

# Huddersfield New College

REPORT FROM  
THE INSPECTORATE  
**1999-00**

THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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*Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry CV1 2WT  
Telephone 024 7686 3000  
Fax 024 7686 3100  
Website [www.fefc.ac.uk](http://www.fefc.ac.uk)*

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### 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.

Audit conclusions are expressed as good, adequate or weak.

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

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

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

## Student Achievements

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

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

# Summary

## Huddersfield New College

### *Yorkshire and Humberside Region*

#### **Inspected October 1999**

Huddersfield New College is a sixth form college. Most of its students are from the metropolitan district of Kirklees. It operates in competition with three other colleges and 17 schools with sixth forms within a radius of 10 miles. The college produced its third self-assessment report for this inspection. The self-assessment process is thorough and involves extensive consultation with staff and students. The self-assessment findings are confirmed by a 'quality council' upon which local employers are represented. A programme of lesson observation is well established. Staff from other colleges are involved in the evaluation of classroom practice. Inspectors agreed with all of the grades in the self-assessment report. Their grade profile for lessons closely matched that of the college. Since the self-assessment report was written, the college has taken action to rectify a significant number of the weaknesses identified in it.

The college offers courses in eight of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Inspectors awarded five grades in four programme areas. Teaching is good: 71% of lessons were judged to be good or outstanding. Students' achievements are outstanding in GNVQ health and social care,

business and some GCE A level art and design and performing arts subjects. Students receive high levels of individual support and excellent careers education and guidance. Links with local schools are particularly productive. Since the last inspection, significant improvements to the estate have been made. A new learning resources centre and new teaching block have been opened. The college provides a pleasant and welcoming learning environment. Quality assurance arrangements are comprehensive and well structured. Data on student retention and achievement are accurate and are carefully analysed. The management style is open and consultative; committees operate effectively. Financial management is good; finances are properly monitored. Governors pay close attention to strategic and curriculum matters and their expertise is used very well. The college should take action to improve: students' achievements in humanities, modern foreign languages and general studies; evaluation of learning support; sports facilities for students; some aspects of operational management. It should also: extend the practice of gathering students' views through questionnaires; establish a formalised training programme for governors.

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

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Business	2	Support for students	1
Health and social care	1	General resources	2
Visual and performing arts	2	Quality assurance	2
Geography, history, law, classics and general studies	3	Governance	2
English and modern foreign languages	2	Management	2

# Context

## The College and its Mission

1 Huddersfield New College was established as a sixth form college in 1974 following a re-organisation of secondary education in Huddersfield. It is located on the outskirts of the town and enrolls most of its students from the metropolitan district of Kirklees. It is one of two sixth form colleges in Huddersfield. There are two other further education colleges and 17 schools with sixth forms, within a radius of 10 miles.

2 Kirklees has a population of approximately 400,000 concentrated principally in the west Yorkshire towns of Huddersfield and Dewsbury. The economy is dominated by small to medium-sized enterprises. There is a strong manufacturing base in engineering, chemicals and textiles. The college is the lead partner in a regional project to train employees of small to medium-sized enterprises in the use of Internet and electronic mail. The minority ethnic population of Kirklees comprises 10.7% of the total population; 31.7% of college students are from minority ethnic groups. In 1998-99, 21% of full-time students received means-tested maintenance awards.

3 The college recruits predominantly from the 16 to 19 age group. In 1998-99, close to 1,100 full-time students were enrolled at the college. The college offers: 33 general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects and 24 GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects; 11 general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects; courses leading to general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) at advanced level and intermediate level in six and five subject areas, respectively. A single GNVQ foundation programme in business is offered and this includes modules from a number of vocational areas. Partnership arrangements exist with three 11 to 16 schools in north Kirklees and eight 11 to 16 schools in south Kirklees. In 1998, the proportion of students leaving schools in Kirklees with five or more GCSE subjects at grades C or above was 40%, which is below the national average of

46%. The current post-16 participation rate in education in the district is 63%. The college has recently been awarded two 'highly commended' Beacon awards. One was for widening participation through its GNVQ foundation programme; the other was for its successful collaboration with a national chemical company over its GNVQ manufacturing programme.

4 Following reorganisation in 1997-98, a new management structure was implemented. The senior management team now comprises the principal; vice-principal with responsibility for curriculum, staffing and students; an assistant principal with responsibility for college information systems and administration; the finance manager and two faculty managers. Of the four assistant faculty managers, two have responsibility for standards and performance and two for student welfare. In September 1999, the college employed 63 full-time equivalent academic staff and 31 full-time equivalent support staff. The mission statement commits the college to 'enabling students to achieve their potential in the fields of study, citizenship and work by expecting and maintaining the highest standards within a sixth form college ethos'. Key objectives include those relating to the development of new courses to widen participation, the continuous improvement of provision, the promotion of respect and esteem for all members of the college, the maintenance of a good learning environment, sound financial management, and the establishment of partnerships with outside bodies for the benefit of students.

## The Inspection

5 The college was inspected during the week beginning 11 October 1999. The inspection team had previously considered the college's self-assessment report and information about the college held by other directorates of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Inspectors used data on students' achievements drawn from the college's individualised student record (ISR) returns to the FEFC for 1997 and

# Context

1998. The college submitted its own data on students' achievements for 1999 which were checked by inspectors against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies. The data proved reliable when checked against these sources. The inspection was carried out by nine inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 39 days. Inspectors observed 66 lessons, assessed students' work and examined college documentation. Meetings were held with governors, managers, other college staff, students, parents, employers, headteachers,

representatives from the local education authority (LEA), training and enterprise council (TEC), Calderdale and Kirklees Careers Service, local colleges, the University of Huddersfield, and other community partners.

6 The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected and the national profile for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. Of the lessons inspected, 71% were judged to be good or outstanding. This is above the national average of 65% for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. Only two lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory.

## Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE AS/A level	6	22	8	0	0	36
GCSE	0	2	2	1	0	5
GNVQ/other vocational	3	12	4	0	0	19
Tutorials	1	1	3	1	0	6
Total (No.)	10	37	17	2	0	66
Total (%)	15	56	26	3	0	100
National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99 (%)	20	45	29	6	0	100

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

7 The following table shows the attendance rates in the lessons observed, including six group tutorials, and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. The highest attendance of 91% was recorded in business; the lowest was 83%, in English and modern foreign languages.

## Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	Average attendance (%)
Huddersfield New College	16.7	88
National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99	11.2	78

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

# Curriculum Areas

## Business

### Grade 2

**8 Inspectors observed 13 lessons covering courses in business studies and economics. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- good teaching
- outstanding pass rates and good retention on GNVQ courses
- good use of industry links
- the high standard of students' assessed work
- comprehensive and well-structured schemes of work
- good specialist resources

#### Weaknesses

- narrow range of learning activities in some lessons
- insufficient support for lower ability students in some of the larger classes
- insufficient use of information technology (IT) by GCE A level students

9 The college offers a broad range of business courses for full-time students. This includes GCE A level and GCE AS business studies and economics courses, and courses leading to a GNVQ in business at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. In 1999, the number of enrolments for GNVQ advanced and GCE A level business studies and economics have all increased. Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that provision in business and economics is well managed. Some staff teach on both GNVQ and GCE courses. They work as a team and are committed to helping the students to succeed. Where appropriate, they make effective use of the same resources and learning materials on

both courses. Schemes of work are of a high standard; learning objectives, activities, and required resources are all clearly identified. Learning materials are of good quality. They are clear, well presented and have been produced using a word processor.

10 Eleven of the 13 lessons observed were either good or outstanding. In lessons, effective use is made of video material. In a GCE A level business studies lesson, excerpts from a video stimulated discussion of marketing concepts and in a GNVQ intermediate lesson, students used a video case study to develop their understanding of business organisations. Teachers make effective use of directed questions to develop business concepts. In most lessons, teachers made sure that the students understood what was being taught and when appropriate, they gave individual students help and support. In some lengthy lessons, students spent considerable time working on their own without sufficient help and assistance from the teacher or from one another. Some students lost concentration and failed to make progress with the task in hand. In some of the larger classes, the needs of lower ability students were not always met effectively and some students had to compete for the teacher's attention. Teachers identify carefully ways in which students on GNVQ courses can develop key skills through all their activities and assignment work. GCE A level students are also afforded opportunities to acquire or improve their key skills. Carefully planned industrial visits provide a realistic context for assignment work. Teachers review students' progress regularly. Students have agreed action plans with their teachers who monitor students' performance against these. Additional workshops are provided outside lesson time for students requesting additional support. Teachers provide detailed written feedback on students' work and this includes clear comments on how students can improve their performance. Students' assessed work demonstrates that students are able to apply the



# Curriculum Areas

knowledge and understanding they have gained to different business and economic contexts. The portfolios of GNVQ students are well organised.

11 Pass rates on GNVQ courses are outstanding. The college recognised in its self-assessment report that these are often significantly above the national average for the further education sector. Retention rates are also well above national figures. In 1999, the pass rates for GCE A level economics and business studies, respectively, were 100%. Although the proportion of students who obtain higher grades in GCE A level business studies is relatively low, many students achieve higher grades than those predicted for them on the basis of their GCSE results. The retention rate on the GCE A level business course is declining and in 1999 it was below the national average. Significant numbers of students progress from

GNVQ foundation to advanced courses. Many students also progress from advanced courses to higher education and appropriate employment.

12 Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. They undertake relevant staff development and professional training. Some have updated their commercial experience. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that the modern specialist facilities and accommodation for this area of work constitute a strength. Rooms used for business studies are well equipped and have informative course-related wall displays. Although modern computer equipment and software are readily available, some students, particularly on GCE A level courses, do not use IT sufficiently in their assignment work. This weakness is not recognised in the self-assessment report. Students with visual impairment are provided with notes in Braille.

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GNVQ foundation	1	Number of starters	19	32	29
		Retention (%)	79	88	80
		Achievement (%)	93	97	92
GNVQ intermediate	2	Number of starters	27	24	32
		Retention (%)	85	88	97
		Achievement (%)	78	95	91
GNVQ advanced	3	Number of starters	50	47	42
		Retention (%)	74	81	91
		Achievement (%)	81	81	90
GCE A level business studies	3	Number of starters	59	70	67
		Retention (%)	88	83	73
		Achievement (%)	100	98	100
GCE A level economics	3	Number of starters	15	14	10
		Retention (%)	93	58	90
		Achievement (%)	75	100	100

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

# Curriculum Areas

## Health and Social Care

### Grade 1

**13 Inspectors observed 10 lessons on GNVQ courses in health and social care. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report but considered that some of the strengths had been overstated. Some of the weaknesses had been addressed by the time of inspection.**

#### Key strengths

- students' outstanding achievement rates
- large percentage of merit and distinction grades
- high pass rates in additional qualifications
- excellent retention rates on courses at intermediate level
- good teaching
- students' successful progression to further and higher education
- extensive opportunities for the assessment of key skills
- well-managed courses

#### Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses

14 The college offers courses in GNVQ health and social care at intermediate and advanced level. Courses are well managed. There are clearly developed curriculum policies and procedures. The course team holds meetings regularly. At each meeting, team members draw up an action plan to effect change; at their next meeting, they monitor the extent to which this has been implemented. There is detailed course documentation, including good schemes of work, for both programmes. Internal verification is effective. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that teachers support their students well. Students

review their work frequently and set themselves targets for further improvement. Teachers regularly monitor students' progress towards these targets.

15 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that teaching is good. Of the 10 lessons observed, eight were good or outstanding. Lessons were well prepared. Teachers had clear aims and objectives for each lesson. Students were able to extend their knowledge and understanding of particular topics and concepts by engaging in a variety of appropriate and imaginative learning activities. They were encouraged to draw on their own experiences. For example, in one lesson, students learned about personality traits by completing a personality test to identify if they were introverts or extroverts. Their findings were related to a case study which illustrated different behaviour patterns. In a minority of lessons, teachers gave out handouts but failed to make sure that the students understood them properly. In four of the lessons observed, some students arrived late. On the advanced course, students go out on work experience in order that they may relate theory to practice. Students on the intermediate course, however, are not provided with any structured work experience. The vocational relevance of courses is strengthened by a series of presentations by outside speakers from the health and caring professions. Key skills assessment is an integral part of many of the learning activities. For example, in one lesson, students developed the key skill of number by considering data on the most common causes of illness in different countries and then drawing graphs and calculating the mean values of death rates.

