

Derwentside College

REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1999-00

THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL

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FUNDING COUNCIL***

The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education according to a four-year cycle. It also inspects other further education provision funded by the FEFC. In fulfilling its work programme, the inspectorate assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum, disseminates good practice and advises the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

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

*Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone 024 7686 3000
Fax 024 7686 3100
Website www.fefc.ac.uk*

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Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

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

Derwentside College

Northern Region

Inspected November 1999

Derwentside College is the major provider of post-16 education and training in the semi-rural district of Derwentside in the north-west of County Durham. For the inspection, the college produced an appropriate self-assessment report, which involved the governors and all sections of the college. A significant number of lesson observations were used in drawing up the report. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the report. They identified some additional strengths, and considered that a few weaknesses had been understated. Since the self-assessment report was written, the college has remedied some of the weaknesses which it had identified. At the time of the inspection, inspectors from the TSC inspected provision funded by the TEC.

The college offers provision in eight of the programme areas funded by the FEFC. The college has productive links with employers, schools and the local community. It has made much progress since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved. Inspectors judged 73% of lessons observed to be good or outstanding compared with 57% in the last inspection. Arrangements to observe the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and extensive. The development and recording of key skills is good on most

courses. Most retention rates are well above the national average for the sector. Significant improvements in accommodation have been made to both engineering and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, access for students with restricted mobility remains poor in some areas. Students use a wide range of effective support services. Governors take an active role in determining the mission and the character of the college. Management and communications throughout the institution are good. The accuracy of the central management information system has improved since the previous inspection. The college should improve: the pass rates of students in some curriculum areas; the setting of targets; the planning and implementation of course reviews; access to management information; the quality of some tutorials; and aspects of reporting to governors.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Business	3	Support for students	3
Health and social care	2	General resources	2
English, communications and uniformed services	2	Quality assurance	2
History, geography, psychology and sociology	2	Governance	2
		Management	2

Context

The College and its Mission

1 Derwentside College, established as a tertiary college in 1986, brought together the activities of Consett Technical College and the sixth forms of five local schools. It is the major provider of post-16 education and training in the semi-rural district of Derwentside in the north-west of County Durham. The college's main centre is in Consett. There are four other sites in Derwentside: two based in the former coal-mining town of Stanley; one in the mainly residential village of Lanchester; and a centre which has been opened recently in Langley Park. There are plans to open another centre in Chester-le-Street. The college has a commitment to widespread community-based education in a range of locations in South Northumberland and Durham. In January 1998, the college merged with Anchor Training, a private training organisation, which operates seven programme centres in North Durham, Gateshead and South Tyneside.

2 The unemployment rate in Derwentside for September 1999 was 9.8%, compared with the national rate of 5% and the rate for County Durham of 7.5%. A national study on deprivation ranked Derwentside thirty-eighth out of 354 local authority districts in England. Significant parts of the borough receive additional funding from the European Social Fund. In the district, engineering companies are the major employers. The college is one of the lead members of the Derwentside Engineering Employers' Forum, which includes 12 local engineering companies. It is also developing a centre of engineering enterprise, in partnership, among others, with the Forum and County Durham Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). Economic activity in the area consists mainly of small to medium-sized enterprises, based on industrial estates. In 1999, the percentage of 16-year-old pupils in Derwentside, excluding those in independent schools, gaining five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects at grade C or above was 38%, similar to County Durham as a whole,

but lower than the national rate of 47.8%. In 1998-99, 32.8% of adults in County Durham were qualified to national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 3 or equivalent, compared with 42% nationally.

3 The college offers courses in eight of the programme areas funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Courses include: GCSE and general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level); general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels; higher national awards; certificate in education from the University of Sunderland; and NVQs from levels 1 to 5. The college is a member of the University of Teesside Partnership. In November 1999, the college enrolled 711 full-time and 3,283 part-time students funded by the FEFC, and a further 190 full-time trainees funded by the TEC. Within the area, there is another college of further education, a school for 11- to 18-year-old pupils and a sixth form centre.

4 The current management structure was established in March 1999. The management team comprises the principal and four directors. One director and two curriculum managers have responsibility for the curriculum areas. The college has established partnerships with a wide range of organisations that includes: the Agudist Women's Information Technology and Teleworking Group; the Derwentside Education and Training Forum; Hermitage School; Derwentside District Council; the Durham New Deal Partnership; and the Northern Training Trust.

5 The college's mission is 'to foster a commitment to learning throughout life in the people of Derwentside and its immediate surrounding area, widen participation in education and training and combat educational disadvantage'. The mission is supported by a detailed statement of educational character, which indicates whom the college serves, what it provides and how it will use its resources.

Context

The Inspection

6 The college was jointly inspected by the FEFC and the Training Standards Council (TSC) during November 1999. The inspection under the leadership of the FEFC reporting inspector was carried out in accordance with the joint guidance procedures. Inspectors evaluated the college's self-assessment report and reviewed evidence from other directorates of the FEFC. Data on students were derived from the individualised student record (ISR) for 1997 and 1998. The college submitted data on students' achievements from internal records for 1999, which were checked before the inspection against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies. The data validated were found to be accurate and reliable. The FEFC inspection was carried out by 10 inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 46 days in the college. They observed 51 lessons, evaluated students' work and examined a range of college documents.

Inspectors held meetings with college governors, students, managers, college staff and representatives from Durham TEC, local industry and public services. The TSC team of seven inspectors including a trainee, worked jointly on cross-college areas with the FEFC.

