

Wigston College of Further Education

REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1999-00

THE
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COUNCIL

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FUNDING COUNCIL***

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

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

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Contents

Paragraph

Summary

Context

The college and its mission	1
The inspection	6

Curriculum areas

Computing and information technology	11
Business and professional courses	16
Health and social care	22
Humanities	28

Cross-college provision

Support for students	34
General resources	41
Quality assurance	48
Governance	57
Management	66
Conclusions	75

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

Wigston College Of Further Education

East Midlands Region

Inspected November 1999

Wigston College of Further Education is a general further education college on the southern boundary of the city of Leicester. The self-assessment report produced in June 1999 was the fifth such annual report by the college and there was widespread involvement of staff in its production. The report was critically appraised by a college review group. It provided inspectors with a useful basis for the inspection. Information was provided on the progress made on actions to address weaknesses since the writing of the report. Inspectors agreed broadly with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified. They found a number of additional weaknesses, some additional strengths and considered that some weaknesses had been understated.

The college offers courses in all 10 FEFC programme areas. The inspection covered courses in four of these areas. Many lessons are well planned and well prepared. The proportion of lessons judged to be good or outstanding by inspectors was below the national average. The proportion of those considered to be less than satisfactory was slightly above the national average. Across the college, the achievements of students over 19 years of age are generally at or above national averages. However, on a number of courses the achievement and

retention of students is poor. Attendance and punctuality were poor in many areas inspected. The absence of foundation level programmes in some curriculum areas restricts appropriate entry and progression opportunities.

There have been significant improvements to accommodation since the previous inspection. A major building project replaced previously underused and poor-quality accommodation on the main site with a number of extra facilities. Students now benefit from generally good-quality accommodation and resources. They receive impartial pre-entry guidance and good personal support, based on a well-structured tutorial programme. There is a comprehensive quality assurance framework and an emphasis given to staff development. Governance of the college is good, with committed governors and sound arrangements for the conduct of corporation business. The college has a clear and productive marketing strategy. Financial management and control is good. The college should improve: achievement and retention on a number of courses; punctuality and attendance; the integration of key skills; the rigour of action-planning and review with individual students; the application and precision of quality assurance procedures in some areas; the direction given to some aspects of college operations; and the poor quality of the mobile classrooms.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Computing and information technology	3	Support for students	3
Business and professional courses	3	General resources	2
Health and social care	3	Quality assurance	3
Humanities	3	Governance	2
		Management	3

The College and its Mission

1 Wigston College of Further Education is a general further education college which was established in 1970. The main site is in the borough of Oadby and Wigston on the southern boundary of the city of Leicester. There is a second centre in Market Harborough. Some courses are offered at centres in the community. There is one general further education college and three sixth form colleges within 8 miles of Wigston in addition to school sixth forms. The nearest centres for higher education are in Leicester, Loughborough and Northampton. The college recruits from Oadby, Wigston, Leicester, Market Harborough and villages in south east Leicestershire. The majority of students live within a 12-mile radius of the Wigston site. Management and professional programmes attract students from a wider geographical area. There are also overseas students from Europe, China and Japan who mainly follow courses in English as a foreign language (EFL).

2 Leicestershire has a population of around 929,100. Unemployment rates in the borough of Oadby and Wigston at 2.9% are higher than the county average of 2.5% but lower than the national average of 4.4%. Employment is mainly in education, health and social work, finance and business, retailing, textiles, clothing, rubber, engineering, distribution and construction. Leicestershire is heavily dependent upon small and medium-sized businesses with 45% of employees working in firms with fewer than 50 people. Ethnic minorities represent 11.1% of the population of Leicestershire and 28.5% of the city of Leicester.

3 In July 1999, the college enrolled 727 full-time students funded by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) and 2,883 part-time students funded by the FEFC. Of these, 58% of full-time students and 91% of part-time students were aged 19 years and over. During the last three years the volume of provision at the college has increased by some

13%. The college employs 127 full-time equivalent staff of whom 74 are support staff. The management group consists of the principal, the director of finance and five assistant principals, responsible for personnel and administration, business development, curriculum and quality, and the management of two faculties, respectively. The curriculum was divided into 12 areas for self-assessment: computing; engineering; administration; business and management; leisure and tourism; health and social care and complementary therapies; languages; general certificate of secondary education (GCSE); general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level); teacher training; access to higher education; and basic education. The majority of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities undertake courses leading to qualifications in the agriculture programme area.

4 The college works with other colleges, external partners and agencies in order to encourage lifelong learning and widen participation. The college's mission statement is 'to provide sustainable vocational and community education through access to lifelong learning across all sections of the college's customer base'. The college has core values which include:

- respect for the worth of individuals
- equality
- consistent quality
- receptiveness
- student centred learning
- relevance of the service
- a market orientated culture
- efficient and effective utilisation of the college resources.

Context

5 The college aims to achieve its mission by providing a wide variety of programmes through various modes of attendance in locations throughout south Leicester and Leicestershire, by continuous and measurable quality improvement with a customer focus and by providing a supportive and caring environment for students.

The Inspection

6 The college was inspected during the week beginning 15 November 1999. Before the inspection, inspectors reviewed the college's self-assessment report and information held by other directorates of the FEFC. The college submitted 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. Inspectors used data on students' achievements derived from the individualised student record (ISR) for the years 1997 and 1998. These data were found to be mostly accurate but some students on two-year programmes had been incorrectly shown as continuing and not withdrawn, and this affected some retention figures in 1997 and 1998.

7 The college was notified in September 1999 of the sample of provision to be inspected. The FEFC inspection was carried out by eight inspectors and an auditor for a total of 38 working days. They observed 50 lessons, and examined students' work and college documentation. Meetings were held with governors, managers, staff and students. A visit was made to a franchised partner. Inspectors sought the views of representatives of the Leicestershire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and a local school.

