City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College
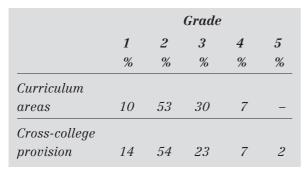
Contents

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.*

Audit conclusions are expressed as good, adequate or weak.

Aggregated grades for aspects of cross-college provision and curriculum areas, for colleges inspected during 1998-99, are shown in the following table.

| | **Grade** | | | | |
	1 **%**	**2** **%**	**3** **%**	**4** **%**	**5** **%**
Curriculum areas	*10*	*53*	*30*	*7*	*–*
Cross-college provision	*14*	*54*	*23*	*7*	*2*

Source: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report
Sample size: 104 college inspections

Student Achievements

Where data on student achievements appear in tables, levels of achievement are shown in three ways:

- *as number of starters, which is the number of enrolments on qualifications where the student was expecting to complete the qualification that college year. For example, a student on a two-year programme who began their programme in October 1995, would appear in the results for 1996-97 because this is the year in which they expected to complete their qualification*
- *as a retention rate, which is the percentage of qualifications which students have completed as expected or where they are continuing their studies beyond the expected end date of the qualification. For programmes of study of two years or more, retention is calculated across the whole programme, that is, from the start to the end of the qualification*
- *as an achievement rate, which is the number of qualifications students have fully achieved as a percentage of completed qualifications with a known outcome. Partial achievements are not included.*

Summary

City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College

West Midlands Region

Inspected March 2000

The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College was established as a purpose-built sixth form college in 1970. The self-assessment report prepared for the inspection was the fourth produced by the college. It was detailed and comprehensive. All staff and governors were involved in the self-assessment process. The report drew upon a range of appropriate evidence, including a well-developed programme of lesson observation. The report was externally validated.

Most of the college's students are full time and aged 16 to 19, but it also has an extensive programme of evening courses for adults. Under a recent collaborative arrangement with Stoke-on-Trent College, it jointly runs a sixth form centre in the north of the city. The college offers courses in six of the FEFC's programme areas. Provision in four of these areas was inspected. Teaching is generally good or better, and some is highly imaginative. The quality of provision in dance, drama and media studies is outstanding. Teachers skilfully develop students' ability to work independently. Students receive good support from subject teachers and personal tutors, including highly effective careers education and guidance. Overall, students' achievements have improved steadily over the past three years but pass rates on some

individual courses have declined. Retention rates on advanced level courses are below the national average for sixth form colleges, although they showed a slight improvement in 1998-99. The college is in a pilot area for the government's scheme of educational maintenance allowances. There are signs that this is having a positive effect on retention in the current year. The college makes effective use of its resources. Space is at a premium and there has been imaginative adaptation of the accommodation to meet changing demand. Sports facilities are excellent. Management is open and consultative, and provides clear leadership. The college has good links with external organisations. Governors use their expertise well to support the college and to monitor its performance. Quality assurance is good and has led to tangible improvements. The college should address: low pass rates on some courses and low retention rates on advanced level courses; low levels of take-up for additional learning support; inadequate library provision; the lack of clear targets and action points in some departmental plans and reviews; and the need to establish clearly documented formal management arrangements for the sixth form centre.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Computing and information technology	3	Support for students	2
Mathematics	3	General resources	2
Business studies	3	Quality assurance	2
Dance, drama and media studies	1	Governance	1
Psychology	3	Management	2

Context

The College and its Mission

1   The City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College is a large sixth form college located close to the centre of Stoke-on-Trent. Students are drawn from throughout North Staffordshire, but the majority live in Stoke-on-Trent, a local authority recently recognised as the 24th most deprived in England. The college was purpose built in 1970 to accommodate 700 students. In November 1999, there were 1,682 full-time and 778 part-time students. The majority of full-time students were aged 16 to 19 years. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups was 12%, compared with 8% in the local community.

2   The educational achievements of school-leavers in Stoke-on-Trent are significantly below national averages. In 1999, 36% of year 11 students gained general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades A to C compared with 46% nationally. Staffordshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) estimates that only 6% of the city's population is educated to degree level compared with 13% nationally. Levels of post-16 participation are lower in Stoke-on-Trent than in Staffordshire as a whole and significantly below national rates, although they have risen from 52% in 1995 to 65% in 1999.

3   The college's mission is 'to provide high-quality education in a caring environment, where all students are encouraged to achieve their full personal and academic potential.' The college is a keen participant in local initiatives to raise aspirations and achievement. In particular, it aims to improve the educational performance of 16 to 19 year olds and to encourage more young people to participate in further education. The college has broadened its range of provision and support to reflect the wider background and ability range of its students and to continue to attract more into further education. For example, the number of students studying foundation or intermediate general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) has increased from 27 in 1994 to 136 in 1999. Most students who follow level 1 or 2 courses stay on to study at the next level. Approximately 65% of the students on advanced level courses progress each year to higher education. In addition, the college now provides a range of general and vocational adult education evening courses.

4   The college is committed to collaborative working and has developed a variety of educational and other local partnerships. Recent projects include a joint-use sports complex developed in collaboration with Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and a partnership with Stoke-on-Trent College to open a sixth form centre in the north of the city. The college has strong links with the universities of Keele and Staffordshire.

5   The college's management team comprises the principal, the college accountant and eight assistant principals. The five assistant principals responsible for teaching and learning manage the academic programme with the help of a team of curriculum managers. The assistant principal, 'student guidance and staff development' leads a team of senior and personal tutors. The two other assistant principals have responsibility for information systems and quality and for resources. The assistant principal, 'resources', is currently seconded to the post of project director for the sixth form centre. The college has a full-time equivalent staff of 148, 86 of whom are teachers.

The Inspection

6   The college was inspected during the week beginning 20 March 2000. Inspectors had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and information about the college held by other directorates of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). This included data on students' achievements for 1997 and 1998 derived from the

individualised student record (ISR). The college submitted its own data on students' achievements for 1999, which inspectors checked against class registers and pass lists issued by awarding bodies. The college was notified two months before the inspection of the sample of its provision to be inspected. The inspection was carried out by nine inspectors and an auditor, working for a total of 45 days. Inspectors observed 58 lessons, plus some tutorials, and examined students' work and documentation about the college and its courses.

