

# Canterbury College

**REPORT FROM  
THE INSPECTORATE  
1997-98**

**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

***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 according to a four-year cycle. It also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum, disseminates good practice and advises the FEFC's quality assessment committee.*

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

*Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry CV1 2WT  
Telephone 01203 863000  
Fax 01203 863100*

© FEFC 1998

*You may photocopy this report. A college may use its report in promotional material provided quotes are accurate, and the findings of the inspection are not misrepresented.*

# Contents

Paragraph

---

## Summary

---

### Context

The college and its mission	1
The inspection	7

---

### Curriculum areas

Engineering	9
Business and finance	15
Hospitality and catering	20
Art and design, media and performing arts	25
English and modern foreign languages	31
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	36

---

### Cross-college provision

Support for students	42
General resources	47
Quality assurance	54
Governance	60
Management	64
Conclusions	71

---

### College statistics

## 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

## Canterbury College

### *South East Region*

#### **Inspected March 1998**

Canterbury College is a general further education college in East Kent. The college makes provision in all 10 of the FEFC's programme areas. This provides vocational education and training courses appropriate to the needs of individuals and of industry, ranging from pre-foundation level to higher education. The college prepares an annual self-assessment report for its corporation, and the report produced for the inspection was a natural outcome of this process. Governors and staff throughout the college were involved and the report was rigorously audited at each stage of its preparation. Judgements made about the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum areas and cross-college provision generally accorded with those made by inspectors, although inspectors sometimes gave different weightings to the evidence. Action plans arising from self-assessment were appropriate and progress had been made in fulfilling them by the time of the inspection. Inspectors chose a sample of six of the college's curriculum areas on which to base their validation of the self-assessment report.

Standards of teaching are high and, in many areas, students achieve results well above the national average. Work in art, design and media is outstanding. Since the last inspection, the college has continued to improve its quality

assurance system which is now totally integrated with all aspects of planning, management, curriculum and service delivery. The system continues to deliver measurable improvements and there is a total commitment throughout the organisation to continuous quality improvement. The college has benefited from imaginative leadership and open management. Delegation of significant responsibilities to curriculum and service managers is highly effective and results in a confident and well-informed organisation. The college is outstandingly well governed and managed. Governors are deeply involved in oversight of strategic planning and performance monitoring. Student support services are well organised. Students have access to high-quality learning resources centres and good IT facilities. Staff are well qualified and experienced. Equipment is of industrial standard in several areas. Recent new buildings and refurbishment have greatly improved the accommodation in many areas, although there are significant underlying structural problems in all the buildings on the Canterbury site. The accommodation strategy contains proposals to relocate as a solution to current building problems. The new satellite college at Sheppey is a first-class facility. If the college is to improve its provision further it should address: poor students' achievements and retention rates on a few courses; uneven tutorial practice; and poor science 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>
Engineering	3	Support for students	2
Business and finance	2	General resources	2
Hospitality and catering	2	Quality assurance	1
Art and design, media and performing arts	1	Governance	1
English and modern foreign languages	2	Management	1
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	2		

## The College and its Mission

1 Canterbury College is one of three further education colleges in East Kent. The main campus is situated close to the centre of the historic city of Canterbury. In October 1996, the college opened a purpose-built second campus on the Isle of Sheppey, known as Sheppey College. The college benefits from good road links, and its close proximity to two main-line rail services and the central bus station. In recent years, employment patterns in the area have stabilised. Unemployment in Canterbury is 4.6 per cent, although other areas that are served by the college have unemployment rates higher than the national average. In Sheerness, for example, it is 6.7 per cent, and Thanet, 9.3 per cent.

2 The Canterbury area has a diverse range of selective schools and non-selective high schools, all of which offer sixth form provision. Two higher education institutes and one university serve the immediate area. The college recognises that prospective students have a choice of places to study, and has tried to avoid duplication of courses and direct competition with other institutions. It works in collaboration with the adult education service and several schools, and fully supports recent initiatives to produce a co-ordinated widening participation strategy for the area. Four franchise agreements with different universities or higher education institutes operate currently, but are being reviewed in the light of the Dearing report's recommendations. As part of the Kent Association of Further Education Corporations, the college is committed to, and implements, specific local targets for lifelong learning.

3 The college provides a wide range of further education courses covering all 10 Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) programme areas, higher education courses, and an educational service to the 11 Kent prisons. It participates in four collaborative partnerships. The majority of students follow

intermediate or advanced level courses. Recent developments have created new foundation level courses and alternative progression routes for students. The college manages two guidance projects and its students receive careers advice through a partnership with Kent Careers, whose staff are based in the college. A substantial amount of non-FEFC funding is attracted by an extensive range of European links.

4 In 1996-97, the college had 3,844 full-time and 3,484 part-time FEFC enrolments on its own premises and a further 2,472 FEFC enrolments (5 per cent of unit provision) franchised to other institutions. Another 1,793 college-based students were funded from other sources. In addition, education is provided each week for some 800 prison inmates. In October 1997, the college estimated that its full-year enrolment for 1997-98 would be 11,000 students funded by the FEFC.

5 Canterbury College is one of the largest employers in the area. On 1 October 1997, it employed 722 full-time and part-time staff (405 full-time equivalents) of whom 324 full-time equivalents are involved in teaching or supporting learning and 18 per cent of whom work in prisons. The college's organisation was reviewed in 1992 and, although some directors have changed, 80 per cent of managers have been in post since 1992 and the structure has remained stable.

6 According to its mission statement, Canterbury College is dedicated to providing an efficient service to all sections of the community. It aims to meet individual student needs through high-quality teaching and support, and by offering flexible and responsive education and training in a climate of mutual respect and a friendly yet purposeful atmosphere. These principles drive the college to fulfil its role at local, national and international levels.

# Context

## The Inspection

7 The college was inspected during the week beginning 16 March 1998. The inspection team had access to the college's self-assessment report and to information about the college held by other divisions of the FEFC. The college was notified about two months before the inspection of those aspects of provision that were to be inspected. The inspection was carried out by 12 inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 48 days. They observed 95 lessons, examined students' work and college documents, and held meetings with governors, managers, students and staff and employers.