8 A team of five inspectors from the Training Standards Council (TSC) worked alongside the FEFC inspection team during the week of the inspection. They concentrated on work-based training provided through Wigston Training, the

training division of the college. Provision for engineering, care, business administration and accountancy was inspected, as well as trainee support, equal opportunities, management of training and quality assurance. The TSC inspectors observed training sessions, reviewed trainee portfolios and held meetings with managers, assessors and trainees. Evidence gathered by TSC inspectors was taken into account when grading college provision, where this was appropriate to the FEFC inspection framework.

9 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 58% were judged to be good or outstanding. This is below the national average of 65% for good or outstanding lessons observed during 1998-99. The percentage of lessons which were less than satisfactory was 8%, which is slightly more than the national average of 6% for 1998-99.

Context

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	0	3	2	0	0	5
GCSE	0	1	1	1	0	3
GNVQ	2	1	7	1	0	11
Other vocational	5	11	4	1	1	22
Other	1	5	3	0	0	9
Total (No.)	8	21	17	3	1	50
Total (%)	16	42	34	6	2	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*

10 The following table shows the attendance rates in the lessons observed and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. Class sizes at the college are smaller than the national average. Attendance in all areas inspected was fairly consistent across the college at 75%, which is below the national average.

Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	Average attendance (%)
Wigston College of Further Education	10.1	75
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

Computing and Information Technology

Grade 3

11 Inspectors visited 12 lessons in computing and information technology (IT) courses which are based within two faculties at the college. There is also some franchised provision. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the college's self-assessment report but considered that some judgements about students' achievements and resources in the self-assessment report were over optimistic.

Key strengths

- well-planned lessons with a good range of learning materials
- above average pass rates for some courses
- above average retention on City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) level 2 programmes
- good computer resources

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality and attendance
- poor pass rates for the GNVQ intermediate and integrated business technology level 2 programmes
- low retention on GNVQ courses
- inadequate level of open access to computers for specialist computer students

12 Inspectors agreed that there is an appropriate range of courses. Full-time general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) programmes are available mainly to school-leavers and these provide the opportunity for progression to advanced level and higher education. GNVQ courses attract a very low proportion of female students. At the time of the inspection, there were no female students following the GNVQ advanced programme.

Significant provision is also made for adults on a full-time and part-time basis, both during the day and in the evenings. The range of courses allows adult students to progress from an introductory or entry level to level 3. Computing and IT courses are currently organised in two sections of the college. This arrangement means that some opportunities for the sharing of good practice are missed and the expertise that is available is not fully used across the college. There is extensive use of fractional and part-time staff who are responsible for more than 40% of the teaching. Few part-time staff attend course planning meetings.

13 In all lessons, teaching was satisfactory or better. Inspectors agreed that there were some examples of good or outstanding practice. Teachers prepare lessons thoroughly. They make good use of a range of materials, including well-prepared overhead projector transparencies and detailed handouts. Some handouts had to be completed by the students and this ensured that they remained involved in the development of topics. Students present in classes are well motivated. One particularly good evening class had a number of highly motivated students who had enrolled on a course entitled 'computing for the terrified'. The teacher had planned the lesson well and involved the students in a range of appropriate activities. Initially they were introduced to software which enabled them to draw. While they practised using this they were provided with help on an individual basis, as required. The students worked well and enthusiastically. They were able to describe their work clearly and with understanding. In some lessons teachers fail to provide work which fully meets the needs of individual students. They do not always take sufficient account of the varying background knowledge of students. At times, teachers do not manage question and answer sessions well.

14 Computing students benefit from using good-quality specialist computer resources during timetabled lessons. However, there is an

Curriculum Areas

inadequate level of open access to computers on a 'drop-in' basis so that students can practise and progress on their own. Inspectors could not agree with the college's judgement that its open access computer resources were a strength.

15 Achievement levels on some courses are low. This was acknowledged in the self-assessment report though there was no accompanying analysis of the possible reasons for this. Pass rates for the GNVQ advanced level IT course are above average for students who complete, though the numbers of students involved are low. Pass rates for C&G level 1 programmes are either at, or above, national averages. A large number of students each year undertake the computer literacy and information technology qualification. For the last two years

the number achieving such awards has been above average. However, pass rates on the GNVQ intermediate IT course and the integrated business technology level 2 programmes are low and sometimes considerably below national averages. Although retention is above the national average on the C&G level 2 programmes, some other courses including full-time GNVQ programmes, have very low retention. On the advanced programme retention is often as low as 25%. The attendance and punctuality of students is poor on many courses. The overall attendance rate for the classes seen was 74% which is below the average of 79% for this programme area.

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
Computer literacy and information technology	1	Number of starters	1,152	1,024	930
		Retention (%)	84	91	81
		Achievement (%)	51	70	69
C&G 7261	1	Number of starters	21	114	122
		Retention (%)	48	66	79
		Achievement (%)	50	53	83
C&G 7261	2	Number of starters	149	206	31
		Retention (%)	97	100	74
		Achievement (%)	63	46	74
Integrated business technology stage 2	2	Number of starters	99	219	281
		Retention (%)	87	88	87
		Achievement (%)	38	56	45
GNVQ intermediate IT	2	Number of starters	21	14	23
		Retention (%)	65	77	48
		Achievement (%)	54	0	11
GNVQ advanced IT and precursors	3	Number of starters	35	31	20
		Retention (%)	*	*	25
		Achievement (%)	68	88	80