They held meetings with governors, managers, staff and students. They also consulted the local TEC about its relationships with the college.

7   The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected and the national profile for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. Of the lessons inspected, 69% were good or outstanding and only 2% were less than satisfactory, compared with the national averages for 1998-99 of 65% and 6%, respectively. The corresponding national averages for sixth form colleges for 1998-99 were 71% and 3%, respectively.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	8	22	10	1	0	41
GCSE	2	2	0	0	0	4
GNVQ	0	4	4	0	0	8
Other	0	2	3	0	0	5
Total (No.)	10	30	17	1	0	58
Total (%)	17	52	29	2	0	100
National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99 (%)	20	45	29	6	0	100

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report

8   The following table shows the attendance rate and average number of students in the lessons observed and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. The

corresponding national averages for sixth form colleges for 1998-99 were 12.8 and 83%, respectively.

Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	Average attendance (%)
City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College	12.4	83
National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99	11.2	78

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report

Computing and Information Technology

Grade 3

9   Inspectors observed 12 lessons covering courses offered by the computing and information technology (IT) department and adult community programme team. They agreed with several of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report but considered some strengths were statements of normal practice. They found additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- the varied teaching methods used to involve students in lessons
- students' good IT skills
- the high quality of course documentation for students
- a consistently high achievement rate for level 1 courses

Weaknesses

- falling achievement rates in general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) computing
- disruption to some lessons caused by the late arrival of students
- some poor IT equipment
- the limited use of IT in the learning process and for course management

10   The computing and IT department and the adult community programme of the college offer an appropriate range of computing and IT courses. The courses provide good progression from pre-foundation to level 3, as stated in the self-assessment report. The range includes basic computer awareness, computer literacy and information technology, GNVQ intermediate and advanced IT, GCE A level computing and GCE A level IT. A small number of IT awareness courses are offered to local businesses. Numbers on the full-time computing and IT courses have shown a significant increase in the last year. There is a high proportion of female students on many specialist computer courses, especially GCE A level IT. Schemes of work are informative and include useful examples of assignments. The lack of a course co-ordinator for GNVQ IT until recently has led to poor maintenance of documentation for these courses. Little use is made of IT to support the management of courses. Teachers predict students' grades on the basis of their GCSE scores on entry and this information has recently been shared with students to encourage them to improve their grades. Information on students' destinations is comprehensive and shows that a significant number of students progress to IT-related courses in higher education. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report.

11   In the lessons observed, teaching and learning was satisfactory or better. The working relationships between students and staff were good. In many lessons, teachers used a variety of effective learning activities to motivate students and retain their interest. These activities included group work, good use of questions and the use of video. Students' practical skills were well developed and they worked skilfully and effectively with applications software. Some lessons were disrupted by students' poor punctuality. In others, poor computer or network performance and software failures were detrimental to students' progress. This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report. There was little use of IT to support teaching and learning.

12   The self-assessment report identified weaknesses in students' retention and achievements on some courses. Pass rates for GCE A level computing have fallen and are now below the national average. Retention for the GNVQ advanced IT pilot was low and retention on the GCE A level IT course has been

consistently below the national average for three years. Pass rates for the large number of students on the computer literacy and information technology course and the National Open College Network (NOCN) beginners' IT course are consistently high. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. The standard of students' completed work is generally good and teachers grade it appropriately.

13   High-specification hardware and general software are used by students in some teaching areas. However, other areas contain machines of lower specification that do not support some software applications or run too slowly, and specialist software is not available in some rooms. Colour printing is freely available to students in computer rooms and they use it to enhance their assignment work. Some course materials are available to students electronically on the college network. Paper-based learning materials are of a high standard and students are supplied with appropriate textbooks. The range of up-to-date IT materials in the library is limited. Accommodation is generally satisfactory. However, some areas suffer from limited space, overheating from computer equipment and noise from shared teaching areas. Most rooms contain appropriate display materials, including displays of students' work. Teachers are suitably qualified and most have undertaken relevant staff development activities in recent years. The staff work and storage area is small and cluttered.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in computing and information technology, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
Computer literacy and information technology	1	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	240 73 83	444 82 90	400 82 71
NOCN beginners' IT	1	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	388 95 100	365 96 92	581 93 94
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	11 91 88	16 81 100	15 100 73
GNVQ advanced IT	3	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	* * *	* * *	18 44 50
GCE A level computing	3	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	38 68 96	53 77 78	37 75 64
GCE A level IT	3	Number of starters Retention (%) Achievement (%)	89 56 86	77 68 92	72 67 98

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
*course not offered

Mathematics

Grade 3

14   Inspectors observed 11 lessons covering mathematics at GCE A level and advanced supplementary (AS), GCSE mathematics and application of number in the GNVQ foundation science course. They agreed with many of the judgements in the college's self-assessment report, but considered that some weaknesses were understated. They identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths
- much good teaching
- some skilful linking of theory and practice
- effective use of a range of mathematical resources
- well-organised department
- a wide range of courses to meet the differing needs of students
- excellent links with local schools

Weaknesses
- over-emphasis on theory in GCE A level pure mathematics
- low retention and achievement rates for GCE A level mathematics
- lack of IT to support teaching and learning
- some teaching rooms too small

15   Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report that there is a good range of mathematics courses. Modular GCE A/AS level courses are available, as well as Schools Mathematics Project courses. Clear guidance is given to students to help them decide which course is most appropriate for them. There is also a one-year bridging course designed for students who need further preparation before starting mathematics at GCE A level. The department offers GCSE mathematics as a

November resit or a one-year course and those who are not yet ready can undertake a preparatory year.

16   The work of the department is well organised. Members of the mathematics team are allocated departmental responsibilities and hold regular meetings. They work together effectively. A small amount of teaching of the application of number for GNVQ courses takes place outside the department. Liaison between members of the mathematics team and GNVQ teachers is sufficient for teaching purposes, but there is no formal structure to ensure overall planning and monitoring of this work.

