

Hartlepool College of Further Education

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1997-98**

THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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

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

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

© FEFC 1998

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

Contents

Paragraph

Summary

Context

The college and its mission 1

The inspection 5

Curriculum areas

Mathematics and science 7

Construction 12

Engineering 17

Business 23

Care 28

English 33

Cross-college provision

Support for students 38

General resources 47

Quality assurance 52

Governance 60

Management 66

Conclusions 74

College statistics

Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

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

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

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

Retention and Pass Rates

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

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

Summary

Hartlepool College of Further Education

Northern Region

Inspected November 1997

Hartlepool College of Further Education is the main provider of post-16 education and training in the new unitary authority of Hartlepool. The college's quality assurance and self-assessment arrangements are comprehensive. It has successfully developed a self-critical approach which is resulting in continuous improvement. The judgements of the inspection team were generally in accord with those in the self-assessment report.

The college is well managed and it is guided by an effective board of governors. Students' achievements have been improved through a number of interconnected strategies. Teaching is of a high standard. The overall support given to students is exemplary and this includes a valued tutorial provision for all full-time students. The use of accommodation has been appropriately rationalised. Information technology resources to support learning are good, and they are well used. The college should: strengthen its financial controls; maintain and monitor its strategies for improving retention rates; and continue to develop its teaching and learning resources.

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

| Curriculum area | Grade | Cross-college provision | Grade |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Mathematics and science | 2 | Support for students | 1 |
| Construction | 2 | General resources | 2 |
| Engineering | 2 | Quality assurance | 1 |
| Business | 2 | Governance | 2 |
| Care | 1 | Management | 2 |
| English | 2 | | |

The College and its Mission

1 The Borough of Hartlepool, previously part of the County of Cleveland, has a population of about 90,000 and was designated a unitary authority in 1996. The borough has high levels of unemployment brought about by the decline of traditional heavy industries. In 1997, the male unemployment rate was 15.6 per cent compared with a national figure of 7.5 per cent. Various local and regional agencies are working in partnership to support local regeneration and encourage individuals to seek better qualifications and employment opportunities. The college plays a key role in partnership activities which are tackling the borough's economic and social problems. It works with City Challenge, Single Regeneration Budget Partnerships, the Teesside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), and Business Link. Successful bids for European and other funds have resulted from joint work with Hartlepool Borough Council and other organisations.

2 The college is the main provider of post-16 education in the borough. Hartlepool also has a sixth form college and a centre which is part of the regional college of art and design. There are five 11 to 16 secondary schools and an 11 to 18 Catholic school. In 1997, 43 per cent of pupils of school-leaving age continued in full-time or part-time education at the college. The rate of participation of young persons over the age of 16 in full-time education remains low. In 1996, approximately 57 per cent of pupils of school-leaving age in the borough continued in full-time education compared with 67 per cent nationally. Achievement rates are also poor. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades C or above in general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) examinations in 1997 was 29 per cent compared with 45 per cent nationally. Head teachers and college principals meet to discuss strategies to increase attainment rates in schools and participation in full-time education after school-leaving age.

3 The college provides a wide range of courses in eight of the programme areas of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The main focus is on vocational qualifications from foundation to higher level, but the college also offers GCSE and general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects in its sixth form centre. Higher education courses are provided through franchise arrangements, mostly with the University of Teesside. At July 1997, the college had 4,800 students. Of the total, 20 per cent attended full time and 66 per cent were 19 or over. The college employed the full-time equivalent of 152 teachers, 31 staff who directly supported learning, and 136 other support staff. The college is organised in eight departments: five of these cover the teaching work and three the support activities. Each department is managed by an assistant principal.

4 The college's mission is to provide the highest-quality opportunities in the field of post-16 education and training for all individuals and sections of the local community. The mission is intended to be achieved through a range of objectives, which support the following key aims:

- raising the achievement of students
- improving the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning
- developing the curriculum to meet local needs
- developing facilities and the efficient use of resources
- ensuring the efficient and effective use of communications, quality assurance, and self-assessment mechanisms
- developing operations and an environment which focus on the needs of students.

Context

The Inspection

5 The college was inspected during the week beginning 24 November 1997. The inspection team had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and information about the college held by other divisions of the FEFC. The college submitted students' achievements data for the three years 1995 to 1997 which were validated by an inspector against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by awarding bodies. It was notified in September 1997 of the sample of provision to be inspected. The inspection was carried out by nine inspectors and an auditor over a total of 42 days. It covered aspects of work in six of the FEFC's programme areas. Inspectors observed 79 lessons and examined students' work and college documentation. They met college governors, staff at all levels and groups of students. They discussed the work of the college with a representative from the Teesside TEC.

6 Seventy-three per cent of the lessons observed were judged good or outstanding and only one lesson was unsatisfactory. This compares well with the average for lessons observed during 1996-97 recorded in *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average attendance in the classes observed was 69 per cent which is below the national figure of

77 per cent for sector colleges. The average number of students in each class was 10.1 which is slightly below the national average published in the chief inspector's report for 1996-97. The following table shows the grades awarded to the lessons inspected.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

| Programme | Grade | | | | | Totals |
|------------------|-------|----|----|---|---|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| GCE A level | 4 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| GCSE | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| GNVQ | 3 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 19 |
| NVQ | 0 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Other vocational | 7 | 13 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| Total | 15 | 43 | 20 | 1 | 0 | 79 |

Curriculum Areas

Mathematics and Science

Grade 2

7 The inspection covered both specialist mathematics and science provision, and the teaching by mathematics teachers in other departments. Fourteen lessons were observed. Inspectors were broadly in agreement with the college's self-assessment report but considered that some strengths of the mathematics provision were not recognised in the report and that insufficient attention was paid to the quality of the mathematics teaching provided in other departments.