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

*data unreliable

Curriculum Areas

Business and Professional Courses

Grade 3

16 Inspectors observed 14 lessons covering GNVQ business, national certificate in business and finance, first and national diploma in public services, and a range of professional courses. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report. Some weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report had been addressed by the time of the inspection. Inspectors found some additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- effective group working
- pass rates consistently above national average on some professional courses
- flexible and effective course management
- good use and integration of modern IT and learning resources
- high standard of students' assignment work

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality and attendance on business studies programmes
- unclear aims and objectives of some lessons
- key skills not integrated effectively within lesson content
- poor retention and achievement on some business programmes

17 Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that the business and professional provision is diverse. The range of courses includes a National Examining Board for Supervisory Management certificate programme to introduce women into management. The college self-assessment did not acknowledge the absence of any offer at

foundation level in business studies. Provision is well planned. Course management is effective. For example, on some courses first and second year groups have been joined to ensure viable class sizes. Students spoke highly of the effectiveness of these arrangements. There are well-established links with a range of professional bodies. These links are used to good effect to find experienced guest speakers. Internal verification of Association of Accounting Technicians courses is not always carried out using the same standards.

18 Inspectors agreed that most teaching is good, with a few outstanding lessons. The best lessons were well planned and teachers shared the clear aims and objectives with students. Time and class management was good. Teachers had high expectations of the students. For example, in a business studies lesson the tutor made appropriate use of work in pairs and groups and showed a short video to which students responded positively using a well-structured worksheet. The teacher made sure in a review of what had been learnt that each student was involved. These strengths were not included in the self-assessment report. In general, the weakness identified by the college about poorly produced learning materials has been addressed. Students at all levels demonstrated effective group work skills. In some lessons students were working to individual learning programmes. In others, teachers encouraged students to work at a pace and in ways which suited their individual learning styles.

19 All courses have schemes of work. However, some are largely lists of topics and do not cover teaching methods, learning activities or assessment procedures. A key weakness not identified in the college's self-assessment was the lack of clarity of aims and objectives for some lessons. This resulted in some poor lesson planning and ineffective teaching and learning. There was a failure to integrate key skills effectively within the lesson content. In some

Curriculum Areas

poor lessons teachers failed to check that all students were learning and there was a tendency to move at the pace of the slowest student. There was poor punctuality and attendance on some business studies programmes. Inspectors concluded that, with the exception of the GNVQ advanced course, little progress in improving punctuality and attendance had been made since the previous inspection. Assessment of students' work is fair and most work is returned promptly. Some of the written feedback on students' marked work is insufficient to help them to improve.

20 At all levels of provision students were confident and articulate. Inspectors found high standards in students' written assignments. The college's self-assessment report acknowledges both high and low levels of retention and achievement. Pass rates on the certificate in marketing and certificate in personnel practice have been above the national average for the last three years. In two of the last three years they have been over twice the national figure. Retention on the Association of Accounting Technicians courses, national vocational qualification (NVQ) levels 2, 3 and 4, is consistently well above the national average and pass rates are at, or above, the national average. Retention and achievement on some business studies programmes are poor. Retention on GNVQ intermediate and advanced business and BTEC national certificate programmes has been below the national average for three years. Achievement on the GNVQ advanced business course is also consistently below the national average. The college has identified key action points to address these weaknesses. The college has good records showing the destinations of students after leaving. There is consistently good progression to higher levels of study or related employment.

21 Most teachers are well qualified and experienced. There is evidence that staff are taking advantage of development opportunities to improve their qualifications. Few staff have undertaken business updating recently. Inspectors agreed with the judgement that there are good specialist resources. There is a good range of up-to-date books, CD-ROMs and periodicals.

Curriculum Areas

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
NVQ accounting	2	Number of starters	55	65	70
		Retention (%)	87	84	77
		Achievement (%)	15	57	49
NVQ accounting	3	Number of starters	68	84	62
		Retention (%)	79	92	79
		Achievement (%)	67	71	38
GNVQ advanced business	3	Number of starters	55	33	44
		Retention (%)	*	*	49
		Achievement (%)	52	33	40
Certificate in marketing	3	Number of starters	13	19	17
		Retention (%)	69	79	88
		Achievement (%)	89	40	93
Certificate in personnel practice	3	Number of starters	49	45	41
		Retention (%)	82	89	88
		Achievement (%)	85	95	97
NVQ accounting	4	Number of starters	36	42	50
		Retention (%)	78	98	88
		Achievement (%)	36	40	31

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

*data unreliable

Curriculum Areas

Health and Social Care

Grade 3

22 Inspectors observed 12 lessons across a range of courses in health, social care and complementary therapies. Inspectors identified a number of strengths and weaknesses which had been omitted from the self-assessment report and considered that some weaknesses had been understated.

Key strengths

- effective work placement programme
- good community-based provision
- effective tutorials
- good standard of students' work and resources in complementary therapies

Weaknesses

- no foundation level programmes
- poor retention on full-time level 3 programmes
- significantly low achievement on GNVQ advanced health and social care course
- no systematic integration of key skills with vocational units
- little use of care equipment
- poor punctuality

23 The range of provision in health and social care is restricted by the absence of a programme at foundation level.

Inspectors agreed that community-based provision widens participation. There are good links with a range of care providers. The provision of an initial training programme for classroom assistants at an inner city primary school and community centre is an example of good practice. A work experience programme is an integral and successful component of full-time programmes. This strength was not stated in the college's self-assessment. There is effective curriculum management in

complementary therapies. Inspectors did not agree that key skills are effectively integrated with vocational units. There is no system to ensure that all students develop appropriate key skills and there is no direct assessment of key skills within GNVQ assignments. Targets are set for achievement and retention but course teams do not detail precise actions for improvement. Internal verification is well organised and effective in monitoring the standard of assessment in college-based courses.

