

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Chesterfield College

August 1995

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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

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

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

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

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 80/95

CHESTERFIELD COLLEGE
EAST MIDLANDS REGION
Inspected January - March 1995

Summary

Chesterfield College has committed governors who provide a clear sense of direction to the college. The principal and senior managers share high standards of personal accountability and commitment to the welfare of the college. Communications, planning processes and review procedures are well managed. There is a strong emphasis on links with other organisations and the community. The college offers a broad range of courses, from basic education to higher education, in a wide variety of subject areas. Student support is flexible and responsive. Most of the teaching is effective. The majority of students on vocational programmes achieve satisfactory or good examination results although results on GCE A level and GCSE courses are more variable. College staff are well qualified and competent. Well-established quality assurance procedures are applied consistently throughout the college. Staff development is well planned. Centres in each curriculum area provide good support for individual learning. The college is committed to upgrading its accommodation. The senior management team should further develop the college's strategy for staff and accommodation. Co-ordination of some cross-college initiatives should be clarified and the inconsistencies in tutorial support addressed. The management information system requires further development so that it can effectively support decision making throughout the college.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	1
Governance and management	2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	1
Resources: staffing	1
equipment/learning resources	2
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science, computing and information technology	2	Hair and beauty	2
Construction	2	Health and social care	2
Engineering	2	Art and design	2
Business	2	English and communications	2
Sport and leisure	2	Social sciences	2
		Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	2

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INTRODUCTION

1 Chesterfield College in Derbyshire was inspected mainly between January and March 1995. Prior to this enrolment and induction activities had been inspected in September 1994. Inspectors spent 68 working days in the college. They observed 288 teaching sessions, scrutinised examples of students' work, examined documents and held discussions with governors, staff, students and representatives from local industry, the North Derbyshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), the community, schools, parents and higher education.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Chesterfield College is a market town in North Derbyshire. The town has a population of 120,000 but the college serves a population of approximately twice this size. There are good links by road and rail. The area was once heavily dependent on local mining and allied trades and industries. The last three deep mines in North Derbyshire were closed in 1993 with a loss of 3,000 mining jobs. The region can now be characterised as having higher than average unemployment, low wages, a lower than average number of small businesses, significant skills shortages and low investment rates.

3 Chesterfield College was created from merger of a college of technology and a college of art. The majority of the college's work is carried out on the main site. There is a newly-opened campus approximately one mile away at Tapton House. There is also a smaller annexe where some part-time business studies courses are delivered and a sports ground on the outskirts of the town.

4 There are three 11-18 schools in Chesterfield, a tertiary college and a further twelve 11-18 schools in the surrounding area. Sheffield, about 13 miles away, has a large tertiary college. The local authority's community education service provides basic education courses, General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses and some vocational courses.

5 At the time of the inspection, the college had 2,186 full-time and 7,570 part-time enrolments. There were 3,639 students aged 25 and over. Enrolments by age and level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2. Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 3. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) funded enrolments for 1994-95 number 7,986 compared with 7,370 for the previous year, a growth of 8.3 per cent. Minority ethnic groups make up approximately 2 per cent of the student population compared with less than 1 per cent of the population of Chesterfield. There are of 407 full-time equivalent staff employed at the college. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

6 The college's mission is to encourage all individuals to develop to their full potential. The college states that it intends to widen and increase participation in its education and training activities. It aims to be a

customer-centred institution which is committed to providing learning programmes of the highest quality to all its students.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

7 College staff are aware of the government's aims and policies for further education, including the national targets for education and training. This awareness is reinforced through staff development. The college has adopted a policy of open access to its provision and aims to provide a suitable course of study for all who apply. An equal opportunities policy has been formally approved. It is disseminated widely through the staff handbook. A working party monitors the implementation of this policy.

8 The college offers a broad range of provision, from basic to higher education, in a wide variety of subject areas. The college has developed a timetable for GCSE and General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) courses which enables each student to compile an individual learning programme. The 'Plus Programme' provides these students with access to other courses to allow them to widen their studies and add other qualifications. The programme includes accredited courses in information technology, English, mathematics, general studies and modern languages. It also includes community sports leader awards and a range of General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) units. First-year GCE A level students are also involved in a pilot project which enables them to obtain credit for the development of core skills through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network.

9 There is an extensive framework of units accredited by the Open College which are available during days and evenings. The units are offered at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels in social sciences, English, health and nursing, science and technology, environment and art. Enrolments on these courses, which are designed for adults who are returning to study, have increased. Chesterfield College was the first to become an associate college of Sheffield Hallam University. The quality of the college's bid was such that the university has used it as an exemplar against which to judge subsequent applications. The higher education courses offered through this link are decided by a consultative process. At present, there are pre-entry and higher national diploma courses and the first year of degree level courses in computing, construction, business, science, art and design, education and engineering.

10 Demand for all courses is monitored and those with low enrolments are regularly reviewed. Heavy industry, foundry work and coal mining have all declined in the area. The college has deliberately retained a course leading to a higher national certificate in cast metals but student numbers are low. The college is promoting a modern apprenticeship in conjunction with the Institute of British Foundrymen. The possibility of attracting overseas students is being explored and the course will be promoted on a forthcoming visit to Poland. The continuation of the course will be linked to the outcome of these initiatives.

11 Strong partnership arrangements exist between the college and the community education service in Derbyshire. Jointly-planned provision ensures that a wide range of opportunities is provided for adult learners and young people. The partnership is used to bring into the college groups who do not normally apply for courses. A bus service is provided to enable those who live in isolated communities to attend the college. There are also close links between the college and local community support services. The Derbyshire service for hearing impaired students is based on the college site. There are currently 24 hearing impaired or profoundly deaf students attending the college. Owing to the shortage of tutors there is a waiting list of students wishing to learn sign language.

12 The college provides a wide range of opportunities for adults with learning difficulties. It runs courses in subjects such as literacy and personal grooming at local hospitals. One successful initiative is a training flat where students can learn living skills. Circulation within certain areas of the college is difficult for students with disabilities and more thought should be given to the design of signs and fire alarms for those with special needs.

13 The service provided by the industrial short course unit is well regarded and regularly used by employers. The unit has established a reputation for quality and flexibility. The publicity material which has been developed is of a high standard and appropriate to the target market. The college readily provides details of course content, duration, cost and outcomes. It has become increasingly responsive to employers' requests and increasingly flexible in accommodating the work patterns of students on its courses. Recent attempts to elicit employers' views on provision through questionnaires have not been successful but alternative methods are now being tried. The college has recently begun a scheme in which all teaching staff are required to develop a link with at least one local employer. Employers participate in industrial liaison committees which are chaired by members of the corporation. The college is also reaching employers through telephone canvassing, a training helpline, a newsletter, mailshots and attendance at conferences and exhibitions. There are strong links with employers through work placements. Generally, employers who take work placement students understand what is expected of the students. They also understand most aspects of their own role, but some are unsure about the part they are expected to play in assessment and the monitoring of attendance.

14 The college has well-developed arrangements to enable both its own staff and representatives from local companies to attain the Training and Development Lead Body qualifications which they need to be able to assess students and employees who are candidates for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The college is the largest provider of assessor training in the area. The close working relationship with the TEC at both strategic and operational levels has resulted in some successful collaboration. One example is a compact, aimed at increasing the

achievements of local 14-19 year olds, in which the college has played a major role. The college has successfully bid for funds for specific training contracts which have been delivered to a high standard.

15 The Chesterfield Essential Skills Service is a joint initiative with Derbyshire County Council Community Education Service and the TEC which provides basic work skills for employees in local companies. The scheme recently won the 1994-95 Post Office Beacon Award for Quality Initiatives. Courses are offered in the workplace or the college and fit in with shift working patterns. The emphasis is on a practical approach which is closely related to the needs of individual workers. Collaboration with the college has identified training needs of which employers were previously unaware. The scheme has responded to changing requirements and is now training staff at supervisory level as well as operative level. The project has helped to forge links between the college, the community education service and employers' training staff and has doubled the level of basic skills participation in Chesterfield in a period of eight months.

