

Havering College of Further and Higher Education

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1997-98**

**THE
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FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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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.

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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.

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

Havering College of Further and Higher Education ***Greater London Region***

Inspected October 1997

Havering College of Further and Higher Education is a general further education college in north-east London. The college produced a thorough self-assessment report. The report was prepared as part of the college's outstanding quality assurance process, which is understood and supported by staff at all levels of the college. The inspectors agreed with the majority of judgements and grades reached by the college which in most respects were well supported by evidence.

The college offers a wide range of courses in all of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Provision in six of these was inspected, together with aspects of cross-college provision. The college shapes its provision well to meet local needs. It offers carefully planned courses from pre-foundation level to higher education, and training which is appropriate to the needs of employers in its catchment area. Courses are well managed and teaching is generally good. The proportion of lessons graded by inspectors as good or outstanding has risen by 7 percentage points since the last inspection. The support for

students is outstanding; there have been major improvements in support for learning, and for students with disabilities. Students work well at their studies and achieve good results on many courses. Governors have a range of experience and skills which they put to good use in the outstanding governance of the college. The college is well managed and its financial management is good. Communication between managers and staff is good, and changes to the management structure have proved effective. The accommodation strategy has led to improvements in accommodation since the last inspection. The college should: improve poor retention rates and students' achievements on some courses; rectify some weaknesses in teaching; improve the variable quality of departmental objectives and operating plans; and achieve a thorough analysis of GCE A level pass rates and retention rates.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Computing and information technology	2	Support for students	1
Mathematics	2	General resources	2
Construction	2	Quality assurance	1
Engineering	2	Governance	1
Business	2	Management	2
Art, design and media	2		
Performing arts, dance and drama	3		
English and communication studies	2		

The College and its Mission

1 Havering College was established as a college of further education in 1963. It was renamed Havering College of Further and Higher Education in January 1990. The largest campus, which includes the main administrative centre, is at Ardleigh Green Road in Hornchurch. There are two other campuses at Harrow Lodge, Hornchurch, and at Quarles, Harold Hill, which are within three miles of the main site.

2 In 1996-97, the college enrolled approximately 8,500 students of whom 66 per cent were aged 19 and over; 23 per cent of full-time students and 17 per cent of part-time students were of minority ethnic origin. By October 1997, the college had enrolled 2,751 full-time students and had over 4,500 part-time, day and evening enrolments. It expects to enrol approximately 11,000 students over the whole of 1997-98. The college's employees represent 393 full-time equivalent posts, of which 245 are teaching posts. The college is currently organised into seven teaching departments: business education; continuing education; creative studies and humanities, mathematics and science; engineering; social services, health and education; information technology; and development and student services. The last two departments listed have major responsibilities for student support. Provision in six of the seven departments was inspected. There are also directorates for administration and finance.

3 The college is the only further education college, and the sole provider of higher education courses, in the London borough of Havering. Other provision for 16 to 19 year olds exists at Havering Sixth Form College, which was opened in 1991, and at five grant-maintained voluntary-aided schools with sixth forms. Havering College of Further and Higher Education competes with these providers for post-16 students who wish to take general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) or general certificate of education advanced/advanced supplementary level (GCE A/AS level) courses, as well as courses leading to

general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs). Four other further education colleges are within easy travelling distance of the college's immediate catchment area. Nevertheless, for its higher education courses and some of its more specialised further education provision, the college attracts students from a wide area beyond the borough of Havering, particularly from Essex. It assesses several of its own higher education courses, as an accredited institution of The Open University Validation Services.

4 Most employed people who are resident in Havering travel outside the borough for their work, for example, to south-west Essex and Hertfordshire as well as to inner London. The college's immediate catchment area has experienced long-term industrial decline. Employment in manufacturing industry is now stable at about 10 per cent. Although there are a number of schemes for economic regeneration that involve the distributive trades and leisure services, about 15 per cent of the borough's commercial and industrial premises are vacant. Approximately 86 per cent of local employees now work in the service sector. Only 9 per cent of residents in Havering have any form of higher education qualification. The post-16 staying-on rate is 75 per cent. There is a low unemployment rate in the locality (4 per cent), although a relatively large proportion of women who live in the borough are not in paid employment. About 3 per cent of residents are of minority ethnic origin, compared with about 20 per cent in Greater London.

5 The college's key strategic objectives have changed since the last inspection to reflect the increasing proportion of adult students and students from minority ethnic groups. The objectives include:

- to review the college's corporate and curriculum strategy, in better partnership with local employers and institutions, to ensure that these focus on developments and changes in local community and labour market needs

Context

- to find, through greater cost efficiency, resources to offer help to disadvantaged groups and generally widen access
- to increase the volume of higher level professional and vocational courses to meet local labour market demands and to provide progression to diploma and degree courses
- to continue to improve systems of quality assurance, management information and staff training and development to enhance the service provided by the college
- to review the college's longer-term accommodation strategy in the light of changes in the nature of the overall curriculum offer and the profile of the student population.

The Inspection

6 The college was inspected during the week beginning 6 October 1997. The inspection team had access to the college's self-assessment report and to information about the college held by other divisions of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The college was notified about two months before the inspection of those aspects of provision that were to be inspected. The inspection was carried out by 15

inspectors working for a total of 52 days, and an auditor. They observed 112 lessons, examined samples of students' work and a variety of college documents, and held meetings with governors, managers, students and staff.

7 Of the lessons inspected, 67 per cent were rated good or outstanding and 6 per cent were less than satisfactory. The attendance level overall was 83 per cent. According to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*, 61 per cent of all lessons inspected for the year 1996-97 had strengths which outweighed weaknesses. According to the same report, 8 per cent of lessons inspected in all colleges had weaknesses which outweighed strengths. The attendance level in the sector as a whole was 77 per cent during 1996-97. The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected. This table includes two lessons observed as part of the inspection of support for students.