16 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment finding that achievement rates are outstanding. Pass rates on both the intermediate and advanced courses are 10% to 20% above the national averages for the further education sector. The proportion of higher grades obtained by students on advanced level courses

# Curriculum Areas

is almost 40% above the national average. Many students obtain additional qualifications. Over half of the students on the advanced course achieve a pass in an additional GCE A level subject and a similar proportion of students on the intermediate course gain grade C or above in at least one GCSE subject. Many students also gain IT and first-aid certificates. Students also organise a number of extra-curricular activities, such as health fairs, throughout the year. Retention rates are outstanding on the intermediate course. The self-assessment report recognises the declining retention rate on the advanced course. In the last two years, over half the students on the intermediate course have progressed to the advanced course. Most students on the advanced course progress to higher education.

17 Students' work is of a high standard. Most portfolios are well organised. Students' assignments demonstrate that students have a good understanding of the subject and the ability to research and evaluate evidence. Teachers grade assignments accurately and provide students with constructive feedback on how to improve their work. Students are well prepared for GNVQ unit tests and the majority of them pass at their first attempt. All assignments provide students with clear opportunities to be assessed in key skills.

18 Teachers are appropriately qualified and many have undertaken staff development and professional training to improve their knowledge of health and social care. Students have access to modern computer equipment and software which they use to carry out research for their assignments.

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GNVQ intermediate	2	Number of starters	19	14	15
		Retention (%)	84	93	93
		Achievement (%)	94	92	92
GNVQ advanced	3	Number of starters	16	30	19
		Retention (%)	88	77	79
		Achievement (%)	100	91	87

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

# Curriculum Areas

## Visual and Performing Arts

### Grade 2

**19 The inspection covered courses in art, design, music, performing arts and theatre studies. Thirteen lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with most judgements in the self-assessment report, although they found some strengths and weaknesses which the college had not identified.**

#### Key strengths

- well-planned lessons
- much good teaching
- productive external links
- good study visits
- thorough assessment of students' work
- some outstanding examination results

#### Weaknesses

- some poor and declining retention rates

20 Provision in art, design and performing arts is well managed. Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that teachers work well together to provide students with learning experiences in which the visual and performing arts are imaginatively integrated. Teachers set high standards and ensure that students understand the demands of the different courses. The college has productive links with a variety of external organisations and through these it is able to provide the students with activities which enrich and broaden their learning. For example, in art and design, a life drawing class is run in collaboration with a local art college. A recent project, part of the Opera North community programme, has enabled performing arts students to undertake a live performance based on the opera *Katya Kabanova* at the Leeds Grand Theatre. The range of options in

performing arts includes theatre, drama, dance and music. In art and design, students have the option of studying various media including ceramics, textiles, fashion, graphics, and three-dimensional work.

21 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that teaching is well organised. Most lessons were good or outstanding. In performing arts, lessons were well planned and ably managed and in them there was an appropriate balance between presentation by the teacher and work, often involving self-expression, which students carried out by themselves. In design, students have a good understanding of what is expected of them. Their work on some of the projects they undertake has been used by commercial companies. One student for example, has designed and developed skiwear specifically for use on a dry ski slope and this is currently being marketed in Saudi Arabia. In art, teachers demonstrate their own work effectively to provide students with a range of creative stimuli. The students' three-dimensional ceramic work is particularly lively and imaginative. In a minority of lessons, teachers dominated activities, and gave the students insufficient scope to be expressive and creative. In some instances, the students were not allowed to make good use of the lesson time and they were required to carry out repetitive and unimaginative tasks. Students receive an assessment in key skills on each of the GCE A level programmes. Opportunities for students to develop and improve their key skills are particularly well developed on art and design courses. Students' work is assessed frequently and detailed checks are made on the extent of students' progress.

22 Examination results in most subjects are outstanding. For example in 1999, pass rates in GCE A level art, design, theatre studies, performing arts and GCSE art were well above national average using all students' entries. Pass rates in performing arts have been 100% for the past three years. Students at GCE A

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level consistently achieve higher grades than those predicted for them on the basis of their GCSE results. The self-assessment report noted the significant improvements in GCE A level design and GCSE art pass rates between 1998 and 1999. It also recognised that the pass rate in GCE A level music has varied considerably in the past three years. In 1999, it fell 10% below the average for sixth form colleges. Retention rates fluctuate from year to year and on most courses they are declining. In GCE A level music, only 50% of students completed the course in 1999. By contrast, the retention rate on performing arts courses increased by 10% between 1998 and 1999.

23 Specialist resources in art and design have improved during the last three years allowing students to undertake projects in both two-dimensional and three-dimensional studies and multimedia workshops. There are good IT facilities next to the design studio and students

can use these on a 'drop-in' basis. Students in the performing arts area enjoy purpose-built accommodation in a converted boilerhouse. Staff are well qualified and experienced. Visiting art and design professional practitioners complement the work of the full-time team.

## A summary of retention and achievement rates in visual and performing arts, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSE art and design	2	Number of starters	68	32	26
		Retention (%)	62	81	77
		Achievement (%)	76	65	95
GCE A level art	3	Number of starters	43	58	31
		Retention (%)	78	72	68
		Achievement (%)	89	95	100
GCE A level design	3	Number of starters	32	46	36
		Retention (%)	50	71	61
		Achievement (%)	100	94	100
GCE A level music performance	3	Number of starters	8	15	12
		Retention (%)	88	73	50
		Achievement (%)	60	100	83
GCE A level performing arts and theatre studies	3	Number of starters	38	64	42
		Retention (%)	74	73	83
		Achievement (%)	89	97	100

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

# Curriculum Areas

## Geography, history, law, classics and general studies

### Grade 3

**24 Inspectors observed 10 lessons and sampled students' work at GCE A level in geography, history, law and classical studies. The GCE A level general studies programme was also examined, although no teaching was taking place during the inspection. Inspectors broadly agreed with the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report for the subjects inspected although achievements in general studies were not extensively evaluated.**

#### Key strengths

- a variety of relevant teaching methods and learning activities
- good development and effective assessment of key skills
- effective course organisation and planning

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient rigour in the monitoring of students' progress
- some students' lack of punctuality
- some students' poor achievements at GCE A level

25 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that a broad range of GCE A level and GCE AS subjects is available. Law has been offered since 1993 and attracts a growing number of students. The number of students enrolled for classical studies is small and first and second-year students are combined to form one group. Enrolments in history and geography have fluctuated but they exceeded target numbers in 1999. Students may take an appropriate GCE AS subject in either their first or second year. The humanities curriculum is

well planned and organised effectively.

