pack of information. New staff have three-monthly review meetings with their line managers during their first year, and are included in the staff appraisal process. The institution is an Investor in People.

## Governance

### Grade 2

**63 To assist the self-assessment process, governors initiated a detailed questionnaire to assess their own competence and knowledge against their key responsibilities. The inspectorate generally agreed with the institution's assessment of governance, but considered that there was some overlap in a number of the strengths that were identified.**

#### Key strengths

- close involvement in the revision of the mission and core values
- an appropriate range of skills and experience
- increased understanding of the institution's work
- principal's accountability secured through regular written reports

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring of the institution's academic performance
- insufficient delegation of work from the board to its committees
- variable attendance at board meetings

64 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the institution is good. The board substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC.

65 The board is properly constituted, as the institution notes in its self-assessment report. The membership possesses a good range of skills and experience. The interests of the local community are well represented. There are at present two vacancies out of the membership of 18. The board has given appropriate consideration to the different areas of expertise that it requires. Processes for the selection and recruitment of new governors have been established and include the formation of a search committee when required. Induction for new governors and new training and support arrangements have been introduced recently. A code of conduct and standing orders have been drawn up. A register of governors' interests has recently been extended to include senior members of staff. The board holds a public annual general meeting. The relative responsibilities of the governors and the senior staff are clear and well understood.

66 Appropriate agendas and supporting papers are circulated in good time for meetings; minutes are distributed promptly and made available in the campus library and learning centre. Inspectors confirmed the institution's claim that clerking arrangements are effective. Meetings of the board and its committees are

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efficiently managed. The board has four properly constituted standing committees. The finance and audit committees carry out most work. The membership of the audit committee has a high level of relevant expertise and has been operating effectively. The finance committee members have sufficient relevant expertise. They receive management accounts each time they meet. The accounts are in the same format as those reported to the institution executive. The remuneration committee is required to meet twice a year. The special committee, formed to deal with disciplinary matters, has not yet had to meet. The board undertakes a large volume of work compared with its committees. For example, it met 10 times in the last year; the committees met much less frequently. All meetings have been quorate, but attendance levels have not been high. Attendance of governors is recorded by the clerk and reported to the board at intervals of six months.

67 Governors have played an appropriate role in shaping the future strategic direction of the institution through their involvement in the production of a revised mission statement, the associated core values, and the strategic plan. In order to improve their knowledge and understanding of the institution's operations, members have recently implemented a twinning programme to link them with a school or support unit. Sixteen governors are taking part in this initiative. In addition, heads of school now routinely make presentations to governors at board meetings. At present, however, governors have insufficient information and knowledge of the curriculum to allow them to monitor effectively the levels of students' achievements across the institution.

## Management

### *Grade 2*

**68 Inspectors considered that the evaluation of management in the self-assessment report was objective. Inspection findings confirmed many of the strengths and weaknesses that were identified.**

#### **Key strengths**

- targets for funding units and student numbers consistently met
- revised management structure that promotes enterprise and accountability
- effective communication structures
- thorough consultation process for strategic planning
- productive community partnerships
- good financial management
- comprehensive policy for equal opportunities

#### **Weaknesses**

- shortcomings in management information systems
- underdeveloped employer links
- ineffective monitoring of past academic performance

69 Each year since the last inspection, the institution has met its targets for funding units and student numbers. The executive team comprises the chief executive and four directors who are responsible for finance, corporate affairs, business development, and curriculum and academic affairs. The team has introduced termly performance reviews in order to monitor progress against targets. The academic board has also been reconstituted to monitor indicators of achievement. Before September 1997, the academic board met only twice each year. It failed to consider fully the effectiveness of action that had been taken to improve the poor level of some students' achievements.



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70 The senior management structure of the institution has recently been revised in line with the changed mission. The new post of director of business development has been created to secure greater responsiveness to the needs of employers and to broaden the income base. The self-assessment report correctly recognises that employer links are underdeveloped. Whilst the established cross-college committees successfully support many key areas of development, the vertical structure of the organisation has not helped curriculum co-ordination. Co-ordinators are currently being appointed to develop institution-wide teaching and assessment strategies for GNVQ and NVQ programmes.

71 Inspection findings confirmed the institution's view that communications across the institution are effective. For example, the executive and management teams meet weekly; in the larger schools, divisional team meetings follow those of the management team. All meetings are minuted; the minutes indicate the action that is to be taken. A weekly 'staff news' bulletin is distributed to all employees and a student newspaper is produced termly. The chief executive addresses all staff twice a year to review and promote institution activities. The head of communications who has been appointed recently is undertaking an audit of internal and external communications. A three-year marketing plan identifies the need to extend the promotion of publicity materials to groups that are under represented at the institution. The branding of the different schools and colleges has successfully allowed staff to specialise and develop their own ethos and working methods.