8 Each section in the report dealing with a curriculum area includes a table giving a sample of examination results and retention rates for 1995-96 and 1996-97. Owing to reorganisation within the college, and changes in the system for recording achievement and retention, similar data were not readily available for 1994-95.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	2	11	6	0	0	19
GCSE	0	4	2	1	0	7
GNVQ	6	8	5	2	0	21
NVQ	0	8	5	0	0	13
Other vocational	8	14	9	2	0	33
Higher education	2	3	0	0	0	5
Other	2	7	3	2	0	14
Total	20	55	30	7	0	112

Curriculum Areas

Computing and Information Technology

Grade 2

9 The inspection included the observation of 13 lessons at foundation, intermediate, advanced and higher education levels, including GCE A level courses and courses leading to GNVQs in information technology. Inspectors considered that the college's self-assessment of the provision was comprehensive and accurate in its identification of strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- a good range of courses
- availability of provision in the information technology workshop at times which suit students
- courses and lessons which are well planned and well managed
- generally good teaching
- modern computing facilities and good access to computers outside lesson time
- good pass rates on most courses
- good rates of progression to further and higher education and to employment

Weaknesses

- in a few lessons, the different abilities and backgrounds of students were not always taken into account
- low retention rates on a few courses and a declining retention rate on the BTEC national diploma in computer studies
- limited industrial or commercial experience amongst teaching staff
- underdeveloped links with employers

10 There is a good range of computing and information technology courses and workshops which meet the needs of full-time and part-time students, and enable them to progress within

the college from foundation to higher education level. The self-assessment report recognises that links with employers are underdeveloped and that few of the courses directly address employers' needs.

11 Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report in its conclusion that courses are well planned and well managed. Students have opportunities to supplement their main courses with additional studies. The key skills of communication and application of number are an integral part of the vocational courses. Assessments and assignments are well thought out and a system of thorough internal verification is in operation to ensure consistency of standards and procedures.

12 The teaching is good. The lessons observed contained an appropriate mix of theoretical and practical work. Teachers made effective use of teaching materials that had been well prepared. In a few lessons, activities did not take sufficient account of the differing abilities of students. The self-assessment report recognises that teachers keep up to date with current developments in computing and information technology; however, it does not acknowledge that few staff have the recent commercial or industrial experience which would enable them to increase the vocational relevance of courses. Students on computing and information technology courses use good, modern equipment and work in carefully planned computer rooms.

13 Students take care with their work; their assignments and projects are well presented and some are of a high standard. In the lessons observed, most students made good progress. Pass rates in external examinations and assessments are generally good. The self-assessment report acknowledges that retention rates on some courses are poor. Students who successfully complete their courses have established a good rate of progression to employment and to higher and further education courses.

Curriculum Areas

Examples of students' achievements in computing and information technology, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level computer science, two-year students	Retention (%)	*	83	60
	Pass rate (%)	*	90	89
Intermediate GNVQ	Retention (%)	*	81	85
	Pass rate (%)	*	74	67
Level 2 information technology courses	Retention (%)	*	95	92
	Pass rate (%)	*	53	80
BTEC national diploma in computing	Retention (%)	*	85	67
	Pass rate (%)	*	69	78

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Mathematics

Grade 2

14 Twelve mathematics lessons were inspected. The college's self-assessment of its mathematics provision is comprehensive and, on the whole, inspectors considered it accurate, although it pays insufficient attention to the quality of teaching.

Key strengths

- pass rates above national averages for GCSE and GCE A/AS level courses
- comprehensive and thorough course planning
- effective assessment of students at induction to help in streaming GCSE groups
- the course texts and workbooks provided for most students

Weaknesses

- insufficiently varied teaching methods
- lack of resources for independent learning and some poorly-equipped teaching accommodation
- little systematic application of information technology in lessons
- little industrial experience amongst staff and few links with industry in the curriculum

15 There is a wide range of mathematics courses which meet the needs of many full-time, part-time and mature students. In addition to modular courses in pure mathematics with statistics or mechanics, the college is also offering other courses. These include 'back to maths', which is aimed at mature students, and the mathematics for science module, which is provided to support students who are studying three GCE A levels in science. The mathematics for science module is

recognised in the college's self-assessment report as a particular strength.

16 The course provision is well planned, well structured and effectively organised. Most teaching is good, although teaching methods lack variety. Most GCE A level students are provided with text books on loan, which enable them to study at their own pace. All GCSE groups use the same workbooks, which have been devised by the college, and have the same schedule of assessment procedures in common. The co-operation within the teaching team, using shared schemes of work, is justifiably identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. The underuse of information technology in lessons is acknowledged to be a weakness.

17 The GCE A/AS level results are above national averages for further education colleges, and retention rates are satisfactory. Overall, the good pass and completion rates are noted as a strength in the self-assessment report.

18 Few teaching staff have any industrial experience and there are few links with industry in the curriculum. These shortcomings are not acknowledged in the self-assessment report. Resources for learning support and independent learning in mathematics are underdeveloped. Lunchtime workshops are voluntarily staffed by members of the course team. Inspectors agreed with the college self-assessment which lists the workshops as a strength and observes that some of the teaching rooms used for mathematics are poorly equipped.

Curriculum Areas

Examples of students' achievements in mathematics, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level pure/mechanical two-year students	Retention (%)	*	64	75
	Pass rate (%)	*	78	40
GCE A level pure/statistics two-year students	Retention (%)	*	65	84
	Pass rate (%)	*	60	76
GCSE mathematics	Retention (%)	*	84	80
	Pass rate (%)	*	61	62

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Construction

Grade 2

19 The inspection covered craft and technician provision at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. It included courses leading to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in subjects such as brickwork, carpentry and electrical installation, and courses leading to GNVQs in the built environment. Fifteen lessons were observed. The inspection generally confirmed the college's own evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of its construction provision. The self-assessment did not, however, identify some weaknesses in students' achievements.