Purposeful team meetings are held regularly. The geography section has a progression agreement with the University of Huddersfield, providing students who wish to go there with the opportunity of an early interview and a potential progression route. In humanities, teachers recognise that in their monitoring of students' progress, they fail to set students demanding targets. Some students have unsatisfactory attendance records.

26 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that lessons are well planned and involve a variety of relevant teaching methods and learning activities. There is much good teaching. In a GCE A level law lesson on different ways of conducting a defence case, students were given a set of cards detailing various crimes and another set of cards specifying possible lines of defence. The students had to match cards appropriately and discuss why one method of defence was more suitable in the case of a particular crime than another. Students enjoyed the exercise and it helped to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of defence methods and techniques. In most lessons, teachers regularly check students' understanding and they question the students effectively and engage them in discussion. In a significant number of lessons, students arrived late, disrupting the start of the lesson. The teachers did not then leave themselves enough time at the end of the lesson to draw proper conclusions or to review the lesson content. In some instances, students are not given sufficient scope to respond to views and theories put to them by the teacher, or to develop and explore ideas of their own. As identified in the self-assessment report, teachers provide a range of enrichment activities, including geography residential courses in France and Morocco and visits to law courts and museums. Teachers place importance on the students' acquisition of research and communication skills. Schemes of work show

# Curriculum Areas

how students can develop key skills through all their learning activities. When marking work, teachers include in their written feedback, comments on students' performance in key skills. Teachers give their time willingly at lunchtimes and during free periods to help students.

27 The self-assessment report recognises that student retention and achievement rates vary considerably and that some are poor. On GCE A level law courses, for example, retention rates are declining but pass rates have improved. On GCE A level history courses, retention rates are satisfactory but the pass rates are significantly below the average for sixth form colleges. In 1998, the pass rate for GCE A level geography was good but it declined in 1999. The retention rates and achievement rates for the small number of students taking classical studies are satisfactory. In all the subject areas inspected, only a small proportion of students obtain higher grades. In order to help students achieve better results, teachers are now providing more revision and support sessions and they

concentrate on improving the students' examination techniques. The GCE A level general studies programme is delivered to all students on advanced programmes through tutorials in the first year. Thereafter students use materials located in the study centre. The college recognises that continuation rates for general studies into the second year are low.

28 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that teachers are well qualified. They have relevant degrees and good teaching experience. Several have strong links with examining bodies. Most teaching rooms are attractive. They contain appropriate display materials and also subject resources available for students' use. The quantity and range of library bookstock are adequate. Students have access to computer facilities. IT is not, however, sufficiently integral to teaching and learning activities.

## A summary of retention and achievement rates in geography, history, law, classics and general studies, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCE A level geography	3	Number of starters	24	39	17
		Retention (%)	83	72	77
		Achievement (%)	*	93	69
GCE A level history	3	Number of starters	38	48	28
		Retention (%)	87	92	82
		Achievement (%)	77	66	78
GCE A level law	3	Number of starters	23	22	29
		Retention (%)	87	77	76
		Achievement (%)	76	87	86
GCE A level general studies	3	Number of starters	353	556	437
		Retention (%)	35	16	14
		Achievement (%)	54	77	75

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

\*data not reliable

# Curriculum Areas

## English and Modern Foreign Languages

### Grade 2

**29 Inspectors observed 14 lessons in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. They were in close agreement with the findings of the self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- a wide range of well-managed programmes
- good opportunities for students to participate in extra-curricular activities
- stimulating teaching in most lessons
- effective support for students
- good achievements by students on English courses
- good learning resources

#### Weaknesses

- students' poor achievements in foreign languages
- declining retention rates on some courses

30 The college offers a wide range of provision in English and foreign languages from foundation to advanced level. This includes a number of courses other than GCE A level and GCSE. For those students who are not ready to start a GCSE English course, the college offers a pre-GCSE programme leading to an Open College qualification. English teachers also contribute to an access to higher education course, and offer a journalism course through the college's enrichment programme. All students have opportunities to take NVQ units in modern foreign languages and GNVQ leisure and tourism students study Spanish as a part of their course. Pupils in years 5 and 6 of local junior schools attend a 'Junior French' course at the college. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the curriculum areas are well managed. Teachers work well together to plan courses, discuss teaching methods and

devise common materials. Course guides, schemes of work and lesson plans are detailed. Minutes of team meetings indicate that due attention is given to identifying and responding to weaknesses.

31 Students have good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. On National Poetry day, students of English visited other classes to read aloud poems they had chosen or written. They mounted displays of poems on walls throughout the college. GCE A level English students take part in an extensive programme of theatre visits. Students from all programme areas take part in foreign visits and exchanges, some of which include work experience. Many of the students taking part in visits abroad study GNVQ language units. Some year 11 pupils from local secondary schools also take part in these visits.

32 In most lessons, teachers engage the students in appropriately varied and imaginative activities which excite and hold their interest. In a GCE A level English language lesson, students worked in groups to analyse the language used on the front covers of popular magazines, and presented their findings. The good choice of material and the teacher's lively approach ensured that the students enjoyed the task and achieved a good understanding of the nuances of language. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and use well-prepared task sheets to direct students' activities. Lessons involve students in an effective blend of individual, group and whole-class activities. Teachers of foreign languages make good use of the language laboratory and satellite television to develop students' listening skills, and students benefit from regular discussion with foreign language assistants. In some GCSE English lessons, students' attention wandered. Some foreign language lessons contained insufficient opportunities for students to communicate with each other in the language being studied. As the self-assessment report indicates, teachers of English and of modern languages provide effective additional support for students. As well as readily giving informal help outside lesson



# Curriculum Areas

time, they are timetabled for sessions in the study centre so that they can offer tutorial help and assist students in using the materials provided there. Teachers' marking of written work includes helpful feedback to students. Students' key skill attainments are identified and recorded.