16 The college has a good relationship with local schools. For the past few years, curriculum liaison activities between groups of schools and the college have been funded by the technical and vocational education initiative. Although this funding has now ceased, the college has made a commitment to continuing its involvement with the initiative. The North East Derbyshire Federation has been formed from the first technical and vocational education initiative group and comprises eight institutions including the college. The arrangements that have been established are being used as a model in other areas. The college is able to gain access to all schools to provide information on further education and to assist in events such as careers conventions, but there is some tension in its relationships with those schools which have, or are planning to have, sixth forms.

17 The main college site has extensive leisure facilities, including a purpose-built fitness suite and an arts centre, which are open to the community. The arts centre has a performance space and cinema which not only allow students to undertake performances and work experience in performing arts but form a valuable community resource. Some money is given to the centre by Derbyshire County Council and East Midlands Arts but the post of arts centre administrator is funded by the college. Saturday morning workshops in the arts also draw in children and their parents for classes in subjects such as pottery.

18 An interesting collaborative project has been set up with Chesterfield Football Club. The club and the college have jointly established a centre of excellence which meets criteria set by the Football Association. At present, more than 100 boys aged between 9 and 16 gain playing or coaching experience and there is the possibility of them taking up an apprenticeship with the club at the end of this process. The collaboration with the college has enabled the club to establish a youth team. The college was joint cup winner in the 1994 English schools under-19 football competition.

Chesterfield Football Club allowed free use of their ground for the final of the competition.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

19 The governors are proud of their college. They bring to the governing body their local knowledge, a network of contacts and a wealth of experience of private companies and public organisations. The governing body has 14 members. There are eight business members, three co-opted governors, a staff nominee, the president of the students' union and the principal. The governing body has no women members. There are three committees: finance and general purposes, which considers resource and employment issues; remuneration; and audit. The college safety committee reports to the governing body. Individual members of the corporation chair industrial liaison committees and so increase their involvement in the college's curriculum.

20 The governors share a strong common view of the purpose of the college in serving its community. The early work of the corporation was concerned with establishing the policies and procedures associated with the new independent status of the college in the fields of finance and personnel. The board is now concentrating on the policy and direction of the college. It has reviewed the strategic plan and selected key factors with which to monitor the college's progress towards its strategic objectives. The board has also taken a developing interest in the curriculum and in its responsibilities for determining the educational character of the institution. Members are aware of their responsibilities and the requirements of public accountability but have yet to approve an agreed code of conduct. The finance and general purposes committee has no agreed terms of reference although the terms of the financial regulations include a description of the committee's role.

21 The academic board has terms of reference set by the corporation in March 1993. It has 20 members including the senior management team, the librarian, the quality co-ordinator and a student representative. The remaining 10 members are elected from the staff. The academic board has two large standing committees which report to it: the resources for learning committee, and the curriculum, quality review and services to students committee. The governors recently requested a report from the academic board on aspects of student achievement. Governors then took steps to support the staff in the action plans for improvement that they had drawn up. The links between governors and the academic board will be further strengthened by an annual quality overview presented as a report from the board to the governors.

22 The senior management team consists of the principal, five directors and the chief administration officer who serves as clerk to the board. The management of the college benefits from the high standards of personal accountability set by the principal with the support of the governing body.

These standards are reflected in the high level of commitment to the welfare of the college shared by the senior management team. Two of the directors have curriculum responsibilities. Other directors have responsibilities for forward planning and resources, personnel and estates, and marketing and student services. In addition to their individual responsibilities the senior team is collectively responsible for advising the governors on future strategy. The strategic planning cycle is effectively managed. There is a strong link between the curriculum planning process and the corporate plan. The planning cycle is integrated with the quality assurance process so that planned improvements in quality are included as operational objectives. The operational plans for the college are clearly derived from strategic objectives and identify responsibilities and time frames. They contain estimates of resource requirements and indicators of success. Some key improvements which have incurred substantial expenditure, such as the development of the management information system, were omitted from the last operational plan. The college should review aspects of its human-resource strategy, which is currently limited to short-term staff-development needs. It should also review its accommodation strategy and adopt procedures for monitoring how efficiently it uses its space. Directors have been closely involved with operational issues during the period of intense change following incorporation. The senior team should clarify the forward strategy for the college.

23 The curriculum is managed effectively. The two curriculum directors each oversee five academic schools and have other clearly-defined individual responsibilities. The 10 heads of schools are supported by deputies and three or four programme co-ordinators. Programme co-ordinator posts were created in September 1994. Some programme co-ordinators have a far more diverse area to manage than others. This lower management tier is already adding to the effectiveness of management in the schools but some post holders have yet to come to terms with the fact that their role is one of manager rather than course expert.

24 Cross-college roles are fulfilled in different ways. In some cases, co-ordination is carried out through a named post holder who reports to the lead director. The post holder co-ordinates the activities of curriculum managers such as the deputy heads of schools who are responsible for the implementation of policy. Quality assurance and external liaison are areas where this approach has worked well. In other situations, roles and responsibilities are less clear. The college has embarked upon a wide range of initiatives related to curriculum delivery and student support. Attention needs to be given to the effective co-ordination of teaching and non-teaching functions to ensure that the impetus for change is maintained and that consistent standards of delivery are met.

25 Communication throughout the college is effective. Informal networks are strong. These are supported by an extensive cycle of well-structured, documented meetings. An in-house college publication

called 'In Perspective' is distributed to all staff and a corresponding publication for employers is now being produced.

26 At present, the management information system is not fully effective. The focus has been on meeting the demands of external agencies such as the FEFC. The information available on staffing is limited. A user group has been set up to identify the information needs of the academic schools. One need already identified is for the provision of information at the level of the teaching group, rather than as aggregated information. Schools are aware of the importance of data concerned with student numbers, such as enrolment and retention rates, as these are linked to the allocation of resources. Heads of schools cannot access student and financial information directly from the central management information system although the first steps in setting up a college-wide network have been completed. Destination information is entered against student lists prepared by the management information system but it is collated manually to meet statutory information requirements. The collection of information in some areas is duplicated and this means that the basis for the data is not consistent across the college. The college has recognised the need to improve confidence in centrally-generated reports. A clerk has been appointed to the management information system office to verify student information and reinforce the importance of accurate, timely returns by the schools.

27 The college's average level of funding for 1994-95 is £19.04 per unit compared with the median for general further education colleges of £18.17. Heads of schools and heads of the non-teaching sections are the principal budget holders. Control over the staffing budget is held at senior management level and is not delegated to schools. Cash flow is managed through the finance office although all schools are required to produce a planned profile of annual expenditure. Monthly summary statements are provided for budget holders which contain information on committed and actual expenditure, internal transfers and income generated. The governors' finance and general purposes committee receives comprehensive reports which cover cash flow, income and expenditure, give a projected outturn and identify variances. Capital purchases are made in response to bids against a central pool of resources. Criteria related to the college plan and school objectives are applied in judging the priority of these bids. The college inherited a surplus from the local authority of £573,000. It has been able to increase this reserve by careful control of expenditure. The corporation has set targets for a contingency reserve of at least 5 per cent of recurrent income and a long-term maintenance provision of 2 per cent. The college's income and expenditure for the 16 months to July 1994 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

28 Most aspects of student support services are effective. Staff responsible for the oversight of student recruitment, guidance and support

are receptive to change. All staff recognise the increasing importance of student support and guidance as key elements of the college's open-access policy. Student support functions are the responsibility of the director of marketing and student services and are monitored by the curriculum, quality review and services to students committee.