24 The majority of lessons are carefully planned. Teachers have developed schemes of work and lesson plans which have clear objectives and in the best lessons these were shared with students. Teaching staff are up to date in their knowledge and regularly use their own work experience to illustrate topics. A weakness not acknowledged by the college is the narrow range of teaching and learning methods used by teachers. In the majority of lessons there is whole-class teaching, or discussion, or common written work. Teachers fail to provide a variety of learning activities which take account of the differing abilities of students in the class. However, written assignments do give students the opportunity to work at their own level of ability. There is a concentration on the production of written work and teachers do not give enough opportunities for students to develop appropriate practical skills.

25 Initial diagnostic assessment and effective tutorial support are in place and there is additional support for the majority of level 2 students who require it. However, there is insufficient additional support for level 3 students, where retention is poor. Tutorials taking place on employer premises were an example of good practice. A sensitive approach is taken to the promotion of equal opportunities and the discussion of cultural issues. Assessment of students' work is fair, carried out regularly and used to inform students about the progress they are making.

Curriculum Areas

26 Classrooms are comfortable but there are few displays of students' work or stimulating, vocationally relevant, displays. Teachers are appropriately qualified. All full-time teachers have taken advantage of staff development opportunities to update their skills. However, teachers make little use of care specific equipment in care and childcare lessons even at times when it would be appropriate to do so. Resources, specialist equipment and technician support are good and used effectively to help students' learning in complementary therapies.

27 Most students' work is of an appropriate standard and there is some outstanding work in the complementary therapies. Student attendance in lessons observed was 73% compared with a national average of 78% for this programme area. Several lessons started late because of poor punctuality. A significant weakness not recognised in the college

self-assessment is the poor retention over the last three years on level 3 full-time programmes. On BTEC childhood studies and GNVQ advanced health and social care courses retention has been significantly below the national average in each of the last three years. Inspectors agreed with the college that the pass rate for GNVQ advanced health and social care is well below the national average. It has declined over the past three years to 29% in 1999. There was good achievement and retention for the first students completing a diploma in reflexology in 1999.

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
Certificate in sessional crèche work	1	Number of starters	10	26	14
		Retention (%)	90	96	86
		Achievement (%)	100	100	100
First aid at work	1	Number of starters	199	188	220
		Retention (%)	89	86	86
		Achievement (%)	75	80	68
GNVQ intermediate health and social care and precursors	2	Number of starters	26	34	13
		Retention (%)	85	91	85
		Achievement (%)	55	32	82
National diploma in childhood studies	3	Number of starters	69	62	62
		Retention (%)	*	*	69
		Achievement (%)	95	77	81
GNVQ advanced health and social care	3	Number of starters	20	22	24
		Retention (%)	*	*	58
		Achievement (%)	88	33	29

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

*data unreliable

Curriculum Areas

Humanities

Grade 3

28 The inspection included GCE A level and GCSE courses, and components of the access to higher education course, offered within the academic studies, access and media section. Inspectors observed 12 lessons in psychology , sociology, English, and core studies in the access course. They agreed with many of the strengths identified in the college’ s self-assessment of this provision, but identified additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- well-prepared and confident teaching
- effective support for individual students
- good pass rates in GCSE subjects and GCE A level English literature
- good quality of individual students’ written and oral contributions

Weaknesses

- few opportunities for students to work together
- insufficiently detailed comments on some marked work
- insufficient rigour in course review

29 Staff work well together in subject teams to plan work effectively. However, the review of individual courses and of the provision as a whole lacks rigour. Action plans fail to specify detailed responses to the issues identified. The choice of GCE A level subjects available on a full-time basis is restricted to four. This is inadequate for the needs of many prospective students.

30 Inspectors agreed with the college that most teaching is well prepared and confident. Lessons have clear aims and objectives. Teachers ensure that students understand what they have been taught. They provide effective

study guides and handouts to help students in their learning. There is a strong emphasis on providing individual students with the support they need for their work. Teachers are very aware of the different needs of individual students and respond well by giving help and encouragement to individuals, often informally. This is particularly evident on the access to higher education courses. In all lessons teachers had established good friendly working relationships with their students which encouraged them to ask for help.

31 In many lessons, there is insufficient variety in the learning experience. Although individual students often make good contributions in response to questions, teachers rely too much on question and answer techniques as a method of teaching. They provide too few opportunities for groups of students to exchange ideas and to work together to develop arguments. In an example of good practice, in a GCE A level English lesson, one student introduced a discussion on a Larkin poem. This led to a very perceptive group analysis of the poem’s content and style. Such opportunities for interactive critical analysis are rare. The comments associated with the marking of some written work gives students insufficient guidance. Some summary comments are unclear. Where a task has not been addressed successfully there is often insufficient indication of what a student needs to do to improve. Students’ individual progress is reviewed during scheduled tutorials. Students value these reviews, but teachers do not set and record clear targets to help students achieve more. Self-assessment did not identify these weaknesses.

32 Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Most of the classrooms used by humanities students provide a pleasant and appropriate learning environment. Most teaching rooms are shared with other courses. Only one room has displays and resources which establish a clear subject identity. The

Curriculum Areas

resource centre has a good range of books for all the courses being offered and many are used regularly by students, although some English literature books are no longer relevant to the courses being taught.