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 51 lessons inspected, 73% were judged to be good or outstanding and 6% were judged to be less than satisfactory. This profile is much better than the national averages for grades 1 and 2 for all colleges inspected in 1998-99.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	5	8	5	0	0	18
GCSE	1	2	1	0	0	4
GNVQ	1	6	3	2	0	12
NVQ	0	2	0	0	0	2
Other vocational, access to higher education and four tutorials	4	8	2	1	0	15
Total (No.)	11	26	11	3	0	51
Total (%)	22	51	21	6	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*

Context

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

Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	Average attendance (%)
Derwentside College	10.8	80
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

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 3

9 Inspectors observed 12 lessons covering courses in business and professional studies. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report but identified additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good retention on many courses
- high pass rates on courses for NVQ level 4 accounting and full-time GCE A level business studies
- effective integration of key skills with full-time courses

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on some courses
- insufficient explicit guidance to students in some lessons
- insufficient recent experience of business among some teachers

10 The college offers courses for full-time and part-time students leading to GNVQ intermediate and advanced level, GCE A level accounting and business studies, accounting technician and management qualifications. Courses are based at Consett and at the Lanchester centre. Some students progress from intermediate to higher education courses. Most advanced GNVQ students are successful in finding employment that is related to their qualifications. Although the college has offered level 1 courses in business, it has not recruited sufficient students in the last two years. Courses in accounting and management are also offered. Recruitment to most full-time business courses has fallen significantly over recent years. Teams meet regularly, their meetings have formal agendas and minutes and subsequent action points are clear. Targets are effectively set and monitored by course teams and the programme manager.

Teachers communicate well with each other and with students by electronic mail. All courses have well-documented schemes of work, but the planning of individual lessons is inconsistent.

11 Teachers regularly review students' progress and agree action plans with them. They provide detailed, constructive written feedback to students on work submitted for assessment. Teachers make effective use of directed questions to develop business concepts. In some lessons, they checked the understanding of students and provided sound support. In a GCE A level business studies lesson, the teacher effectively drew on students' experiences to illustrate Herzberg's theory of motivation. In a GNVQ advanced lesson on cashflow forecasting, students used computer spreadsheets well to apply concepts that they had learnt recently. Some teachers did not explain the subject matter sufficiently clearly, nor did they ensure that students had fully grasped the key issues. In one lesson, students watched a lengthy video programme on market research. There was little subsequent discussion of what had been presented and students did not make any notes. Occasionally students spent excessive time unnecessarily copying information from projected slides. Low numbers on many courses restricted opportunities for discussion. On GNVQ programmes in 1998-99, students did not undertake work experience. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report that for full-time students key skills are integrated effectively with courses. Opportunities to develop these skills are identified in students' learning activities and assignment work, on both GNVQ and GCE A level courses. In addition, all students attend specialist key skills lessons.

12 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that there are good retention rates on many courses. However, the retention rate for GNVQ intermediate is poor and declining. Pass rates for NVQ level 4 accounting are consistently high and are significantly above national

Curriculum Areas

benchmarks. In 1999, in the module for this course on planning and allocation of resources, the pass rate was 94%, which is well above the national average. There is a high pass rate for full-time students of GCE A level business studies. The proportion of students achieving passes at higher grades is above the national average for similar colleges. The college identified poor pass rates on some courses but gave insufficient weight to this weakness. Pass rates have fluctuated significantly on the GNVQ advanced level course. Many of these results are poor; less than half the students who completed the course in 1997 and 1999 obtained a pass. Pass rates are significantly below sector benchmarks for courses for NVQ level 3 accounting. In 1999, only 30% of part-time students taking GCE A level business studies were successful.

13 Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced, but some lack recent business experience, a weakness recognised in the self-assessment report. They have recently started on a planned programme of professional development that is relevant to their work. The majority of students benefit from appropriate specialist facilities. There is a good specialist business learning centre at the recently developed Lanchester centre. Students use a suitable range of computers and the Internet for research work on assignments, which supplement their learning in lessons and help to develop their skills of enquiry. The specialist bookstock is small but texts can easily be loaned from the library at the Consett site. Classrooms are well furnished but contain few display materials that relate to the business courses.

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
NVQ accounting	2	Number of starters	33	23	26
		Retention (%)	97	90	89
		Achievement (%)	34	25	79
GNVQ advanced business	3	Number of starters	26	13	15
		Retention (%)	77	92	87
		Achievement (%)	45	73	46
GCE A level business studies	3	Number of starters	83	64	37
		Retention (%)	92	72	90
		Achievement (%)	56	75	68
NVQ accounting	3	Number of starters	25	26	21
		Retention (%)	100	85	81
		Achievement (%)	16	71	17
NVQ accounting	4	Number of starters	9	16	20
		Retention (%)	100	94	90
		Achievement (%)	78	58	100

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

Curriculum Areas

Health and Social Care

Grade 2

14 Inspectors observed 12 lessons in childcare, health and social care and counselling. They agreed with most of the judgements made in the self-assessment report but identified additional weaknesses. Inspectors found the self-assessment report insufficiently detailed in the evaluation of teaching and students' achievements.

Key strengths

- well-organised courses
- well-motivated students
- the high standard of students' work
- good rates of retention and achievement in counselling courses
- effective monitoring of students' progress

Weaknesses

- some poor retention and achievement rates in childcare and health and social care courses
- some poorly planned group work
- ineffective target-setting and action-planning

15 Most courses are well managed. There are three co-ordinators who, respectively, lead teams for health and social care, childcare and counselling. There is insufficient sharing of good practice between the course teams. Communication within course teams is good, and effective use is made of the Internet and electronic mail for assignment work. Teams meet regularly but minutes are too brief and do not give sufficient attention to action-planning, in particular to improving achievement rates. The self-assessment report identified these weaknesses. Course reviews are effective. Modifications to assignments and changes to key skill workbooks have been made in response to the termly reviews.