29 College prospectuses and publicity material are informative and attractively designed. The information office provides an efficient and friendly service in dealing with pre-entry enquiries. It is efficient in handling applications, enrolments and data. The college operates a computer database of its courses. Access to this is available through the information office and a range of other key locations. The database is updated regularly to include the latest course changes. Well-designed printouts are produced from the system in response to individual enquiries. The database helps to ensure that prospective students are well informed about the college's courses. A portable version of the database is taken on visits to schools and career conventions. The college has a thriving recruitment programme which includes visits to schools and careers events, and a range of taster courses for school pupils. Close contact is maintained with schools' careers officers.

30 The guidance offered to prospective students is thorough. Guidelines exist to promote consistent standards of interviewing. Specialist staff are available on a rota basis to give advice to applicants throughout the year, including vacation periods. There are procedures for the accreditation of students' prior learning, which are supported by professional guidance and relevant reference material. Trained contact staff in specialist areas collaborate closely with the co-ordinator who manages the open-learning centre. The number of students seeking accreditation of prior learning is still relatively small.

31 An induction programme is provided for all full-time and part-time students. The comprehensive content is standardised across all programmes. Implementation of the programme is generally good although the styles of delivery vary in their effectiveness. The best induction sessions contained a mixture of activities; administrative chores were interspersed with practical introductions to course content. Student services staff and students' union officers provide support during induction weeks. The college charter is distributed and explained during induction. The student handbook is written in a friendly style and is comprehensive, accurate and informative.

32 The pastoral tutoring system is the cornerstone of student support. The role of a pastoral tutor is to diagnose each student's need for additional learning support, monitor students' overall academic progress, disseminate college and other information, discuss issues of common relevance in group tutorials and support the development of records of achievement. Students' parents receive regular reports and can attend parents' meetings. Tutors' work is co-ordinated by the college's pastoral services co-ordinator. All full-time students are allocated a minimum of

45 minutes pastoral tutorial time a week. However, some staff and students are uncertain whether attendance at these pastoral tutorials is obligatory. Part-time students do not have a timetabled tutorial but have access to a tutor on request, often in the open-learning centre. Although the conduct of tutorials is subject to quality standards, there is inconsistency in the quality of tutoring.

33 Staff with oversight of student support services understand the relationship and boundaries between academic guidance, pastoral tutoring, careers guidance and personal counselling. These are well defined in published guidelines. Personal counselling is professionally organised and provides a good and confidential service. The service is physically located in the student services area and staff are appropriately welcoming. Staff are experienced and regularly update their skills. Regular team meetings encourage mutual support within the team.

34 Students enrolling on all courses at intermediate level and below, undergo screening to identify any problems they may have with numeracy and literacy. Additional support is provided within the specialist schools through resource-based learning centres. These are stocked with specialised course material and learning packs, as well as material for the development of basic skills. Computers installed in the centres have standardised software which enables students to develop basic information technology skills such as wordprocessing. The learning centres complement the work of the central library and the open-learning unit. They are valued highly by students and are well used. Twenty-eight staff have gained City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) qualifications in teaching basic numeracy and literacy. Students are also able to take advantage of 'drop-in' workshops conducted in the open-learning centre which cover basic competence in literacy, numeracy and study skills. Workshops are attended on a voluntary basis. Some of the basic-skills learning materials in the centre need improving and students' progress should be monitored more effectively.

35 There is a close relationship between the careers advisory service and specialist, vocational staff. Current and prospective students receive objective advice which they value. College staff are complemented by specialist careers counsellors from Derbyshire County Council Careers Service under an annually negotiated service agreement. The careers section of the library is updated regularly in consultation with the careers counsellor.

36 The main campus has a nursery for up to 40 children. Tapton House campus has an additional 16 places. The provision is valued by students. Staff take their responsibilities seriously. The legal requirements of the Children's Act are strictly adhered to; a programme of staff development is in place; and quality standards are monitored.

37 The officers of the students' union play a constructive part in the life of the college. The students' union president is a member of the

corporation. There are regular meetings of the union executive. Officers of the union consult regularly with the principal and other senior staff.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

38 The strengths outweighed the weaknesses in 67 per cent of the classes inspected. Weaknesses were predominant in only 6 per cent of the sessions. This profile compares favourably with the figures based on inspections carried out in 1993-94 and reported in the Chief Inspector's report of November 1994. The following table shows the grades awarded as a result of the sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		11	12	5	4	0	32
GCSE		0	2	7	0	0	9
GNVQ		6	14	11	1	0	32
NVQ		10	26	13	3	0	52
Other vocational		19	60	27	7	2	115
Access		4	7	2	0	0	13
Basic education		0	9	7	0	0	16
Higher education		3	11	4	1	0	19
Total		53	141	76	16	2	288

39 Science classes are well planned. Particular strengths, common to most sessions, are; varied and appropriate methods of working, enthusiastic presentations by tutors, and the setting of substantial, but acceptable, volumes of coursework and homework. Students' work is carefully and accurately marked and teachers provides good written feedback to students. The new GNVQ in science is developing in a satisfactory manner. Some imaginative assignments have been developed in human physiology. Information technology and computing courses have clear objectives. Teaching is well organised and takes good account of students' abilities. New material is introduced with enthusiasm and this helps to create a warm and open atmosphere in classes. Students' work is accurately graded, but teachers' comments are not as thorough or as helpful as they are in science.

40 In construction, lesson plans have clear objectives. Staff display sound technical knowledge. The technician studies course team uses schemes of work to ensure that core skills are developed and assessed appropriately. The quality of teaching on construction craft courses is variable, and the section needs to develop more appropriate material for the teaching of NVQs. Some teachers gave unclear explanations of technical topics or failed to manage classes effectively, and students frequently turned up late for classes. In contrast, some teaching was of high quality. Teachers encourage groupwork and individual research and

make effective use of photography to record students' achievements. Adults with special needs are effectively catered for on a pathway course which provides access to NVQ level 1 in construction.

41 There is extensive engineering provision in the college, organised into three schools of mechanical and materials technology, automobile engineering, and electrical and electronic engineering. The teaching, promotion of learning and assessment of students' work are generally effective throughout the engineering programmes, but more could be done to develop programmes which meet the needs of a wider range of students and to integrate common aspects of the programmes across the three schools. In electrical and electronic engineering, teachers have appropriate schemes of work. Coursework is set regularly and returned promptly. The work is assessed conscientiously and tutors frequently provide detailed comments to help students to improve their English. There is no system of internal moderation to ensure that standards are consistent in marking assessed work. There is an appropriate range of project work but the quality of the briefing for assignments is variable. Core skills are being developed effectively and there is good documentation to assist students in claiming the skills that they can demonstrate. There are good arrangements to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In automobile engineering, the school has responded well to the development of NVQ provision. Programmes of learning are well designed. There is an appropriate blend of theory and practical work. Students are encouraged to contribute to discussions by effective use of question and answer techniques. Underpinning knowledge is delivered mainly in classrooms. The location of workshops, away from the classrooms, means it is not always possible to take students into a workshop to provide practical demonstrations of theoretical concepts. Heavy reliance on the use of textbooks sometimes results in dull teaching. In mechanical and materials technology there is an appropriate range of craft, technician and higher technician programmes. Assessments are of an appropriate standard and are suitably varied: some check whether students can recall information whilst others develop practical and research skills.