33 The self-assessment report does not acknowledge the good quality of students' work. Much written work is thorough and carefully structured. There are good achievements in GCE A level English literature and in the GCSE courses inspected. The pass rate in GCE A level English literature has improved substantially from 47% in 1997 to 100% in 1999. A high proportion of students who complete the access to higher education course proceed to higher education. The self-assessment report identifies low achievement in both GCE A level psychology and sociology. There has been significant improvement over three years. In 1997 and

1998, overall pass rates in these subjects were well below national averages for colleges of further education. In 1999 overall pass rates were at the national average for psychology and improving, but still below the average for sociology. There has been poor retention in access to higher education courses in some years. Attendance is low and punctuality poor in some classes. Insufficient action is taken to prevent late students from disrupting the start of lessons, particularly at the beginning of the day.

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

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1997	1998	1999
GCSE English language	2	Number of starters	68	75	81
		Retention (%)	75	85	70
		Achievement (%)	53	31	68
GCSE psychology and social studies	2	Number of starters	43	45	24
		Retention (%)	60	76	71
		Achievement (%)	81	59	76
Access to higher education	3	Number of starters	62	38	36
		Retention (%)	50	82	56
		Achievement (%)	81	74	90
GCE A level English literature (one and two year)	3	Number of starters	23	18	23
		Retention (%)	83	61	78
		Achievement (%)	47	87	100
GCE A level psychology (one and two year)	3	Number of starters	42	45	33
		Retention (%)	64	71	76
		Achievement (%)	30	50	64
GCE A level sociology (one and two year)	3	Number of starters	24	28	30
		Retention (%)	67	79	73
		Achievement (%)	38	29	55

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

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 3

34 The college self-assessment report was supplemented by more detailed reports covering each element of support for students. Inspectors broadly agreed with the overall judgements in the self-assessment reports.

Key strengths

- comprehensive information and impartial pre-entry advice and guidance
- well-structured tutorial programme
- effective additional learning support
- good personal support

Weaknesses

- inconsistent rigour in action-planning and review with individual students
- low proportion of students receiving additional support in numeracy
- insufficient systematic monitoring of some aspects of student support

35 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment that prospective students receive comprehensive information and impartial pre-entry advice and guidance. The college publicity material is clear, attractive and informative. General information is effectively supplemented by detailed course leaflets. School pupils are provided with impartial information about the range of options available for progression to further education. Central student guidance services organise and provide impartial pre-entry guidance interviews. For certain vocational courses interviews are undertaken in conjunction with course tutors. There are opportunities for students to seek further guidance at welcome sessions and during enrolment. ‘Taster’ days are organised for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

36 The self-assessment identifies that a comprehensive and well-structured tutorial programme has been developed and established. Both full-time and part-time students have a tutorial entitlement. All students are assigned to a learning tutor. Induction is provided through the tutorial programme. It is well organised and effective in helping students to settle into college quickly. There are good schemes of work for the rest of the tutorial programme. Most tutors keep careful tutorial records. Most students are encouraged to develop a record of achievement. Students speak highly of the support they receive from learning tutors. However, inspectors found that the implementation of action-planning with individual students was often weak. This part of the programme monitors students’ progress and sets targets for improvement. In the few good examples of action-planning, tutors monitored and recorded students’ progress to date. Specific short-term and long-term goals for improvement were set. Clear guidance was given about how students could improve their achievement. However, the majority of student action plans were superficial and lacked sufficient rigour. This weakness had been recognised by the college.

37 Careers education and progression advice is well integrated with the tutorial programme. Tutors are supported by a pack of materials. There is individual careers action-planning which can be accredited through the National Open College Network. Impartial careers advice is available from the college guidance officer. The guidance officer also makes inputs into group tutorial sessions. Students wishing to progress to higher education are well supported through the application process by their tutors, working in conjunction with the college student guidance officer.

Cross-college Provision

38 Students benefit from the good support which is provided to help them with financial, welfare and personal difficulties. The student support officer provides a comprehensive, very accessible and effective service supplying information and advice on financial and welfare matters. Hardship funds are administered and distributed carefully and efficiently. The learning tutors have a close liaison with the student support officer and refer students for specialist guidance. The college counsellor provides a professional counselling service, if required. Students have been making increasing use of this service. There is no formal programme for health education or health promotion.

39 As identified by the college in its self-assessment there is effective additional support for literacy and numeracy. Students are screened during induction to identify whether they need this additional support. Results of testing are confidential. Those identified as requiring support are invited for individual interviews. An individual learning programme with negotiated targets is then agreed. Where a group of students studying on the same course is identified as requiring support, then it is provided in class with support tutors teaching alongside vocational tutors. However, the number of students receiving support in numeracy, as a proportion of those identified as requiring it, is low. The capacity of the skills workshop and the additional support staff is stretched. Currently, there is no spare capacity. The college recognised these weaknesses in its self-assessment report. Students at all levels make good use of the 'drop-in' facilities provided by the skills workshop which provides a pleasant, well-resourced learning environment. The college has effective arrangements for identifying, assessing and supporting students with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties.

40 There is insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of some aspects of student support. This weakness is identified in the self-assessment. Inspectors agreed that there is a need to monitor the delivery of the tutorial programme more closely. There is some monitoring of response targets in admissions and enrolment. There is also monthly reporting of activity to the college management team. However, little evaluative analysis of the overall effectiveness of the service is undertaken. An action within the operational plan for student guidance services is to systematically analyse performance against indicators. Currently, there is heavy reliance on student opinion to judge effectiveness.

General Resources

Grade 2

41 Inspectors generally agreed with the key strengths concerning general resources in the self-assessment report. Actions had been completed on many key weaknesses by the time of the inspection. Inspectors identified additional key weaknesses.