Key strengths

- significant increases in recruitment on some courses
- well-maintained student records and course management documents
- effective management of most courses
- good teaching with teachers making effective use of visual aids and learning materials
- the high standard of work achieved by many students on all courses
- some good pass rates, particularly on the courses leading to intermediate GNVQs in 1996-97
- good resources for learning which are well used by construction students

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory retention and pass rates on some courses
- a brickwork workshop that is too small

20 The college offers full-time technician courses and a range of full-time and part-time courses in craft subjects. Courses leading to GNVQs are offered at intermediate and advanced levels. Courses leading to NVQs are

available at level 1 in building crafts and at level 2 in electrical installation. Most courses are well supported by employers, which confirms that the provision is well matched to the needs of local industry. There is a range of progression routes for students, leading to further and higher education and to employment. The self-assessment report demonstrates that students who succeed on technician courses use the qualification to continue with further studies.

21 Course teams have well-documented schemes of work which are shared with students. An appropriate variety of teaching methods and learning opportunities is used. Educational visits and extra-curricular activities enrich students' studies. Tutorial provision is being extended to most students who are studying on a part-time basis.

22 The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is good. One of the best lessons was for full-time students on an advanced GNVQ course. It was well planned and an appropriate variety of visual aids was used to support a clear presentation. Students were required to demonstrate their understanding of the topic being covered and then to complete suitably challenging written tasks. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report which identifies the good teaching methods used in construction and the ways in which key skills are effectively integrated with other course elements.

23 Most students work especially well in the workshops, and produce practical work of a good standard. Written work is more variable, and not always well presented. Students' portfolios are well organised. Retention rates have improved over the last three years, although some are still unsatisfactory. The self-assessment report identifies the good pass rate for GNVQ but fails to comment on the poor pass rates on some courses. Courses that seek to improve basic skills are taken by many students who do not want to take the final qualification; they usually leave once they have

Curriculum Areas

achieved the skills that they require. An example is the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) 608 part I bricklaying course.

24 Most classrooms and workshops are suitable in size and are appropriately equipped, although the brickwork workshop is too small. A study area with good resources for learning is well used by students. The use of interactive, computerised learning programmes allows students to progress at their own pace.

Examples of students' achievements in construction, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Intermediate GNVQ	Retention (%)	*	82	100
	Pass rate (%)	*	89	83
Electrical installation C&G 236 NVQ level 2	Retention (%)	*	55	61
	Pass rate (%)	*	77	76
Bricklaying C&G 608 part I	Retention (%)	*	59	60
	Pass rate (%)	*	20	11

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Engineering

Grade 2

25 The inspection covered all aspects of the engineering provision at the college including general engineering, electronic engineering, mechanical engineering and motor vehicle engineering. Thirteen lessons were observed at foundation, intermediate, advanced and higher education levels. Most of the strengths and weaknesses noted by inspectors were also identified by the college in its own self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- the well-managed curriculum and generally well-planned schemes of work, assignments and workshop tasks
- effective integration of key skills with GNVQ and BTEC programmes
- use of team teaching on some courses
- effective systems for recording students' achievements
- high retention rates and pass rates above the national average for most courses
- well-equipped accommodation on some courses
- close links with a major employer

Weaknesses

- insufficient integration of theory with practice on courses leading to NVQs
- some students following inappropriate courses
- poor retention rates on some craft courses
- some poor standard accommodation

26 The college offers a range of full-time and part-time courses in engineering at craft, technician and higher technician level. Courses

leading to NVQs and GNVQs have been successfully introduced. There are clearly-defined progression routes to further study for successful students.

27 The engineering curriculum is effectively managed. Course teams work well together and follow the college's quality guidelines. Schemes of work, which are well prepared for most courses, were justifiably identified as a strength in the college's self-assessment. Course teams have regular and effective meetings. Issues on the teaching and assessment of courses are discussed. Action plans are devised, and deadlines are set for their implementation. Students are represented on course teams.

28 Teaching is generally good, although occasionally unimaginative. The key skills of communication, application of number and information technology are integral to, and an effective part of, BTEC and GNVQ programmes. Assignment briefs give students clear guidelines and indicate the grading criteria. On craft courses, carefully-designed practical tasks enable students to develop competences to meet NVQ criteria. On some NVQ courses, theory is not sufficiently integrated with practical work.

29 There are good examination results, particularly on BTEC, C&G 381 part III courses and GNVQ programmes. Retention rates are mainly good but there is a poor rate on some two-year craft courses, where students leave in mid-course to seek employment. Some students are placed on courses where they cannot reach the required standard in the time available. These issues are identified in the college's self-assessment report.

30 There is close contact with a major car manufacturer, a strength which is noted in the self-assessment report. The department acted as consultants when the company planned its national training scheme. The college is now a member of a consortium with responsibility for the GNVQ scheme nationally. The department shares the delivery of a four-year block-release

Curriculum Areas

scheme with a neighbouring college. The college recognises, however, that it has only limited involvement with small and medium-sized companies.

31 Teaching staff are suitably qualified for the courses they deliver. There is well-equipped accommodation available for some engineering courses, particularly advanced electronics and electronics servicing programmes. However, some accommodation is of a poor standard, an issue recognised by the college.

Examples of students' achievements in engineering, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
BTEC national diploma in engineering	Retention (%)	*	87	100
	Pass rate (%)	*	98	100
Intermediate GNVQ	Retention (%)	*	79	81
	Pass rate (%)	*	87	85
C&G 381 part III motor vehicle craft studies	Retention (%)	*	100	93
	Pass rate (%)	*	100	71
C&G 3440 bodycraft NVQ level 2	Retention (%)	*	76	52
	Pass rate (%)	*	14	64

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 2

32 The inspection covered all aspects of the college's business provision. A total of 23 lessons were inspected. The college's self-assessment of its business provision is comprehensive, honest and self-critical. In general, the inspection confirmed the strengths and weaknesses identified by the college.