42 Business studies courses are clearly structured around coherent sets of objectives which are shared with students. Written assignments are of an appropriate standard although, in a number of instances, the assignment materials lack clarity. Assessments are graded consistently and fairly but the amount of written feedback given to students is limited even when the work is poor. Relationships between staff and students are good. There are some excellent examples of staff using students' own experiences as a resource. Styles of teaching and methods of working are generally well chosen. Some teachers make good use of learning aids and handouts are generally of high quality. Tutor support on the GNVQ advanced course is excellent. Evidence of students' achievements on all aspects of the programme are recorded in a portfolio and action plans for future development are produced. In the administrative and secretarial

area, most sessions are effective. In the best classes, teachers again make good use of students' experience. Slow learners are encouraged with patience and humour. In a few instances the lack of effective course planning led to repetition and disjointed work. Students' work is marked thoroughly and accurately. Marking schemes and assessment criteria are known to the students.

43 In sport and leisure, there are well-documented schemes of work, and each lesson plan is carefully structured. Staff take every opportunity to apply subject matter to a vocational context. They provide thorough and detailed explanations of new material. However, insufficient effort goes into ensuring that learning is actually taking place. Students can follow practical coaching courses in a number of sports and gain Royal Life Saving Society proficiency awards. These additional opportunities are valuable but more attention should be paid to the systematic development, integration and application of core skills. The pathways course for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities includes sessions in personal presentation, sport and dressmaking.

44 In hairdressing and beauty therapy, students are encouraged to work on their own using the learning materials in the well-equipped resource-based learning area. Activities include working with computers, preparing portfolios, teachers working with individual students and students working on their own with work packs. Teaching is well managed; information technology, science and core skills are integrated effectively. Students' progress is monitored and the records are available to them. Schemes and lesson plans are well planned and used to good effect. The expectations of staff are sometimes too low and demands placed on students are not always sufficient. In the salon, particularly, some of the work lacks challenge because there are too few clients.

45 In health and social care, attendance on some GNVQ and access courses is poor. Teachers work from good lesson plans which are linked to comprehensive schemes of work. Thought has been given to the effective integration of core skills with other aspects of students' programmes. In the best classes, staff use questioning skilfully to extend students' thinking and to draw them into group discussions. However, not all staff handle group work with equal skill and some lessons lack a clear introduction and conclusion. On advanced level courses, there are examples of over-generous marking.

46 Most art and design sessions take place in a studio or workshop environment and assignments are used to develop students' skills. Students have substantial access to specialist facilities and support. All courses have detailed schemes of work and assessment policies are well documented. Timetabled sessions in drawing are part of every course to develop students' basic skills. A programme of complementary studies is implemented across all full-time courses. High standards of work are evident in most areas. In particular, there were excellent sessions in life

drawing and the main part of the fashion programme. Standards in the areas of new technology are generally lower.

47 Some of the lessons in English and communications are of high quality. The teaching of Shakespeare and the work in communication skills for vocational courses are particularly notable. There are considerable differences in the detail and usefulness of schemes of work and lesson plans and many of the worksheets are poorly designed and based on outdated material. In history, politics, psychology and sociology, much of the work is lively and the activities varied. Resource materials are of high quality. Students work effectively in small groups and produce excellent reports in their activities. In some classes, teachers draw the best out of students through skilful questioning. Students are also given individual support, where necessary. Some weaker practice included sessions in which the time was used badly, there was poor linking of theory and practice or an over dependence on textbooks.

48 In the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, links to the different schools are created through the extensive 'pathways to new horizons' programme. Sixty-two full-time and 270 part-time students are supported on vocational and academic courses. There is a coherent accreditation system. Relationships between teachers and students are good. Students feel encouraged and well supported. Generally, the purpose of activities is made clear and questions are carefully constructed. Students are encouraged to take some responsibility for organising their own learning and to work co-operatively. Teachers in vocational areas are sometimes poorly briefed about students' needs and about how to alter their methods and approaches accordingly. Where there are weaknesses in teaching sessions they arise because the aims are not made clear enough at the outset, questioning techniques are not well developed and there are inadequate checks on learning. In some cases, students are being kept occupied copying work provided by the teacher. Records are kept up to date but the recording of progressive development of skills is weak. Students' competence in particular areas may only be recorded once, at the end of the unit, rather than regularly to indicate progress in learning.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

49 In 1993-94, the college's average retention rate was 83 per cent. The college has noted particular problems with retention in some GCSE and GCE A level courses and NVQ hairdressing. It is addressing this issue by developing ways of accrediting partial achievement so that early leavers are encouraged to return to complete their qualification at a later date.

50 Students following GCE A level courses represent fewer than 5 per cent of total enrolments. Sixteen to 18 year old students form a minority of this group (under 2 per cent of total enrolments). The achievement of 16-18 year old GCE A level students is published in the Department for

Education performance tables. The average points score per GCE A level entry (where A=10, E=2) was 3.1 for 16-18 year old students from Chesterfield College in 1993-94. This is substantially below the average of 4.9 points for all school and college students of this age. It reflects, in part, variations in the attainment of GCE A level candidates before they enter the college which is a consequence of the open-access policy. The performance places the college in the bottom third of colleges in the further education sector.

51 Most students at Chesterfield College are following vocational programmes where comparative levels of success are difficult to establish. The Department for Education has recently included the percentage of students achieving a limited range of advanced level vocational qualifications in its performance tables for 16-18 year old students. An administrative error resulted in the percentage of Chesterfield College students achieving these qualifications being recorded as 59 per cent in 1993-94. Correction of this error resulted in a recorded success rate of 82 per cent which puts the college in the middle third of all further education sector colleges on this performance measure. However, nearly 60 per cent of Chesterfield College students are over the age of 18 and the majority of these are pursuing vocational programmes. Students achievements are less than satisfactory in a limited number of programmes, which are being monitored carefully. The majority of students on vocational programmes are achieving satisfactory or good results.

52 In sciences, the 1993-94 GCE A level examination results are broadly comparable with those obtained in other general further education colleges although the proportion of A-C grades is slightly lower. In physics, 77 per cent of students achieved passes at grades A-E and 6 per cent at grades A-C compared with the national average pass rates of 68 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively. In chemistry, the profile is closer to the national norms for general further education colleges. The pass rate was 60 per cent and 27 per cent achieved grades A-C compared with the national average pass rates of 65 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively. Pass rates in biology and human biology were both 66 per cent (close to the national figure of 64 per cent) and 50 per cent of human biology passes were at grades A-C. In geology, 67 per cent obtained grades A-E and 27 per cent grades A-C. Approximately 60 per cent of the science GCE A level students went on to higher education. One-third of students who completed access to higher education courses in science went on to higher education in 1994 with a further third beginning nursing courses. Almost all students spoke knowledgeably about their work. Students written work was generally of a satisfactory standard but levels of attainment on the advanced GNVQ were variable. Students carried out practical work competently and safely. In information technology and computing, all the students interviewed were capable of putting forward constructive views in a logical, considered manner.

53 There was a satisfactory level of achievement in construction technician programmes. Very few students failed to complete their courses. The majority of students enjoyed their studies and spoke about them with enthusiasm. They were well motivated and responsive in class. The standard of assignment and coursework was generally satisfactory and sometimes good. At higher national certificate level, the quality of presentation and the attention to detail was often good. In construction crafts, the work in progress was of an appropriate standard, but some of the simulated work was on too small a scale and provided an unrealistic experience for the trainees. Students were well motivated. Standards of written work were acceptable throughout the craft section. In 1994, C&G examination results were good, but of the 235 candidates for NVQ levels 2 and 3, only 55 students (23 per cent) achieved a full NVQ award. This slow progress was partly due to the fact that many students were attending on an evening-only basis, or were day-release students working at their own pace. One student received three distinctions in advanced craft carpentry and joinery examinations and received second prize nationally from the Institute of Carpenters.