Key strengths

- the high quality of most teaching
- the high level of mathematical discussion in the better mathematics lessons
- good achievements by the large cohort of GCSE mathematics students
- good pass rates recently in GCE A level physics and environmental science, and GCSE human physiology and health
- effective involvement of mathematics staff in courses across the college
- thorough organisation of the mathematics and science provision
- the good level of resources for mathematics and science

Weaknesses

- missed opportunities to share good practice
- retention and success rates in some subjects below sector averages
- poor attendance in some cross-college mathematics support lessons
- little use of information technology to enrich mathematics work

8 Science provision includes GCE A level, GCSE and access courses. Recruitment at GCE A level is low. Mathematics provision includes a large cohort of students retaking GCSE, modest numbers at GCE A level and a considerable volume of teaching for other departments. Specialist teachers also provide timetabled sessions to give support to students having difficulties with mathematics. The planned sessions are widely advertised and work well for most students, but attendance at some impromptu sessions is low. In both science and mathematics, management of the curriculum is thorough; there are comprehensive handbooks and subject files, detailed assignment of responsibilities, efficient record-keeping and a clear planning framework. The extent to which the need for mathematics support across the college is being met is not evaluated in the college's self-assessment report.

9 Overall, the profile of grades awarded to lessons was good. No lessons were judged to be less than satisfactory. Teachers in science planned their teaching thoroughly. They conveyed interest and enthusiasm and employed a range of methods, including effective use of information technology. The small numbers of students in classes restricted opportunities for group work and discussion. The self-assessment of science provision omitted this weakness but otherwise inspectors agreed with the judgements in the report. Mathematics teaching was also good. A mix of formal exposition, group and individual work, and practical investigations sustained students' interest. In some lessons, students' understanding was extended and demonstrated by discussion of underlying mathematical principles. This effective practice might, with benefits, be used more uniformly. Mathematics teaching for students on vocational courses was usually well designed. Teaching materials and the examples used by teachers were relevant to the students' main areas of study.

Curriculum Areas

10 In both mathematics and science, the standards of students' responses in class and in written work were good. In science, students' achievements have improved since the courses started in 1994, though comparisons are difficult given the low enrolments at the start. Results are now generally above sector averages. Students in GCSE mathematics achieved a pass rate 10 per cent above the average for similar colleges in 1997. Pass rates at GCE A level are below the sector average, and the retention rate was poor in the 1995 to 1997 group, though it has improved since. Inspectors considered that the college accurately assessed the quality of its students' achievements except with regard to GCSE mathematics where judgements had been made against departmental targets which did not reflect the national average.

11 Mathematics and science have good resources and this is recognised in the college's self-assessment report. Staff in both areas of work are well qualified. There are modern, well-equipped laboratories and a specialist mathematics suite in high-quality new accommodation. There are good supplies of supportive handouts and learning materials. Appropriate mathematics software is available but, although there is an information technology centre close to the mathematics suite, mathematics staff do not make enough use of it. No computers are available in the mathematics rooms themselves.

Examples of students' achievements in mathematics and science, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------|------|------|
| GCSE mathematics | Retention (%) | 88 | 70 | 74 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 39 | 49 | 49 |
| GCSE human physiology and health | Retention (%) | 79 | 68 | 73 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 31 | 42 | 57 |

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Construction

Grade 2

12 The inspection covered all specialist aspects of the construction provision. Eleven lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with many aspects of the self-assessment of construction provision, but considered that the college had under-represented the strengths compared with the weaknesses.

Key strengths

- maintenance of provision in a difficult industrial climate
- well-planned teaching
- excellent course management
- staff who have coped well with significant change
- students who generally produce high standards of work and achievement
- new specialist accommodation for a range of crafts
- effective links with schools through the construction curriculum centre

Weaknesses

- no effective strategy to encourage students to learn successfully on their own
- few employers participating in college developments or evaluation of provision
- inadequate development of key skills

13 The college maintains a good range of construction provision. Opportunities are provided for students to progress to higher goals, despite a significant decline in employer demand. The serious challenges faced by the college in this area have been well managed. The number of specialist construction staff has been reduced and the work now takes place in the department of technology. Staff morale is improving as new developments come to

fruition. Course management is good and team files are maintained well. The college did not identify these strengths in its self-assessment report. The significance of employer support for its provision was, however, overstated. Only a few employers participate in college developments or provide work experience. The college's construction curriculum centre has stimulated effective links with local primary and secondary schools.

14 Lessons are well prepared and based on detailed schemes of work. Teachers support individual students effectively. The profile of lesson observation grades awarded by inspectors was better than the national figures given in the chief inspector's annual report. Some of the good practice in promoting flexibility in teaching has been lost since the last inspection. For example, more rigid timetabling now divorces theory from practice and prevents students from learning more on their own and working at their own speed.

15 Students achieve good standards in their practical work, portfolios of written work and research. Retention and pass rates are generally better than the average quoted in the FEFC's curriculum area survey, *Construction* (April 1997). Pass rates on the general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate and advanced courses in construction and the built environment programme are excellent compared with the national average. The college is addressing an unusually poor retention rate on the higher national certificate course in 1995 to 1997. In its self-assessment, the college gives insufficient weight to poor retention on some courses. Inspection findings did not support the college's claim for the sound development of construction students' key skills; no students gained a key skills award last year.

16 Workshop accommodation is clean and well kept. New workshops provided on the main site are excellent, though they are distant from other construction learning areas. The painting and decorating courses are still to be

Curriculum Areas

relocated to a purpose-built area. Teaching rooms are well decorated and suitably furnished. Some areas have good displays of related industrial posters, though others remain bare. Rooms are sometimes uncomfortable and inadequately ventilated. Health and safety is given a high priority but risk assessments relating to some hazardous areas have not been updated recently. The college recognises some shortages of specialist books in the library and has taken action to improve this. Students have good access to a range of high-quality information technology. Few of the established teachers have recent industrial experience though some recently-appointed staff have come direct from industry.