33 Students produce coursework of a high standard. English students demonstrate good powers of critical analysis and the ability to express their personal response to literature clearly in speech and writing. Modern language students make effective use of their experience in the foreign country. Achievements in English are good. In 1999, 91% of students on the pre-GCSE English programme achieved a pass, and of these, 74% progressed to the GCSE course. Rates of retention and achievement on GCSE English courses have been significantly above the average for sixth form colleges for the past two years. GCE A level English students consistently achieve results which are at or above the sixth form college average, and higher than those predicted for them on the basis of

their GCSE grades. In general, students' examination results in modern foreign languages are poor. With the exception of those taking German, GCE A level students achieve results below those predicted for them. Retention rates on some courses have declined over the last three years. In 1999, those for GCE A level English, French and German courses fell below national averages.

34 Teachers are well qualified and suitably experienced. Many have useful experience as examiners. Specialist accommodation and equipment are good. Subject classrooms have attractive displays of students' work. A recently built languages suite includes satellite television recording facilities and two good-sized language laboratories. The specialist materials held in the learning resource centre and the study centre are mostly well matched to students' needs. They include appropriate CD-ROMs and audiovisual materials. Students use the Internet for their coursework assignments, and language students communicate by electronic mail with students abroad.

## A summary of retention and achievement rates in English and modern foreign languages, 1997 to 1999

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
Communication skills (pre-GCSE course)	1	Number of starters	39	18	28
		Retention (%)	79	72	82
		Achievement (%)	77	77	91
GCSE English	2	Number of starters	184	251	235
		Retention (%)	89	90	91
		Achievement (%)	21	63	60
GCSE French, Spanish, Italian	2	Number of starters	37	39	30
		Retention (%)	59	79	90
		Achievement (%)	86	61	59
GCE A level English language and English literature	3	Number of starters	154	211	137
		Retention (%)	81	75	71
		Achievement (%)	93	91	92
GCE A level French, German, Spanish	3	Number of starters	33	66	45
		Retention (%)	73	76	69
		Achievement (%)	95	71	61

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

# Cross-college Provision

## Support for Students

### Grade 1

**35 As part of the inspection of support for students, inspectors observed six group tutorials. They agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report. Some weaknesses had been rectified by the time of the inspection.**

#### Key strengths

- effective pre-entry guidance
- high levels of support for individual students
- well-planned induction
- excellent careers education and guidance
- careful monitoring of students' progress
- productive links with schools

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient evaluation of the impact of learning support on students' achievements

36 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that pre-entry guidance for students is effective. Considerable care is taken to ensure that students are enrolled on the course most appropriate for them. Responses to questionnaires indicate that students are highly satisfied with the information and guidance they receive. Productive links with schools enable the college to provide guidance to prospective students while they are still at school. All applicants receive an interview, and those from partner schools are interviewed at school. A wide range of publicity materials and activities complements pre-course guidance effectively. This year, almost 300 year 10 pupils attended an open day at the college and they expressed their appreciation of this event. The 'summer technology' project at the college gave pupils, their parents and teachers the opportunity to learn how to use the Internet and electronic

mail facilities. The college keeps its partner schools informed about their past pupils' achievements and destinations.

37 Induction procedures are effective. All students receive a college diary and useful course guides, which contain clear information on both course content and assessment procedures. The college charter is sent to students before they enrol, and discussed at induction. As the self-assessment report indicates, there are clear and effective procedures for students who wish to change their course.

38 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that careers and higher education guidance are excellent. Staff from the local careers service complement the work of the college's careers adviser. All students follow a comprehensive careers education and guidance programme. They receive effective support when applying for university and jobs. The learning resource centre has a well-stocked and attractive careers information section. The college makes good use of links with local industry and commerce. Employers provide work experience, participate in the college's industry day and, more recently, they have been offering trainee management opportunities. In 1998, 72% of leavers on advanced courses gained a place at university. Significant numbers of students have progressed from foundation through to advanced level courses and then to university. A high percentage of intermediate students progress to advanced programmes.

39 The college arrangements for providing students with pastoral support are well established and excellent. A 'review day' is held each term when students draw up action plans for improving their performance and agree these with their tutors. Students are set target examination grades. These are determined on the basis of their previous performance in the GCSE and they are revised in the light of the progress the students make. Students speak

# Cross-college Provision

highly of the personal and academic support which they receive from tutors. Parents receive comprehensive progress reports and are invited to parents' evenings. They speak positively of the information provided, the support offered to students and the helpfulness of staff. Students receive good welfare and counselling support. The college organises a schedule of health education activities, such as health week and drug awareness seminars. It also contracts with the local health trust to provide a nurse who is a qualified counsellor, and a female doctor, each for one session each week.

40 The tutorial system plays a key role in helping the college to achieve its mission of enabling students to fulfil their potential. All students have a personal tutor, who is usually one of their subject teachers. Guidelines for tutors are expressed clearly in a comprehensive file, which includes a schedule of tutorial activities and relevant materials. Students are also provided with a tutorial file which contains a series of structured activities to help them to develop key skills and study skills. The tutorial programme for GCSE students includes revision techniques, and for final year advanced level students the focus is on careers education and guidance. Overall, inspectors awarded lower grades for tutorials than that for other lessons. In first-year tutorials, students were purposefully completing a questionnaire designed to assess their competence in different study skills. Tutorials for final-year students were more fragmented because some students were unable to attend at the designated time.

41 At induction, all students' literacy and numeracy skills are assessed. Most of those who are identified as requiring additional support receive it. Much of the support is provided in the college's study centre, which contains a useful range of learning materials and is staffed by specialist teachers. Learning support teachers also assist in lessons. Details of students' progress are recorded. The self-assessment identifies as a weakness the

college's failure to evaluate the extent to which the provision of support helps students to succeed in their examinations. All curriculum areas have produced special and demanding study materials for the more able students which challenge them to think perceptively and use learning skills rigorously. All curriculum areas have produced study materials to challenge the more able students. The college provides good support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

42 Students are entitled to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport, music, drama, dance, languages, and coaching awards. College sports teams have distinguished themselves at regional level. Students have opportunities for foreign exchanges, including one with Tanzania. The student council plays an active role in the college. It raises money for charity, organises activities and represents students' views to college management and the corporation.