54 In automobile engineering, most courses have a strong practical content. Students used their skills with confidence and enthusiasm. They were less at ease with written work which was attempted with varying degrees of competence. In the practical situation, they worked well together in groups. The 1993-94 examination results were generally satisfactory. Poor pass rates were achieved in C&G level 3 vehicle body studies and C&G part 3 electrical auxiliaries. However, most of the students referred from these two examinations were successful subsequently in the December examinations. Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma work-experience placements gave students the opportunity to engage in real work which frequently led to permanent employment. In electrical and electronic engineering, students were industrious and worked well in teams. They were developing appropriate levels of understanding and knowledge but some had difficulty with mathematics. Students' written work was of a good standard and well presented. Greater use should be made of wordprocessing. In practical work, students were developing satisfactory levels of competence and adopting safe working procedures. Pass rates for BTEC first diploma and first certificate technician and craft courses were generally in line with national figures. The percentage of students who enrolled on the national certificate and national diploma programmes in 1992 and gained their award in 1994 were 68 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively. In 1994, the 75 per cent pass rate on the higher national certificate was lower than past years, partly due to local redundancies. In mechanical and materials technology, students were positive about their studies and industrious in their work. Appropriate levels of knowledge, understanding and practical skills were being developed. Student responses to assessment were good and mathematical skills showed improvement. Practical work was carried

out competently and safely. Examination results in 1994 were generally good. There was a 100 per cent pass rate on some courses.

55 Students' achievements in business and management studies were high. Written and oral contributions demonstrated the application of knowledge and an understanding of business issues. Students displayed a mutually supportive attitude in groupwork. Core skills and study skills were of a good standard and had been developed successfully. Students' work for internal assessment was of a high standard and there were plentiful examples of individual excellence in research, application and presentation. Almost all students on BTEC programmes passed their examinations and there were satisfactory levels of success on GCSE and GCE A level programmes. In 1993-94, 56 per cent of GCSE business studies students achieved grades A-C. On GCE A level business studies there was a pass rate of 66 per cent compared with a national average of 65 per cent. The development of core skills was strong in GNVQ intermediate programmes but success in the final award last year was only 65 per cent. NVQ portfolios of administration and secretarial students were well kept and students took responsibility for assembling their evidence. Examination results across the area showed a marked variation. There were good results on the single-subject secretarial courses but poorer results on one of the group diplomas. Achievements were also variable on professional and management courses. Pass rates on the Association of Accounting Technicians foundation and intermediate courses were extremely low although final level pass rates were higher than the national average.

56 There was a poor pass rate in GCE A level sports studies; only 40 per cent of students achieved a pass grade in 1994. The college has modified the curriculum in an attempt to improve on this performance. In the vocational area, there was a range of assessment techniques which enabled students to demonstrate their skill and understanding and there were clear opportunities for students to assess and analyse their own progress. Every effort was made to ensure that students achieved successful outcomes. At sports and recreation level 1, 21 out of 27 candidates (78 per cent) were awarded a full NVQ; at level 2, 19 out of 25 (76 per cent) were awarded a full NVQ and at level 3, 12 out of 19 (63 per cent) achieved the full award. Students also achieved additional qualifications in sports and coaching award such as community sports leader, football association leaders, Royal Life Saving Society bronze medallion and volleyball coaching.

57 Examination results in hair and beauty were generally good, the two exceptions being C&G beauty therapy and NVQ level 2 in hairdressing. Students demonstrated good skills and enjoyed their studies. Progress through assignments in hairdressing could have been improved by offering more practical client sessions. The BTEC national diploma beauty therapy programme achieved a 100 per cent pass rate with 22 per cent of students progressing to higher education.

58 In health and social care, students worked willingly and displayed a positive attitude. The first cohort of 14 BTEC national students all gained their qualification. Six went on to higher education and another six gained vocationally-relevant employment. GCSE sociology results in the pre-nursing studies programme were good; 80 per cent of candidates achieved A-C grades. Students were less successful in GCSE biology and environmental science. The retention rate on health and social care programmes was high. Students had good insight into their own progress. There was evidence in lessons of students thinking in depth and explaining ideas to their peers with clarity. Knowledge of subject matter was poor on some advanced level programmes and there was insufficient evidence of supplementary reading. In the dental surgery assistants' national examination, achievements were well above the national average.

59 In art and design, students were assessed at predetermined points throughout the year. The quality of work was of a high standard. A range of tasks and assessment methods ensured a good, balanced range of achievement. Basic visual studies achievements in graphics and fashion were not as advanced as in other areas. Students' enthusiasm and commitment to work was noticeably high. High pass rates were achieved across all programmes. There were good progression rates to higher level courses or employment, particularly in the foundation and general art and design programmes.

60 In English and communications there were many instances of a high level of debate and the development of articulate and confident students. In 1993-94 there was a pass rate of 93 per cent in GCE A level English language compared with a national average of 78 per cent. However, there were too many ungraded results in English literature and communication studies. The percentage pass rates for all English-related subjects are close to or better than comparable national figures but there is a high drop-out rate particularly from GCSE English. The retention rate for GCSE English was 54 per cent in 1993-94. Of the 105 students who sat GCSE English, 69 per cent achieved grades A-C as against a national average of 70 per cent. In GCSE English literature 80 per cent of students gained A-C grades against a national pass rate of 74 per cent. There were some good examination results in psychology, history and government and politics which compared favourably with national figures. In 1993-94, the GCE A level pass rates in these subjects were 80 per cent, 90 per cent and 85 per cent, respectively. Examination achievements in economics, sociology and law were lower with pass rates of 25 per cent, 34 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively. GCSE results also showed variations between subjects. In 1993-94, the best pass rates at grades A-C were in sociology and psychology (both 83 per cent) and the worst was in law (34 per cent).

61 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities demonstrated a high level of interest and involvement in vocational units. Some 420 students registered for South Yorkshire Open College Network

accreditation in 1993-94 of whom 91 achieved credits. Two hundred and five modules were completed, mostly in communication and number and personal/social development. Achievement on Open College Network modules allowed student to progress to NVQ level 1 provision.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

62 The quality assurance system at Chesterfield College evolved from a pilot project, started in 1989, and is now well established. The system is clearly outlined in quality manuals which contain standard forms and procedures for all stages of the process. The documentation is of a high standard and it is used throughout the college. There is a clear understanding amongst students and staff as to how they contribute to the evaluation and review of courses. One of the curriculum directors has a specific senior management responsibility for quality and there is a cross-college quality co-ordinator. There is a clear acceptance throughout the institution that quality is the responsibility of all staff to monitor and control. There are quality noticeboards in all school and support offices. These display minutes of meetings, quality standards and a range of other information. The college newsletter is also an important means of communicating outcomes of quality procedures.

63 The college has produced an attractively-designed charter which is easy to read and understand. It was developed as a result of an extensive and effective consultation process. The charter expresses clearly the standards of service the college intends to deliver. The planned development of a wider range of performance indicators and a performance audit system will increase the college's ability to meet its service targets.

64 In preparation for inspection, the college produced a clear and comprehensive internal self-assessment report, based upon established quality procedures. It identifies issues for action against the headings used in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. The report contains useful appendices which supplement the information in each section. The issues identified in the report are in line with those recognised by the inspection team, although some of these are not given sufficient attention. The report would be more useful to the college if it included action plans, in line with other quality assurance documents produced by the college. In future the college plans to produce the self-assessment report in August to fit in with the established quality cycle.

65 Quality control in the curriculum is addressed through regular programme team meetings during which issues are discussed and students' perceptions are monitored. Student representatives and, in some schools, support staff also attend these meetings. Where students or staff cannot attend there are mechanisms to ensure that their views are taken into account. In the school of art and design, students set the agenda for one of the team meetings each term. The effectiveness of quality review meetings has been enhanced by a programme of staff development. A

parallel system has been developed for all areas of support services. Support staff have all devised realistic quality standards and criteria against which they can gather evidence of performance. Teams have recently reviewed these quality standards and the performance criteria for their areas of work. Performance against these standards is monitored at regular meetings of support staff teams.