Key strengths

- much good teaching
- well-motivated students
- thorough entry and induction procedures
- the development of students' skills in information technology and communication
- students' work, which is mainly of a high standard
- good examination results on many courses
- well-developed policies and procedures for managing the provision
- the comprehensive range of courses

Weaknesses

- a minority of lessons in which the work is insufficiently varied and challenging
- little development of numeracy skills across the curriculum
- unsatisfactory retention rates and achievement by students on some course

33 The college offers a comprehensive range of full-time and part-time business courses which meets the needs of local school-leavers, adult returners and employers. There are well-developed internal and external routes along which students can progress to a range of

higher education programmes. Many students progress to appropriate employment.

34 Most courses are managed effectively by teaching teams. There are well-developed policies and procedures for the management of the provision. Staff are well qualified and almost all have completed appropriate assessor and verifier qualifications.

35 The quality of teaching is generally good and based upon effective planning. Lessons have detailed aims and objectives and an appropriate variety of learning activities, and are well paced. A minority of the lessons observed were pedestrian and failed to stretch more able students. The quality of feedback to students is generally satisfactory, although some portfolios for GNVQ courses contain insufficient written guidance to help students to improve their work.

36 Teaching teams have worked hard to integrate information technology and communication key skills with other aspects of work across the curriculum. However, the development and assessment of numeracy skills remains perfunctory on most programmes. Students have good access to computers, particularly on the intermediate GNVQ programme.

37 The quality of students' work is generally good. Most students work purposefully in lessons and display a mature attitude to their studies. Working relationships between students and teachers are sound. Retention and achievements in external examinations are good on many courses, but less than satisfactory on others. These variations are noted in the college's self-assessment.

Curriculum Areas

Examples of students' achievements in business, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Intermediate GNVQ	Retention (%)	*	93	78
	Pass rate (%)	*	72	89
Medical typing/wordprocessing	Retention (%)	*	100	100
	Pass rate (%)	*	94	86
Advanced GNVQ	Retention (%)	*	59	65
	Pass rate (%)	*	55	53

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Art, Design and Media

Grade 2

38 Eleven lessons were observed, covering the full range of art, design and media courses. Inspectors considered that the college's self-assessment report provides a generally accurate evaluation, although it does not give sufficient recognition to the achievement of students in their practical work. Also, some shortcomings in teaching and the promotion of learning are not mentioned.

Key strengths

- a good range of well-managed courses
- well-produced and well-used course handbooks
- well-planned courses and lessons
- teaching which is generally good and, in a few cases, outstanding
- high standards in exploratory work
- thorough and fair assessment of students' work
- good achievements on many courses
- the high proportion of students progressing to other courses within the college and to higher education

Weaknesses

- some students' late arrival at lessons, which disturbs teaching and learning
- some project briefs which are not fully understood by students
- ineffective integration of key skills with other elements of assignment and project work
- students' inadequate access to information technology
- poor accommodation and equipment for printmaking

39 The programme area provides a range of subjects in art and design and media, including courses leading to GNVQs at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels, as well as a number of more specialist national diplomas. Higher national certificate courses have been developed in graphic design, media and design crafts. This range of courses enables students to progress to other courses in the college or to higher education or employment.

40 Art and design courses develop sound drawing and design skills as the basis for other aspects of study. The national diploma in foundation studies is particularly successful in giving students opportunities to experiment with a variety of media and materials. The course is offered on a full-time and part-time modular basis which makes it more available to adult students.

41 Overall, the standard of teaching in art, design and media is good. It is outstanding in some aspects of foundation studies where projects encourage students to explore and develop their ideas. Most students at this level are developing individual styles and are confident in discussing their work. Teaching on most courses is lively, and there is a positive and professional relationship between teachers and students. Students are introduced to a broad range of materials, techniques and problem-solving activities. However, the aims, objectives and requirements of some assignments, outlined in project briefs, are not emphasised sufficiently by teachers. The unpunctuality of some students was allowed to disturb teaching and learning. The college's self-assessment does not identify some of the weaknesses in teaching and learning.

42 The programme area is well managed. Recent changes in roles and responsibilities have introduced a clear direction and purpose. Course teams meet regularly, although minutes are not always sufficiently detailed. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report which

Curriculum Areas

identifies quality assurance as a strength; the programme area benefits from the regular review and evaluation of courses.

43 Students' work is marked consistently and fairly. Although students understand how their work is assessed, they do not always receive detailed feedback, a feature recognised in the college's self-assessment report.

44 The self-assessment report justifiably identifies the strengths of students' achievements in external examinations, particularly for: the national diploma in graphic design; GCE A level art; and the national diploma in foundation studies. Students on media courses have won awards at the prestigious National Co-operative Film Festival. Inspectors concluded that the self-assessment report underestimates the quality of students' work in drawing and painting, in exploratory work and in film and video production.

45 Specialist resources are generally satisfactory and there is an appropriate range of studios and classrooms. Although the new computer-aided design suite is an important development, students still have limited access to information technology. The accommodation and equipment available for printmaking is inadequate.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level art two-year students	Retention (%)	*	87	89
	Pass rate (%)	*	94	100
BTEC national diploma in graphic design	Retention (%)	*	50	76
	Pass rate (%)	*	100	94
BTEC diploma in foundation studies in art and design	Retention (%)	*	90	94
	Pass rate (%)	*	100	100
Advanced GNVQ in media	Retention (%)	*	84	52
	Pass rate (%)	*	88	80

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

Performing Arts, Dance and Drama

Grade 3

46 Eleven lessons were observed. They covered: drama, dance and performing arts lessons on the BTEC first and national diploma programmes in performing arts; and GCE A level courses in dance, drama and theatre studies. The college's self-assessment of the provision is detailed and considered largely accurate by inspectors, but does not pay enough attention to weaknesses in teaching and learning.