Examples of students' achievements in construction, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|--|---------------|------|------|------|
| Average for one-year vocational programmes | Retention (%) | 91 | 100 | 85 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 85 | 81 | 77 |
| Average for two-year vocational programmes | Retention (%) | 68 | 69 | 73 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 70 | 57 | 72 |
| Average for NVQ level 3 programmes | Retention (%) | 81 | 53 | 74 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 70 | 57 | 72 |

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Engineering

Grade 2

17 The inspection concentrated on the work of the mechanical and fabrication and welding section in the department of technology, but also included an analysis of retention and pass rates for all the engineering provision. Eleven lessons were observed. The college's self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, although some weaknesses were understated.

Key strengths

- well-planned teaching providing a variety of appropriate learning experiences
- effective monitoring of students' progress
- safe procedures employed by competent students in practical work
- good pass rates on the majority of courses
- effective management of the broad range of courses
- the wide range of learning materials
- the good level of resources

Weaknesses

- the significant number of students leaving their courses early
- low pass rates on some courses
- shortcomings in teaching in a minority of the lessons observed
- the poor quality of some students' files and other written work

18 There is a good range of courses which meets the needs of industry and students. Part-time and full-time provision is available at intermediate, advanced and higher levels. Both full-time and part-time enrolment numbers have

increased over the last three years. Provision at foundation level is provided through a link programme with two schools. The section maintains close but informal contacts with engineering employers and courses have been established as a result of requests from industry. Course files are well maintained and each teacher maintains a portfolio containing the documentation needed for the classes taught. The self-assessment report identified many of the strengths in the range and management of the provision.

19 There were detailed schemes of work and lesson plans. Students undertook a wide range of learning activities which included residential and work experience. Teachers generally used an appropriate variety of teaching aids. A feature of the lessons was the interest and motivation of the students who contributed fully to the work. In a minority of lessons, teachers failed to keep the more able students fully occupied or failed to provide work which took account of the large size of the class. Some students on intermediate level courses demonstrated poor skills in the use of calculators. Overall the profile of grades for the lessons inspected and the average attendance of 81 per cent compare favourably with those recorded in the chief inspector's annual report.

20 Students' progress is carefully and regularly monitored. Where corrective action is thought to be necessary, its effect is monitored and reports are sent to parents or employers, as appropriate.

21 Students generally produce work of a satisfactory standard and many students' files and log books are well maintained. In a minority of cases, files are poorly ordered and some students display poor note-taking skills. Some marking of assignment work fails to indicate clearly to the students how the work might be improved. Pass rates on the majority of courses are comparable to, or better than, those given in the FEFC's curriculum area survey, *Engineering* (April 1996), and in many

Curriculum Areas

cases they show improvement over the last three years. Some courses have poor pass rates. A significant number of students leave their courses early, particularly those on the full-time advanced courses for technicians. The college correctly identified this weakness in its self-assessment. Measures have been taken this year to address this by ensuring that students are enrolled on the course for which they are most suited. These measures include rigorous attention to each student's qualifications at entry, and a review, early in the course, of the progress made by each student.

22 Teachers hold appropriate vocational and assessor qualifications. The wide range of engineering equipment meets the demands of the present courses. The computer-controlled machine tools are modern and of industrial standard. The computer-aided design resources are good. Some of the other equipment is old but serviceable. The library contains insufficient engineering books. Better use could be made of some of the extensive workshops and laboratories to improve the range of practical work undertaken by students. Classrooms are of good quality and equipped with appropriate teaching aids.

Examples of students' achievements in engineering, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|
| Full-time advanced technician courses | Retention (%) | 56 | 42 | 53 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 74 | 71 | 83 |
| Full-time intermediate technician courses | Retention (%) | 40 | 61 | 66 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 50 | 73 | 77 |
| Part-time advanced technician courses | Retention (%) | 53 | 79 | 74 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 72 | 77 | 58 |
| NVQ, craft and other courses | Retention (%) | 68 | 68 | 68 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 88 | 70 | 90 |

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 2

23 The inspection covered provision in administration, business, management, secretarial skills and computer literacy. Twenty-one lessons were inspected. Inspectors' views accorded with many of the judgements in the college's self-assessment report, but insufficient weight had been given to the assessment of classroom practice.

Key strengths

- well-organised courses and lessons
- consistently good pass rates on a range of courses
- generally good teaching which motivated students
- opportunities for students to take a variety of additional courses
- the developing links with industry

Weaknesses

- shortcomings in teaching in a minority of lessons
- insufficient book resources
- some poor assessment practices

24 The college provides a good range of courses for school-leavers. It is developing courses for industry which include some management courses on the premises of a large local employer. A well-established initiative provides four different but related courses for adults wishing to return to employment or to go to higher education. Inspection findings confirmed the strengths in the organisation and management of the curriculum that the college identified in its self-assessment report. Course and departmental teams meet regularly. Courses are reviewed against departmental and course operating statements which increasingly include targets to measure improvement.

Students benefit from an entitlement to take additional studies which may include computer literacy, key skills, GNVQ additional units or general education certificates. The tutorial support for students is effective. Tutors are provided with good information about students' progress; students meet their tutors regularly and are set realistic targets that challenge them to improve their performance. Part-time staff are well supported; they attend meetings regularly and take part in appraisal and staff development activities.

25 Teachers of business used comprehensive lesson plans which identified both teacher activity and student objectives and were clearly linked to schemes of work. Lessons were generally well managed so that students with widely different backgrounds and experiences progressed at a suitable pace. In the better lessons, students were involved in a variety of activities which sustained their interest. In a minority of lessons, the range of student activity was narrow and the pace of work was too slow. Teachers made insufficient use of questions directed to individual students to engage their interest and check their understanding of the work. In some business administration lessons, teachers failed to provide adequate support for the wide range of students in their class. On part-time courses, teachers made good use of students' employment or work experience. The majority of GNVQ and national vocational qualification (NVQ) assessment was thorough and prompt, and it provided useful feedback to students. However, some assessment was cursory and inaccurate. Internal verification on GNVQ courses did not adequately cover key skills. These weaknesses were not explicitly stated in the self-assessment report.