Key strengths

- good-quality accommodation
- modern computing resources
- good access to college buildings for students with restricted mobility
- good facilities in the library, careers library, essential skills workshop and language centre

Weaknesses

- poor-quality mobile classrooms
- difficulties associated with using computers on an open access basis

Cross-college Provision

42 The quality of the learning environment is good. The self-assessment recognises the significant improvements made to the accommodation since the previous inspection. A major building project replaced previously underused and poor-quality accommodation on the main site with a number of extra facilities. Improvements include a refurbished refectory and social area, a new reception and entrance, a new student services area, and a suite of new classrooms. Other beneficial changes made to the accommodation include improved teaching and administrative staff accommodation, a new language centre, enlarged and improved staff and student car parking, and the internal decoration of the engineering workshop block. The accommodation is in good decorative order and is clean and tidy. The major building project allowed the removal of a number of mobile classrooms. The five remaining mobiles provide poorer-quality teaching accommodation. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Further accommodation improvements are planned. The playing field is underused. The St Mary's Road site in Market Harborough has good-quality resources for students studying IT, basic literacy and numeracy.

43 Overall space utilisation is slowly improving year on year and is now 31%. Subject teams have priority use of designated classrooms with spare periods being timetabled centrally to meet general college needs. An accommodation utilisation survey is undertaken three times a year. Resulting timetable changes improve room usage. Calculations of space utilisation based on the latest recommended methods have yet to be undertaken. The use of a central computerised timetabling system is being investigated.

44 The self-assessment recognises the high quality of the computing resources. There are 268 computers for teaching and administrative use, of which 181 are for teaching purposes. There is a common network. All the teaching

computers have modern processors and business standard software. Access to the Internet is available from all machines. Software systems restrict and monitor the use of the Internet. The student to computer ratio is approximately 7.5:1. Most of the computers available for students are in timetabled rooms and may be used when a member of staff is present. Computer rooms are locked when no staff are present. Only 12 computers, in the library, are available on an open access basis and they have to be booked. Help for students to use the computers is not always available. The student guide contains some references to the computing facilities in the library, but there is no information on how to access other machines for 'drop-in' use. The difficulties of using and gaining access to computers on an 'open-access' basis was not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. There are 20 computers at the St Mary's Road site, all with modern hardware and software.

45 The college provides a 20-place day nursery for children between three months and five years. The college has successfully bid for development funds for a further 20 places. The refectory provides a hot and cold service during the day and on four nights a week. The adjoining common room area has vending facilities and a pleasant social seating area, as noted in the self-assessment. A fitness centre has been developed and is in use.

46 The library opening hours are appropriate to meet the needs of students. Saturday morning opening is being tested as a pilot study. The self-assessment report recognises that the centre is a pleasant open plan area. There are approximately 14,000 books and 130 periodicals. Many dated books have been removed. There is a total of 68 study spaces, including some for silent study. The ratios of the number of books per student and of students per study space are similar to those in many colleges. One computer provides access to a small stock of CD-ROMs. The on-line catalogue

Cross-college Provision

is available on one computer in the library. Currently, only 60% of the stock is entered on the catalogue. Modern multimedia equipment includes digital editing equipment. Video players and monitors are located adjacent to classrooms. The video catalogue is available to staff through the computer network. The careers library has up-to-date and relevant material. The essential skills workshop is well equipped. The language centre contains modern resources for language teaching, as noted in the self-assessment.

47 Inspectors agreed that students who have restricted mobility have good physical access to buildings on the main site. Ramps, lifts and automatic doors improve the accessibility to all areas. The mobiles are not accessible to these students but classes are relocated, if necessary. Toilets for students with disabilities are suitably located around the college. The ground floor at St Mary's Road has good access. The computing facility on the upper floor can only be reached by a steep staircase, as noted in the self-assessment.

Quality Assurance

Grade 3

48 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- the comprehensive quality assurance framework
- effective procedures for gaining feedback from students
- rigorous procedures for validating new courses
- the emphasis given to staff development

Weaknesses

- lack of rigour in applying quality assurance procedures in some areas of the college
- some weak action-planning and imprecise target-setting
- deficiencies in quality assurance procedures for franchised provision

49 The college has a clear commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement. The comprehensive quality assurance framework is well understood by staff. The quality assurance policy clearly identifies the roles, responsibilities and procedures for ensuring quality. The academic advisory board plays a key role in the establishment, monitoring and review of quality assurance procedures. There is a well-established self-assessment process covering all aspects of the college's work. The self-assessment report produced for the inspection was the college's fifth annual report. It is a summary document which draws together reports produced by teaching and business support teams. A self-assessment review group oversees and validates self-assessment. The group includes a college governor and a member of staff from another college.

Cross-college Provision

50 Inspectors agreed with the college that there is a lack of rigour in the application of quality assurance procedures in some areas. Self-assessment reports and action plans form the basis of course evaluation and review. Reports are generally evaluative, but in some the judgements are not clearly expressed and their significance not made apparent. A wide range of evidence is used to support judgements, including lesson observations arising from internal inspection, data on students' achievements and student questionnaires. However, in some reports only the source of evidence is cited. Many of the action plans lack precision and detail. Some pay insufficient attention to key weaknesses. In others, strategies for addressing key weaknesses are unclear. Some course folders are not comprehensive. The recording of some course team meetings is inadequate. Some make no reference to action-planning, target-setting or performance indicators.

51 College-wide targets are set for enrolment, attendance, retention and achievement in the context of the national benchmarking data published by the FEFC. Targets for individual courses are established and are reviewed at section and faculty level. Some of the target-setting is imprecise. The college has introduced service standards for all support areas of the college but in some cases they lack precision or are inappropriate. Some performance indicators are difficult to quantify or measure. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report.