66 Outcomes of the quality reviews are disseminated and discussed widely within the college and form an integral part of both strategic and curriculum planning. Annual programme evaluation reports are produced in June. Each director prepares a quality assurance report with appropriate action plans. Input from other elements of the system is then considered. The end result is the college's quality assurance report which is presented to the academic board and, as part of the academic board papers, to the governors. There is a supplementary report on students' achievements and an action plan from each school or section stating any remedial action which is to be taken. The whole process is reviewed and monitored. A new system of quality auditing should strengthen this.

67 Performance indicators are required as part of the standard review and evaluation of curriculum areas, and their use is encouraged in the setting of performance criteria in support areas across the college. There is scope for some further refinement of the use and range of performance indicators and the development of the management information system to support them. The management information system user group, which includes the quality co-ordinator and the curriculum director responsible for quality, has discussed the preparations of standard performance indicator reports. Value-added measures, which take account of students' achievements on entry to the college and compare them with final achievements, are not yet used in the analysis of students' results.

68 Internal assessment and verification aims to ensure that systems for fair and accurate assessment are available to students, that they are consistent and that they satisfy the requirements of internal quality standards and those of external bodies. Reports from external verifiers and moderators are included in the review process. Other external bodies require the college to have approved quality assurance procedures. Sheffield Hallam University has agreed that the quality systems at the college are sufficiently rigorous to satisfy their quality assurance procedures. The quality systems also embrace the requirements of the local TEC.

69 Each year, a series of three standard questionnaires are completed by students as part of the customer care survey. Comparative data are available from previous years' surveys. In addition, there are other questionnaires on the library services and the open-learning centre. There is evidence that the findings of the surveys are fed back to students and that they are also informed of any actions taken as a result of their comments. Action has included changes in course timetables to help hair

and beauty students, the introduction of site visits at the suggestion of construction students and improved access to computers in a number of areas. The customer care survey in 1994 showed that students had found the general office more helpful, which justifies the changes made to this service. There are no formal questionnaires to employers to elicit their views on the college. This method was tried but abandoned because of the low rate of response. The college has set a number of initiatives in train to remedy this matter in a realistic way.

70 The college has introduced a scheme for the review, appraisal and development of staff. The scheme focuses on the contribution which individual members of staff make to the goals of the organisation. It sets individual review in the context of the college's aims and is an integral part of the quality framework. The scheme has been devised with widespread consultation, clear documentation and a training plan. The appraisal process includes observation of work tasks, including teaching, and self-appraisal. The appraisal interview is carried out by the line manager. The process is built around a maximum cycle of two years. Individual development needs that are identified through this process are fed into plans for staff development. Staff induction programmes are provided for new support and teaching staff. A comprehensive staff handbook is issued to all staff. Each new member of the teaching staff is assigned a mentor and a programme of sessions is organised by the staff-development co-ordinator which involves meetings and briefings with key members of staff. Induction for support staff is carried out by the line manager.

71 The policy, procedures and planning of staff-development activities are all well established. A budget approaching £160,000 has been allocated to staff development in 1994-95. This represents about 1.5 per cent of planned recurrent expenditure. An annual staff-development plan is produced with clear procedures for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Staff-development policy is informed by, and contributes to, the strategic-planning process; it is an integral part of the total quality management system. Links to the personnel planning function are not yet established. Written reports and evaluations are produced by staff attending staff-development events, together with proposals for how they intend to disseminate information to colleagues. The quality team examine feedback on staff development to ensure that strategic objectives are being achieved. The college is developing the idea of portfolios of evidence for individual members of staff which will contain details of all the staff-development activities they have undertaken. The college is working towards the Investors in People standard. The target date for completion is the autumn term 1995.

RESOURCES

Staffing

72 Of the 407 full-time equivalent staff, 343 are full time and 64 are part time. One member of the senior management team of seven is a woman. The college's equal opportunities monitoring statement of May 1994 states that employees from minority ethnic groups make up 0.5 per cent of the full-time staff compared with 1 per cent of the local population. Five employees are registered as disabled. All staff have job descriptions.

73 Full-time teaching staff are suitably qualified. Approximately 60 per cent have a degree whilst other staff have relevant vocational qualifications. Over 90 per cent have a teaching qualification. Part-time teachers are also suitably qualified. Course teams have teachers with a good mix of different specialisms. Many specialist tutors have additional skills in areas such as information technology, teaching literacy and numeracy and working with students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff development is successfully addressing the needs of staff for up-to-date vocational experience.

74 There are well-qualified support staff who regularly participate in college-wide staff development and who undertake accredited courses to update and develop relevant skills, including Training and Development Lead Body qualifications to support student assessment. Since incorporation, 41 per cent have been involved in staff development leading to accreditation. The main site library has sufficient professional and administrative staff. A professional librarian is located at Tipton House. Some of the caretaking staff are designated as security personnel in addition to their caretaking duties. They provide a highly-visible presence as they patrol the college buildings.

Equipment/learning resources

75 The strategic plan has appropriate operating objectives and associated targets for the development of equipment and resources. School budgets are generally sufficient. There is a college development fund for capital equipment. Money from this fund has been used appropriately to equip the resource-based learning centres. Generally, the curriculum is supported by good specialist equipment, exemplified by the specialist equipment for foundry work, the paint facilities in automobile engineering and the well-equipped leisure centre. Resources for business studies courses at the small annexe are limited.

76 Students have ready access to appropriate general purpose computer hardware and software through the resource-based learning centres. There are 465 computers available for student use. Fifty-two per cent of these computers are less than two years old and 61 per cent are modern industry standard, but many of the remainder are dated. A common operating system and general purpose software has been adopted across

the college. Appropriate learning material is available to support students working with computers.

77 There is a library on the main site and a library is being built at Tapton House campus. There is no library at the small annexe. Library opening hours are adequate. At the main site, the library is on two levels. The lower level has two separate book and periodical areas. There is a mix of group study tables and individual study carrels. On the upper level, there are further study carrels and a room for group work. There are approximately 35,000 books. An audit of the books is in progress. The stock is being reviewed by subject staff supported by library staff and this has helped in weeding out many old or inappropriate texts. The upper floor houses a growing collection of audio-visual material with approximately 24,000 items. The recent growth has been in videos but there are also compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases and audio tapes. Viewing and listening facilities are available. The library has a computing area which is available to students whilst the library is open.

Accommodation

78 The main college site is close to the town centre. It is a large site with 10 separate buildings. The oldest building is the original technical college which was built in 1926. The former college of art used the west wing of an old grammar school built in 1846; it is a grade 2 listed building and its necessary maintenance is proving costly. A communal block was completed in 1974 and provided library, refectory and sports facilities for both colleges. The most recent building houses the nursery. A leisure centre has been built to support the leisure studies curriculum and is open to students and the general public for recreational use. There is also a good-size sports hall. The refectory serving area has been refurbished to provide a bright modern image. It also serves as the main student communal area. The small theatre is open to the general public for performances. The main college hall is a large underused space but stage lighting has been added to allow its use by performing arts students. New direction signs are being put up around the site. There is an adequate amount of protected car parking for staff and for students with disabilities. A reasonable-size car park for students is situated on the edge of the college site. All areas are clean and tidy.

79 The college is committed to update its accommodation and there has been steady progress on the main site. The aim is to make the buildings weatherproof, to bring the internal fabric of the building up to an acceptable standard and to improve the general teaching environment. The corporation has determined that 2 per cent of the college expenditure shall be set aside for long-term maintenance. An expenditure schedule to the year 2004 has been prepared. Long-term maintenance expenditure is estimated as £256,000 per annum. The maintenance investment plan identifies the level of maintenance each building requires.