26 Completed portfolios for GNVQ and NVQ students are well organised and of a high standard. Part-time students on administration courses make effective use of evidence from the workplace. The achievements of students in external examinations are good. Pass rates of

Curriculum Areas

students taking GNVQ advanced and GCE A level business are well above the national average for similar colleges. Seventy-eight per cent of GCE A level students achieved grades C or above. Over 75 per cent of students completing full-time GCE A level business or GNVQ advanced business courses in 1997 went on to higher education. The college's self-assessment report identifies that retention and pass rates on a minority of courses need attention.

27 Teachers' specialist knowledge is generally up to date. Five teachers have been on short secondments to industry in the last two years as part of a scheme organised by the Teesside TEC. Specialist facilities for students taking administration and computer literacy courses are generally very good. Some classrooms lack display and do not provide a stimulating environment for learning. On many courses students are provided with support materials and resource packs of high quality. The library bookstock is outdated and insufficient for the range of courses on offer.

Examples of students' achievements in business, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|----------------------------|---------------|------|------|------|
| GNVQ advanced | Retention (%) | * | 78 | 63 |
| | Pass rate (%) | * | 93 | 94 |
| Computer literacy | Retention (%) | 47 | 77 | 78 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 100 | 60 | 78 |
| NVQ level 3 administration | Retention (%) | 75 | 60 | 85 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 60 | 100 | 70 |

Source: college data

*no completed courses in this year

Curriculum Areas

Care

Grade 1

28 The inspection covered health, social care, and childhood education. Ten lessons were observed. Inspectors' judgements agreed with those of the self-assessment report, though they considered that insufficient credit had been given for students' achievements.

Key strengths

- thoroughly-prepared teaching
- tutorial support meeting the learning needs of individual students
- integral work experience valued by students
- high achievement rates across all courses
- well-planned assignments, clearly related to assessment criteria
- effective management of courses aided by standardised, comprehensive documentation
- clear links between strategic planning and management of the curriculum

Weaknesses

- resource deficiencies in some classrooms

29 Course documentation is thorough, meticulously organised and standardised for all courses. Course teams meet regularly and lines of communication between teaching groups, and with managers, are clear and well understood. In the lessons observed, all teachers used comprehensive lesson plans which specified aims, and detailed objectives for both teacher and students. Objectives were shared with students and the extent to which they had been achieved in the lessons was assessed as part of a concluding discussion. Teachers used resource materials effectively in most lessons. They made good use of question and answer

techniques to monitor the understanding of each member of the class. They encouraged students to draw on their own personal or vocational experiences. Students responded well to working in small groups, and the tutor ensured that each group was given appropriate attention. Most lessons had strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses; none were less than satisfactory. The self-assessment report recognises the strengths in this area.

30 Students' work shows a sound level of knowledge and skills. Assignments are well planned and matched to assessment criteria. Work experience is central to all courses, including those leading to GNVQs. It is valued by students who say that it allows them to apply their learning in a realistic vocational environment. Individual tutorial support is effective in monitoring and encouraging the progress of each student. Feedback from work placement providers has encouraged the department to offer new provision in complementary therapies. These courses are certificated, popular and available as additional qualifications for full-time students.

31 Most students who enrol in the programme area achieve their learning goal. Pass rates are high across all courses. Students on the national certificate in childhood studies achieved a 100 per cent pass rate in 1997. Pass rates on GNVQ courses are considerably above the national average. Some have improved dramatically. The self-assessment report recognises these performances as a strength but understates their significance. In 1995, no students were successful in GNVQ foundation in health and social care; in 1996, the pass rate had risen to 86 per cent; and by 1997, all students completing the course were successful. Retention rates across all courses were either around or above the national average. Progression from advanced courses to higher education is strong: 18 out of a total of 20 students who completed the national diploma in health studies in 1997 went to higher education.

Curriculum Areas

32 Ten new appointments in the last two years have helped to ensure that the subject knowledge and experience of teachers is up to date. Learning resources to support the courses are satisfactory. Teaching rooms are clean and recently decorated, but some lack an overhead projector and appropriate wall displays.

Examples of students' achievements in care, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|--|---------------|------|------|------|
| Two-year, full-time advanced courses | Retention (%) | * | 94 | 74 |
| | Pass rate (%) | * | 94 | 93 |
| Two-year, part-time advanced courses | Retention (%) | * | 86 | 63 |
| | Pass rate (%) | * | 83 | 96 |
| One-year, part-time intermediate courses | Retention (%) | 96 | 92 | 94 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 96 | 89 | 97 |

Source: college data

*no completed courses in this year

Curriculum Areas

English

Grade 2

33 The inspection covered GCSE and GCE A level English subjects and GNVQ and GCE A level media studies. Twelve lessons were observed. The self-assessment report addressed the sixth form centre overall and contained few specific references to English and media studies. Inspectors agreed with those judgements in the report which related specifically to English and media studies. The report omitted weaknesses in achievement which were identified during the inspection.

Key strengths

- generally good pass rates
- high-quality teaching and effective classroom management
- meticulously-prepared teaching documentation and learning support materials
- good retention on GCE A level English literature and media studies courses
- wide access to high-quality information technology resources

Weaknesses

- poor retention on some courses
- declining year-on-year results in GCSE English
- declining enrolments to GCE A level English literature

34 Teachers plan their teaching carefully to cover the content of the syllabus. They prepare full schemes of work which are shared with students and displayed in classrooms. New strategies, for example using CD-ROM resources, have been introduced. Lesson plans relate directly to the schemes of work. Communications are good within the curriculum team. Staff often teach classes jointly and meet frequently on an informal basis. New staff are

well supported by individual colleagues and have their marked work moderated to ensure consistency. There are regular reviews of students' progress, and additional subject reviews take place after mock examinations. The director of the sixth form centre provides GCE A level teachers with the predicted grade for each student, based on qualifications at entry. They use this to monitor expected performance. Students have access to this information if they wish, but care is taken not to prejudice their expectations.