8 Of the lessons inspected, 72 per cent were rated good or outstanding and 5 per cent were less than satisfactory. This is better than the average for the sector according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average attendance in classes inspected was 78 per cent compared with an attendance level in the sector as a whole of 77 per cent during 1996-97 according to the same report. Attendance was best in hotel and catering at 91 per cent and poorest in business studies at 72 per cent. 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	
GCE A/AS level	5	6	3	0	0	4
GNVQ	10	11	8	2	0	31
NVQ	6	7	0	0	0	13
Other vocational	4	6	6	1	1	18
Other*	2	11	5	1	0	19
Total	27	41	22	4	1	95

\*includes adult and basic education, teacher education and tutorial work

# Curriculum Areas

## Engineering

### Grade 3

**9 Inspectors observed 11 electrical and mechanical engineering lessons. They agreed with some strengths claimed in the college's self-assessment report but found that others were overstated. Inspectors also identified weaknesses not recognised in the report.**

#### Key strengths

- some very good teaching
- well-written learning materials
- high retention and achievement rates on some courses
- students with well-developed practical skills
- internal verification procedures
- productive and effective links with local industry

#### Weaknesses

- some poor lesson planning
- poor retention and achievement rates particularly at intermediate level
- incomplete student assessment records
- failure of action plans to identify key issues

10 The majority of the teaching is very good. However, of the 11 lessons observed, three were less than satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers had good lesson plans and detailed schemes of work that included teaching, learning and assessment methods. In these lessons, learning objectives were achieved and students enjoyed their work. They experienced a variety of teaching methods. Good use was made of audio and visual teaching aids. In workshop sessions, students worked well under the supervision of teachers as well as learning from each other. In the poorer lessons, there was little evidence of teachers' planning or of

students' enthusiasm for learning. In one lesson, students were required to copy notes from the board for long periods and there was little interaction with the teacher. The existence of some less effective teaching was not identified in the college's self-assessment report.

11 There are good retention and achievement rates on some engineering courses, but they are poor on others. Retention on higher national certificate courses is very good and results are close to the national averages quoted in the national engineering survey published by the inspectorate in 1996. Results on the wide range of one-year and two-year craft and national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses vary widely. The achievement of students on full-time intermediate and advanced level programmes in 1997 was poor. No students achieved the national diploma in engineering whilst only half of those who completed the national diploma in electrical and electronic engineering were successful. Students on the first diploma in technology were transferred to more suitable courses during the year as it became clear that they would not successfully complete the course. The course review system is clearly informed by the use of accurate statistics but teachers often fail to take full account of them when producing action plans.

12 The internal verification process is generally effective, although some record-keeping is inadequate. In the mechanical engineering workshop, the system for monitoring students' progress and assessment process ensure that students are aware of how well they are doing. In other areas, students' work is not promptly returned and assessments of work are sometimes not properly recorded. The self-assessment report identifies the strengths in this area but not the weaknesses.

13 The technology programme area was formed by the amalgamation of the electrical and mechanical engineering sections at the beginning of the current academic year. At the

# Curriculum Areas

time of the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning experienced by some students was poor, but teachers are working to establish common practices in the new area. A good range of engineering craft, technician and higher technician courses is offered. Students starting engineering courses at a number of different levels have the opportunity to progress to the highest level. The technology programme area has good relationships with representatives of local companies. Employees from many of these companies regularly attend courses at the college. Employers also attend development meetings and triennial course reviews. Their contribution to curriculum development and advice about resources is welcomed, a strength recognised in the self-assessment report.

14 Teachers are appropriately qualified and many hold the required range of training and development lead body assessor and verifier awards. Overall, specialist resources are adequate. Equipment is well maintained and workshop areas are kept clean and tidy. Software and some machine tools in the computer-aided design suite and the mechanical engineering workshops are nearing the end of their life and will soon need replacement.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Professional and higher education	Retention (%)	*	93	91
	Pass rate (%)	*	67	69
BTEC national diplomas and certificate programmes	Retention (%)	93	64	71
	Pass rate (%)	66	73	61
Intermediate vocational	Retention (%)	*	100	46
	Pass rate (%)	*	50	17
NVQ	Retention (%)	79	80	80
	Pass rate (%)	75	36	62
Other vocational courses (mainly C&G)	Retention (%)	86	82	76
	Pass rate (%)	55	63	60

Source: college data

\*validated data not available

# Curriculum Areas

## Business and Finance

### Grade 2

**15 Inspectors observed 16 lessons covering general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate and advanced level courses in business, professional marketing, personnel, business and management courses and NVQ courses in accounting and management. While inspectors judged that most strengths and weaknesses had been identified in the self-assessment report, they considered that the weighting given to some strengths was not justified.**

#### Key strengths

- effective course management
- some very good teaching
- good monitoring of students' progress
- high pass rates in a number of courses
- good range of business standard information technology (IT) resources

#### Weaknesses

- ineffective management of some lessons
- lack of differentiated teaching materials for some groups
- poor pass rates and retention rates on some courses

16 Courses are effectively managed. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgements in the self-assessment report that the well-developed course manuals and files, effective internal verification procedures and good monitoring of students' progress are key strengths. Imaginative use is made of large wall-mounted charts to display individual students' progress. Many schemes of work are comprehensive, but a few are no more than lists of topics to be covered without reference to teaching methods, resource requirements and assessment schedules.

17 The quality of teaching is often good and sometimes outstanding. No sessions were less than satisfactory and most were well planned. The aims and objectives are made clear to students; teachers use a variety of activities to stimulate and maintain students' interest, especially in half-day sessions. Some excellent materials are produced to support the learning activity. Teachers are skilful in asking increasingly penetrating questions to check students' understanding, enabling them to develop increasingly higher level concepts. Some lessons were less effective because teachers made poor use of questioning techniques; allowed insufficient time for students to reach solutions to problems; or failed to provide materials which took account of students' differing abilities. Some students chatted or worked on unrelated tasks unnoticed by the teacher. In some instances, students' note-taking skills were inadequate and little was being done to remedy this. These weaker aspects of teaching and learning were not included in the college's self-assessment report. Assignments and tasks set for students are often imaginative and well structured. Staff usually make helpful and constructive comments on students' marked work although, in some cases, errors in students' written work are not corrected by teachers. Work experience is provided and is well managed.