Key strengths

- well-planned courses and lessons employing an appropriate range of teaching methods
- the well-established emphasis on vocational relevance in lessons
- high levels of achievement on the GCE A level dance course and the BTEC first diploma course in performing arts
- the small but carefully chosen range of courses and additional options
- rigorous team leadership committed to raising students' achievements
- thorough and effective assessment and record-keeping

Weaknesses

- little acknowledgement in some lessons of students' prior achievements
- insufficient challenge in vocational drama classes
- few opportunities for students to articulate what they are learning in some classes
- underdevelopment of key skills
- some poor pass rates and retention rates in 1997
- some poor-quality accommodation and few specialist resources

47 In 1997, the college's quality assurance system identified a number of performing arts courses which were not serving students well. As a result, the provision was revised. A new programme now leads through stages to the BTEC national diploma in the performing arts. The BTEC first diploma programme provides an effective access route and a number of associated courses offer additional qualifications both for BTEC performing arts students and other students in the college. Work placements are organised for all advanced level vocational students, but there are few other links with industry. Performance plays a large part in the provision and there are regular opportunities for students to dance, sing and act, helped by strong links with a local theatre. Some groups are too large to be taught practical subjects effectively. The separation of students into dance and drama groups reduces the opportunities for them to work together on integrated projects. This weakness was recognised in the college's self-assessment.

48 All teachers prepare and structure their lessons diligently. In some lessons, most notably in singing and dance, students learn the disciplines required for employment as well as technique, and achieve the highest standards. In drama lessons, BTEC performing arts students were sometimes insufficiently challenged or were allowed to work at too slow a pace; little account was taken of what they already know and can do. In some lessons students were given few opportunities to reflect upon their work or to demonstrate their understanding through discussion. The teaching of key skills such as communication, application of number and the use of information technology is acknowledged in the self-assessment as an underdeveloped aspect of the provision.

49 Students on all courses are enthusiastic and committed to their work. Students on the BTEC first diploma programme are motivated by the chance to progress to a higher level

Curriculum Areas

course within the college. GCE A level dance is a strength. Many young dancers show considerable aptitude in their technique, and also in their ability to understand and write about dance practice. The self-assessment identified the poor retention rates of GCSE dance students in 1997; and examination results in GCE A level theatre studies in 1997 were well below the national average. The college has made changes to the organisation and delivery of both courses to effect improvements.

50 The performing arts team is well led and new management arrangements should give the team the support necessary for the next phase of its development. Although much improved since the last inspection, specialist accommodation is still unsatisfactory for advanced level vocational work. Essential resources for specialist work such as costumes, stage properties and technical equipment are in very short supply.

Examples of students' achievements in performing arts, dance and drama, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level art two-year students	Retention (%)	*	92	61
	Pass rate (%)	*	64	91
BTEC first diploma in performing arts	Retention (%)	*	82	85
	Pass rate (%)	*	97	91
Drama (Guildhall)	Retention (%)	*	88	68
	Pass rate (%)	*	82	87
GCSE dance	Retention (%)	*	72	77
	Pass rate (%)	*	43	6

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Curriculum Areas

English and Communication Studies

Grade 2

51 The inspection covered GCSE and GCE A level English and communication studies courses. A total of 12 lessons were observed. Inspectors generally agreed with the college's own assessment of the quality of its provision.

Key strengths

- pass rates on most GCE A level courses which are above the national average
- varied and well-managed teaching in most classes
- helpful and constructive marking of work
- effective curriculum management
- appropriate choice of texts and materials for students of varying abilities and backgrounds

Weaknesses

- disruption to some lessons from students' late arrival
- weak pass rates on part-time GCE A level courses
- poor retention on some GCSE and part-time GCE A level courses

52 The college's self-assessment report recognised that courses and lessons are generally well managed and planned. Staff work together constructively in the planning and delivery of courses. There are well-established assessment procedures, and students' progress is carefully recorded and monitored. Many students each year advance successfully from GCSE to GCE A level courses.

53 The quality of teaching is often good. Most lessons were well planned and purposeful, and teachers and students worked enthusiastically. Teaching materials take account of the

multicultural backgrounds of students. Teachers respond well to the needs of individual students, particularly those who have joined courses late and require additional support. Written work is marked thoroughly. Teachers provide helpful written comments. In a number of lessons, there was an emphasis on study skills, such as researching information, making notes, and using evidence to support ideas. A few of the classes seen were less successfully managed, and offered little opportunity for students to contribute their own ideas. There are few opportunities for teachers to share and compare practice.

54 Most students co-operate well with staff and take part effectively in discussions and group work. They produce thorough written answers, although good ideas are not always matched by accuracy of expression. Few students use information technology to present their work, a weakness not identified in the college's self-assessment report. Late arrival by students disrupted some lessons. Teachers did not always express sufficient concern about this issue of punctuality.

55 The pass rates on full-time GCE A level courses are above the national average for further education colleges. There was a considerable improvement in results for one-year students in English over the period 1996 to 1997. Retention rates are good on full-time GCE A level courses but poor on the part-time English GCE A level course. Pass rates for GCSE English are satisfactory, although retention rates are low on some courses, particularly those which are based away from the main college site. The strengths identified by inspectors and some of the weaknesses in students' achievements were also identified in the college's self-assessment process.