## General Resources

### *Grade 2*

**43 The college's general resources have improved significantly since the last inspection. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. By the time of the inspection, the college had taken action on the weaknesses.**

#### **Key strengths**

- improvements to the estate
- pleasant and welcoming learning environment
- good-quality general teaching accommodation
- attractive and well-equipped learning resource centre
- good access to modern IT facilities

# Cross-college Provision

## Weaknesses

- insufficient access to parts of the site for students with restricted mobility
- no policy for replacement and upgrading of capital equipment
- poor quality of sports facilities

44 The college has made significant improvements to the accommodation since the last inspection. These include the redevelopment of part of the main building to create a new teaching block, the conversion of the main hall into a new learning resource centre, the creation of an open access IT suite, the provision of an enlarged study centre for additional learning support, the development of a new centre for the performing arts, and the refurbishment of the refectory and student common room. The college now provides a welcoming learning environment which is appreciated by students and teachers. In 1997, the college carried out a survey of the condition of its accommodation and has implemented an annual programme of maintenance and repairs. The buildings are clean and well maintained, and corridors have attractive displays of students' work. There are good car parking facilities for both staff and students. Campus security is visible and effective.

45 The quality of most teaching accommodation is good. The new teaching block contains good-quality classrooms which can be used for a variety of teaching and learning activities, and most classrooms are appropriately equipped and furnished. In some instances, classrooms are too big or too small for the class using them or are unsuitable for the activities being undertaken. Students with restricted mobility have difficulty gaining access to a number of areas of the college. For example, the chemistry laboratories, parts of the learning resource centre and sports studies mobile are inaccessible to wheelchair users.

46 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that the learning resource centre provides a good-quality learning environment. The centre has an adequate number of study spaces where students may work in silence. It also has computer workstations at which students may gain access to the Internet and use CD-ROMs, and it contains a wide range of books, journals and periodicals. In addition, departments purchase books for use by students in departmental resource areas. The centre is well organised, and it is managed by experienced and well-qualified staff. Links between subject teachers and library staff are effective, and the centre manager is a member of the college's academic board and quality council. No recent stock check has been undertaken. There is no overall catalogue showing which resources are held centrally and which are held within departments.

47 The college has made a significant investment in IT since the last inspection. A major upgrade to the college network has recently been completed, and students have access to modern computers located in specialist rooms and other areas of the college. The new IT centre enables students to use computers on a 'drop-in' basis. All computers have industry-standard software, and provide access to the Internet and electronic mail. The ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students of 1:6 compares favourably with the average for the sector as a whole. Most teachers and support staff also have good access to computers. There is a computer users' group with representatives from curriculum areas and the IT team, but it has not met recently. The self-assessment report acknowledged the absence of a systematic process for upgrading and replacing capital equipment.

48 The college site includes a large sports field which is used extensively for team games. Some outdoor tennis courts are unfit for use. The gymnasium and changing rooms are in need of refurbishment. The self-assessment report

# Cross-college Provision

recognises that sports accommodation is in need of improvement, and the college is preparing a bid for external funding for a new sports hall and outdoor floodlit playing area. The refurbished refectory and adjacent common room are attractive, and popular with students. The college reception area is pleasant and welcoming. Staff workrooms are of adequate size, and enable curriculum teams to meet and work together. A private nursery on the college site is used by staff and students attending the college.

## Quality Assurance

### Grade 2

**49 The self-assessment report emphasised the college's strong commitment to quality assurance. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report but found a weakness which the college had not identified.**

#### Key strengths

- college-wide commitment to quality assurance
- well-structured and comprehensive quality assurance arrangements
- rigorous self-assessment process
- good analysis of data on students' attendance, retention and achievement
- rigorous programme of lesson observation

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of staff development
- inadequate monitoring of the achievement of some support service standards
- insufficient use of student questionnaires

50 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that all staff clearly understand the quality assurance processes operating in the

college. Staff have a strong commitment to ensuring that all provision is of good quality and they recognise the important role they each have in improving the college's performance. A commitment to maintaining the highest standards is included in the college mission statement and improving the quality of the college's provision is a key objective in the strategic plan.

51 The college has made significant progress in developing its quality assurance systems and procedures since the last inspection. There is a clear quality assurance policy and well-structured quality assurance procedures. The quality council, a subcommittee of the academic board, includes representatives from the corporation, employers, students and staff. It oversees the development, implementation and monitoring of quality assurance procedures and has responsibility for the college charter. The manager with responsibility for quality and equality, together with two assistant faculty managers, oversee the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of quality. All teams, including support services, maintain quality assurance files. Action-planning is integral to all stages of the quality assurance process although some of the teams do not set themselves clearly measurable targets. Some quality assurance files are not kept up to date.

52 The self-assessment report which the college prepared for the inspection was the third it has produced. The self-assessment report was detailed and thorough. Judgements in it were carefully considered and they were well supported by clear evidence. Teams throughout the college are fully involved in regular self-assessment, following clear guidelines. Academic and support teams produce reports which are objective and evaluative and which contribute to the overall self-assessment document. The self-assessment report contains clear information relating to the college's overall performance such as student attendance, retention and achievement rates, summaries of

# Cross-college Provision

students' responses to questionnaires and records of lesson observations. It was rigorously validated by the quality council, before being approved by governors; this was appropriately identified as a strength by the college in the self-assessment report.

53 Most course teams make effective use of data to set targets for students' achievements and to monitor students' progress towards reaching them. A few course teams, however, fail to make full and regular use of these data to monitor and improve performance in their respective areas. Subject teams determine targets for students' recruitment, attendance, retention and achievements after considering previous performance, national averages and college criteria for target-setting. Senior managers and college committees monitor progress towards achieving subject-team targets. Support services have recently identified clear standards for their provision and they have set targets related to these. Arrangements, however, for monitoring progress towards these targets are underdeveloped. For example, there is no analysis of how long it takes central admissions to respond to an application from a potential student.

54 A wide range of questionnaires is used to gather students' views at key stages of their courses. As the self-assessment report identified, there is no central co-ordination of the way students' responses are received and dealt with and opportunities are missed for comparing students' views across different courses. Specific support service areas, such as the learning resource centre, issue their own questionnaires to students. The opinions of staff and parents are also gathered annually. Summaries of responses to the course questionnaires are fed directly back to the students and action is taken on issues raised. Summaries of responses to other questionnaires are publicised as appropriate. The quality assurance manager makes a final summary of responses to all questionnaires and presents this to the quality council.