18 On GNVQ intermediate level courses, the pass rate has been good for two out of the last three years, whilst pass rates in GNVQ foundation level courses have been well above the national average since 1995. On GNVQ advanced level courses, the pass rate was below the national average in 1996 and above it in 1997. Retention in both years was low. Progression rates of full-time GNVQ students into higher education are high. Pass rates in NVQ courses all fell in 1997. In some professional courses, for example, the higher national certificate in business and finance and the certificate in personnel practice, pass rates have been good over the last three years,

# Curriculum Areas

although the overall pass rate for professional courses has declined over the same time period. The college is changing the design and length of courses in an attempt to improve achievements. Whilst weaknesses in pass rates and retention rates in the curriculum area have not been given appropriate significance in the self-assessment report, problems of student retention have been identified as an overall college issue. Business studies staff have been active in contributing to college-wide solutions, some of which are already having an impact in this curriculum area.

19 Staff are well qualified, and the majority have or are working towards appropriate assessor and verifier qualifications. There are good IT facilities and business standard software. Most rooms are fit for purpose. Library resources for business studies are good.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
NVQ level 4	Retention (%)	100	100	59
	Pass rate (%)	0	43	27
Professional courses	Retention (%)	95	83	78
	Pass rate (%)	68	58	49
GNVQ advanced	Retention (%)	*	65	63
	Pass rate (%)	*	68	85
NVQ level 3	Retention (%)	*	100	65
	Pass rate (%)	*	50	30
GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	69	85	73
	Pass rate (%)	79	73	50
NVQ level 2	Retention (%)	*	77	88
	Pass rate (%)	*	65	45
GNVQ foundation	Retention (%)	90	63	90
	Pass rate (%)	89	100	78

Source: college data

\*data not available

# Curriculum Areas

## Hospitality and Catering

### Grade 2

**20 Inspectors observed 13 practical and theory lessons. They agreed with the college's overall assessment of hospitality and catering provision, but considered that the self-assessment report did not thoroughly address the weaknesses of students' achievements nor indicate the weight attached to strengths and weaknesses. The report contained few references to the quality of teaching and learning.**

#### Key strengths

- effective curriculum management and good course planning
- much outstanding teaching and good standards of practical work
- a high level of commercial awareness and good industrial links
- well above average students' achievements on advanced level courses in 1995 and 1996
- good specialist resources and accommodation

#### Weaknesses

- a few examples of poorly-planned teaching
- poor students' achievements and retention rates on a minority of courses
- little use of IT in students' portfolios on some courses

21 Enrolments for hotel and catering courses have dropped significantly since 1994. The college has examined the appropriateness of its courses, and introduced new provision. The decline in part-time enrolments has now been halted. Full-time GNVQ programmes are offered at intermediate and advanced levels. There are also general catering, professional chefs and

advanced craft courses leading to a range of NVQ awards for part-time students. Some students with learning difficulties are successfully attending courses. Courses are well organised and effectively managed. The small, largely full-time, teaching team is ably assisted by learning and technical support officers. As the college's self-assessment indicates, staff form an effective and closely-knit group and work well with students. Practical teaching is enhanced by the involvement of students in a range of internal and external catering events. Good work experience and training links have been established in France.

22 The college's self-assessment report makes little reference to the quality of teaching. Most of the lessons observed by inspectors were good or outstanding. Particularly notable is the close reference which teachers make to current trends and practices in hospitality and catering. Topical examples are frequently used and restaurant menus reflect modern approaches to food preparation and eating. In the better lessons, planning is coherent, objectives are carefully emphasised and shared with students, and teachers make skilful use of a variety of tasks and teaching methods. Practical teaching shows an awareness of sound commercial practice and of the need to produce high-quality products to a deadline. There is good attention to health and safety and hygiene. Teachers set students realistic and relevant written and practical assessment tasks. As indicated in the self-assessment report, internal verification works well. Some teachers need to plan their teaching with greater care. More use of directed questioning would enable them to check students' understanding of the work.

23 The quality of students' written work is generally good, but there is inadequate use of IT to aid presentation in some portfolios. Assessment of work is accurate, but teachers give insufficiently detailed written feedback to help students to improve. Examination pass rates for the courses with the largest number of

# Curriculum Areas

students have improved over the last three years. The exception to this is the GNVQ advanced level programmes where well above average achievements in 1995 and 1996 dropped to only 11 per cent in 1997, because of poor performance in one end test. Pass rates for the GNVQ intermediate level programme are now close to the national average, while those for the NVQ level 2 food preparation and cooking are well above. On the professional chefs course, all students had met the college's target to achieve NVQ level 1 during their second term. Retention rates are no more than satisfactory on the GNVQ intermediate course and they were poor at advanced level in 1996 and 1997. Inspection evidence confirmed that retention was much improved for courses which started in September 1997. Many of the students who leave courses early gain employment in relevant occupations.

their vocational area, but this facility needs to be developed and expanded.