80 Tapton House, once the home of George Stephenson, is situated in an attractive location in its own extensive grounds. The college has the use of the building on a 10-year lease. It has been extensively refurbished to provide a high-quality learning environment. The opening of the campus at Tapton House is the culmination of a partnership between the college and Chesterfield Borough Council, involving financial assistance from the TEC, the County Council and the European Union. There is a mix of classrooms, resource-based learning areas equipped with computers, a small library, a nursery and communal and eating areas. There is ample car parking.

81 The playing field is at Langer Lane some distance from the college. It provides adequate facilities for some sports but is somewhat limited in its scope. During the winter there are two football pitches and in summer there is a cricket pitch. The field has also been used for hockey, rounders and lacrosse. Municipal facilities such as the local athletics track, tennis courts and astroturf hockey pitch are hired for other sports. The pitches are rented to local teams on Saturdays and Sundays. The changing rooms building provides adequate facilities but the exterior requires extensive maintenance. There is no hard parking area.

82 A small annexe is situated approximately one mile from the college. It was formerly a primary school which was converted to form an information technology training centre. At incorporation, the college took over the use of the building after the equipment had been removed. The centre is used mainly for business studies students. It is decorated and furnished to an adequate standard.

83 Some progress has been made towards the college's objective that its accommodation provides a welcoming environment. The main reception area has been refurbished and external lighting has been improved. However, there are a number of areas on the main site which remain uninviting, especially in the evening. Security has been improved by the high-visibility patrols but their coverage of the site is inevitably limited.

84 There are many changes of level between buildings on the main site and within buildings which makes it difficult to ensure easy access for those with restricted mobility. Wherever possible, ramps have been built and there are plans to improve access further. The South building is equipped with lifts but there is no access to some floors in several of the buildings. Access to the library is difficult. Students who are coming from West or North buildings have to take a lengthy external route around buildings. The upper level of the library is inaccessible to students with restricted mobility.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

85 The strengths of the college are:

- the strong, collective support of the governors
- the high standards of personal accountability and commitment shared by the principal and senior managers
- well-managed planning and quality assurance cycles
- effective communication
- the strong community links
- the flexibility of student support services and their responsiveness to individual needs
- the resource-based learning centres in curriculum areas
- effective teaching
- students' achievements in most vocational programmes
- well-qualified and competent staff
- well-planned staff development
- a well-established and effective quality assurance system
- a commitment to improving standards of accommodation.

86 The college should address the following issues:

- the further development of the college's strategy for staff and accommodation
- the co-ordination of some cross-college initiatives
- the inconsistencies in tutorial support
- the variability in examination outcomes, especially at GCE A level and GCSE
- the development of the management information system to support decision making throughout the college
- the effective monitoring of use of accommodation.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)

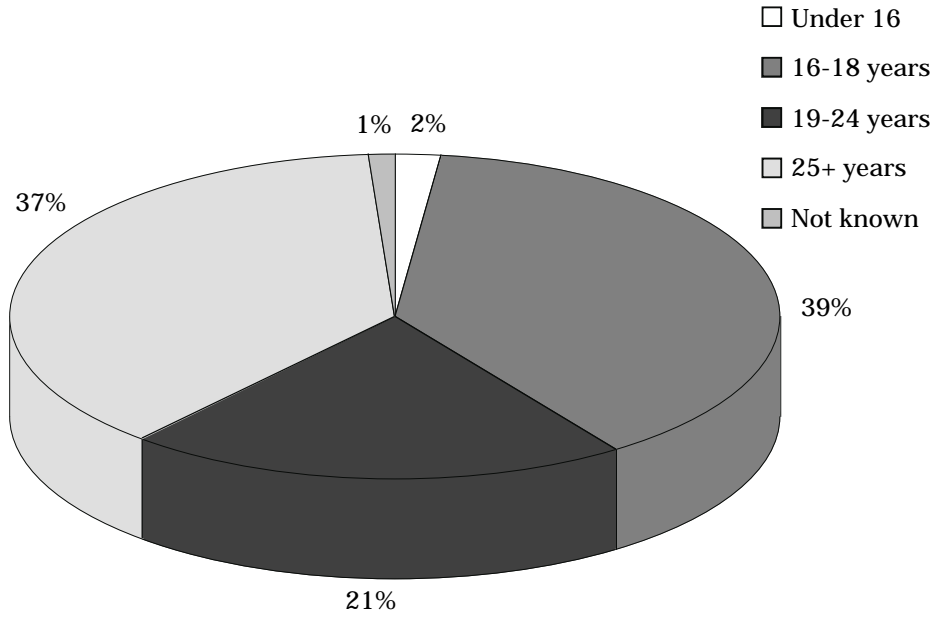
 - 5 Income (for 16 months to July 1994)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)

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

Figure 1

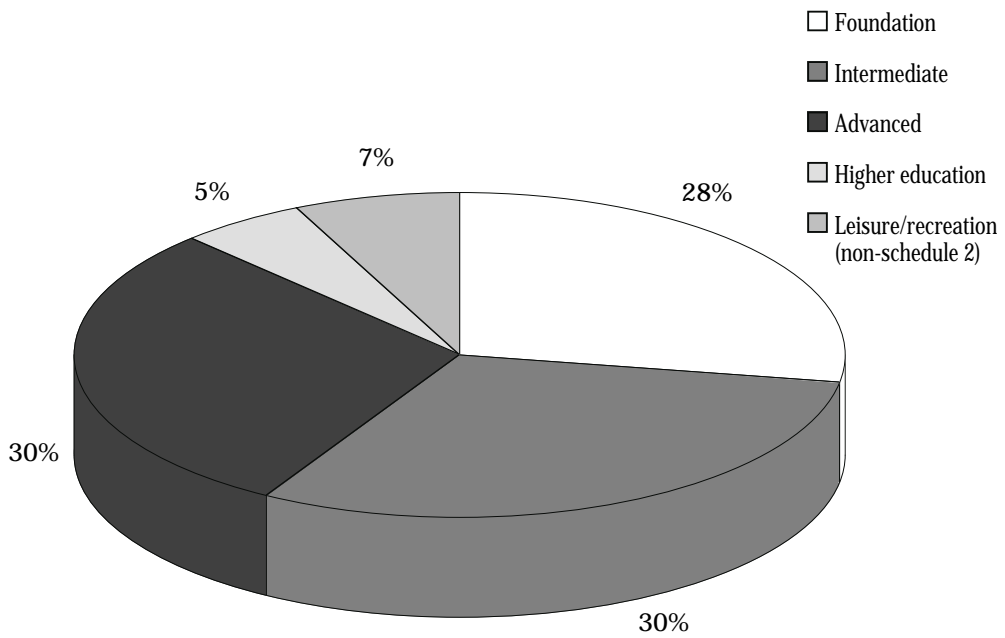
Chesterfield College: percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)



Enrolments: 9,756

Figure 2

Chesterfield College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)