17   Most of the teaching is good and some is outstanding. Lessons were well planned and the materials produced by teachers for students were of high quality. On courses that include a practical coursework element, teachers effectively related the theory of the topics being covered to real-life situations, making learning more relevant and accessible to the students. However, on other courses, for example pure mathematics, there was no linking of theory to practical applications. The department encourages students to acquire graphic calculators and has a supply to lend during lessons if needed. Teachers use them skilfully for teaching purposes, and in some of the lessons observed they were used to very good effect.

18   Students' achievements are variable. The college's self-assessment report highlighted some courses where results are above the national average and others where they are not. The department has recognised that there are areas of concern, particularly in GCE A/AS level mathematics. Overall retention and pass rates for GCE A level mathematics courses have fallen for the past three years to below the national average. The effects of the bridging course, which is only in its second year, have yet to make themselves felt in improved rates of retention and achievement. Many of the

coursework assignments produced by students are of a high standard. Most students completing GCE A level mathematics progress to higher education and a significant number take courses that are mathematically based.

19 The department has excellent links with local educational establishments. It runs an annual mathematics quiz and invites mathematics departments in local schools to send pupils to take part. The quiz has been running very successfully for some years and fosters excellent links with the schools involved. The head of the sixth form centre invites the heads of mathematics in neighbouring schools to meetings to discuss matters of common interest.

20 Mathematics teachers are well qualified. Some have experience of examining, one at a senior level, and this is valuable to the work of the department. Rooms in the college designated for mathematics teaching are well laid out. They have good wall displays that teachers use in their lessons. Some rooms are too small for the larger mathematics groups. Materials such as rulers, graph paper, books and calculators are in good supply. The college's self-assessment report cites as a weakness that IT provision to support the teaching and learning of mathematics is minimal, and although some developments have taken place since the writing of the report, this continues to be the case.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in mathematics, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSE mathematics	2	Number of starters	415	335	322
		Retention (%)	87	81	81
		Achievement (%)	30	37	38
GCE AS mathematics	3	Number of starters	38	30	23
		Retention (%)	74	77	87
		Achievement (%)	24	48	15
GCE A level mathematics	3	Number of starters	236	231	203
		Retention (%)	59	59	53
		Achievement (%)	80	77	75
GCE A level further mathematics	3	Number of starters	*	28	15
		Retention (%)	*	32	73
		Achievement (%)	*	100	91

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
*data unreliable

Business Studies

Grade 3

21   Inspectors observed 12 lessons in business. They agreed with some of the judgements in the self-assessment report but found additional weaknesses. The report gave insufficient emphasis to students' retention and achievements.

Key strengths

- a wide variety of teaching methods
- good pass rates for GCE A level accounting
- effective development of key skills
- teachers working effectively on both academic and vocational programmes

Weaknesses

- poor retention and achievement rates for GCE A level business studies
- insufficient challenge and checks on learning in a minority of lessons
- low retention and achievement rates for integrated business technology courses
- some inappropriate teaching rooms

22   The college offers full-time courses in GCE A level accounting and business studies, and GNVQ intermediate and advanced business. Part-time one-year GCE A level business courses, offered primarily to adult learners, were introduced in 1997. Recruitment to full-time GCE A level business studies courses has grown significantly since 1997. Integrated business technology qualifications are offered to full-time students as part of their enrichment programmes, and to adult learners on a part-time basis. Students' receive informative course guides when they start their courses. Schemes of work and lesson plans follow a common format but a number lack detail. Communication between staff is good. Formal and informal meetings are attended by part-time and associate teachers. Most teachers work confidently and effectively across GCE A level and GNVQ courses. This enables sharing of materials and good practice, and engenders parity of esteem between academic and vocational students.

23   The teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to good. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that a wide range of teaching methods is used to enliven students' learning. Teachers make effective use of formal lectures, discussion and group-work. In the most successful lessons, teachers used challenging questions and up-to-date case studies. In a GCE A level business studies lesson, the teacher developed the topic of external influences on businesses through probing questions that encouraged students to use appropriate terminology. The teacher skilfully summarised students' responses in a diagram on the whiteboard, providing a good example of how to develop notes on the topic. Students' understanding was further reinforced through a series of carefully selected newspaper articles. In some lessons, teachers did not clarify the expected aims of the lesson and did not draw together themes arising from discussions with students. In a minority of lessons, teachers did not set clear objectives and made insufficient checks on students' understanding. All students have opportunities to develop key skills. The GNVQ students make confident use of IT. In a GNVQ intermediate lesson, students used their good technical skills to produce newsletters. All full-time students have opportunities to gain formal accreditation for IT skills through the information business technology qualification, but, as the self-assessment identified, attendance at these lessons is poor. Application of number and communication are effectively integrated within classroom activity and coursework. Students' written work demonstrates effective research skills and use of IT. Teachers provide constructive verbal feedback but written

feedback is insufficiently detailed. While there are opportunities for business studies students to visit a range of local companies, there are few formal links with employers.

24   Teachers are well qualified and experienced. They make good use of opportunities to update their knowledge. Two members of staff have recently undertaken short placements in local businesses. The college provides textbooks for all full-time GCE A level students. Some texts used in lessons and provided by the department and the library are out of date. Useful learning materials are available to students on information business technology courses. Printing facilities are good. Many GNVQ lessons take place in a well-equipped IT room. Some rooms are of inappropriate size and have inadequate furniture.