24 Teachers are appropriately qualified for the courses they teach. Most have recent industrial and commercial experience and keep abreast of new developments. The college has recently invested significantly in new accommodation and equipment for hospitality and catering. The central kitchen and restaurants provide realistic work environments and teaching and learning are aided by their compact grouping. Students have some access to modern computers within

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ advanced*	Retention (%)	77	53	53
	Pass rate (%)	100	90	11
GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	72	75	74
	Pass rate (%)	11	39	48
NVQ catering and hospitality level 2 food preparation and cooking	Retention (%)	79	42	69
	Pass rate (%)	21	36	75

Source: college data

\*ordinary national diploma hotel and catering in 1995

# Curriculum Areas

## Art and Design, Media and Performing Arts

### Grade 1

**25 Inspectors observed 26 lessons covering art and design, media, performing arts and music technology. Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment of strengths and weaknesses in these subjects.**

#### Key strengths

- outstanding or good teaching
- rapid response to GNVQ advanced students' needs
- clear and comprehensive course documentation
- excellent results in GNVQ advanced courses
- the accommodation for performing arts and media programmes
- the excellent range of equipment for music technology

#### Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on some courses

26 The art and design curriculum has been successfully developed. It is broadly based, and includes GNVQs at foundation level in art and design, intermediate and advanced levels in art, design and media, general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) and an access course to higher education. In addition, art and design is part of a vocational access course for students with learning difficulties. Adult and evening courses are offered in art, photography, ceramics and video production. Student numbers have grown rapidly in the last two years. The management of this complex programme area is effective and communications between the different specialist staff are good. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that there is much

successful team teaching across the disciplines. A thorough process of evaluation and review takes place continuously in addition to the annual and triennial review process. All courses are fully accredited and students are given the opportunity of gaining additional qualifications; for example, additional GCE A level subjects may be selected to support higher education applications. Performing arts students are encouraged to take professional dance qualifications.

27 The majority of the teaching is good or outstanding. Staff are enthusiastic and enjoy good relationships with their students. There is a sense of purpose and professionalism about most of the work. This is reflected in the industrial relevance of many of the assignments, a particular feature of which is the emphasis placed on research skills. For example, a group of GNVQ intermediate level students were confidently moving from the local history section of the resource centre to the internet in search of images to support their print assignment. In a small minority of practical sessions, teachers' failure to sustain students' interest over a protracted period resulted in discipline problems.

28 Written work, project research and personal studies are thoroughly researched and presented. There are many examples of high-quality GNVQ advanced work on display in public areas of the college. A performing arts practical assignment revealed impressive discipline and choreographic skills, early in the course. GNVQ portfolios in media and art and design are well presented and contain work of an appropriate standard. On some students' work teachers do not provide enough feedback to enable them to improve their performance. Guidance on entry to higher education is particularly strong, resulting in good progression to relevant higher education courses.

29 GCE A level results in media, art and design and history of art have all been at, or

# Curriculum Areas

well above, the national average for a number of years. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that pass rates in GNVQ advanced media are outstanding and very good in art and design. On the GNVQ intermediate course, where retention has been steadily improving, pass rates in art and design are also high. In media studies, retention has improved slightly on the GNVQ advanced level course but dropped on the intermediate level course. Action taken in the current academic year has produced a significant improvement in previously falling retention rates at advanced level.

30 Resources for art and design are of a high quality, and there is efficient and effective technical support. Those strengths are understated in the self-assessment report. There is a very high-quality history of art reference collection. The new theatre, the integrated learning environment for media, and investment in music technology have added to the range of excellent resources available. Plans are well advanced for a new sound recording studio to eliminate the current problems of soundproofing.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced level subjects	Retention (%)	98	58	72
	Pass rate (%)	80	97	91
GNVQ advanced art and design	Retention (%)	*	68	56
	Pass rate (%)	*	88	95
GNVQ advanced media and communications	Retention (%)	*	*	59
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	92
GNVQ intermediate art and design	Retention (%)	84	66	85
	Pass rate (%)	66	88	92
GNVQ intermediate media and communications	Retention (%)	*	82	76
	Pass rate (%)	*	64	68

Source: college data

\*no entries

# Curriculum Areas

## English and Modern Foreign Languages

### Grade 2

**31 Inspectors observed 16 lessons covering GCE A level English, French and German, English as a foreign language (EFL) and a range of modern language units supporting courses in other programme areas.**

**Inspectors concluded that the college's self-assessment report identifies many strengths and some areas for action, but omits a few weaknesses.**

#### Key strengths

- the high quality of most of the teaching
- good use of a range of teaching methods
- effective monitoring of students' progress
- high levels of achievement on daytime advanced level courses
- effective management and teamwork

#### Weaknesses

- unimaginative teaching in a minority of lessons
- poor retention on some courses
- poor results on one-year GCE A level courses

32 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that management at course level is good. A recent restructuring has established clear lines of communication. Support to course leaders is effective. Teams work well, and share good practice. Teachers meet regularly and increasingly discuss issues of teaching and learning. They take account of the views of students, who consider that they are well consulted.

33 Teaching is good. The majority of lessons are well structured, have a clear sense of purpose, and are presented in a lively manner.

In the most successful lessons, a range of teaching methods is used, and these are well supported by supplementary material designed by staff. As indicated in the self-assessment report, teachers' expectations of their students are high, and they know their students well. In most lessons, teachers create a congenial but busy atmosphere. In modern language lessons, the use of the language being learned is consistent and effective. In English lessons, the successful use of small group discussion and of presentations by students demonstrates their progress in critical analysis. However, a minority of lessons are less stimulating because teachers do not use appropriate teaching methods or do not vary the activities sufficiently. As a result, they do not engage or sustain students' interest. Attendance at a number of lessons is poor, particularly on modern language courses provided for other programme areas.

34 Students' written work is good. They write critically and with accuracy. Modern language students display confidence orally and enjoy speaking the language being learned. English students are enthusiastic about literary study and enjoy the challenging range of texts which include the works of Shakespeare, Chaucer and modern poets. Visits to theatres, foreign exchanges and other visits provide students with opportunities for enhancing their work. EFL students respond conscientiously and with enjoyment in their lessons. Assignments are thoroughly marked and assessment is appropriate. As indicated in the self-assessment report, students' progress is systematically monitored in an environment of encouragement and positive support. Staff give willingly of their time to students at the end of lessons and during breaks. Achievements on two-year GCE A level courses are high; these courses have pass rates well above the national average. Unfortunately, these results are marred by very poor retention rates. Rates of progression to higher education are high. Achievements on the one-year GCE A level courses are low, although on some individual evening courses, for example,

# Curriculum Areas

English, a good proportion of high grades is achieved. Staff have analysed retention and achievement trends, and are now monitoring retention more closely, as well as developing strategies to improve achievements. These include the targeting of particular teaching groups with additional support.