55 A programme of lesson observations was introduced in 1997. All teachers are observed annually. The observation procedure is rigorous and the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. Inspectors judged 71% of lessons to be good or outstanding. This profile closely matches the college's own assessment. The profile of grades has improved from the 60% of good or outstanding grades awarded at the last inspection. Observations are conducted by two observers, one usually from another college, to improve consistency of judgements. The college provides support to staff receiving low grades. Useful summaries of strengths and weaknesses in lessons and the grades are discussed at team meetings. Good practice is shared and action is agreed to rectify weaknesses. All staff have an annual appraisal which results in a personal development plan.

56 Staff development needs are identified during staff appraisal interviews. The staff development and training plan reflects the needs of individual staff, the plans of staff teams, and the college's corporate and strategic objectives. The plan is discussed and approved by the staff development committee, and is reviewed annually. Staff benefit from a range of internal and external training events. Staff are taking part in training events on the new curriculum to be introduced next year and these are organised by the regional sixth form college network. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that there is insufficient evaluation of the effectiveness of staff development and training. The college is addressing this weakness. The college was successfully reassessed as an Investor in People in May 1999.

# Cross-college Provision

## Governance

### Grade 2

#### 57 Inspectors and auditors agreed substantially with the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report.

##### Key strengths

- detailed monitoring of the college's financial performance
- inclusive role in setting the college's strategic direction and monitoring progress
- good use of governors' expertise
- governors' close interest in curriculum matters
- governors' commitment to the successful implementation of key policies

##### Weaknesses

- no formalised governor training programme
- some non-compliance issues

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

59 The corporation has 15 members, with one vacancy. There are six female governors and membership from minority ethnic groups. Governors have a range of expertise which has been effectively used by the college, for example, in developing appraisal procedures. The search committee has not yet carried out a formal review of governors' skills although steps are being taken to address the lack of audit experience on the corporation. At induction, newly appointed governors receive a comprehensive handbook which contains a range of useful information including

committees' terms of reference and the college's financial regulations. Governor training has largely comprised presentations by college staff, joint training with staff and a development day. There is currently no formal, annual training programme. Governors have recently assessed their own training requirements in order to rectify this weakness identified in the self-assessment report.

60 The corporation meets at least termly, with additional meetings as appropriate, and is clerked effectively. Governors appreciate the well-organised meetings and the timely distribution of agendas and papers. The conduct of meetings is determined by a comprehensive set of standing orders. Minutes clearly record decisions taken by the corporation. The clerk to the corporation, who is a member of the college's senior management team, has a separate, detailed job description covering her responsibilities as clerk. Governors' attendance at corporation and committee meetings over the last 12 months is good, averaging 80%.

61 In addition to the search committee, there are corporation committees for finance and general purposes, audit, employment, remuneration and quality. The committees meet with appropriate frequency. As noted in the self-assessment report, each committee has clear terms of reference. Reporting arrangements to the corporation are effective. Monitoring of the college's financial performance is undertaken by the finance and general purposes committee which is chaired by a governor with a professional financial qualification. The committee receives and reviews the college's management accounts at each of its meetings. The finance manager also presents governors with a detailed financial summary at corporation meetings. Whilst the audit committee has largely operated effectively, its two most recent meetings were clerked by the finance manager contrary to the best practice recommended in Council Circular 99/30.

# Cross-college Provision

62 Governors and all staff have completed declarations of interest which are updated annually. However, the declarations do not include the interests of spouses, partners and close relatives. The register of governors' interests is available for public inspection at the college reception desk. Minutes of corporation and committee meetings are placed in the college library and corporation business is reported in detail in a weekly newsletter to staff. The incidence of confidential items of business is low. Whilst a code of conduct has been agreed, it requires updating to bring it in line with the recommendations of the Nolan committee.

63 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that governors play an appropriate part in setting the strategic direction of the college and that they take a close interest in academic matters. They review the mission annually and attend sessions on strategy held with staff and which take place during a training day for the whole college. The achievement of operational objectives is reviewed in February and at the end of the academic year. College targets for students' recruitment, retention and achievements are approved and progress towards reaching them is monitored by governors. Governors also monitor key college policies such as those for health and safety and equal opportunities. Governors have played a significant part in validating the college's self-assessment report. However, with the exception of an attendance target of 80%, insufficient attention has been paid to setting criteria against which to review their overall performance. The appraisal of the principal against the achievement of corporate targets is undertaken by the chair of governors annually. As part of the principal's appraisal, the chair receives reports from the college's senior managers about aspects of the principal's performance.

64 Governors communicate with staff in a number of ways. Senior managers make presentations to the corporation and its committees where appropriate. There is a staff governor and the vacancy on the corporation is to be filled by a student, following a recent re-determination of membership under the revised instrument and articles of government. Governors on the quality committee receive presentations from college curriculum managers when self-assessment reports are reviewed. Governors receive summaries of responses to staff and student questionnaires and some attend the college's joint consultative committee which brings together management and trades unions. Governors have recently been linked to different curriculum areas across the college in order to improve their understanding of academic and vocational matters.

## Management

### *Grade 2*

**65 Inspectors substantially agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.**

#### **Key strengths**

- clear management structures
- effective operation of committees
- open and consultative management
- comprehensive corporate planning process
- effective college information service
- progress in rectifying key weaknesses identified at the last inspection
- good financial management

#### **Weaknesses**

- failure of improvement strategies to lead to better pass rates in some GCE A level subjects
- some aspects of operational management



# Cross-college Provision

66 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the college management structure is clear and understood by staff and that there is good communication throughout the college. Some aspects of management, including communications, have improved significantly since the last inspection. The means of communication include an informative, weekly staff newsletter, twice-weekly staff briefings, electronic communications and regular team meetings. Staff speak favourably about the openness and responsiveness of senior management, for example, their willingness to explain the reasons for change and responsiveness to the concerns of individual staff. Nevertheless, the present management structures are relatively new and the college recognises that a small proportion of staff are not yet fully convinced that the new management systems are going to be effective. The college has worked productively to address this issue by, for example, establishing focus groups and conducting team-building activities and has been successful in reducing the number of staff who have doubts about the new systems.