16 Courses are well organised. Schemes of work are appropriately detailed and identify the range of teaching methods that are to be used. Plans are written for all lessons, but some plans lack sufficient detail and their quality is not always satisfactory. Students make good use of learning packs. These are well designed by teachers, stimulate interest and result in highly motivated students who work well on the subject matter. In the successful lessons, teachers use their experience to help students develop and display knowledge, understanding and skills within a vocational context. In one lesson, students were asked to reflect on the effects of positive and negative personal relationships. Clear guidance enabled students to have the confidence to undertake and respond well to a demanding task. In a few lessons, students were not sufficiently prepared for group work and were unsure about the purpose of the tasks. The objectives were not shared with them and teachers did not regularly check students' progress. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report. Work experience is well planned, effectively monitored and fully integrated within childcare, health and social care courses. Teachers make skilful use of what students learn during work experience and ensure that their progress helps their overall development. Carefully designed assignments link learning at college and in the workplace. Visiting health professionals make effective contributions to student learning. They help students to relate theory to current workplace practices.

17 Students' work is of a high standard and it is well presented. Students demonstrate good oral, written and practical skills, which show an appropriate level of understanding and knowledge. Tutors provide students with constructive feedback on their assignments, which helps them to improve their work. Students speak highly of the support they receive from their tutors. Students are encouraged to evaluate their own progress and are given responsibility for learning on their

Curriculum Areas

own. Tutors effectively monitor students' progress through regular reviews. As part of a health education assignment, students made good use of graphics and demonstrated competent information technology (IT) skills using spreadsheets.

18 Inspectors agreed with the findings in the self-assessment report that retention and achievement rates are good on counselling courses and above national averages for the sector. In childcare and health and social care, there are some poor retention and achievement rates. From a high level of retention and achievement in the GNVQ intermediate courses in 1997, rates have subsequently declined. Over the same period the GNVQ advanced course shows an improving rate of retention, but in 1999 the achievement rate was low. In the

diploma in nursery nursing course, compared with 1998, achievement in 1999 was significantly lower but the retention rate had improved significantly.

19 As noted in the self-assessment report, staff have relevant vocational experience and qualifications. Almost all teachers have professional teaching qualifications and most have assessor awards. Accommodation is generally comfortable and appropriately provided with audiovisual equipment. Wall displays of students' work which are of high quality provide a stimulating environment in most classrooms and celebrate students' achievements. This feature is particularly evident in childcare base rooms. One room used by GNVQ students was small, overcrowded and inadequate for group work activities.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in health and social care, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GNVQ intermediate health and social care (one year)	2	Number of starters	24	28	35
		Retention (%)	88	71	63
		Achievement (%)	86	80	71
Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education certificate in childcare and education (one year)	2	Number of starters	22	22	9
		Retention (%)	77	95	67
		Achievement (%)	60	71	83
Certificate in basic counselling	2	Number of starters	75	70	97
		Retention (%)	89	97	100
		Achievement (%)	73	97	89
Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education diploma in nursery nursing (two year)	3	Number of starters	19	22	18
		Retention (%)	89	73	89
		Achievement (%)	79	75	63
Certificate in counselling (one year)	3	Number of starters	27	19	35
		Retention (%)	96	79	94
		Achievement (%)	*	*	94
GNVQ advanced health and social care (two year)	3	Number of starters	29	17	23
		Retention (%)	31	71	91
		Achievement (%)	56	92	56

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

*data may be unreliable

Curriculum Areas

English, Communications and Uniformed Services

Grade 2

20 Inspectors observed 11 lessons covering English subjects at GCSE and GCE A level, communications, the English module on the college's higher education foundation course, and preparatory courses for the 'uniformed services'. Inspectors broadly agreed with the judgements made in the college's self-assessment report but found additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- well-managed uniformed services courses
- extensive opportunities for students on uniformed services courses
- significant improvement in students' achievements in 1999
- a well-developed programme for key skills

Weaknesses

- low level of student attention in many English lessons
- insufficient use of IT in teaching

21 The college has run a number of courses to prepare students for entry to public services where it is traditional to wear a uniform such as the police and fire service. These courses provide a wide variety of learning opportunities, are well managed and now attract over 50 full-time students. Recruitment to GCE A level and GCSE English courses has declined significantly over the last three years. Course documentation has been redesigned and the recruitment approaches improved in an attempt to attract students who are better informed on the courses and committed to studying the subject. English and communication courses are offered at community centres in the area including an imaginative project with the Jewish

community in Gateshead. English can also be studied under arrangements for open learning. There are weaknesses in the management of English provision. For example, the arrangements for open learning are weak and the provision of English at community centres is not sufficiently co-ordinated.

22 Lessons on the uniformed services courses are lively and enjoyable. Students are committed to the work and interact well with each other and with their teachers. In one lesson, students developed appropriate communication skills through self-assessment of their own leadership skills. They then related their conclusions to a recent walking and camping expedition in which they had all taken part. A short video clip of this event was used effectively to assist them in considering the issues. Students enthusiastically worked on relevant tasks to develop their capacity for leadership and reliance on themselves and each other. Students on the uniformed services courses benefit from a significant range of learning opportunities. They gain additional awards while: arranging trips outside the college; organising expeditions and visits from outside speakers; and taking part in voluntary activities. The programme has a strong vocational emphasis. Links with the uniformed services courses are extensive and effective. Student support and supervision are well-developed aspects of the provision.

23 Teaching and learning on English GCSE and GCE A level courses are at least satisfactory. Students on these courses speak highly of the support that they receive from teachers. However, in many lessons there was little response from students to the teaching. This was in part attributable to a narrow range of teaching methods, which focused more on the class as a whole than on individual students. There is no use of IT during English lessons. The self-assessment report identified the need to develop teaching methods that appealed to all students. However, the report failed to

Curriculum Areas

recognise the lack of relevant extra-curricular experiences for English GCE A level and GCSE students. English students do not go on organised visits to theatres nor are there clubs or societies that might extend their interest in the subject.