56 Learning is supported by an appropriate range of resources and materials, for example, handouts and worksheets, most of which are well produced. In several classes effective use was made of the whiteboards and overhead

Curriculum Areas

projectors to summarise and emphasise key points. The learning centre has a limited stock of books and videos to support the teaching of English and communication studies. The self-assessment report does not identify this weakness.

Examples of students' achievements in English and communication studies, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GCE A level English literature two-year students	Retention (%)	*	76	70
	Pass rate (%)	*	91	94
GCE A level communications studies two-year students	Retention (%)	*	68	70
	Pass rate (%)	*	69	95
GCSE English	Retention (%)	*	76	70
	Pass rate (%)	*	53	49
GCSE English literature	Retention (%)	*	80	75
	Pass rate (%)	*	42	65

Source: college data

*comparable data unavailable

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 1

57 Support arrangements play a major role in enhancing the students' experience of the college. Inspectors concluded that some of the strengths in this area of provision were underemphasised by the college in its self-assessment.

Key strengths

- an effective computer-based system for course information to support staff handling enquiries
- good-quality literature and advice for students about the college and its courses
- an effective tutorial system
- external accreditation for aspects of the tutorial programme
- effective liaison between learning support teachers and personal tutors
- an extensive welfare support network
- effective careers advice and guidance
- effective support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Weaknesses

- basic skills support which does not fully meet the level of need identified

58 The college has comprehensive and effective procedures for recruiting and enrolling students through its advice and information centre and through links with local schools and the community. There are special arrangements to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through the process.

59 The tutorial system has been identified by the college in its self-assessment report as being a major strength. This judgement is supported by the inspection. Tutorials are well co-ordinated and effectively monitored. All full-time students have a weekly tutorial, and

the college is piloting tutorials for part-time students. There are good resources to support tutors. All full-time students are enrolled on the personal initiative programme, which enables students to achieve units accredited by the Essex Open College Federation. Tutors take prompt action following reports from teachers of poor attendance in lessons, tutorials and basic skills sessions. Students speak very highly of the support they receive from tutors.

60 All full-time students and part-time students taking a course that lasts for more than six hours a week take tests during induction that assess their competence in basic skills. The basic skills unit operates on all three sites but with limited staffing, accommodation and equipment. For those students most in need of help the service is good, but the facilities are not sufficient to support fully all students identified as needing support. This situation is not acknowledged in the college's self-assessment report. Students' attendance at the basic skills unit is carefully monitored and prompt action taken about absences. Records of students' progress are comprehensive. In some curriculum areas, teachers have received training in basic skills support which they can use to help students in their own classes. Students report that many teachers offer support in basic skills in their own time.

61 Students have access to extensive welfare support. The college employs: three qualified part-time counsellors; a welfare advice worker to help with problems of finance and accommodation; and four qualified youth workers, who provide an interesting range of activities and are also a valuable source of informal advice and counselling for students. There is a service level agreement with a local guidance company to provide careers advice and guidance. The careers officers work in the college but may assist students before they join the college to help them choose an appropriate course. The careers library is extensive and well used.

Cross-college Provision

62 The college's self-assessment places great emphasis on the quality of support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and, particularly, support for students with physical disabilities. Several students who have multiple disabilities are supported by specialist staff, who may give assistance with aspects of personal care as well as academic support. The college effectively supports a number of students with impaired hearing. Students on discrete courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive sensitive support which enables them to participate in college life outside the classroom.

General Resources

Grade 2

63 The college's self-assessment was supported by the evidence and corroborated by inspectors. A number of weaknesses that have been identified are already being addressed.

Key strengths

- accommodation which is generally suitable, used effectively and well maintained
- good information technology provision across the college
- good provision for students with physical disabilities

Weaknesses

- problems with temperature control in the New Building at Ardleigh Green
- the small size of the resources centres for learning at Ardleigh Green and Harrow Lodge
- some pressure on teaching space at Ardleigh Green

64 The college occupies three sites at Ardleigh Green, Quarles and Harrow Lodge. Since

incorporation it has developed a clear accommodation strategy. Many improvements have been made since the last inspection. The college's self-assessment acknowledges that the quality of accommodation varies, but it is generally suitable, used effectively and well maintained. Inspectors agreed with this judgement. Pressure on rooming is most noticeable at Ardleigh Green; a number of the rooms are not of a suitable size for the groups being taught. There are problems with temperature control in the New Building at Ardleigh Green which has recently been completed.

65 There are learning resources centres on all three sites. All three centres are open in the evening; the Ardleigh Green Centre is open on Saturday mornings. There is a general shortage of study spaces, in particular at Ardleigh Green and Harrow Lodge, a weakness which is acknowledged in the college's self-assessment. The centres hold a good range of books and other resources. Most curriculum areas are well supplied with learning materials; there is effective liaison with library users, and the computerised library catalogues allow staff and students to request books from all three centres.

66 A college policy on information technology has recently been developed. It seeks to achieve compatibility in the provision of information technology across the college. In the last two years there has been significant investment in this area which has improved both the quantity and quality of hardware and software. The college is well provided with equipment both in classrooms and in the open access centres for information technology which exist on all three sites. At Ardleigh Green, new multimedia machines have been installed to enable the college to trial the provision of materials for independent learning in beauty therapy and electrical installation.

67 There are canteens on all three sites. The quality varies and at Harrow Lodge the small kitchen area can only provide a limited menu.

Cross-college Provision

The college has responded to students' requests by providing a range of vending machines. Students and staff have comfortably furnished common rooms. Staff have appropriate work areas and access to information technology. Sports facilities are limited on all sites. Little formal use is made of the large areas of grass at Ardleigh Green. The two gymnasias are often in use for timetabled classes or examinations. A number of sporting activities take place off site. The college has recognised a need for improved sports facilities and is awaiting the result of a planning enquiry into its application for a new sports hall and other facilities at Ardleigh Green.