35 Teachers are well qualified and effectively deployed. The majority of modern language teachers teach their first language. Lessons generally take place in well-furnished and well-equipped classrooms though some English is taught in a remote hut. The recently developed language centre is providing an effective focus for the development of a range of foreign language courses. Further progress is presently impeded by its frequent use as a general language teaching space.

## **Examples of students' achievements in English and modern foreign languages, 1995 to 1997**

<b>Course grouping</b>		<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>
GCE A level English (two year)	Retention (%)	100	55	65
	Pass rate (%)	75	78	86
GCE A level English (one year)	Retention (%)	91	87	90
	Pass rate (%)	50	85	47
GCE A level modern foreign languages (all courses)	Retention (%)	90	85	65
	Pass rate (%)	48	50	72

*Source: college data*

# Curriculum Areas

## Provision for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

### Grade 2

**36 Inspectors observed 13 lessons on separate specialist courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment of the strengths of this provision, but identified some weaknesses which were not recorded in the self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- well-planned teaching and learning
- the strong emphasis on students taking some responsibility for their learning
- the effective use of learning support assistants
- effective integration of IT with the curriculum
- individual action plans and effective tutorials
- the strong links with the community

#### Weaknesses

- lack of feedback on assessed work
- the inappropriate and unclear purpose of some activity
- the sharing of rooms by classes and consequent disruption of learning
- lack of vocational studies at Sheppey

37 The college provides a wide range of courses for students with learning difficulties which offer them opportunities for progression to GNVQ foundation or NVQ level 1. Link courses for schools and courses in the community are offered in partnership with other agencies. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that its links with the community are a strength.

38 Most teaching is effective; 10 out of the 13 lessons observed by inspectors were judged to be good or outstanding. Lessons are generally well planned and carefully organised to meet the learning needs of individual students. On the work introduction course, two hearing impaired students attended a practical lesson on motor vehicles. They were supported by a signer who enabled them to undertake the practical tasks safely and effectively. The college's self-assessment report identifies the quality of teaching as a key strength, a view confirmed by inspectors. In a few instances, however, some tasks undertaken by students were not appropriate to their needs and they were not able to identify the purpose of some activities. This contrasts with the work students undertake in the college's Cathedral View restaurant. Here, activities are purposeful, well directed and improve students' confidence and work-related skills. IT is used to support the learning process in a range of curriculum areas and students value the opportunities to produce good-quality work through the use of computers. Sheppey College has only a few courses which offer students an introduction to vocational studies on its programme for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

39 In 1994-95, students' programmes were not accredited. Students are now working towards appropriate awards and obtaining accredited units. Overall, levels of achievement are good. Individual action plans with personal targets for students' social, emotional and educational development are used to ensure that students follow programmes that take account of their individual needs and enable them to make appropriate progress. The college identified this as a particular strength in its self-assessment report and inspectors agreed with this. Students obtain support in producing and updating their plans from the effective tutorial system. Some students working towards basic levels of accreditation have tutorial records which use pictorial symbols in place of some words. This practice is helpful in promoting students'

# Curriculum Areas

understanding of the process. Careful records of all progress are kept. Students are constantly engaged in learning and produce work of an appropriate standard. In some lessons, however, teachers rely heavily on handouts which students complete without receiving written feedback on their progress or achievements. This omission makes it difficult to assess the progress students are making in their tasks.

40 Support assistants are well managed. They work with students across the college and have a clear understanding of their role in supporting their learning. For example, support assistants carefully consult students before helping them to complete an activity or assignment.

41 Many rooms have displays of students' work. On occasions, classes have to share the same room and students are distracted from their learning activities by the noise from the other group. The computer usage in one room is hampered by the limited space, and students struggle to find an adequate working area.

# Cross-college Provision

## Support for Students

### Grade 2

**42 Inspectors agreed that the college had identified the main strengths and weaknesses of support for students in its self-assessment report. However, they thought that two weaknesses had not been identified.**

#### Key strengths

- clear policies for support and guidance of students
- well-managed student services
- the pre-entry guidance and admissions processes
- student welfare services
- cross-college learning support services
- an expanding range of extra-curricular activities

#### Weaknesses

- some less than satisfactory tutorial provision
- incomplete destinations data

43 The college has made progress in the provision of support and guidance for students since the last inspection. It now has a range of policies which are implemented by strong commitments in strategic and operational plans. Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that pre-entry information and guidance procedures are effective and supported by clear guidelines. The college uses a variety of media to reach a wide audience. Publicity material is well targeted. In a highly competitive environment for recruiting school-leavers, the college has succeeded in increasing its share of the market. Applications and enrolments are co-ordinated efficiently by the central customer service and registry teams. Links with special schools ensure that students have a smooth transition to college. All full-time and most part-

time students have an interview which seeks to establish the appropriateness of the course for their career ambitions. On a few courses, the academic and financial demands made on students were not made clear before enrolment. This was not identified in the self-assessment report.

44 Many students are excited about their experiences at college and are delighted to be there. They are all allocated a course and/or personal tutor. A tutor support pack outlines the development plan for the tutor system and the responsibilities of personal and course tutors. It includes details of provision for individual tutorial support, the tutorial programme, and the personal career development guide. Approximately 60 per cent of courses demonstrate good tutorial practice. Tutors provide introductions to the college and course which confirm students' decisions, assess starting points, support students in their academic and personal development, and prepare them for the next step in their careers. On the other courses tutors display adherence to the letter rather than to the intentions of the tutorial guidelines. The college's own review system reveals that this often leads to tedious induction processes, poor use of tutorial time, weak action-planning, ineffective monitoring of attendance, and insufficient acknowledgement of students' views. The system for GCE A level provision is well conceived and is supported by clear documentation and resource materials. The college recognises that more work is needed on records of achievement. The lack of college-wide oversight to ensure that action is taken to remedy poor tutorial practice is not mentioned in the self-assessment report.