24 Reviewing and reporting on students' progress is good. Reports are thorough and where appropriate, copies are sent to parents. Retention and pass rates in English at GCSE and GCE A level have improved over the last three years. Pass rates in GCSE English at grade C or above, are well above the national average for further education colleges. The pass rate on the uniformed services courses is high. Of the 53 students who joined in 1998, 85% completed the course in 1999 and achieved the qualification. The majority progressed to the advanced course. Most of the remaining students went to related employment or other courses in further education. On the uniformed services courses, the standard of students' work was high and contained many examples of sophisticated oral and written responses. However, some responses from students in English lessons showed little understanding of the subject matter. Tutor feedback on assessed work is uneven in quality.

25 Full-time students benefit from a well-developed programme on key skills. Students take additional courses that focus on the key skills of application of number, communication and IT. The key skill where a student demonstrates self-improvement in learning and performance is accredited through the tutorial programme. However, GCE A level English language students do not have the key skill of communication accredited.

26 Lessons take place in attractive, well-equipped classrooms. Displays of students' work provide stimulating decoration on the walls. Appropriate videos, overhead projectors and whiteboards are widely available. Handouts and overhead slides that were used in

some of the weaker lessons were poorly produced. No texts were available to students in these classrooms with the exception of the rooms used for the uniformed services courses. The resources centre provides adequate support for students of English. Relevant texts are available as well as other appropriate resources. Students on the uniformed services courses visit the main site once each week, to use resources at the centre.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in English, communications and uniformed services, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSE English language	2	Number of starters	114	77	72
		Retention (%)	88	62	83
		Achievement (%)	32	43	68
Preparation for entry to uniformed services	2	Number of starters	*	*	53
		Retention (%)	*	*	85
		Achievement (%)	*	*	100
GCE A level English literature	3	Number of starters	58	49	22
		Retention (%)	82	57	95
		Achievement (%)	57	85	90
GCE A level communication studies	3	Number of starters	21	23	11
		Retention (%)	62	70	82
		Achievement (%)	100	75	78
GCE A level English language	3	Number of starters	37	42	14
		Retention (%)	76	62	71
		Achievement (%)	69	71	100

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

*course not running

Curriculum Areas

History, Geography, Psychology and Sociology

Grade 2

27 Inspectors observed 12 lessons covering GCSE and GCE A level courses in history, geography, psychology and sociology. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report, and identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good teaching
- high student achievements in GCE A level psychology
- high level of attendance on all full-time GCE A level courses
- high retention rates at GCE A level in 1999

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates in GCE A level sociology
- insufficient use of IT in teaching

28 Courses are provided on four sites in history, geography, psychology and sociology at GCE A level, GCE advanced supplementary (AS) and GCSE, as well as access to higher education programmes. A team leader co-ordinates the provision. Individual subjects are managed by subject tutors. Effective management is achieved through: regular team meetings; clear communication using electronic mail; and informal contact between colleagues. Targets for enrolment, retention, attendance and achievement which are set by course teams, take account of: enrolment trends; national achievement data; and previous statistics on achievement and retention rates. Progress towards meeting these targets is monitored regularly through the course review and evaluation procedure.

29 Ten of the 12 lessons observed were good or outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and teachers make effective use of well-designed handouts and textbooks. Students are encouraged to contribute to class discussion by drawing on their own experiences. Questioning is used effectively to develop students' knowledge and to assess their understanding of the subject matter. In some lessons, imaginative and stimulating exercises for small groups were used to explore concepts and issues. For example, in a psychology lesson, a small group exercise, which involved students sorting words into sentences, helped them to gain an understanding of aggression. Some schemes of work are unsatisfactory; they only contain a list of topics to be covered rather than detailing the skills which students should develop. Although students study key skills separately from their academic subjects, few schemes of work or lesson plans contain details of how the development of key skills is integrated with the learning. Only a few lessons have plans to match teaching to the differing learning needs of students. The quality of written feedback on students' work is uneven. Often students are not given feedback which is sufficiently constructive to help them to improve their work. The criteria for marking work are not always shared with students. IT is underused in teaching; this was acknowledged in the self-assessment report.

30 As identified in the self-assessment report, achievement rates in GCE A level psychology have been excellent for the past two years. Achievement rates in geography have shown improvement over the last three years and in 1999 all students who completed the course were successful. In sociology achievement rates are poor. High grades achieved in psychology and geography were above the national benchmark in 1999. Students performed better than the predictions that were based on their GCSE grades in psychology but worse in sociology. Retention rates in all GCE subjects

Curriculum Areas

have been excellent for 1999 and good in history and geography over the past three years. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. GCSE retention and achievement rates are below national averages for the sector. Inspectors agreed with the college's claim in the report that there is a consistently high level of attendance on all full-time courses. Inspectors identified 93% attendance in the lessons observed. Students' written work is generally of an appropriate standard, although in some subjects teachers place insufficient emphasis on the development of analytical and evaluative skills.

range of texts and journals. There is access to IT in the resource centres but at the Consett site provision is insufficient to meet the demand. Teachers have appropriate subject qualifications and all hold teaching qualifications. They are enthusiastic about their work and have detailed knowledge of their subjects.