72 The self-assessment report recognises that there is no institution-wide model to determine the funding of each school. However, a range of efficiency measures is applied. Teaching staff work to contracts which specify the expected weekly class contact hours. A recommended average class size is used as a measure to assess

the viability of different teaching groups. Attendance and sickness levels of staff are monitored. Staff costs, which at 64 per cent of total expenditure are currently below the sector average, are regularly monitored to maintain or improve efficiency.

73 Widespread consultation was undertaken in preparation for the production of the current three-year strategic plan. The revised mission and core values proposed by governors were discussed at a institution-wide planning event which agreed the format to be used for operating statements. An extensive range of meetings was held with staff, students, and others with an involvement in the institution before the final draft of the plan was agreed. The planning process was thorough. However, not all the current operating plans fully reflect the core values of the institution.

74 The institution is involved in some productive community partnerships. The chief executive is a director of the West Central Halifax Partnership, which is tackling the issue of localised pockets of high unemployment among minority ethnic groups by providing pre-recruitment training programmes. A partnership with a local 11 to 16 school has led to the secondment of a teacher to develop a range of curriculum links and opportunities for progression from school to the institution.

75 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the institution's financial management is good. The budget preparation process is clearly documented and runs to a published timetable. Budget holders are involved in formulating the budget and understand the process. Management accounts are reported promptly each month to budget holders and to the institution's executive; they include all the elements recommended as good practice. A rolling 12 months cashflow forecast has been included from August 1997. The institution has up-to-date financial regulations and procedures, which are readily available to staff. Financial returns submitted to the FEFC

# Cross-college Provision

are accurate. Principally as a consequence of the large investment in improvements to accommodation, some of the short-term financial indicators give cause for concern. Budget forecasts show that this situation is expected to improve significantly in the medium and long term.

76 The self-assessment report recognises the shortcomings in management information systems; the software needs to be replaced. A working party is being established to define the needs of all users over the full range of institution activities. Some of the data on performance indicators generated through the individualised student record are inaccurate because of past inadequacies in data collection. The figure of only 26 per cent of students achieving their primary learning goal in 1995-96 is considered by the institution to be a significant underestimate; levels of student retention in 1994-95, prior to audit, were significantly overestimated. The institution was, however, successful in the production of reliable data on students' achievements for the inspection. A network supports the dissemination of operating procedures, including all the institutional policies. The policies register records revisions undertaken, together with dates and the named person responsible for each policy.

77 The existing equal opportunities statement was significantly revised and extended to form a new institution policy, and was adopted by governors in July 1997. A co-ordinator is responsible for promoting the policy, supported by a committee chaired by a member of the senior staff. An action plan has been produced that covers the responsibilities of the different schools and service units. These are required to implement equal opportunities policies and to commence appropriate staff development. A number of reports on equal opportunities issues have been produced recently on, for example, gender balance in the institution and the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

## Conclusions

78 Despite the newness of the self-assessment process, the inspection team found the self-assessment report provided a useful basis for planning and carrying out the inspection. Most of the key strengths and weaknesses identified in the report were confirmed by the inspection team. The grades awarded in the curriculum areas by the institutions were mostly confirmed by the findings of inspection. There was full agreement on the grades for cross-college provision.

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

# College Statistics

## Student numbers by age (November 1997)

<i>Age</i>	<i>%</i>
Under 16	0
16-18 years	11
19-24 years	17
25+ years	72
Not known	0
Total	100

*Source: college data*

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

<i>Level of study</i>	<i>%</i>
Foundation	29
Intermediate	32
Advanced	22
Higher education	5
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	12
Total	100

*Source: college data*

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

<i>Programme area</i>	<i>Full time</i>	<i>Part time</i>	<i>Total provision %</i>
Science	217	527	9
Agriculture	37	42	1
Construction	77	186	3
Engineering	43	691	9
Business	189	1,646	22
Hotel and catering	85	172	3
Health and community care	351	505	10
Art and design	273	239	6
Humanities	378	2,384	33
Basic education	249	69	4
Total	1,899	6,461	100

*Source: college data*

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

	<i>Perm- anent</i>	<i>Fixed term</i>	<i>Casual</i>	<i>Total</i>
Direct learning contact	97	87	5	189
Supporting direct learning contact	47	3	1	51
Other support	114	3	1	118
Total	258	93	7	358

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

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends

### Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£10,205,000	£11,670,000	£12,050,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£19.76	£18.08	£18.27
Payroll as a proportion of income	79%	63%	*
Achievement of funding target	97%	101%	*
Diversity of income	21%	14%	*
Operating surplus	-£1,040,000	£154,000	*

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

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

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

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

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

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

\*data not available

### Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	62	66	99
	Average point score per entry	3.8	3.8	4.1
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	82	62	98
	Percentage achieving qualification	71%	66%	39%
	Position in tables	bottom third	bottom third	bottom 10%
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	83	67
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	48%	43%
	Position in tables	*	bottom third	bottom 10%

Source: DfEE

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

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

\*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

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