45 The college considers that its cross-college learning support is effective. Inspectors agreed with this assessment. The needs of those with physical or sensory impairments are identified at an early stage of their college careers. Response to their needs is prompt. Regular monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the

# Cross-college Provision

support includes observation of learning support assistants at work. During induction, the college assesses the literacy and numeracy skills of full-time students on intermediate and foundation level courses, using the Basic Skills Agency (BSA) tests. Nearly 1,000 students were identified as needing help at the beginning of the current academic year. This is provided either on an individual basis in the resource centre or through on-course support. Individual support has been effective in enabling some students to achieve remarkable levels of success, although some students do not see their learning agreement through to conclusion. There is evidence of improvement in students' general levels of competence and confidence and in retention rates in some curriculum areas as the result of on-course support. In its self-assessment report, the college acknowledges the need to extend screening of basic skills to all students and recognises the resource implications.

46 Student services are well managed. Careful records are maintained and timely reports are produced. Good teamwork ensures continuity of services. The student welfare service offers financial advice and dispenses various funds sensitively. It also offers a well-managed accommodation service for those students who need it. The welfare officer is the first point of call for those who need counselling, for which there is no provision in the college. However, the college has close links with a range of external counselling agencies. Careers consultants provide an effective service within the current limits of the service level agreement. The college has been awarded the Kent Careers Services kitemark for its careers information resources. However, the number of students whose destinations are unknown is too high, with the consequence that there is inadequate information for planning future developments in careers education and the curriculum. There is an active students' union. The appointment of a students' activities co-ordinator has increased enormously the level of

extra-curricular activities since the last inspection. The co-ordinator works closely with the executive of the students' union which values his support and advice.

## General Resources

### *Grade 2*

**47 The college's self-assessment report is comprehensive and inspectors agreed with the judgements about the strengths of general resources. The major weaknesses, which related exclusively to the accommodation on the main site, were not detailed in the self-assessment report but had been taken into account in the college's overall judgements.**

#### Key strengths

- the new high-quality facility at Sheppey College
- effective management and maintenance of estates and buildings
- a carefully-planned accommodation and estates strategy
- industrial-standard equipment supporting a number of specialist areas
- the excellent resources centres on both college sites
- good provision and access to IT
- health and safety organisation and management

#### Weaknesses

- the major structural and service difficulties in all the Canterbury buildings
- the poor-quality science accommodation
- lack of student car parking
- lack of outdoor sports facilities

48 The main college is situated close to the centre of Canterbury. The site consists of 24 accommodation blocks and 27 mobile

# Cross-college Provision

classrooms. Most were built in the 1960s and 1970s and a four-storey block was added in 1984. The majority of these buildings now have major structural problems and part of the site is subject to flooding. Car parking space is severely restricted. In its accommodation strategy, the college judged that the cost of addressing these difficulties made a new building a potentially viable alternative. Detailed planning has proceeded with this outcome in mind and the college has been developing a private finance solution to support relocation from its current site.

49 Most of the teaching buildings have serious defects. There are significant problems with services including water, electrical supply and drainage. However, inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that, within the constraints of poor buildings and the prospect of relocation, extensive efforts have been made to create the best possible learning environments through imaginative refurbishments or cost-effective new building intended for short-term occupation. This has included the recent building of a central resources facility, and a new drama and performing arts space, and extensions to the motor vehicle unit and sports hall. New hair and beauty facilities have been created by the conversion of high street offices and the construction department has been accommodated in a converted dairy. Extensive redecoration of classrooms and corridors has been undertaken and much of the general teaching takes place in good-quality teaching rooms most of which are carpeted and well furnished. The science laboratories remain in need of substantial refurbishment. Many of the mobile classrooms, although decorated, provide substandard teaching accommodation. There is access for students in wheelchairs to about two-thirds of the teaching areas. Social facilities for students are limited but include a student restaurant and a cafe. The college has a 24-place crèche which recently received a highly complimentary Ofsted inspection report.

50 Sheppey College, opened in 1996, is a new purpose-built satellite of Canterbury College, at Sheerness, on the Isle of Sheppey. It is well planned to meet the needs of students with mobility difficulties. Teaching and resource areas are comfortable and are flexible in their use. Circulation areas and student facilities are pleasant and welcoming. Inspectors agreed with the college's view that the building is a very high-quality facility designed by the college's own estates team. The college estate and buildings maintenance functions are effectively managed by a well-qualified and skilled premises team, a key strength identified in the college's self-assessment report with which inspectors agreed. A planned maintenance programme is being modified as part of the developing accommodation strategy. Room utilisation is high. Health and safety management and training are efficiently organised.

51 At both Canterbury and Sheppey, all curriculum areas are well equipped with a wide range of teaching aids. All areas have good-quality furniture. In all curriculum areas equipment is adequate for the courses being taught, although some equipment in engineering and plumbing is dated. In some curriculum areas, including hair and beauty, motor vehicle, construction crafts and catering, specialist equipment is of an industrial standard.

52 The library is part of the resources centre at the centre of the main campus. It includes the IT centre and the study skills centre. The whole area is light, well furnished and provides a good study environment. The resources centre is well stocked with over 40,000 books, 170 periodical subscriptions and daily newspapers, 1,150 audio and video tapes, 53 CD-ROMs, and a wide range of information packs, research documents and other materials. The resources centre at Sheppey is similarly resourced. Some limitations were identified for part-time students wishing to access popular texts in sociology and psychology. The resource

# Cross-college Provision

centre is well managed by a qualified librarian. There is effective liaison with curriculum areas and good use is made of records and performance indicators to monitor the use of the library service. The current catalogue includes all items held both on the main site and at Sheppey but there is a need to include the books held in some curriculum areas.

53 The college has a clearly-defined IT strategy and ambitious proposals for future developments. The quality of the IT equipment across the college is high. The overall ratio of high grade machines to full-time equivalent students is 1:8 at Canterbury. Ease of access, particularly in the resources centre is very good. At Sheppey College, the ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students is 1:4 and there is unrestricted access to about half the machines.