31 Each subject has a dedicated classroom. All classrooms contain whiteboards, screens, overhead projectors, televisions and videos. They are comfortably furnished, are of an appropriate size for the groups and contain stimulating subject displays, which have been produced by students. Full-time students are provided with textbooks which are current and appropriate. The resource centre contains a

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSEs	2	Number of starters	64	61	23
		Retention (%)	82	58	56
		Achievement (%)	31	63	64
GCE AS	3	Number of starters	*	*	20
		Retention (%)	*	*	84
		Achievement (%)	*	*	95
GCE A level geography and psychology	3	Number of starters	80	55	35
		Retention (%)	83	71	95
		Achievement (%)	50	82	100
GCE A level history and sociology	3	Number of starters	52	33	31
		Retention (%)	83	78	100
		Achievement (%)	62	82	61

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

*course not running

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 3

32 Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report. The college had taken action to overcome weaknesses identified in its report, though inspectors found other strengths and significant additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good arrangements for recruitment and admission of students
- a well co-ordinated range of liaison activities with schools
- careers education of high quality
- a good range of welfare, counselling and childcare services

Weaknesses

- underdeveloped co-ordination of student support services
- the uneven quality of induction and tutorial programmes
- insufficient enrichment activities
- no analysis of the impact of learning support

33 The college has recently made a number of changes to improve the provision of support for students. However, the support provided has not kept pace with the requirements of the college's increasingly diverse student body, especially the needs of disadvantaged students. There is also insufficient support for those studying at a distance from the college and those training on employer's premises. Responsibilities for providing support services are shared between a number of managers. They are not effectively co-ordinated across the college; this was not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report.

34 Inspectors agreed with the college's claim that its recruitment team provides a well co-ordinated range of liaison activities with local partner schools. Almost all year 11 pupils in these schools attend presentations by college staff, including specialist teachers. The college team has flexible arrangements for special workshops and 'taster' sessions which are popular with parents and students. Most full-time students interviewed by inspectors thought that the college presentations were informative and that they influenced their choice of study programme. The college is recruiting a declining proportion of school-leavers to full-time courses, but the proportion joining vocational and training courses has increased. The college has developed a range of activities, especially with partner schools, to prepare for the curriculum 2000 initiative. However, there is insufficient development of arrangements for inclusive learning across the college. For example, too few curriculum areas have developed materials to meet the needs of all learners.

35 The college provides a good range of well-produced information on courses to help students to make their choices. All staff involved in recruitment and admissions are well briefed on their responsibilities. They get on well with potential students, offer them general advice and, when appropriate, direct students to appropriate specialist teachers for more detailed course information. Students value the impartial advice and guidance provided and state that most courses meet their expectations. Few students change courses but when they do the arrangements are handled well. Guidance on student welfare and the provision of financial support to those in need is well planned. Resources are distributed fairly. A free bus service covering a wide geographical area is provided to full-time students. Part-time students facing financial hardship have bus fares reimbursed. The college pays for the cost of childcare for the children of over 50 students.

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The self-assessment report does not identify these strengths in the provision of personal support.

36 The induction and tutorial programmes operate through clear procedures but are uneven in their effectiveness. This weakness was recognised in the self-assessment report. Many students receive a handbook at induction that refers to the college charter and sign a 'learner agreement' that clearly sets out their rights and responsibilities. The college does not monitor whether different groups of students receive the entitlements. Whilst the development of key skills is given a high priority across the college and stressed at induction, some students reported that they had to repeat topics already learnt. Full-time students have a personal tutor and a weekly one-hour tutorial period. Tutors receive appropriate training for tutorials. They use a range of teaching materials that have recently been improved. Tutors review progress with students every six weeks. Most students value these progress reviews. However, many students regard some aspects of the group tutorial programme as unproductive, a weakness identified in the previous inspection. There has been no overall evaluation of the induction or tutorial programmes since that inspection. Students receive good personal support from teachers. Actions to improve retention are increasingly effective. Attendance in lessons is well monitored by staff.

37 The college has improved cross-college support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Arrangements for providing support for literacy, numeracy and study skills are effective for full-time students. All full-time students with less than a grade C in either GCSE English or GCSE mathematics are assessed to identify their specific needs in these subjects. All students identified as needing further help attend one of seven weekly sessions on offer or separate arrangements are made for them to be helped in groups at other times. Progress

reports on these students are not provided to their tutors as a matter of routine. The college has not evaluated the impact of learning support on students' achievements. Part-time students are not screened on entry but may refer themselves to the support workshops.

38 Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that it offers an extensive and regularly updated range of specialist information in the careers resource area at the Consett site. The County Durham Careers Service also provides additional careers information at other centres that are operated by the college. High-quality careers education is provided by specialist careers advisers as part of the tutorial programme. There are insufficient opportunities for students to follow activities to enrich their main programme of study. Such activities are restricted to some sports and a few additional part-time courses.

39 The college provides a professional counselling service run by two qualified part-time counsellors on two days each week. This service is highly regarded by the students. It is advertised at most college centres and most students refer themselves through the electronic mail system. Both counsellors receive appropriate professional supervision. Counselling records are well kept and remain highly confidential. The counselling room does not provide an appropriate environment, a weakness identified in the previous inspection report. The students' union is relatively inactive and does not meet the needs of many students.

Cross-college Provision

General Resources

Grade 2

40 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report and identified further additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- well-appointed and well-equipped teaching areas
- excellent resources at Stanley, Lanchester and Langley Park
- a good resource centre
- a reliable and effective computer network

Weaknesses

- poor access for wheelchair users at the main site
- insufficient IT resources

41 The main site is at Consett; there are further centres at Stanley, Lanchester and Langley Park and several other small centres, some of which provide employment service courses. The Consett site has a diverse range of buildings located on a steeply sloping site, which causes considerable difficulty to wheelchair users. A significant amount of floor space consists of corridors and stairs. The college has produced a comprehensive accommodation strategy setting out proposals for a new building at the Consett site or at an alternative location. The FEFC has approved the strategy as a basis for capital project application. Most of the college's interior is well appointed with clean, tidy and generally well-furnished accommodation. Particular attention has been paid to the improvement of classrooms and workshops. Students consistently report satisfaction with their accommodation.

42 Since the previous inspection, dramatic improvements have been made to accommodation in some curriculum areas, for example, specialist provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those with limited mobility. In addition, the college has created a centre of engineering enterprise. When complete, this £700,000 development will provide the college with modern computer controlled machines and other equipment relevant to local industry.