25   The self-assessment report identified as a weakness the achievement rates for GCE A level business studies. Action taken by the department has led to a slight improvement in pass rates, but they remain below the national average. The self-assessment report did not identify falling retention rates in GCE A level business studies. Pass rates for GNVQ intermediate and advanced business were significantly above national averages in 1997 and 1998 but fell in 1999, when the college took part in the national GNVQ new model pilot. Retention and achievement rates on information business technology courses are low. The self-assessment report did not identify the high pass rates for GCE A level accounting, where retention and pass rates were significantly above the national average in 1999. There is good progression to business-related courses in higher education.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in business studies, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GNVQ intermediate business	2	Number of starters	19	36	32
		Retention (%)	89	89	91
		Achievement (%)	87	89	69
GCE A level business studies (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	43	128	118
		Retention (%)	74	73	61
		Achievement (%)	77	76	79
GCE A level business studies (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	*	17	24
		Retention (%)	*	59	50
		Achievement (%)	*	60	45
GCE A level accounting	3	Number of starters	21	23	17
		Retention (%)	43	100	82
		Achievement (%)	89	61	86
GNVQ advanced business	3	Number of starters	14	24	17
		Retention (%)	85	46	76
		Achievement (%)	100	100	46

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
*course not offered

Curriculum Areas

Dance, Drama and Media Studies

Grade 1

26   Inspectors observed 11 lessons. They agreed with most of the findings in the self-assessment reports for media, and dance and drama.

Key strengths
- the high standard of teaching and learning
- effective linking of theory and practice
- consistently high levels of achievement
- the good standard of students' practical work

Weaknesses
- some deficiencies in media equipment

27   Recruitment to the full-time advanced level courses offered by the college has grown significantly in the current year. There is good collaboration with schools and other colleges over the programme offered. Many students successfully progress from the full-time courses to higher education. Course evaluations indicate that most students are highly satisfied with the provision. As the self-assessment report states, extra-curricular activities enrich students' learning experience. A good example was seen during the inspection when an established repertory theatre company gave improvisation workshops to college drama students, followed by a public performance of a new play. The curriculum is well planned and managed. There is careful analysis of students' achievements and this informs further planning. Monitoring of students' progress and their attendance is rigorous. Students benefit from good personal support from teachers. Teachers work well as a team and are highly committed to their students, both within and outside timetabled lessons. There are well-developed links with community, arts and media organisations.

28   Of the 11 lessons observed, nine were good or outstanding. This is a significantly higher proportion than the national average for the programme area. The standard of teaching is high, as identified in the self-assessment report. Teachers use an appropriate range of teaching methods. Drama and dance students benefit from opportunities to perform to their peers in the college and media students exhibit their work. Teachers effectively integrate theory and practical work. For example, dance students were given a variety of practical opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the labanotation system for representing dance movements on paper. These included fixing labels with laban symbols on the relevant parts of their partners' bodies and an exploration of how to use the language to represent minute movements. Media students carried out a careful analysis of published women's magazines and then used specialist IT software to produce their own cover and contents pages of a magazine for a specialist audience.

29   Lessons and courses are carefully planned and activities suitably varied. Teachers effectively manage individual and group work. Media teachers enhance students' learning through the use of informative handouts and worksheets, some of which are based on the work of previous students. Students' written work is marked with constructive critical comments and students take account of these to improve their work.

30   The standard of students' practical work is good. Media students produced short television advertisements which demonstrated both technical awareness and an understanding of issues such as homelessness. Students were generally articulate and confident and presented their ideas effectively. Students work well in groups and demonstrate a good standard of technical competence. As the self-assessment report identifies, pass rates in all subjects have been above national averages for the past three years. In most years, the proportion of higher grades that students receive is well above

national benchmarks. Students achieve levels of success that are significantly above those predicted on the basis of their previous performance. Retention rates are at or above national averages and are improving in media and dance.

31   There is a good range of spacious specialist accommodation in most areas. Further improvements in accommodation were taking place at the time of inspection. There is a well-equipped theatre that is used for public performances. The spaces available for practical work and choreography in dance are good. Media classrooms have attractive displays of students' work and other materials. The television studio, soon to be relocated in the new media block, is small. The college relies on borrowed video cameras to supplement its own so that it can cope with student demand. Video-editing suites are small, do not have equipment of industry standard, and can only be accessed through the television studio. They are currently inaccessible to people with restricted mobility. A number of these issues will be addressed when the provision is relocated in the new

block. The library stock is being developed to meet the growth in student numbers and is supplemented by departmental specialist collections. There is good technical support for students and staff. Teachers are well qualified and undertake staff development to keep abreast of developments in their field.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in dance, drama and media studies, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCE A level communication/media	3	Number of starters	60	78	84
		Retention (%)	78	74	80
		Achievement (%)	96	98	100
GCE A level dance	3	Number of starters	*	11	11
		Retention (%)	*	55	91
		Achievement (%)	*	100	100
GCE A level theatre and dramatic arts	3	Number of starters	39	40	43
		Retention (%)	82	75	72
		Achievement (%)	100	93	100

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
*course not offered

Curriculum Areas

Psychology

Grade 3

32   Inspectors observed 12 lessons at GCSE and GCE A/AS level. They agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report but found additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths
- well-managed teaching and learning
- much imaginative teaching
- good student coursework
- strong rates of progression to higher education
- high-quality resource packs and materials

Weaknesses
- low achievement rates
- low and declining retention rates
- some shortcomings in teaching

33   The college offers psychology courses at GCE A/AS level and GCSE. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the courses are well managed. Monthly meetings are held, with minuted actions and completion dates. There is target-setting and monitoring of attendance, retention and achievement. Staff have a self-critical approach to identifying areas for improvement. Students provide written evaluations at the end of each course. Their comments contribute to the course reviews and lead to change. There is a useful departmental handbook that includes an equal opportunities policy specific to psychology.

34   Much of the teaching is imaginative. Many lessons are well structured. Schemes of work are detailed and identify learning outcomes. Teachers give freely of their time to provide additional subject support for students. Most teachers use a varied range of techniques to engage their students. A GCSE group used a game as a way to memorise specialist vocabulary. In the most successful lessons, students were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. In one GCE AS lesson, the students conducted an ethics forum, evaluating experiments against ethical guidelines from the British Psychological Society. Some students chose to role-play their presentation and conducted a spirited defence of a psychological experiment. In all lessons, teachers help students to acquire subject-specific skills of evaluation and analysis. There are some weaker aspects of teaching. For example, not enough attention is paid to the acquisition of general academic skills. There is insufficient emphasis on improving students' written work to meet examination requirements, including practice of timed essays. As the self-assessment report states, the course materials and work packs are very good and represent a strength. Some are available on the college intranet. Sometimes there are insufficient checks on learning following their use.