## Quality Assurance

### *Grade 1*

**54 The college has a long-established and effective quality assurance system. The self-assessment report was written to the college's own format, but a supplementary document provided cross-references to the new inspection framework. Inspectors identified only one weakness not noted in the self-assessment report.**

#### **Key strengths**

- the long-established commitment to the principles and practice of total quality management
- a quality assurance system linked to governance, management and appraisal at all levels
- annual appraisal of all teachers with six-monthly review
- involvement of external representatives and students on triennial reviews
- staff development

#### **Weaknesses**

- failure to address adequately retention and achievement in a small minority of annual course reviews

55 The college has a well-established quality assurance system based on total quality management principles. This is a strength identified in the college's self-assessment report with which inspectors agreed. Quality assurance has been successfully integrated with the life of the college, and staff are enthusiastic about the improvements and benefits that have come from it. The system involves a rigorous evaluation of all college operations. The first part of this process is the annual review of courses. Action plans are agreed with the programme managers, who monitor them, and with the divisional director. A small number of annual course reviews do not adequately address poor or falling student retention and achievement, particularly on two-year programmes. An annual report records successful completion of targets and gives reasons for those yet to be completed. Judgements are summarised in a grade. Annual course reviews contribute to programme area action plans. These are detailed documents and include specific targets and an evaluation of the progress made against the previous year's action plan. Support areas publish service standards and produce action plans with targets. These are subject to a similar annual review process.

56 Each year, some 30 courses are evaluated as part of a triennial review system. The reviews consider trends for the last three years, recent staff development activities, and a report on lesson observations provided by an external consultant. The review panel of nine includes two external members and two students, and is chaired by the principal or a director. Over 50 external members, who already serve on programme area development groups, are involved in any one year's round of triennial reviews. The reports list the course's strengths

# Cross-college Provision

and include examples of good practice. It is the college's policy to define weaknesses as areas for action. Some of these are not always clearly expressed. Action plans complete the process. Triennial reviews are public documents and are lodged in the college's learning resources centre. A summary quality report is considered by the academic board each year.

57 The corporation is committed to the college's quality assurance system, a strength confirmed by inspectors. It receives and reviews the college's annual action plan and also monitors college performance against the annual operating statement. Two members of the corporation serve on the college's quality review committee to ensure that improvements are achieved and that there are regular reviews of the system to maintain its effectiveness. The corporation recently published its second triennial review of the college's work. It reports on all curriculum and cross-college areas, listing strengths and areas for action and giving a grade for each section. It also has tables of student retention and achievement rates for courses in each programme area, for overall GNVQ, general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) and GCE A level achievements, and for the college's contribution to national targets for education and training. The report on quality is incorporated into the governance and management section of the review, thus reflecting the strongly-held view of the corporation and senior managers that these activities are inextricably linked.

58 Students' opinions are monitored, evaluated and included in annual and triennial course reviews. In a small number of courses, adverse comment has not been reflected in the annual action plan. The college has a clear and concise charter that informs students of its standards, and what students may do if the college fails to achieve them. The majority of students' complaints are made directly to teachers or course tutors and are dealt with effectively. The small number of formal

complaints made each year are thoroughly investigated. Outcomes are carefully recorded.

59 The substantial staff development budget represents 2.5 per cent of the college's annual payroll. A wide range of staff development activities is undertaken and teachers speak highly of the effectiveness of the system. There is a well-developed staff development policy with 10 priority areas linked to strategic objectives. Objectives, clearly linked to the strategic plan or college priorities, are agreed during an annual appraisal and the previous year's performance against target is discussed. A two-day training event is held in January each year for all staff. This year the event focused on lifelong learning and there were some 40 different workshop sessions, some led by outside speakers.

## Governance

### *Grade 1*

**60 Inspectors considered that the college's self-assessment report provided an accurate appraisal of the strengths of governance.**

#### Key strengths

- a committed corporation with members selected for their ability to contribute to strategic decisions
- effective involvement in strategic planning and quality assurance
- the clear focus on the importance of each student's performance
- the efficient and effective discharge of corporation business
- the consistently high standard of clerking
- good working relationships with senior managers

#### Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses

# Cross-college Provision

61 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is good. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC. The corporation has an effective committee structure. The quality of documentation produced for committee and corporation meetings is excellent and contributes to the creation of a disciplined and purposeful atmosphere for corporation activities. Clerking is of a consistently high standard. All these strengths are identified in the college's self-assessment report and were confirmed by inspectors.

62 The corporation has 12 members. Seven of these are independent members and one is a TEC nominee. The principal is a member and there are two staff governors and one co-opted member. The corporation consciously chose to limit its membership to 12 at the time of incorporation to impress upon governors the importance of regular attendance and to create a group small enough to act effectively in strategic matters. Governors have consequently been chosen for their ability to contribute to strategic decision taking rather than for their expertise in any particular area. This process has been successful and the corporation is a tightly-knit body which has a clear understanding of its duties and responsibilities. Potential governors are identified by a search committee which has clear terms of reference. Induction training for new governors is good and there is a range of internal and external training for all members either on their own or in conjunction with staff. Because there is no student representative on the board, members hold a meeting every term with officers of the students' union, an arrangement valued by both parties.

63 Governors play an active and effective part in the planning processes which permeate

college life. They take the lead in making key decisions about the educational character of the college either through the normal schedule of meetings or by special arrangements, for example, to review the mission of the college. The three-year strategic plan and one-year operational plan are routinely and thoroughly reviewed either by the whole corporation or its committees. The college's academic performance is examined critically through a similar process which focuses on the quality of experience of each individual student. Governors speak of a duty to challenge both the clarity of what is presented to them and the assumptions on which it is based. Governors are equally rigorous in assessing their own performance. Once decisions have been taken, their implementation is formally delegated to the principal. Relations between governors and the principal and senior staff are cordial and supportive but not uncritically so. The annual plan is used to create personal targets for the principal who is appraised each year by the chairman. Similar arrangements exist for other senior postholders who are appraised by the principal.