43 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that the buildings at Stanley, Lanchester and Langley Park provide high-quality accommodation. All these centres have been extensively refurbished and provide attractive environments for both staff and students. Classrooms are well decorated, comfortably furnished, and equipped with modern teaching aids and up-to-date high specification computers. Langley Park is the latest to be refurbished; some costs were met from the college's successful bid under the terms of the 'centre of excellence' IT project, and from Derwentside District Council's rural challenge fund.

44 The college provides a resource centre at its main site and at other main centres. The main resource centre at Consett is well appointed, and includes a library, small audiovisual suite, 30 computer workstations and areas for group work and quiet study. The strength of this provision was recognised in the self-assessment report. The centre has well-qualified and well-experienced staff who provide good support to students. Students expressed high levels of satisfaction with the services provided by the resource centre and its staff. Staff are active in promoting the centre and produce a range of promotional and information literature. The centre is open until 19.00 hours most evenings which suits most full-time and part-time students. The budget for books and other resources in the centre is low when judged by available benchmarks.

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45 There are extensive IT resources at Lanchester and Langley Park. The ratio of modern computers to students is 1:5. The oldest machines are located at the Consett site and are to be replaced under the college's IT capital equipment replacement plan. Although a recently established information and learning technology group assesses IT requirements and advises on budget spend, no formal information and learning technology strategy has been drawn up. All computers are networked and provide up-to-date software packages. The network is reliable and used extensively by staff and students. A college intranet provides access to an increasing amount of information for students and staff. A video-conferencing system has also been introduced but is not widely used. An appropriate maintenance system exists for all computers. Computers are available to students on specialist courses. Students on other courses have little access to IT in their subject area. Staff and students reported difficulties in using the 'drop-in' facility in the resource centre; access is restricted as many classes are timetabled into this area. Use of CD-ROMs in the college is limited by a lack of appropriate machines, a weakness not identified in the self-assessment report.

46 The college provides catering facilities, including a bistro, for students on the main site and light refreshments at the other principal centres. The areas are well appointed and provide an appropriate environment that is well used by students. On occasions students have difficulty in getting served and finding a seat. The student common room is appropriately located adjacent to the main refectory and is popular with younger students. The accommodation for full-time and part-time staff is adequate to meet their needs. Most staff work areas have access to IT resources but there are insufficient machines for staff to develop enough appropriate materials to support their teaching. Teachers are supported by an effective reprographic service for preparing handouts and other teaching materials. Video equipment is readily available and easy to book.

Quality Assurance

Grade 2

47 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements about arrangements to assure quality in the self-assessment report. However, they identified further strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good support from staff for the quality assurance system
- a thorough self-assessment process
- effective arrangements for observation of lessons
- clear identification of staff development needs

Weaknesses

- inconsistent approach to the completion of course reviews
- slow implementation of the appraisal system

48 The college has a quality assurance system that is understood and supported by staff. It has built on the framework that was judged successful in the previous inspection report. Although the college mission does not specifically mention the improvement of quality, the directors and two curriculum managers have the development, implementation and monitoring of quality standards and procedures included in their job descriptions. Quality assurance arrangements have been simplified and made stronger. A policy on quality assurance identifies criteria to be used to monitor the achievement of the policy.

49 The college has improved its financial position and met its targets for enrolment, retention and achievement over the last three years. The retention rate is above the national average for the sector in all categories. The three-year retention average from 1995-96 to 1997-98 compares favourably with the best

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rates among further education and tertiary colleges. The student achievement rate for the same three-year period is 53%, which is below the national average for the sector. However, in 1998 the achievement rate improved to 69%, which compares favourably with national figures. College data for 1999 suggest that the improvement has been maintained. The college has data comparing students' qualifications on entry with their results on GCE A level and GNVQ advanced courses. Data for 1999 show that overall students did not achieve as well as had been predicted.

50 Course co-ordinators review their courses four times a year. These reviews are highly structured ensuring that all staff use the same documentation. Staff understand the importance of maintaining accurate data and using such data to measure the performance of courses. The reviews now place greater emphasis on the use of enrolment, attendance, retention and achievement data, on setting targets and on using national benchmarking to measure progress. However, during the first year of implementation, a number of the review documents have not been completed with sufficient care. Action plans resulting from these reviews form the basis of regular discussions between co-ordinators and team leaders.

51 The college forum, which has developed from the academic board, is a key group responsible for monitoring the implementation of quality assurance procedures. This forum has a number of subgroups to help it with its work, for example, groups responsible for internal verification, equal opportunities, staff development, and inspection. Some of these groups are not yet fully established. It is intended that all papers that go to the forum should be accompanied by an action plan with timescales and that actions outstanding for six months should include an explanation of failure to complete. The college's own inspection team was responsible for the observation of teaching,

monitoring self-assessment records, validating self-assessment judgements and grading provision.

52 The self-assessment process is well integrated with the framework for quality assurance and involves all staff. Course reviews are a major source of evidence for the self-assessment of curriculum areas. Lesson observation has become an important part of the college's quality assurance system. Those staff drafting the self-assessment report used evidence from 211 observations while they were reaching judgements about teaching. Inspectors identified 73% of lessons as good or outstanding which is similar to the figure quoted by the college. The inspection profile shows much improvement when compared with the last inspection where 57% of the lessons observed were good or outstanding. Inspectors agreed with the majority of the judgements in the self-assessment report although in a few cases they felt that insufficient weight had been given to some weaknesses. In some areas inspectors identified additional strengths.

53 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that a good start has been made in establishing clear service standards for support and service areas. This process is supported by staff. Appropriate standards have been introduced for: learning processes; the resource centre; the administration of recruitment; computer services; and the college information system. However, for marketing, quality assurance and finance standards have not yet been developed. The college has sound student and community charters. The charters include targets that are monitored as part of the system of cross-college review. The college has been awarded the charter mark for improving public services.