35 The quality of the teaching observed was high. Teachers use a variety of methods appropriately and effectively, including lectures, role-play, presentations and group work. They have produced attractive and informative study guides containing biographies of authors, literary criticism and study tasks. Students are set objectives for their directed study time, in addition to homework, and their attainment is monitored. Lessons are enhanced by extra-curricular activities which include theatre visits and a residential experience. A project which emphasises the need to raise achievements is successfully improving students' performance.

36 Achievements in GCE A level English literature are consistently high. Since 1995, all students taking the subject as a two-year course have passed the examination. Over half achieved grades C or above. Students are consistently performing better than the predictions based on their qualifications at entry. The one-year GCE A level English literature pass rate has shown steady improvement over the past three years, reaching 94 per cent in 1997. Pass rates for the small GCE A level media studies groups improved from 30 per cent in 1996, its first examination year, to 90 per cent in 1997. However, results are declining in GCSE English language and are below the sector average. An entry level requirement has been introduced this year to attempt to halt this decline. The strengths and

Curriculum Areas

weaknesses in students' achievements are not identified by the college in the self-assessment report produced for inspection. They are, however, correctly identified in the more detailed reviews at programme level. Retention is good on the full-time GCE A level courses but poor on the part-time GCSE programme. Enrolments to GCE A level English literature, which has the largest numbers of any GCE A level subject in the sixth form centre, have fallen in 1997 compared with previous years.

37 Inspection findings confirmed the judgement in the self-assessment report that resources for both English and media studies are of a high standard. The classrooms are pleasantly furnished, but some are bare and contain no decoration or displays of students' work. Staff have easy access to audio-visual teaching aids. Students use a resource centre adjacent to the sixth form centre as well as the extensive general college facility. Teachers have had training on the use of information technology in teaching, including the use of graphics. Students make good use of the CD-ROM resources.

Examples of students' achievements in English, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|
| GCE A level English literature (two year) | Retention (%) | 100 | 100 | 81 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| GCE A level English literature (one year) | Retention (%) | 81 | 58 | 53 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 55 | 63 | 94 |
| GCSE English language | Retention (%) | 64 | 61 | 82 |
| | Pass rate (%) | 40 | 57 | 38 |

Source: college data

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 1

38 Support for students is one of the responsibilities of the academic services department. Inspection findings agreed with the college's analysis of this area in its self-assessment report. Action has already been taken on some of the weaknesses identified in the report.

Key strengths

- close liaison between the academic services department and other departments
- efficient and effective systems for processing enquiries, applications and internal transfers
- successful development and promotion of the 'unified tutorial system'
- the variety of strategies used to provide effective learning support
- highly-regarded services for careers education, guidance and counselling

Weaknesses

- underdeveloped use of progression and destination data

39 The academic services department provides high-quality services for students. Its responsibilities include guidance, the tutorial system and careers education. Tutors are linked to the academic services department through advisers in each department who have been successful in promoting consistent good practices. Staff and students have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to the college's support systems.

40 The college operates effective entry systems through which all applications from prospective students are channelled. They ensure that comparable and impartial guidance is given. Information obtained at the enquiry stage is not

readily transferred to the admissions data system. Promotional activities effectively disseminate information about the college's provision. Each local secondary school has a noticeboard maintained by the college.

41 Inspectors confirmed the excellent progress claimed in the college's self-assessment report in ensuring consistency in tutorial practice since the last inspection. A comprehensive 'unified tutorial system' ensures that all tutorial processes across the college are consistent. A senior tutors' committee monitors implementation and disseminates good practice. Course tutors work to a standard handbook containing detailed guidelines which can be adapted to suit the needs of particular groups of students. Components include careers guidance, work experience, and a residential experience. These are accredited by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network at an appropriate level. Students are positive in their views about all aspects of the tutorial system.

42 In addition to the group tutorial, one hour each week is used by tutors to conduct reviews of each student's progress and to update records of achievement. Detailed reports are completed termly, signed by both tutor and student, and sent to parents and employers as appropriate. The need for learning support is reviewed and any recommendations are recorded, communicated to relevant staff, and entered on the student's file. In this way, the college systems ensure that student needs are quickly identified and that support is offered. Transfers between courses are managed efficiently and sympathetically by the departmental advisers working through tutors.

43 Students who enrol at the college often have poor abilities in key skills. Over half of the full-time enrolments fall below the Basic Skills Agency's criteria for functional literacy and numeracy. The college gives high priority to the provision of support for basic skills development. All full-time students take tests in literacy and numeracy at a level appropriate for

Cross-college Provision

their main course. Some specialist subject areas, such as science, test for other relevant skills. Results are used to determine the need for additional specialist support. Each teaching department has at least one trained teacher for basic skills who provides support in a specialist workshop or within the course of study. Individual support is also available. Numeracy support is provided by specialist mathematics teachers to individuals or small groups. A learning support committee meets termly to determine whether stated needs are being met. Support for students with learning difficulties is closely co-ordinated and appropriate external agencies are involved. Inspectors agreed with the college's claim that it was successfully addressing learners' support needs.

44 The college counselling service is well publicised to students. It liaises effectively with many local agencies to ensure that a full range of support is available. College welfare services are extensive and well used. Nursery provision is available for the children of students.

45 As the self-assessment report correctly states, careers education and guidance at the college is accessible and comprehensive. It is provided by qualified careers advisers in the academic services department who are allocated work with specific teaching departments. Careers lessons are timetabled into tutorial programmes and customised for each course. Confidential interviews can be booked. The careers library has recently been updated. Modules have been written for the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network's award to ensure the standardisation of the careers programme for all students. Links with the local careers service are good.