68 There is a clearly defined strategy to improve access for staff and students with disabilities. The lack of lifts at Quarles and Harrow Lodge means that access to upper floors is restricted. The college has purchased a stair climber for people using wheelchairs and made a number of other improvements, including the provision of automatic doors and ramps on all sites. Probably the most significant improvement has been the relocation of the learning resources centre at Quarles to the ground floor. The Quarles Campus caters for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are plans to improve access to the college for the visually impaired. Combined nurseries and crèches for the children of students, staff and the general public are provided at the two larger sites.

Quality Assurance

Grade 1

69 The college has a strong commitment to assuring and developing the quality of all aspects of its provision. This commitment is realised in an outstanding whole-college system of quality assurance. Most of the judgements of inspectors were in agreement with those made by the college.

Key strengths

- coherent quality assurance procedures which have the enthusiastic support of all staff
- an annual quality self-assessment cycle, which has led to measurable gains in all areas of the college's performance
- the effective introduction of quality assurance initiatives
- well-conducted staff appraisal and staff development systems
- the effective gathering of students' perceptions of the provision

Weaknesses

- the need to refine further the use of evidence and performance indicators
- the lack of a formal, college-wide system for gathering employers' perceptions of the provision

70 The college has made substantial progress in developing its quality assurance systems since it was last inspected in 1994. The overall coherence and rigour of the quality assurance process has led to measurable gains in all areas of the college's work. The proportion of lessons graded by inspectors as good or outstanding has increased by 7 percentage points. There have been major improvements in the provision of support for learning and in access to the college by students with disabilities.

71 There is a committee for quality assurance and academic standards which ensures that effective procedures for quality assurance operate in every aspect of the college's work, including franchised provision. Departments operate with an appropriate degree of flexibility within the context of college-wide policies. The annual quality self-assessment cycle, which has operated for three years, begins with each team in the college reviewing its work against the previous year's targets, and setting new ones. These team reviews are brought together into

Cross-college Provision

departmental self-assessment reports, which are audited to rigorous standards, firstly by the departmental director and secondly by a panel from the committee.

72 Quality assurance arrangements are understood and enthusiastically supported by all managers and staff. All new or substantially modified courses must go through a rigorous validation procedure. Periodic review is a requirement for all full-time courses before the expiry of their period of validation. The college has targets which lead to most teaching staff being involved in this aspect of quality assurance as members of the internal validation and review pool. Governors are appropriately involved in the assurance and development of quality. The requirements of examining, awarding and accrediting bodies are meticulously met.

73 Performance indicators are usually clearly identified and effectively used, although the college recognises that further adjustment is needed to the systems through which evidence of performance is gathered. The observation of teaching and learning is aimed at improving standards of teaching. A pilot programme of teaching observation in a large and particularly diverse department during 1996-97 was successful and has recently been extended across the whole college. As with the introduction of other potentially problematic initiatives, classroom observation has been developed in a measured and effective way. Self-assessment in several programme areas has been informed by some observation of teaching and learning.

74 The college achieved the Investors in People award in 1996, and now works to maintain and improve those standards. Staff development needs are identified as they arise from the strategic plan, developments in the curriculum, the self-assessment reports on quality, and staff appraisals. There is a clear and comprehensive staff development handbook. A particularly effective application form for staff development

includes the applicant's objectives, the line-manager's view of the benefit of the activity, and a section for evaluation. The college has a comprehensive appraisal policy and handbook; staff appraisal is carried out effectively. A management training programme, which will be externally accredited by a university, is being developed for middle managers. An increasing number of staff are benefiting from industrial placements. The college holds an annual staff conference for all staff.

75 A clear summary of the college's charter is printed in the diary which is given to all students, together with information on where to obtain the full charter. A survey has been carried out amongst students to gauge the effectiveness of the charter. The quality assurance and academic standards committee will monitor action taken as a result of the survey findings. Students' perceptions of the college's provision are gained in many ways. These include the use of questionnaires and discussion with students about teaching that they have received in lessons which have been observed. Students serve on departmental committees. There is an effective complaints system which gives students a choice of ways of making their complaint, whilst ensuring that complaints reach the correct destination. The perceptions of employers, and others with an interest in the college, are frequently obtained and used, although the college acknowledges that information on employers' perceptions needs to be collected through a more formal, college-wide system.

Governance

Grade 1

76 The college's own assessment of governance generally matched the findings of the inspection, although not all strengths were identified. Progress is being made in rectifying weaknesses that were identified in the self-assessment report.

Cross-college Provision

Key strengths

- sound and efficient procedures for conducting corporation business
- effective contribution by governors to the strategic planning process
- governors with a broad range of expertise which is of value to the college
- appropriate monitoring by governors of the college's financial situation
- the appraisal of principal and vice-principal against strategic objectives

Weaknesses

- irregular attendance of some governors at full corporation meetings

77 The college has sound and efficient procedures for conducting the corporation's business. The full corporation meets twice a term. The board is supported by appropriate committees and working groups whose work is overseen but not duplicated by the full board. The corporation has established effective finance and audit committees with appropriate terms of reference. Quarterly management accounts are considered by the employment policy and finance committee. The audit committee closely monitors internal and external audit plans and reports. The strength of all these arrangements is identified in the college's self-assessment report and is supported by inspection findings.

78 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.

79 There is a good balance of long-serving governors, who provide stability, and new governors, appointed through external advertisement, who contribute fresh ideas. The

broad expertise of governors is used to the benefit of the college. The business links group is particularly valued for establishing liaison with industry, for contributing labour market information and for securing work placements for staff and students. The self-assessment identifies as a weakness governors' communications with staff and students. However, inspectors judged that governors have appropriate contacts with staff. Governors attend staff training events and contribute to events for students, such as a drugs awareness day. Some are attached to departments. There is an active governor-student liaison group. Most members have a good record of attendance at full corporation and committee meetings and attendance is normally well above that required for a quorum. The attendance of a few members at full corporation meetings has been irregular.