35   Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that examination achievements at GCE A level are below the national average for sixth form colleges. Results had been improving until 1999, when achievement fell by 5% compared with the previous year. The department has adopted a range of measures this year to address this. In GCSE, the achievements were well above the national average in 1998 but dropped below in 1999. At GCE AS, achievement fell by 26% between 1998 and 1999. As the self-assessment report notes, retention is a weakness. It has declined for the last three years and is below the national average for sixth form colleges. The college recognises attendance as a weakness and is taking vigorous steps to address this. Current attendance is much improved. Students' coursework is good and well presented. It includes interesting topics, such as the relationship between self-esteem and GCSE results, and personality type and 'road rage'.

Other written work is generally of an appropriate standard. Students demonstrate high levels of competence in oral work. They work effectively in groups, sharing responsibility for tasks. Progression to higher education is good and significant numbers of students choose courses related to psychology.

36   Staff are well qualified and carefully deployed. Accommodation ranges from good to satisfactory. Some rooms are too small for the size of the groups taught in them. The lecture theatres are used for groups when other rooms are not available, but they are not always appropriate for some of the planned teaching and learning activities. Students have good opportunities to use IT but there is no specialist psychology software. There are eye-catching visual displays in the psychology classrooms and corridor. Those produced by students are often witty and include cartoons and psychological snakes and ladders.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in psychology, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSE psychology	2	Number of starters	*	15	23
		Retention (%)	*	87	61
		Achievement (%)	*	69	43
GCE A level psychology	3	Number of starters	175	182	144
		Retention (%)	75	67	65
		Achievement (%)	82	86	81
GCE AS psychology	3	Number of starters	+	18	21
		Retention (%)	+	83	81
		Achievement (%)	+	73	47

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
***data unreliable**
+course not offered

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 2

37   Inspectors agreed with many of the findings in the self-assessment report. They found some further weaknesses.

Key strengths
- effective pre-entry guidance
- helpful induction programme
- well-developed processes for monitoring students' progress
- thorough and comprehensive careers guidance

Weaknesses
- aspects of the tutorial programme
- the low take-up of additional learning support
- poor retention rates on level 3 courses

38   Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the college gives effective pre-entry guidance to prospective students. It works in close partnership with other organisations to increase the numbers of young people continuing in education post-16. Relations with partner schools are well developed. The college offers 'taster' days, available to all year 10 pupils, to sample areas they would like to study. College staff visit the schools to advise year 11 pupils on post-16 options. This includes individual discussions to help them make a career choice. The college holds three open evenings each year. The well-designed prospectuses and course leaflets give helpful information, some in community languages. The college also advertises in a variety of media.

39   Admissions, enrolment and induction procedures are well managed, as stated in the self-assessment report. Prospective students can attend familiarisation days in the summer prior to entry. All one-year students and many others receive a second interview immediately after they receive their examination results. This provides both general and course-specific guidance. The presence of staff from Staffordshire Careers helps to ensure that students receive impartial guidance. Induction gives students a clear introduction to curriculum and cross-college aspects. At the sixth form centre, induction includes a team-building activity held away from the college. The student handbook gives useful information on the services available to students. Those students who wish to transfer to another course are carefully advised. Students' retention at level 3 has fallen in the last three years and is below the national average for sixth form colleges, although it has recently shown some improvement.

40   Inspectors agreed that students' progress is effectively monitored. For most students, their personal tutor is also one of their teachers. Personal tutors have overall responsibility for students' academic and personal progress. Much attention is paid to attendance and performance. Students whose performance is unsatisfactory have to report regularly to senior tutors until their performance improves. Some individual action-planning takes place but the plans often lack specific targets. There is some setting of minimum target grades for students but this is not yet consistent across the college. Parents evenings are held regularly to discuss students' progress. The tutorial programme includes advice on careers, time management and some personal and social education. The content is varied to some extent to meet the needs of different levels of programmes. Students were critical of some aspects of the tutorial programme, in particular the timing and some of the materials used. The tutorials observed were satisfactory but had weaknesses similar to those identified by students. The college acknowledged this weakness in its self-assessment report and plans to make changes.

41   All full-time students receive a diagnostic assessment of their levels of literacy and numeracy, and this year an assessment of learning styles has been introduced. Different diagnostic surveys are used at the sixth form centre. Students who are identified as needing help are referred for extra support. Those who reject the offer of support are asked to sign an acknowledgement of this. Inspectors identified as a weakness the low take-up of support by students identified as needing it.

42   As the self-assessment report states, the quality of careers education and guidance is a particular strength. The college has its own careers adviser, and staff from Staffordshire Careers, with which it has partnership agreements, give regular support. Many students receive individual interviews with the careers service. The extensive careers library includes prospectuses, computerised databases and videos. Outside speakers regularly give talks about vocational areas. There are thorough arrangements to advise students on how to apply to higher education. After the publication of examination results, staff, careers advisers and local universities are available to assist students who have not done as well as expected. Careful attention is paid to the needs of students wishing to progress to further education courses or employment. There are regular 'drop-in' sessions for students to obtain careers advice. A work experience co-ordinator has recently been appointed. The college makes good use of the detailed information it holds about the destinations of most of its students to provide guidance for students planning their next career move.

43   The college has a lively ethos. It offers a wide range of sporting activities, and many voluntary and community activities. Its enrichment programme has a range of courses such as mathematics for physics, Young Enterprise and community sports leadership, although take-up for these is low.

44   The college offers much personal support to students, including advice on financial support and travel. Many students are benefiting from the newly introduced educational maintenance allowance. Careful attention is paid to the needs of students with disabilities. Support and appropriate equipment is provided for students who have hearing or sight impairment. There is a personal counselling service at both sites, staffed by qualified counsellors. Students are referred to external agencies when appropriate.