46 Progression to higher education is monitored and well supported. The system for recording destinations and progression is efficient but the data are used largely for marketing purposes. A voucher system has recently been introduced which enables any student progressing within the college to a

higher level course to obtain partial remission of fees.

General Resources

Grade 2

47 Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report conclusions that accommodation is good and that resource-based learning facilities are of high quality.

Key strengths

- consolidation to a single site in the centre of Hartlepool
- well-maintained buildings and rooms
- good access for wheelchair users
- well-managed relocation of teaching areas and teachers' workrooms
- computer-based learning resources which are of high quality
- active promotion of technology to support learning

Weaknesses

- unattractive main entrance and confusing internal directional signs
- low recent investment in bookstock

48 The college is on a single campus in the centre of Hartlepool. The main building dates from the mid-1960s. In the last 10 years, the college has built new facilities specially designed to house the nursery and provision in mathematics and information technology, hospitality studies, hairdressing and construction. Wheelchair users have access to all main college rooms. Since 1995, two college annexes have been vacated and another is for sale. Specialist teaching teams have recently been relocated into workrooms which are furnished and equipped to a high standard and which are close to the specialist teaching rooms. Inspection findings supported the college's

Cross-college Provision

judgement that these moves have been well managed and beneficial to the students. There are few sports and other social and recreational facilities on site but students are able to use facilities in the town.

49 The outward appearance of the front of the college has been improved by the addition of a new bistro and a hairdressing salon which provide services to the public as part of the training of students. These additions, however, mask the main entrance which is now reduced in prominence and unattractive by comparison. Directional signs within the college are confusing. Teaching rooms and corridors are generally well maintained but many do not proclaim a curriculum identity. The college did not acknowledge this in its self-assessment. A minority of general teaching rooms is uninspiring. The college has a planned maintenance programme which is being extended to include a redecoration schedule.

50 Students and staff benefit from easy access to an extensive array of high-quality information technology and learning resources which are networked reliably across the college. Over 100 study spaces are provided in the 'Infotech' which is a purpose-built and centrally-located resource centre. The centre incorporates the library, learning facilities and other media resources. Students appreciate the facilities it offers. There are insufficient books for some curriculum areas and this is acknowledged in the college's self-assessment report. Additional computer centres throughout the college provide good services and facilities.

51 The use of technology to support learning is actively promoted to both students and staff. Managers take great care to ensure that information technology resources are kept up to date. Staff are able to purchase computers and software licensed to the college at economic rates. A significant growth in student demand for computer resources has created a few problems. Students reported occasional shortage of workstations but praised staff for

working hard to overcome any difficulties. Visual aids used by teachers were generally of good quality but a few were poorly presented. The college does not have extensive specialist resources to assist students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It has a long-standing agreement to borrow these from another college and other specialist providers.

Quality Assurance

Grade 1

52 Inspectors agreed with the college's overall assessment of its quality assurance arrangements, but concluded that it had understated the significance of some of the strengths in its self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- the strong commitment to quality assurance
- comprehensive quality assurance policies and procedures
- rigorous monitoring of the implementation of quality assurance arrangements
- well-established review and evaluation procedures covering the college's courses
- staff appraisal systems which are effective in leading to appropriate staff development
- the links between staff development and strategic objectives
- the robust and self-critical self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- aspects of the arrangements for gathering students' and employers' views about courses

53 The college makes a commitment to the continuous improvement of the quality of its

Cross-college Provision

provision in its mission statement, strategic plan and operating statements. Staff at all levels are consulted and encouraged to become involved in the development of new quality assurance initiatives. Inspection findings confirmed that staff fully support the aspects of quality assurance which directly affect their area of work. Since the last inspection, quality assurance arrangements have been continuously reviewed, developed and extended to include self-assessment. There is a well-conceived structure for the management of quality assurance, the implementation of policies and procedures, and their subsequent review and evaluation. The business services unit has been accredited for ISO 9002, or its precursors, since 1993.

54 The college has established departmental self-assessment procedures which produce reports and action plans to inform the planning cycle. A well-founded systematic approach was adopted for producing a whole-college self-assessment report for the inspection. The report was organised under the headings of the previous inspection framework given in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It was written in continuous prose rather than in tabular form, and lacked detailed reference to evidence. A hierarchy of 46 self-assessment reports covering all aspects of the work of the college contributed to the main report. Most of these reports identify clearly the strengths of each area, with supporting evidence, and the areas for improvement. They were rigorously checked by college managers to ensure judgements could be substantiated by evidence. Separate documents detailed appropriate action plans based on identified weaknesses. The college acknowledges in its self-assessment report that the grades awarded in its programme of lesson observations were too high. This has been addressed by introducing tighter procedures for moderating lesson observation grades. Inspection confirmed that a self-critical approach has been established in the college, and action had been taken on most of

the issues identified in the self-assessment report.

55 A comprehensive and well-organised manual of quality assurance policies and procedures encompasses all aspects of the college's work. Procedures are updated regularly and all staff have the opportunity to propose additions and revisions. Clear and tightly controlled procedures operate for maintaining the currency of quality assurance documents, and controlling their issue. An internal quality assessment group carries out audits to ensure compliance with quality assurance policies and procedures. The findings from audit are reported back to course teams, assistant principals and the principalship. Inspection confirmed that remedial action is taken.

56 Well-established, exacting procedures guide review and evaluation at course and departmental level. They have resulted in many improvements in practices. At course level, there is some inconsistent monitoring of progress against action plans; this is acknowledged by the college in its self-assessment report and is being addressed. Course teams carry out termly reviews and a full review of all courses, programme areas and departments takes place at the end of the operational year. The outcomes from these reviews inform the strategic plan and operating statements, and contribute to self-assessment. Rigorous mid-year departmental reviews are carried out to monitor the progress made towards achieving the performance targets in department operating statements. A detailed report is produced showing strengths and areas for improvement and these are incorporated in actions plans. An annual internal quality assessment report is presented to the corporation.