80 Governors contribute effectively to the strategic planning process and have a clear understanding of their role. They are kept well informed about the college through reports and statistical information. They have started to assess their own performance. The remuneration committee appraises the performance of the principal and vice-principal against the college's strategic objectives. As a result of their self-assessment, the governors have recently established a curriculum working group to ensure that the corporation is kept informed about the curriculum and to monitor what is offered and its quality.

Management

Grade 2

81 The college's self-assessment report on management, although it lacked sufficient detail, closely matches the findings of the inspection.

Cross-college Provision

Key strengths

- the involvement of staff and governors in developing the strategic plan
- the clear management structure and reporting lines
- effective communication of information and decisions to staff
- management information which is generally accurate and well used to inform planning
- good arrangements for financial management
- the successful promotion of equality of opportunity

Weaknesses

- the variable quality of departmental operating plans
- some inadequate management information

82 The college, its staff and resources are well managed. The college management team comprises the principal, vice-principal, director of finance, director of administration and seven directors of study who are responsible for teaching departments and student services. The management structure, and the arrangement of curriculum areas and other provision within departments, has been reorganised since the last inspection. This has led to improvements in, for example, support for students and information technology. The structure of departments varies, being determined by the nature and requirements of the work. Structures and lines of responsibility are generally made clear to staff. Middle managers have agreed job descriptions, understand their roles and are well supported by their line-managers. Technicians are now managed in departments which have strengthened the professional relationship between them and teachers. Co-ordination across departments has been improved since the last inspection by the

formation of a directors' group which meets regularly and reports to the principal. The group has been effective in piloting new initiatives and sharing good practice.

83 All staff have a clear understanding of the college's values and were involved in developing the strategic plan and the key strategic objectives. The principal sets targets for senior managers which are related to the key strategic objectives and are regularly monitored. Senior managers have developed action plans which address weaknesses identified in the self-assessment process. The college's self-assessment report recognises that targets are incorporated into the action plans, are generally measurable and identify where the specific responsibility lies for meeting the targets. What the report does not recognise is that the operating plans of departments vary in the amount of detail that they include and the precision of some targets.

84 General information and the decisions made by managers and governors are effectively communicated to staff through weekly newsletters, team briefings and an annual cycle of meetings. Electronic mail has improved communication across the college. Many staff contribute to curriculum development through their work on the subcommittees and working parties that report to the academic board.

85 Management information is generally good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. The self-assessment report states that management information needs have been identified and many have been met. The inspection findings confirm that management information is generally accurate and is used effectively to inform planning. The information relating to students' achievements and retention rates on GCE A level courses does not enable distinctions to be made between one-year and two-year students; and there is as yet no facility for keeping track of the progress of individual students within the college.

Cross-college Provision

86 Equality of opportunity is effectively promoted in the college. The equal opportunities policy has recently been revised and the underpinning principles that relate to gender, race, age and disability have been included. Training for staff and events organised by students help to raise awareness of the issues that are involved. Departments are required to address equality of opportunity in their operating plans. Effective promotion of the policy has led to increases in the number of female students, adults, people with disabilities and students from minority ethnic groups. The self-assessment report does not acknowledge the progress that has been made.

87 The FEFC's audit service concludes that within the scope of its review the financial management of the college is good. The college's average level of funding for 1997-98 is £16.92 per unit, a decrease of 1.9 per cent compared with 1996-97. The median for general further education colleges is £16.72 per unit in 1997-98. Budget holders receive timely reports on expenditure and additional information as required. Monthly management accounts include forecasts of the out-turn to the end of the financial year of both income and expenditure. Although the college has substantial liquid funds, financial reporting would be enhanced by the inclusion of a rolling 12-month cashflow forecast. Neither the internal nor the external auditors have identified significant weaknesses in the college's systems of financial control.

Conclusions

88 The college's self-assessment report was honest and evaluative. It provided a useful basis for planning and carrying out the inspection. The majority of the report's findings were in agreement with those of the inspection team. In a minority of curriculum areas, there was insufficient emphasis on teaching and learning, and occasionally weaknesses were overlooked.

Overall, the college's grades for its provision closely matched those awarded by inspectors. Inspectors concluded that the college had underestimated its strengths in grading two aspects of its cross-college provision.

89 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	0
16-18 years	32
19-24 years	18
25+ years	48
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Note: data are for FEFC-funded provision

Student numbers by level of study (July 1997)

Level of study	%
Foundation	24
Intermediate	30
Advanced	36
Higher education	7
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	3
Total	100

Source: college data

Note: data are for FEFC-funded provision

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

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	346	684	12
Agriculture	29	24	1
Construction	108	240	4
Engineering	341	844	14
Business	1,066	1,064	25
Hotel and catering	67	63	2
Health and community care	574	551	13
Art and design	380	522	10
Humanities	281	930	14
Basic education	244	158	5
Total	3,436	5,080	100

Source: college data

Note: data are for FEFC-funded provision

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (July 1997)

	Perm-ament	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	202	6	37	245
Supporting direct learning contact	44	4	6	54
Other support	85	3	6	94
Total	331	13	49	393

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£13,716,000	£14,131,000	£14,283,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£17.75	£16.70	£17.70
Payroll as a proportion of income	71%	71%	72%
Achievement of funding target	95%	108%	(est) 102%
Diversity of income	26%	22%	21%
Operating surplus	-£73,000	-£569,000	-£439,000

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)

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	267	270	309
	Average point score per entry	4.0	4.1	4.3
	Position in tables	middle third	middle third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	223	171	148
	Percentage achieving qualification	93%	71%	64%
	Position in tables	top third	middle third	bottom third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	223	163
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	72%	68%
	Position in tables	*	top 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

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