General Resources
Grade 2

45   Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report and found an additional weakness.

Key strengths
- imaginative adaptation of accommodation to meet changing needs
- effective estates management and space utilisation
- up-to-date IT facilities
- high-quality sports facilities

Weaknesses
- shortcomings in library provision
- poor access to some areas for people with restricted mobility

46   The college was established in 1970 on a spacious and open site to the south of the city centre. The college has expanded its capacity and improved its space utilisation. The building was extended in 1975. Fifteen of the mobile classrooms constructed in 1971 remain; most were refurbished in 1992. The college has a comprehensive accommodation strategy that is clearly linked to the strategic plan, to the issues raised in the previous inspection and to the

changing nature of the curriculum. The plan is carefully reviewed by an accommodation strategy group and the college management team. Thorough analyses of space utilisation ensure that decisions are well informed. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment of its strengths relating to the effective management and use of space.

47   The college has imaginatively adapted its accommodation to respond to changes in learning styles and subject demand. The original building contained many small teaching rooms. The earth sciences and business studies departments have replaced some of their small rooms with a large multimedia resources area. The art and design section has moved into the former gym and a mezzanine floor has been installed to create a number of space-efficient and well-lit studio areas. Students using the mobile classrooms have limited access to a range of college resources. The completion of the north east wing building project in April 2000 will remove some of the accommodation that is not fit for purpose, although the mobiles will remain. The college is currently preparing a bid for a significant capital programme to address some of the remaining issues.

48   Inspectors agreed with some of the strengths claimed in relation to IT resources. There are 260 computers available for curriculum use, of which 219 are to a good specification and are networked. This gives a ratio of one computer to eight students. Each student has an individual log-in account and file store, and an entitlement to access the Internet upon completion of a training course designed to encourage responsible use. The standard desktop contains a suite of modern software augmented by curriculum-specific packages. There is a good range of both colour and laser printers which students use well. Access to the network and to the Internet is slow. Staff access to IT has been significantly increased as the result of a successful bid for external funding by a group of North Staffordshire colleges.

49   The centrally situated college library contains books, periodicals and a well-equipped careers section. The bookshelves are too tightly spaced and some books are outdated. Students who wish to use electronic media have to use the facilities in the learning resources areas. The computerised library catalogue has recently been updated but the use of reports to assist management decisions is underdeveloped. The self-assessment report did not identify these weaknesses. The college plans to extend the library and increase the number of study spaces. There are no formal links between the library and curriculum areas but inspectors found some effective informal links. Some curriculum areas have developed their own local resource bases.

50   The welcoming reception area leads directly to the student social areas, the college shop and the recently improved catering facilities. Pressure on the social and eating areas has been eased by changes to the college timetable. Although the cleaning contract has been extended to deal with the build-up of litter during the day, a problem remains. Corridors and circulation areas have attractive wall displays. The college's self-assessment acknowledges that internal access for people with restricted mobility is poor in some areas of the college. The two lifts are unsuitable for people using wheelchairs and the mobile classrooms do not have ramps. The college has recognised this weakness and has made improved access for those with disabilities a priority in its preparation of a bid for capital funding.

51   The self-assessment report noted the positive impact of collaborative working in order to improve accommodation. As a result of a partnership between the city council and the college, the Fenton Manor Sports Complex was opened in 1998 next to the college. This £8 million project provides excellent sports and leisure facilities, including a large sports hall,

squash courts with moveable walls easily adapted for the teaching of dance, a teaching room, a sports science laboratory and a staff workroom. These facilities complement the existing swimming pool. In addition, the college grounds contain facilities for a number of outdoor sports.

Quality Assurance

Grade 2

52   Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the college self-assessment report. They found a few additional strengths and weaknesses and considered that some strengths were normal practice.

Key strengths

- improvements resulting from quality assurance activities
- a good quality assurance manual
- well-managed students' perceptions surveys
- thorough analysis of students' achievements
- an effective concerns and complaints system

Weaknesses

- some poorly defined targets in action plans
- unclear relationships between staff development, appraisals and lesson observations
- inadequate records of course reviews

53   The college's quality assurance system is helping to secure improvements in quality. For instance, full-time students' achievements at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels consistently improved over the three-year period starting in 1996. However, there has been a decline in retention rates at levels 2 and 3. Quality assurance arrangements are regularly improved. The college's quality manual provides a comprehensive guide to the policies, procedures, committees and reports relevant to quality assurance. There is good involvement of all areas of the college in quality assurance. Inspectors agreed that there have been increasing levels of student satisfaction and that effective action has been taken to make improvements in some college facilities that were criticised in student surveys. The college has had its status as an Investor in People re-confirmed.

54   The practice of setting targets and service standards is developing but has not yet been effectively applied to all areas of the college. The college recognised this weakness in its self-assessment report and has been taking action to address it. Staff in most support areas have recently developed well-defined service standards and have begun to monitor whether they are being achieved. However, there are no service standards or performance indicators as yet for the library. In a significant minority of curriculum areas, key targets for improvements contained in action plans are not sufficiently precise. For example, some targets for attendance, retention and achievement simply state that there is to be improvement.

55   There are effective quality assurance arrangements for tackling weaknesses in students' achievements. These are closely analysed and the value added is carefully measured. Students' achievements are reviewed at course level and there are well-written papers on pass rates for the whole college. In addition, an analysis is undertaken to help the college identify factors associated with student performance that is lower than expected. The two GCE A level courses causing concern in 1998 improved their achievement significantly as a result of a range of strategies.

56   The college takes full account of students' views. A particularly effective feature is the students' forum. Surveys are used to monitor

students' perceptions of the quality of teaching and learning and college resources. The results of the centrally organised survey are circulated to those responsible for taking action, and the resulting improvements are communicated to students through the students' forum and student representatives.

57   There are regular reviews of the quality of individual courses, but they are not sufficiently well documented. It is not clear whether all the issues needing attention have been identified and action taken. There are no formal, comprehensive action plans dealing with issues needing improvement. Support areas of the college also undertake quality reviews. There are good reviews and written reports on the performance of student support and admissions sections of the college, and of the examinations service. The college's lesson observation scheme helps to monitor the quality of teaching.