57 Numerous quality-related initiatives have been instigated which have resulted in improvements. The college makes good use of information which predicts students'

Cross-college Provision

performance on its GCE A level courses. Pilot studies to put a similar system in place for the college's vocational courses were successful, and these schemes are now being operated across the vocational curriculum.

58 Service standards and performance targets have been established for many areas of the college and these are closely monitored. The commitments in the college charter are carefully checked through questionnaires to students. In their present form, these do not enquire about students' experiences of their courses, and some questions are ambiguous. Course teams are required under the quality assurance procedures to obtain students' views; some have developed additional questionnaires, others organise student-staff meetings. Steps have been taken recently to gather methodically the views of employers and the wider community, and these are beginning to inform some curriculum developments. Inspectors agree with the self-assessment report that the processes for gathering users' views need strengthening.

59 Staff development is a major strength of the college which inspectors considered had been understated in the self-assessment report. All staff have an annual appraisal at which targets for staff development are agreed. A representative in each department from the staff development committee monitors these agreed targets. Lesson observations are carried out as an integral part of the self-assessment process but they are not a requirement for teachers' appraisal. All staff have equal access to staff development. Priority is given to those activities which are related to college strategic objectives and departmental operating statements. Over the last two years, 11 staff have had industrial placements or secondment. The college achieved Investor in People status in 1995.

Governance

Grade 2

60 The inspectors are generally in agreement with the findings of the college's self-assessment report on governance.

Key strengths

- the broad range of skills and experience contributed by members of the board
- an appropriate committee structure with comprehensive terms of reference
- governors' involvement in setting the mission statement and the main strategic objectives
- careful monitoring of the implementation of the strategic plan
- generally good reports to the board by senior managers

Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of the finance committee in the budget-setting process
- limited structures for governors to interact with staff

61 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is good. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum with the FEFC. It meets termly, with additional meetings as required. The clerk supports the corporation well. He has a comprehensive job description. There are no standing orders to determine how corporation meetings are conducted. Governors are well informed on most aspects of the college, through reports presented at corporation meetings. The corporation operates in an open manner and

Cross-college Provision

has formulated a specific policy on access to information and procedures for dealing with complaints. The register of interests, which is open to public scrutiny and has recently been updated, covers all governors and their close relatives. It does not cover staff with significant financial responsibilities.

62 The corporation has a membership of 20, three of whom are women. There is one vacancy, pending acceptance of a recent offer of appointment. A search committee considers the current composition of the corporation and seeks to fill vacancies through the recruitment of new members who can strengthen the existing wide range of expertise and experience. The membership includes one staff governor. There is no student member, but elected representatives from the college's active student association meet regularly with the principal and with the chair of governors. The term of office of 13 of the existing governors expires on 31 March 1998. Newly appointed members undertake an induction programme and receive a pack of documentation about the college and their role within it. Governor training largely consists of presentations made by college managers, and the self-assessment report recognises the need to give further consideration to training requirements. With a small number of exceptions, individual attendance at corporation meetings is good.

63 The corporation is supported by a wide range of committees. Governance is conducted largely through the finance and audit committees. Reporting arrangements are good and governors receive the minutes of committee meetings and an oral report, where appropriate. Members of the finance committee review the most recent college management accounts at each of their termly meetings, but do not receive accounts between these meetings. The committee's involvement in the budget-setting process is largely confined to a review of a truncated version of the forthcoming year's budget. The committee does not review the

mid-year financial forecast or the three-year financial forecasts prior to the submission to the FEFC. The limited involvement of the governors in the budget-setting and review process is not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report.

64 Governors steer the college's operations through their consideration of the main strategic objectives and the mission statement. They monitor the strategic plan closely by means of the detailed reports which go to the board's committees and through the termly principal's reports. Progress made towards the achievement of the college's strategic objectives are the basis for the appraisal of the principal and vice-principal by the chairman of the board.

65 Some governors visit the college and maintain informal links with staff. There are no formal structures, other than through the staff governor or the senior management team, for governors to meet staff. Some college staff commented that governors appear remote.

Management

Grade 2

66 Inspectors agree with the judgements in the college's self-assessment report. There is no reference in it to recent difficulties relating to budgets; these became clear to the college managers after the report's date of submission.

Key strengths

- a consultative management style that is appreciated by staff
- excellent strategic and operating planning systems
- clear, helpful documentation understood by all users
- an effective developmental approach to changes in management structures
- the emphasis placed on curriculum development

Cross-college Provision

Weaknesses

- some shortcomings in financial controls
- variation in the management of workloads below assistant principal level

67 Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the college's self-assessment report that the planning process is effective and well integrated with college life. A large number of interested external partners are consulted on the strategic plan which is finally agreed by the governors. A residential planning conference is attended by representatives from all areas of the college and the chair of the board of governors; the strategic objectives are revisited in the light of the results from self-assessment. The mission statement and the strategic objectives are used to generate operational statements for every area of the college's work. The accommodation strategy has been used effectively to rationalise the college's estate.

68 Targets are set within other operating statements, some of which are exacting. Most of the key issues identified in the last FEFC inspection in 1995 have given rise to such targets. For example, a major strategic objective has been the raising of students' achievements. The following table demonstrates the progress made to date. The targets which are set often form the basis of subsequent department performance indicators, such as those for enrolment, success, income, and staffing levels. Departments vary in the way these targets are translated into specific targets for course teams. Key policy statements are clearly expressed and are well supported by papers on guidance and procedures. Their implementation is monitored throughout the college using the quality assurance system.