67 A wide range of committees and working groups supports the work of the college. A broad selection of college staff are members of these and many have student representatives. Members are required to report developments back to their local teams. Staff teams at all levels in the college meet regularly and according to a college calendar. Minutes are recorded on a standard proforma and circulated appropriately. Actions and the monitoring of their implementation are usually clear. In some cases, action points are too vague to allow for rigorous monitoring of their implementation and some actions are not completed within the specified time. The college has a register of appropriate policies. The college has a clear policy on equal opportunities and effective procedures for ensuring that equality of opportunity is upheld and promoted through all aspects of the college's work.

68 Planning throughout the college reflects the college's mission statement and strategic objectives. Corporate planning is carried out through consultation. Discussion groups and presentations at staff training days provide an appropriate means whereby staff can contribute to the planning process. External organisations provide market information to assist planning. An annual planning diary is used to ensure that planning functions are co-ordinated and clearly communicated to staff. The resulting operating statement and other action plans are rigorously reviewed. Targets for improving the college's performance are set. The college has recently taken specific action to raise some GCE A level subject pass rates which have fallen below the national average for sixth form colleges, but this has yet to prove effective. In addition, retention on part-time computer literacy courses was particularly poor in 1997-98. Due to unit targets being fully met, part-time courses are now provided at the college by Huddersfield Technical College. The college information service provides data for the FEFC which are accurate and timely. It also provides a broad range of useful reports to help staff in their review and evaluation of provision. Information is easily accessible and users receive good support from the service.

# Cross-college Provision

69 As noted in the self-assessment report, the college has developed a large number of links and partnerships with external organisations. A concordat between the three colleges in Huddersfield has enabled them, collectively, to provide a co-ordinated and broad curriculum and maintain liaison with partner schools. There are good curriculum links with the adjacent secondary school. Curriculum links with other partner schools are less well developed. Community organisations, including those representing minority ethnic groups, speak positively about the college's responsiveness. The college contributes to a number of collaborative projects with other educational and commercial institutions. It is part of two regional sixth form college consortia and plays a leading role in a local 'virtual manufacturing network' and a project on environmental sustainability sponsored by Kirklees district.

70 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The college has achieved its funding unit targets for each of the last four years. It enjoyed an operating surplus of over £300,000 for the year ending 31 July 1999 and reserves are close to £500,000. Operating surpluses were also achieved in the three previous years and the latest financial forecasts indicate that the college will continue to be financially sound. These results have been achieved despite a reduction in the college's average level of funding. The senior management team reviews the college's financial position monthly through the receipt of detailed management accounts. The finance manager is a qualified chartered accountant. The management accounts contain a range of appropriate information, including a commentary, and they provide measurement of performance against different financial ratios. They do not, however, include a rolling 12-month cashflow forecast. Budget holders also receive monthly reports of actual and

committed expenditure against budget. The financial regulations are largely comprehensive and have been updated. The reports of the internal and external auditors indicate that the college has sound systems of internal control. Auditors agreed substantially with the strengths and weaknesses of the college's financial management which were identified in the self-assessment report.

## Conclusions

71 The college's third self-assessment report is clear, detailed, thorough and objective. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses it identified. They also agreed with all the grades awarded by the college for the curriculum areas and cross-college aspects inspected although general studies achievements were not sufficiently evaluated in the report. Since the last report was written, progress has been made addressing a significant number of the weaknesses identified in it. Staff teams throughout the college are fully involved in the self-assessment process, and they follow clear guidelines. Both academic and support teams produce reports which are objective and evaluative and which contribute to the college's overall self-assessment report. Representatives from other colleges have validated the judgements in the self-assessment report and the findings from lesson observations. The quality council, upon which employers are represented, rigorously validated the self-assessment report before it was submitted to governors for their approval.

72 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 (September 1999)

Age	%
Under 16	0
16-18 years	96
19-24 years	3
25+ years	1
Not known	0
Total	100

Source: college data

## Student numbers by level of study (September 1999)

Level of study	%
Level 1 (foundation)	3
Level 2 (intermediate)	13
Level 3 (advanced)	84
Level 4/5 (higher)	0
Non-schedule 2	0
Total	100

Source: college data

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

	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	380	0	32
Engineering	34	0	3
Business	166	0	14
Hotel and catering	48	0	4
Health and community care	54	0	5
Art and design	40	0	3
Humanities	425	12	36
Basic education	39	0	3
Total	1,186	12	100

Source: college data

## Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 21% of students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment Index of Local Conditions.

## Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (September 1999)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	53	9	1	63
Supporting direct learning contact	8	1	0	9
Other support	22	0	0	22
Total	83	10	1	94

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

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends

### Financial data

	1997	1998	1999
Income	£3,273,000	£3,138,000	£3,517,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	£20.49	£17.90	£17.33
Payroll as a proportion of income	70%	70%	64%
Achievement of funding target	123%	107%	101%
Diversity of income	5%	5%	8%
Operating surplus	-£392,000	£25,000	£358,000

Sources: Income – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

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

Payroll – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

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

Diversity of income – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

Operating surplus – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

### Students' achievements data

Level	Retention and pass	Students aged 16 to 18			Students aged 19 or over		
		1996	1997	1998	1996	1997	1998
1	Number of starters	356	242	218	4	8	128
	Retention (%)	52	81	73	75	88	31
	Achievement (%)	66	70	91	67	57	100
2	Number of starters	911	1,031	1,040	25	43	49
	Retention (%)	85	84	89	16	58	90
	Achievement (%)	62	53	64	25	32	79
3	Number of starters	1,798	1,585	2,037	104	55	52
	Retention (%)	77	73	60	54	67	46
	Achievement (%)	79	82	84	83	93	79
4 or 5	Number of starters	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Retention (%)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Achievement (%)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Short courses	Number of starters	18	11	25	0	2	66
	Retention (%)	22	82	84	0	0	12
	Achievement (%)	25	78	58	0	0	100
Unknown/unclassified	Number of starters	283	543	502	6	9	10
	Retention (%)	84	84	67	83	67	30
	Achievement (%)	77	73	92	80	50	67

Source: ISR

n/a not applicable

## **FEFC Inspection Report 10/00**

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