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54 The college achieved Investor in People status in 1997. There is a good staff development policy. The development needs of staff are agreed and an order of priority is established. Each course team identifies the needs of its staff as part of their course review arrangements. Currently much of the staff development budget has been earmarked to prepare the college for curriculum 2000. Last year, as a result of financial constraints, the college reduced the amount of staff development. The staff development budget for 1999-2000 comprises only 0.5% of staffing costs. Many staff value opportunities provided for their development. Support staff speak particularly positively of the help that they have received. Managers received appropriate training for their new responsibilities. The self-assessment report noted and the inspectors found that staff development activity is not evaluated effectively. The appraisal system is not fully operational and does not meet the needs of the college. There are a number of staff who have not yet received an appraisal.

Governance

Grade 2

55 Inspectors and auditors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report and found that the weaknesses are being addressed. They noted additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good induction arrangements for new governors
- effective use of governors' skills and experience
- the corporations' major role in determining the mission and character of the college
- appropriate attention to the college's academic performance
- the mature processes for self-assessment of governance and for individual appraisal

Weaknesses

- insufficient reporting of management accounts to the full corporation
- aspects of reporting on non-financial matters
- slow progress in improving governors' involvement with staff and students

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

57 The corporation has a determined membership of 16. There are currently three vacancies. The corporation maintains a skills audit of governors in post. Hence, when filling vacancies the board is able to draw up a profile

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of the skills and experience that candidates should possess. There are also procedures to find student and parent governors. Governors' expertise has been used effectively. For example, one governor, who works in the manufacturing industry, has contributed to the development of the centre for engineering enterprise. As identified in the self-assessment report, the corporation lacks specific expertise in the area of finance.

58 New governors undergo a thorough induction which they find helpful. They are provided with a comprehensive handbook and an experienced mentor. The clerk meets with new governors to introduce them to agenda items before each meeting. Arrangements for governor training have been improved and are now managed as part of college staff development. Needs are determined by committees and through governor appraisal.

59 The corporation is supported by an independent, experienced clerk. Corporation and committee agendas, papers and minutes are comprehensive and help the process of decision-making. Attendance at corporation meetings during 1998-99 was below 70%, partly due to the long-term absence of one governor. Overall attendance at committee meetings is better. The code of conduct, revised in July 1999, does not incorporate fully the recommendations of the Nolan committee on openness and accountability. The corporation is aware of the need to develop policies for fraud and 'whistleblowing'. The college resource centre and local libraries hold copies of agendas, minutes and papers for corporation meetings. They also advertise the register of interests which is updated annually. The code of conduct, and procedures for seeking new members, are available on application to the clerk. Confidential items are kept to a minimum.

60 The corporation has four committees: finance; employment and remuneration; audit; and strategy, curriculum, quality and general

purposes. The finance committee meets four times each year, receives monthly management accounts and is responsible for their detailed monitoring. Although the corporation considers the report of the chair of the finance committee, and approves the committee minutes, it does not formally consider the management accounts through the year. The audit committee recognises the need to set and monitor performance indicators for the work of internal and external auditors. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report.

61 The corporation plays an important role in reviewing the mission and educational character of the college. Members ensured that the revised mission statement properly reflected their view of the nature and direction of the college. The corporation considers the proposals for the strategic priorities of the college in the light of this mission statement. Until 1999-2000, the corporation learnt of progress in implementing these priorities through a mid-year review and reports on specific aspects. This year, formal reports of progress against action plans are to be presented to the corporation at regular intervals throughout the year.

62 The principal regularly presents the full corporation with data that have been appropriately aggregated and reports on enrolment, retention and achievement. He compares the data to local and national benchmarks, with performance in previous years and with college targets agreed by the corporation. Senior managers make regular presentations to the corporation, which members value. The corporation reviews the student charter but does not monitor the college's performance against charter commitments. The corporation has not received regular reports on health and safety matters. The self-assessment report acknowledges continuing difficulty in improving members' contacts with staff and students. Some progress has been made recently; governors have joined college working groups.

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63 The corporation has formally assessed its performance each year since 1996. It operates a governor appraisal system which includes discussion of personal targets. Members complete an annual self-assessment questionnaire on the board's performance and their own contribution. The governance self-assessment report and action plan are agreed during an annual self-assessment event. The corporation is seeking to develop appropriate benchmarks to enable improved comparisons of performance to be made.

Management

Grade 2

64 Inspectors and auditors broadly agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- a clear and effective management structure
- a well-managed merger
- good communication strategies
- effective strategic and operational planning
- strong franchising partnerships

Weaknesses

- insufficient direct access to management information
- inconsistencies in setting targets by curriculum teams
- underdeveloped use of market research

65 The merger between the college and Anchor Training was well managed. Clients of both partners benefit from the increasingly integrated provision. A reorganisation in spring 1999 resulted in a clear line management structure in which roles are well defined. Staff appreciated the open and consultative way in

which the merger and reorganisation were implemented. Senior managers provide clear leadership and are seen as approachable by staff. Major changes in curriculum management, including a comprehensive system for planning the resourcing of courses, are already being implemented. The self-assessment report identified several personnel issues as weaknesses but these have largely been resolved. The college is aware that the sharing of good practice across teaching teams needs to be improved.

66 Communications are good throughout the college. Staff feel well informed on college matters. The principal holds a meeting for all staff twice each term. Electronic mail is used extensively and the college intranet carries an increasing amount of information including minutes of key meetings and weekly staff and student newsletters. Teams of managers meet regularly with teaching and support staff. Agendas reflect the requirements of the college's planning and quality assurance cycles. The leaders of most groups that deal with specific cross-college issues are members of the college forum.