Enrolments: 9,756

Figure 3

Chesterfield College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

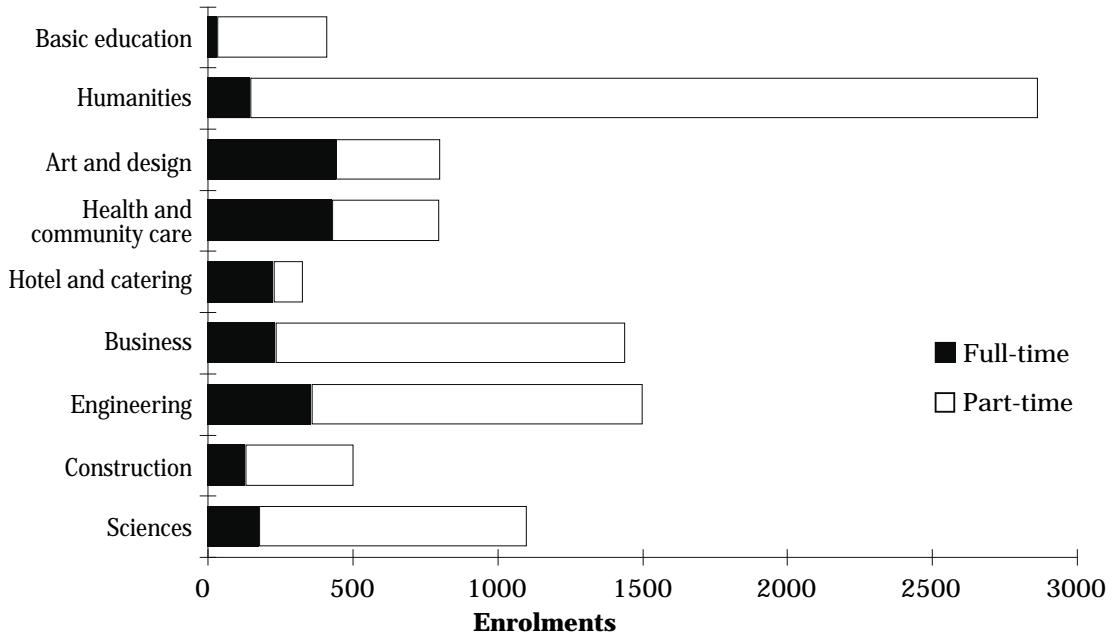


Figure 4

Chesterfield College: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)

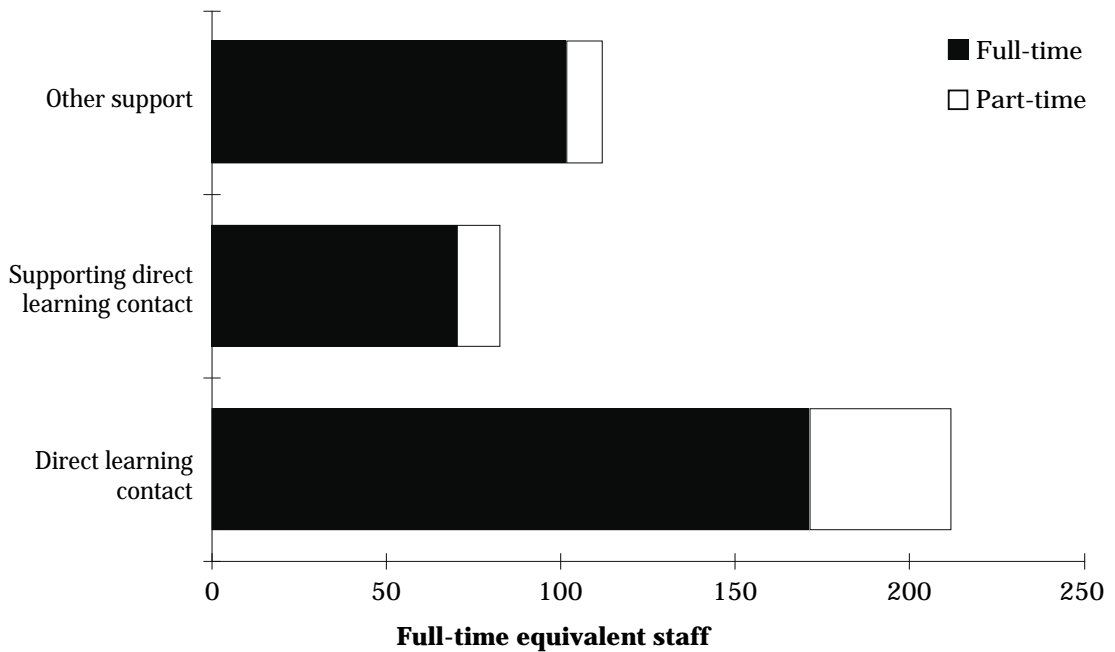
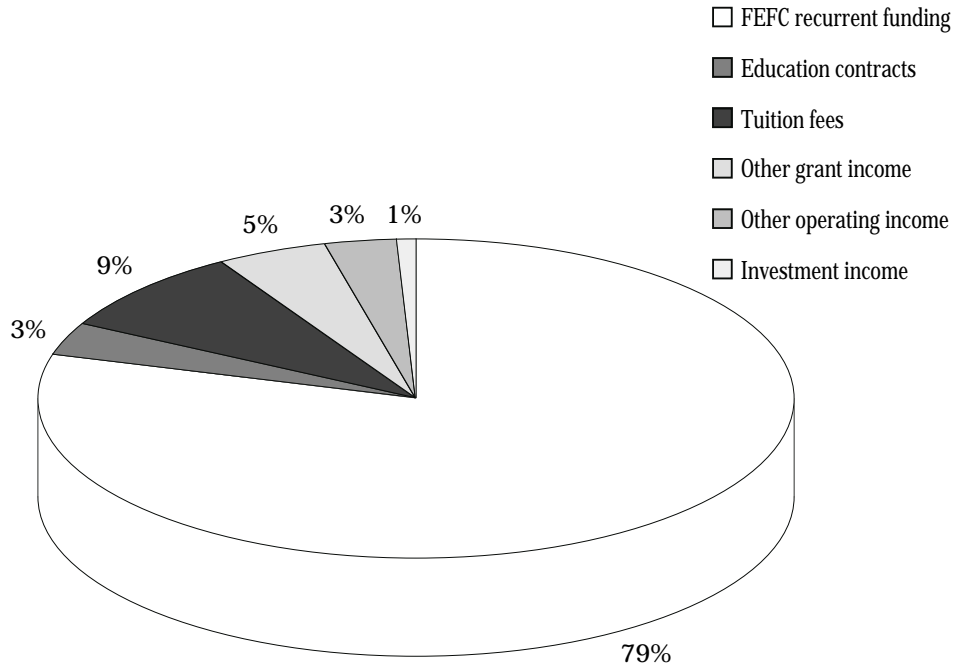


Figure 5

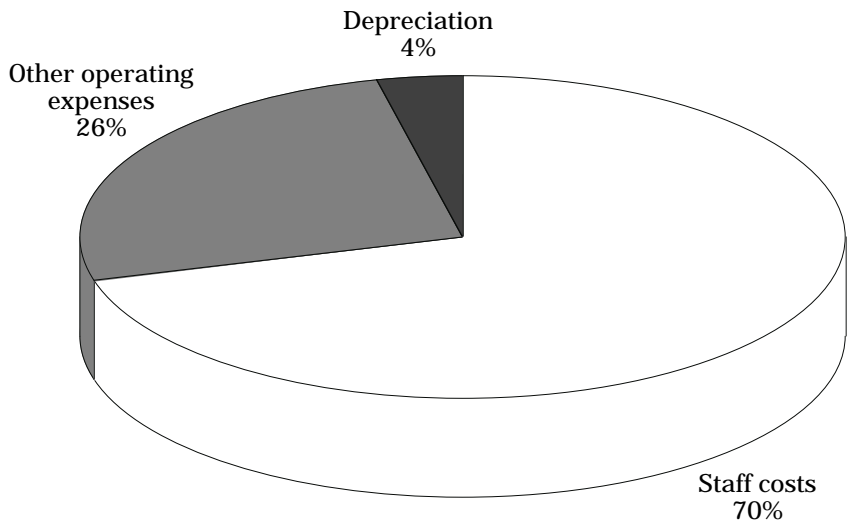
Chesterfield College: income (for 16 months to July 1994)



Income: £15,685,000

Figure 6

Chesterfield College: expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)



Expenditure: £15,402,000

Published by the
Further Education Funding Council
August 1995