52 Inspectors agreed with the college that there is a high level of student involvement in course review. Every full-time course and some part-time courses have individual boards of study. They provide an effective opportunity for students to raise issues relating to any aspect of their course. The meetings follow a standard agenda and formal reports are produced. A report is produced which draws together key strengths and weaknesses and results in an

overall action plan. Students' opinions are also surveyed twice a year using questionnaires. The results are analysed carefully. They are used to inform the review of student services and the student charter. The college has recognised the need for more systematic procedures for gathering employers' views. It has introduced an employers' survey, but it provides insufficient evidence of employers' views.

53 There are clear procedures for validating new courses. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. Proposals for new courses are submitted to a panel for validation. There is a standard form for submissions which provides detailed evidence relating to a number of areas, including programme aims, market intelligence, relationship to the college's strategic plan, teaching and learning methods and progression.

54 Inspectors agreed with the college that the student charter is readily available and easy to read and understand. It contains clear statements of the standards of service students can expect. Charter commitments are reviewed annually and a report presented to the academic advisory board. The college's complaints procedure is clear and well publicised. Investigation of complaints is thorough. Regular reports are presented to the corporation.

55 The college has addressed many weaknesses in the quality assurance arrangements for franchised provision identified during the last inspection. There has been significant improvement in monitoring for compliance. However, some quality assurance arrangements are still deficient at curriculum level. The college acknowledges the need for better and more regular links at this level.

56 Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the emphasis given to staff development is a strength. There is a comprehensive training and development policy. A system of performance development review applies to all staff. The reviews form the basis

Cross-college Provision

for identifying individual development needs. There is an informative induction handbook for new staff. Induction meetings are held for new part-time teachers who also receive an information pack. Friday afternoons are kept free for staff development and team meetings. 'Essential training days' are used to provide staff development for all teaching and support staff. There is good documentation of staff development activity, including computerised records. Annual training development plans reflect strategic and departmental objectives. However, the prioritising of staff development against strategic plan priorities such as retention is not always appropriate. The evaluation of some development activity is incomplete. The college is recognised as an Investor in People.

Governance

Grade 2

57 Self-assessment involved all corporation members in a thorough appraisal of their strengths and weaknesses. In general, inspectors and auditors agreed with the judgements made by the college in its self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- high level of governor commitment
- thorough approach to the self-assessment of governance
- sound arrangements for conduct of corporation business
- well-informed strategic decision-making
- effective financial monitoring

Weaknesses

- insufficiently broad representation on the corporation
- lack of formal links with curriculum areas

58 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.

59 There is a high level of governor commitment to the college. This strength was not identified in the self-assessment report. Governors have in the last three years effectively overseen the appointment of a new principal and the restructuring of the management team. Governors are represented on the academic advisory board and the self-assessment working party and review group. Attendance rates at corporation and committee meetings are high. Governors actively support college events. The corporation was represented at the opening of new accommodation and awards presentations. Governors visited students in a curriculum area and in one case made valuable inputs to curriculum development. There is no formally identified link between individual governors and curriculum areas.

60 Governors bring a wide range of expertise to the corporation. However, inspectors and auditors agreed with the self-assessment report that representation on the corporation is insufficiently broad. The corporation has responded positively to the government's changes to corporation membership. It has increased membership from 12 to 14 governors and included new categories of staff, student, community and local authority governors. The search committee is actively recruiting to the new categories of governor. The college has used direct approaches to identify and recruit governors. Advertising has not been used. New governors are provided with a pack of information about the college and the further education sector. They undertake an induction programme to introduce them to the college. The college has a budget for governor training.

Cross-college Provision

There have been training events for the whole corporation. However, there is no formal identification of individual governor's training needs.

61 There are sound arrangements for the conduct of corporation business, as identified in the self-assessment. The inspection team agreed that clerking arrangements are effective, well resourced and independent. The clerk to the corporation is experienced and clerks all corporation and committee meetings. The clerk is appraised by the chair of governors. Standing orders are comprehensive. Corporation and committee meetings are scheduled one year in advance. Agendas and papers are clear and distributed at least seven days before the meeting. Minutes are well written and produced as a draft within one week of the meeting. Items are treated as confidential, when appropriate. Corporation and committee minutes are publicly available in the college library.

62 The corporation has established procedures for openness and accountability. Disclosure guidelines for the register of interests comply with best practice. The register extends to senior managers. An annual declaration is signed by governors confirming their eligibility to act as governors. The code of conduct has recently been updated. The corporation is working to produce a 'whistleblowing' procedure which would enable people to raise concerns whilst protecting their confidentiality. The college has a complaints and compliments procedure. All complaints are investigated and a summary reported to the corporation.

63 Governors have established an effective committee structure. Committees operate within their terms of reference. The corporation takes responsibility for quality assurance matters. All governors receive the monthly management accounts and the corporation monitors the college's financial position closely. Governors also monitored the recent accommodation

project very closely and the project was completed on time and on budget. The audit committee monitors the effectiveness of the college's control systems. The remuneration committee has made appropriate arrangements for the appraisal of the principal and senior postholders.

64 The corporation has a thorough and effective self-assessment process. It includes the completion by individual governors of questionnaires on the conduct of board business. The corporation receives an annual report that examines the effectiveness of its own procedures. The college has consulted with other colleges during the preparation of its self-assessment report.

65 Inspectors and auditors agreed that governors are fully aware of their strategic responsibilities. They play an active role in the strategic planning process. The corporation regularly receives reports on the progress made against the targets set in the strategic plan and on issues that have an impact on the strategic direction of the college. They are appropriately involved in strategic decisions, for example the decisions to continue with engineering provision and to curtail franchised provision. Governors are generally well informed about any financial and academic issues facing the college. Regular development meetings are used to brief governors on a range of topics. Student retention and achievement is monitored closely.