58   The self-assessment process is well established. The college completed its fourth self-assessment report in preparation for the inspection. All areas of the college are involved in carrying out self-assessment and their reports contribute to the relevant curriculum and cross-college reports. The self-assessment process is supported by the programme of lesson observations and its outcomes were compared with data contained in *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report.* Moderation of the report was undertaken by external consultants.

59   Staff development is satisfactory but inspectors did not agree with the college's self-assessment that it was a significant strength. The college has a staff development committee that meets twice a term and reports to the college management team. A staff development plan is prepared annually. For 1999-2000, the plan includes a major focus on preparation for the introduction of curriculum 2000. Although staff development needs are

identified by appraisees and by heads of subject areas, the plan does not show how staff development takes account of appraisals and lesson observations. Links with strategic objectives are only broadly indicated.

60   The college charter is regularly reviewed. In 1999, it was reviewed with a group of students whose opinions were carefully surveyed. The commitments in the charter are broad and do not spell out the standards that the college seeks to achieve. The college's complaints system has been revised and refined recently to include a clearer distinction between a cause for concern and a complaint. The system is carefully administered and students at the main college site express confidence in it. There is a lack of clarity about the steps to be taken when a complaint is raised at the sixth form centre.

Governance

Grade 1

61   Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the college's self-assessment report.

Key strengths
- effective involvement in strategic planning
- the broad range of relevant governor skills and experience
- active search committee and planning for governor succession
- effective clerking arrangements
- governors' scrutiny of students' achievements

Weaknesses
- some procedures for corporation openness not adequately documented

62   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.

63   The corporation has 18 members, of whom eight, including the chair, are business governors. There are two student governors and one staff governor. There is one vacancy. The college intends to advertise this shortly in local newspapers. Governors bring a broad range of skills to the college. They also have strong links with local educational institutions and, as recognised in the self-assessment report, have significant links with and knowledge of the local community. Governors are clear about the distinction between governance and management. They are committed to the college and their attendance at committee and corporation meetings is good. The corporation has an active search committee and has established effective nomination and appointment procedures. Succession plans have been established to manage the imminent retirement of a number of governors.

64   New governors receive induction, including a briefing pack and a handbook giving detailed information on the role of governors and procedures for governance. An annual two-day residential event provides senior managers with the opportunity to update governors on new initiatives, to review the college's progress in achieving its strategic objectives and to plan for the future. Some governors attend external training events for governors. An analysis of governors' training needs is undertaken but this has not yet led to the establishment of a formal training programme.

65   Clerking is effective and independent. The clerk is well qualified and receives sufficient training and administrative support. Agendas are well organised and clear deadlines are set for the production of supporting papers. Discussions and actions are clearly minuted. The corporation has established an appropriate range of committees. Reports of committee meetings and key papers are presented to the corporation for consideration and to confirm recommended decisions. The terms of reference of the audit committee have not been updated in line with recent guidance. The cycle of corporation and committee meetings is set one year in advance. All meetings of the corporation in the past year have been quorate.

66   All governors and senior staff update annually a register of interests. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the governors regularly review policies and all aspects of college performance. The corporation has agreed standing orders, a code of conduct for governors, and fraud and 'whistleblowing' policies. Agendas, papers and minutes, except confidential items, are available for public inspection in the college library. However, the standing orders are not comprehensive and there is no clear written policy on providing information to the public.

67   The corporation approves the college's financial strategy. The finance and general purposes committee and the corporation give appropriate consideration to the college's latest monthly management accounts and comprehensive cashflow statements at each of their meetings.

68   Governors take a keen interest in the college. They attend many formal meetings as well as a range of college social and cultural events. One governor is a member of the college's self-assessment committee. Some governors have established links with curriculum areas.

69   The governing body is involved effectively in the preparation of the strategic plan. It has reviewed the college's mission and set objectives for the strategic plan for 1997 to 2000.

Cross-college Provision

A two-day residential event is planned for the summer term to allow the governing body to consider the development of the next strategic plan. The governing body has played a full part in determining the educational character of the college. It has debated extensively its strategy for the development of the college's adult education provision. It was also involved fully in the decision to develop a sixth form centre in the north of the city. It considered carefully the impact of its decisions on the nature of the college and its full-time students aged 16 to 19.

70   The corporation reviews its performance each year and has established four indicators to measure its performance. The chair and deputy chair appraised the principal, and the chairs of the corporation and the remuneration committee review the appraisals of the senior postholders, conducted by the principal. They provide guidance on what further development or action may be required.

71   There are effective arrangements for governors to monitor the academic performance of the college. The academic planning and quality committee receives detailed reports on examination results. Comparisons are made with national averages. Reports also provide an analysis of unsuccessful students, indicating the action that the college plans to take to secure improvements. Governors are aware that the college has some poor retention rates and they recognise the relationship between poor attendance and poor retention.

Management

Grade 2

72   Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the college's self-assessment report. Action had been taken to rectify some of the weaknesses.

Key strengths

- a well-managed college with a clear sense of direction
- open and consultative management style and good communications
- productive links with external organisations
- effective financial monitoring

Weaknesses

- ineffective monitoring of student attendance
- underdeveloped plans in subject departments and support areas

73   The principal and the nine senior managers provide effective management and a clear sense of direction for the college. They work well together as the college management team. Regular meetings of senior managers are held and these are well minuted. Following the last inspection, the college undertook a review of the management structure and appointed five assistant principals for teaching and learning to strengthen support for curriculum areas. This has been successful. Restructuring of the college's management is continuing, and includes a review of middle management. Some new posts are being created, for example, for key skills co-ordination. Since the last inspection, the large number of middle management posts has been reduced.

74   The management style is open and consultative and helps to ensure good communications. There is a regular cycle of meetings for all staff. Staff are consulted about new curriculum initiatives or proposed changes, such as the current review of the management structure. Various methods are used to canvass the views of staff including questionnaires, small group discussions and full staff meetings. Staff are committed to the success of the college.