67 Governors, staff at all levels, and others with major interests in the college contribute to the development of the strategic plan. Responsibility for the annual priorities established in the plan are allocated to members of the senior management team, each of whom produces an appropriate action plan. Senior managers discuss their priorities and plans with middle managers who then consult with their teams on how they can contribute. Progress is reported regularly at meetings of the senior management team, and posted on the college intranet. These strengths in planning are noted in the self-assessment report. Target-setting by course teams has varied in its effectiveness.

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68 Some of the market research information available to assist the planning process is of poor quality, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. Several research projects from external sources have provided some useful information. There is no overall market research strategy or comprehensive needs analysis. A college strategy for developing a corporate image has been agreed and a plan of marketing activities has recently begun to be implemented.

69 Issues affecting equal opportunities in the college are receiving renewed attention. The equal opportunities committee has developed comprehensive policies for equal opportunities and fair treatment, and matters that involve harassment and bullying. These policies give detailed guidance to staff and students. The development of the policies dominated the business of the committee through its first year of operation. As a result, the committee's action plan has been slow to be implemented.

70 The college often takes a lead role in a wide range of partnerships. Partners speak highly of the college's contribution. It is a member of an education and training forum in association with local schools and other partners who have strong interests in education and training for young people and provide vocational courses for pupils in years 10 and 11. The merger with Anchor Training has helped the college to develop productive relationships with other local training organisations to their mutual benefit. This outcome has been welcomed by the Durham TEC.

71 The previous inspection identified deficiencies in the computerised management information system. The self-assessment report suggested that there are continuing problems with the accuracy and availability of data. Considerable progress has been made in addressing these weaknesses. Senior and middle managers are now able to trust the reports that are drawn from centrally held data.

The introduction of an optical-mark-read register system has greatly improved the timeliness and accuracy of information on student absences and also on retention rates. The range of reports available has been increased. However, curriculum managers and team leaders do not have direct access to central information, and there are occasional delays in responses to requests for reports. Further improvements in software and hardware are planned.

72 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is adequate. Until April 1999, when the present director was appointed, the college had experienced changes in senior finance personnel. The current finance team is appropriately qualified and is making progress in the comprehensive updating that is needed for the financial regulations. Management accounts are usually issued monthly. Detailed accounts were not produced for the period June to September 1999 whilst an accounting system was upgraded, though some brief interim information was distributed. A more relevant format was used for the October 1999 management accounts. However, it does not yet incorporate a full balance sheet and regular comprehensive monitoring of performance indicators.

73 The merger with Anchor Training brought significant cash reserves to the college. The latest unaudited financial out-turn for 1998-99 indicates a small surplus. This situation is a major improvement on the previous year, when large deficits were incurred. The college is forecasting a breakeven out-turn position for 1999-2000. The 1998-99 annual internal audit report confirms that the college has adequate systems of internal control.

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Conclusions

74 The college's self-assessment report was wide ranging, drawing on reports produced by governors, curriculum and support areas. The judgements in the report were evaluative and supported by clear evidence. The self-assessment report contained clear action plans to enable improvements to be achieved. The report helped inspectors in preparing for and undertaking the inspection. Some curriculum self-assessment reports were too brief. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report, though they found that the significance of a few weaknesses was understated and one area had been over-rated. In some other areas inspectors found additional strengths.

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

College Statistics

Student numbers by age (November 1999)

Age	%
Under 16	3
16-18 years	24
19-24 years	12
25+ years	59
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (November 1999)

Level of study	%
Level 1 (foundation)	38
Level 2 (intermediate)	29
Level 3 (advanced)	30
Level 4/5 (higher)	1
Non-schedule 2	2
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	210	1,107	31
Engineering	117	59	4
Business	118	497	15
Hotel and catering	59	107	4
Health and community care	134	561	17
Art and design	49	300	8
Humanities	162	488	16
Basic education	52	164	5
Total	901	3,283	100

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 14% 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)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	50	33	0	83
Supporting direct learning contact	19	12	0	31
Other support	62	12	0	74
Total	131	57	0	188

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1997	1998	1999
Income	£5,587,000	£5,748,000	£6,667,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	£18.92	£16.28	£16.25*
Payroll as a proportion of income	68%	64%	60%
Achievement of funding target	116%	101%	94%
Diversity of income	24%	24%	34%
Operating surplus	-£171,000	-£230,000	£48,000

Sources: Income - college (1997, 1998 and 1999)

ALF - Funding Allocations 1997-98 (1997 and 1998), Funding Allocations 1998-99 (1999)

Payroll - college (1997, 1998 and 1999)

Achievement of funding target - Performance Indicators 1997-98 (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

Diversity of income - college (1997, 1998 and 1999)

Operating surplus - college (1997, 1998 and 1999)

*provisional data

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	410	420	536	434	675	1,390
	Retention (%)	79	87	84	90	83	85
	Achievement (%)	48	24	45	32	56	63
2	Number of starters	689	816	1,058	724	989	1,349
	Retention (%)	84	82	77	87	85	75
	Achievement (%)	53	52	74	27	39	60
3	Number of starters	938	988	1,142	876	1,099	763
	Retention (%)	84	75	79	86	88	72
	Achievement (%)	55	61	75	44	40	66
4 or 5	Number of starters	-	-	2	13	57	43
	Retention (%)	-	-	100	82	100	79
	Achievement (%)	-	-	100	67	70	74
Short courses	Number of starters	340	869	807	256	357	633
	Retention (%)	91	80	88	91	77	76
	Achievement (%)	15	60	93	66	70	95
Unknown/unclassified	Number of starters	161	167	276	1,337	1,765	2,155
	Retention (%)	92	92	98	92	92	96
	Achievement (%)	45	48	72	51	38	59

Source: ISR

-ISR data not collected

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