69 The principal, appointed in January 1997, was previously one of the two vice-principals at the college. The management style is consultative and caring. A revised senior management structure is in place; the changes

Achievement comparators, 1995 to 1997

| Course grouping | Year of final assessment | Number entered for final assessment | Percentage achieving full qualifications |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| All GNVQs and precursors | 1995 | 288 | 68 |
| | 1997 | 323 | 79 |
| All NVQs | 1995 | 277 | 79 |
| | 1997 | 373 | 89 |
| GCE A/AS level | 1995 | 201 | 54 |
| | 1997 | 264 | 75 |
| GCSE | 1995 | 345 | 43 |
| | 1997 | 198 | 56 |
| Other | 1995 | 914 | 69 |
| | 1997 | 1,577 | 81 |

Source: college data

Cross-college Provision

have been well managed. The principalship comprises the principal and the vice-principal. They share the same job description; the duties arising from this job description have been divided between them and agreed by the governors. The job descriptions of the assistant principals are out of date, but their current roles are understood. The college has a sound committee structure. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report's claim that each committee has clear terms of reference, appropriate membership and an effective inter-relationship with other committees. The curriculum forum, consisting of the assistant principals responsible for the teaching and student services departments, ensures that curriculum development is considered as a major issue by all senior managers.

70 The committee structure provides an effective communication medium. Other channels include team meetings at all levels which include support staff, and the principalship's regular whole-college briefing meetings. The internal electronic mail facility has been so successful that the demand to use the equipment in staff rooms at times outstrips the availability. Staff generally feel well informed and fully involved in the decision-making processes. Support staff and part-time teachers comment that they feel valued as important members of the establishment. Staff are effectively deployed.

71 The computerised central management information system is developing well. It produces reports on attendance, retention, room availability, timetabling and students. Staff at all levels agree that the information is generally accurate. There have been difficulties recently as the system is being upgraded. The introduction of departmental administrators has helped with the collection and dissemination of information.

72 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is adequate. The

operation of the college's finance department had been robust, but towards the end of the last financial year, inaccuracies were revealed in the end-of-year reports and the 1997 to 2000 financial forecasts. Action has been taken to ensure that all errors are identified and corrected. In the meantime, budget holders are monitoring expenditure against their 1996-97 budgets. Governors are aware of the situation, and their finance committee recently received a report on the effects of these difficulties on the college's financial performance during 1996-97.

73 Detailed management accounts and budget holders' reports are produced directly from the accounting system, usually monthly, but temporarily bi-monthly. The accounts are summarised and presented to governors. Formal monitoring of the college's financial position is undertaken by the principal and the deputy head of finance, the principal reporting to members of the senior management team. The college's financial regulations are comprehensive and have recently been updated. The college's average level of funding in 1997-98 is £17.25 per unit. The average for general further education colleges is £16.72 per unit.

Conclusions

74 The inspection team concluded that the college's self-assessment processes were rigorous. The processes are part of a mature quality assurance system. The self-assessment report followed the structure of previous inspection reports and fairly represented the college's strengths and weaknesses in both curriculum areas and cross-college aspects. Inspectors sometimes put a different emphasis on the particular strengths and weaknesses identified by the college, or recognised additional strengths and weaknesses that had not been identified in the self-assessment processes. Inspectors agreed with most of the grades awarded in the self-assessment report. In two curriculum areas, inspectors awarded a higher grade, and in one the grade awarded

Cross-college Provision

was lower. Inspectors raised the grade in one aspect of cross-college provision. College managers had recognised that the grades awarded in their internal programme of lesson observations were too optimistic and had taken this into account in drawing the report together.

75 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 (July 1997)

| Age | % |
|-------------|-----|
| Under 16 | 8 |
| 16-18 years | 26 |
| 19-24 years | 14 |
| 25+ years | 52 |
| Not known | 0 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (July 1997)

| Level of study | % |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Foundation | 17 |
| Intermediate | 29 |
| Advanced | 30 |
| Higher education | 8 |
| Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2) | 16 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: college data

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

| Programme area | Full time | Part time | Total provision % |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Science | 68 | 978 | 22 |
| Agriculture | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Construction | 83 | 342 | 9 |
| Engineering | 188 | 479 | 14 |
| Business | 112 | 453 | 12 |
| Hotel and catering | 62 | 43 | 2 |
| Health and community care | 128 | 493 | 13 |
| Art and design | 10 | 40 | 1 |
| Humanities | 313 | 926 | 25 |
| Basic education | 9 | 67 | 2 |
| Total | 973 | 3,827 | 100 |

Source: college data

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (July 1997)

| | Perm- anent | Fixed term | Casual | Total |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------|-------|
| Direct learning contact | 120 | 10 | 22 | 152 |
| Supporting direct learning contact | 29 | 2 | 0 | 31 |
| Other support | 118 | 7 | 11 | 136 |
| Total | 267 | 19 | 33 | 319 |

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

| | 1994-95 | 1995-96 | 1996-97 |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Income | £7,466,000 | £7,587,000 | £7,128,000 |
| Average level of funding (ALF) | | | |
| Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97 | £20.29 | £19.84 | £19.92 |
| Payroll as a proportion of income | 73% | 76% | 77% |
| Achievement of funding target | 101% | 101% | 112% |
| Diversity of income | 39% | 35% | 30% |
| Operating surplus | -£277,000 | -£244,000 | -£664,000 |

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

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

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

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

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

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

Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

| Qualifications | | 1994-95 | 1995-96 | 1996-97 |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| GCE A level | Number of candidates | ** | 54 | 83 |
| | Average point score per entry | ** | 3.6 | 3.4 |
| | Position in tables | ** | middle third | middle third |
| Advanced vocational | Number in final year | 88 | 99 | 142 |
| | Percentage achieving qualification | 43% | 66% | 79% |
| | Position in tables | bottom 10% | bottom third | top third |
| Intermediate vocational | Number in final year | * | 56 | 87 |
| | Percentage achieving qualification | * | 59% | 66% |
| | Position in tables | * | middle third | middle third |

Source: DfEE

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

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

*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

**College not listed in points score per entry table

FEFC Inspection Report 27/98

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