Cross-college Provision

75   The college's approach to strategic planning involves staff and governors. In preparing the strategic plan for 1997 to 2000, senior managers and governors reviewed the college's mission and strategy and consulted widely with staff. The college makes effective use of labour market information to inform its strategic plan. The annual operating statement is cross-referenced to the self-assessment report and associated action plans. Development plans in subject departments and support areas are underdeveloped. This weakness was not included in the college's self-assessment report.

76   Targets for student achievement and retention are set at course level and monitored. Inspectors agreed with the college that monitoring of student attendance needs to improve. Although attendance rates in the lessons observed during inspection were above the national average for all colleges inspected in 1998-99, the college has not achieved its own target of 90% attendance. The college plans to extend a pilot of a new attendance monitoring system in the summer term.

77   As the self-assessment report recognised, there are good links with a range of external organisations and other education providers. A good example is the collaboration with Stoke-on-Trent City Council to provide the new Fenton Manor Sports Complex. The college has also recently established a sixth form centre through its partnership with Stoke-on-Trent College. The centre provides full-time further education opportunities in the north of the city for students aged 16 to 19, who would otherwise be unlikely to continue in education. The management arrangements for the centre have still to be formalised and financial reporting improved.

78   The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The college has maintained good levels of reserves and solvency. As at 31 July 1999, it had accumulated reserves of over £1.1 million. Financial regulations and procedures have been established but the regulations do not clearly document financial authority limits for the authorisation of orders, supply cover, invoices or cheque signing. Management accounts are produced each month except for the first month of the financial year. The accountant provides a commentary to the accounts but financial performance indicators and details of student numbers are not provided. The management accounts are considered by the college management team as well as by governors.

79   The management information system provides managers and governors with appropriate information. Data on enrolments, attendance, retention, achievements and students' destinations are available on-line to all senior managers and senior tutors and accessible to teachers in the staff workroom. The college's returns to the FEFC are usually timely.

80   The college's health and safety policy was reviewed and updated in 1999. An annual risk assessment of high-risk areas and other selected areas is undertaken. The equal opportunities policy was reviewed in 1998. The equal opportunities committee meets regularly but its terms of reference are out of date. Some monitoring of gender, ethnicity and disability of students and job applicants is undertaken. There is an annual survey of staff and students' views on equal opportunities. Work has been undertaken to monitor equal opportunities in the curriculum but practice is not consistent. In its self-assessment report, the college stated that strategies for developing inclusive learning were not fully embedded in the curriculum. Inspectors found that the college had made good progress with its inclusive learning action plan.

Conclusions

81   Inspectors considered that the self-assessment report provided a useful basis for the inspection. It was detailed and comprehensive, and was accompanied by action plans to address weaknesses. The evidence to support the judgements in the report was usually appropriate. The action plans had suitable timescales and clearly identified who was responsible for action. Some sections of the report were less well developed than others and contained statements of fact rather than judgements. Sometimes the evidence cited was simply the source of the evidence. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report but found further strengths and weaknesses. They considered that some strengths represented normal practice. A number of the identified weaknesses were being addressed by the time of the inspection. Inspectors agreed with three of the five curriculum grades awarded by the college and with all of the cross-college grades.

82   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 1999)

Age	%
Under 16	1
16-18 years	65
19-24 years	11
25+ years	23
Not known	0
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (November 1999)

Level of study	%
Level 1 (foundation)	26
Level 2 (intermediate)	10
Level 3 (advanced)	64
Level 4/5 (higher)	0
Non-schedule 2	0
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (November 1999)

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	495	441	38
Business	200	19	9
Hotel and catering	54	18	3
Health and community care	77	0	3
Art and design	141	34	7
Humanities	715	266	40
Total	1,682	778	100

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 22% of"students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment Index of Local Conditions.

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (November 1999)

	Per-manent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	79	0	7	86
Supporting direct learning contact	21	1	1	23
Other support	37	0	2	39
Total	137	1	10	148

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1997	1998	1999
Income	£4,681,000	£4,528,000	£4,716,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	£18.60	£17.31	£16.94
Payroll as a proportion of income	74%	75%	73%
Achievement of funding target	109%	102%	100%
Diversity of income	4%	5%	5%
Operating surplus	£20,000	£20,000	£140,000

Sources: Income - Council Circulars 98/43 (1997), 00/10 (1998), college (1999)
ALF - Funding Allocations 1997-98 (1997 and 1998), Funding Allocations 1998-99 (1999)
Payroll - Council Circulars 98/43 (1997), 00/10 (1998), college (1999)
Achievement of funding target - Performance Indicators 1997-98 (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
Diversity of income - Council Circulars 98/43 (1997), 00/10 (1998), college (1999)
Operating surplus - Council Circulars 98/43 (1997), 00/10 (1998), college (1999)

Students' achievements data

Level	Retention and pass	Students aged 16 to 18			Students aged 19 or over		
		1996	1997	1998	1996	1997	1998
1	Number of starters	115	485	277	41	122	210
	Retention (%)	77	75	79	78	74	85
	Achievement (%)	64	79	85	55	86	95
2	Number of starters	976	844	832	37	69	96
	Retention (%)	84	81	80	81	70	78
	Achievement (%)	62	72	94	40	55	67
3	Number of starters	3,090	3,425	3,247	11	98	103
	Retention (%)	83	71	70	64	65	72
	Achievement (%)	78	82	84	57	89	61
4 or 5	Number of starters	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Retention (%)	0	0	0	0	0	100
	Achievement (%)	0	0	0	0	0	100
Short courses	Number of starters	38	340	255	102	749	854
	Retention (%)	97	92	95	98	92	91
	Achievement (%)	76	55	90	57	98	92
Unknown/ unclassified	Number of starters	77	369	482	88	37	32
	Retention (%)	78	69	75	85	68	50
	Achievement (%)	40	86	82	63	100	100

Source: ISR

FEFC Inspection Report 83/00