## Management

### *Grade 1*

**64 The self-assessment report identified all of the strengths noted by inspectors, either wholly or in part.**

#### **Key strengths**

- a widely understood and supported mission statement
- a coherent and pervasive planning regime with an emphasis on performance
- imaginative leadership and open management
- the clearly-defined management structure

# Cross-college Provision

- a well-structured and effective communication system
- the good working relationships between managers and staff at all levels
- the strong and developing links with the community
- effective financial management
- a fully integrated management information system
- a comprehensive and fully integrated personnel function

## Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses

65 Canterbury College benefits from imaginative leadership and open management. The college has a clear sense of purpose and direction which staff understand and support. The strategic planning process offers staff at all levels opportunities to contribute through a carefully-structured round of meetings. Contributions are aggregated in draft form for consideration by the corporation. Once the plan is approved, the annual operating statement and development plans for all areas of activity are agreed and these incorporate specific targets against which success will subsequently be assessed. These targets are also used to review the performance of all college managers. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the planning process is deeply embedded in the college and is seen as a normal part of everyday life rather than as a separate activity. Planning activities are closely linked with others, such as quality assurance procedures. The overall system is effective and valued by staff who can see in the finished plan ideas which they may well have originated themselves.

66 The management structure is stable and is understood by staff. There is a high degree of devolution. Some 11 per cent of the budget is controlled by senior managers while the rest is delegated to 28 managers who have operational

responsibilities for academic or support areas. Managers welcome this arrangement. They see it as a vote of confidence in them and they value the autonomy and flexibility it brings. They also see it as an opportunity to be creative, and initiatives generated at programme level have played a key role in the rapid expansion of the college which has consistently achieved its growth targets. A system with such a high degree of devolution requires effective communication and line management. The college provides these. Line management responsibilities are clearly defined and effectively discharged. New conditions of service have allowed the college to achieve a flexibility in its operation which allows it to respond to changing patterns of enrolment. There is an appropriate range of personnel policies. Staffing costs account for some 68 per cent of the college's expenditure.

67 In seeking to implement its mission, the college has developed links with external groups and agencies and these are represented on programme groups which review and develop vocational areas. The college makes use of a range of information about existing and potential markets to inform planning. Individual managers, who have a responsibility for developing community links, are also required to submit evidence of market research to support any new course proposal. The opening of Sheppey College was preceded by significant market research produced by college staff amongst others. All these activities and findings are incorporated into a sophisticated and comprehensive marketing plan for the period 1997-2001. The college has played an important part in bids for regeneration funds from central government and has good links with training agencies. An emerging feature is the emphasis on partnership and collaboration with schools, colleges, the local education authority (LEA) and local government. External agencies speak highly of the college which they see as responsive, approachable and well organised.

# Cross-college Provision

68 Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement in the self-assessment report that the management information system is well integrated and effective. It comprises data on finance, students, courses, the deployment of staff and the use of accommodation. Managers at all levels make extensive use of the system and have confidence in it. Access to the system for other staff is restricted. There is a tension for managers between the need to implement course review action plans, and the delay in obtaining completely accurate students' achievement data. This is a problem of timing for the college to solve.

69 There is a clear commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities which is vigorously implemented. The college's mission statement underlines the importance of respect between all members of the college community and the college's developing community role is extending access to a wider clientele in terms of ability, learning need and geographical location. A committee of the academic board oversees this aspect of college life and has clear targets to be addressed.

70 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The finance function is well managed and adequately resourced. Comprehensive financial information, designed to meet the particular requirements of budget holders, college managers and governors, is produced in good time. There are comprehensive financial regulations. No significant internal control weaknesses have been identified by the internal or external auditors.

## Conclusions

71 The college's self-assessment process is effective and the inspection team found that the self-assessment report was supported by sound evidence. The inspection team agreed with most findings of the report, although because

weaknesses in students' achievements and retention were identified as college-wide issues in a separate section of the report, they were not necessarily given sufficient weight in the evaluation of some individual curriculum sections. The college's assessment of student support covered slightly different functions than those outlined in Council Circular 97/12. In general resources, both inspectors and the college considered that in awarding an overall grade it was difficult to weigh the high quality of equipment and learning resources against some of the major weaknesses undoubtedly present in the main site buildings. Overall, there was agreement between inspectors and the college on almost all grades. In one case inspectors considered that the college had underestimated its strengths.

72 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	1
16-18 years	45
19-24 years	18
25+ years	36
Not known	0
Total	100

*Source: college data*

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

<i>Level of study</i>	<i>%</i>
Foundation	8
Intermediate	31
Advanced	46
Higher education	10
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	5
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	275	362	9
Agriculture	141	43	3
Construction	214	526	10
Engineering	354	518	12
Business	754	544	18
Hotel and catering	385	75	6
Health and community care	649	610	17
Art and design	478	71	7
Humanities	550	670	17
Basic education	44	65	1
Total	3,844	3,484	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	122	58	6	186
Supporting direct learning contact	61	10	0	71
Other support	71	2	0	73
Total	254	70	6	330

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

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends

### Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£12,715,000	£13,040,000	£13,809,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£15.67	£16.11	£16.47
Payroll as a proportion of income	65%	66%	69%
Achievement of funding target	104%	94%	104%
Diversity of income	45%	39%	35%
Operating surplus	£270,000	£162,000	£869,000

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

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

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

*Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96), college (1996-97)*

*Diversity of income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)*

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

### Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	227	225	294
	Average point score per entry	3.7	3.5	3.8
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	244	213	271
	Percentage achieving qualification	86%	78%	79%
	Position in tables	top third	middle third	top third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	190	236
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	67%	63%
	Position in tables	*	middle third	middle third

*Source: DfEE*

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

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

*\*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available*

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends *continued*

### Students' achievements

		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Advanced academic	Pass (%)	55	65	70
	Retention (%)	82	64	67
Intermediate academic	Pass (%)	25	34	40
	Retention (%)	76	66	69
Advanced vocational	Pass (%)	76	81	78
	Retention (%)	92	69	63
Intermediate vocational	Pass (%)	33	72	69
	Retention (%)	50	82	63

*Source: college data*

**FEFC Inspection Report 75/98**

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