Cross-college Provision

Management

Grade 3

66 Inspectors broadly agreed with the strengths and some of the weaknesses in the self-assessment. Some additional weaknesses were identified by inspectors.

Key strengths

- well-informed staff involved in strategic planning
- good financial management and control
- clear and productive marketing strategy
- effective external liaison to encourage widening participation

Weaknesses

- lack of sufficient direction to some aspects of college operations
- lack of clarity in some annual operational plans
- management information system data not utilised effectively by all staff

67 Inspectors agreed that staff are generally well informed and are involved in the strategic planning process. The development of strategic objectives and associated targets involves wide consultation. Regular team meetings provide opportunities for staff to offer views. The strategic objectives are well understood. Termly college staff meetings provide regular updates on developments. The monthly newsletter is informative and widely read. An academic advisory board provides an opportunity for staff involvement in curriculum and quality assurance developments. However, agendas are not published widely prior to meetings, thus reducing the opportunity for consultation. Communications with part-time staff have improved significantly.

68 The college management structure is clear and well understood by all staff. Managers are open and approachable. However, there is insufficient direction given to staff in some aspects of college operations. This is having a detrimental effect on the college's ability to achieve some of its targets. This weakness was not clearly identified by the self-assessment. A number of strategies have been put in place to effect improvements in student retention and achievement rates, but they have not been fully successful. Some aspects of internal planning have not been actioned efficiently.

69 Annual operational plans are developed for each team. These plans take account of college strategic objectives and action points arising from self-assessment. However, there is a lack of clarity in some operational plans. Some contain a high number of objectives. Priorities are not always identified clearly. This results in slow progress being made on some tasks. Progress against operational plans is monitored formally three times each year. The absence of clearly stated targets in some of the objectives limits the effectiveness of progress monitoring. This weakness in operational planning was not identified in the self-assessment report.

70 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The finance team is headed by a senior postholder who is a qualified accountant. The budget planning process is clear and appropriate. Monthly management accounts are produced promptly and provide detailed historical and forecast financial information. Budget holders receive appropriately detailed monthly reports. The college management team formally considers the monthly management accounts. Financial planning and monitoring procedures are well established. Expenditure and income levels and cashflows are scrutinised closely. Effective support is provided to budget holders by the finance team, including help with systems for monitoring and controlling staff budgets and

Cross-college Provision

other resources. Recently updated financial regulations are comprehensive and widely distributed. Returns to the FEFC are made promptly. Currently, the college is financially sound. Surplus funds are invested carefully.

71 There is a well-informed and productive marketing strategy. Inspectors agreed that it is a strength. Market intelligence from a range of sources is used to inform a needs analysis and risk assessment. The needs analysis and marketing strategy effectively inform the annual planning cycle. Research identifies funding to support local initiatives. Changes made to the strategy for marketing the college to the community and employers have resulted in a marked improvement in recruitment on a lower budget. A database of employers helps to identify groups that have similar training needs for publicity materials. Visits are recorded, monitored and followed-up as required. European recruitment to language courses is supported by an Internet site.

72 Inspectors agreed with the strength identified by the college that there is effective external liaison. In line with one of its corporate objectives, the college is developing and using its links with a range of educational and community groups and employers to widen participation. The college is involved in community work and franchised provision with local partners. It also collaborates with a wide range of organisations to provide opportunities for under-represented groups in further education, childcare training and the university for industry. However, there is little consultation with the community and other groups in the development of the strategic plan.

73 A recently installed management information system offers improved accessibility to information on-line. However, as identified in the self-assessment report, not all managers are using the data available effectively. The college recognises that the system needs further development to be able to deal with all modes of study and attendance.

74 The equal opportunities policy covers both staff and students. The college monitors the ethnic and gender mix of students and staff. Personnel procedures reflect good equal opportunities practice. An equal opportunities action plan has recently been introduced and this will be monitored termly by the college management group. Some equal opportunities issues in the curriculum have been identified and dealt with. The equal opportunities policy is covered in the students' handbook but the policy does not clearly identify all aspects of equal opportunities that could be experienced by students such as bullying and harassment.

Conclusions

75 The college produced its fifth annual self-assessment report in June 1999. This report provided a useful basis for planning and carrying out the inspection. Prior to the inspection the college provided the inspection team with a useful report on actions taken to address weaknesses identified in the self-assessment. Inspectors agreed broadly with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified. They identified a number of additional weaknesses and some additional strengths, and considered that some weaknesses had been understated. In all but one of the curriculum areas inspected, inspectors agreed with the grades. In the one area which they considered overgraded, weaknesses had been omitted or understated. They agreed with all the cross-college grades.

76 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 1999)

Age	%
Under 16	1
16-18 years	14
19-24 years	15
25+ years	68
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (July 1999)

Level of study	%
Level 1 (foundation)	33
Level 2 (intermediate)	31
Level 3 (advanced)	31
Level 4/5 (higher)	5
Non-schedule 2	0
Total	100

Source: college data

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

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	153	813	27
Agriculture	38	94	4
Construction	30	9	1
Engineering	9	143	4
Business	207	686	25
Hotel and catering	24	9	1
Health and community care	128	354	13
Art and design	14	3	0
Humanities	123	557	19
Basic education	1	215	6
Total	727	2,883	100

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 14% of students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment Index of Local Conditions.

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (October 1999)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	52	1	0	53
Supporting direct learning contact	14	0	1	15
Other support	56	0	3	59
Total	122	1	4	127

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1997	1998	1999
Income	£4,134,000	£3,951,000	£4,007,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	£17.45	£16.95	£16.70
Payroll as a proportion of income	67%	59%	62%
Achievement of funding target	100%	101%	99%
Diversity of income	19%	20%	19%
Operating surplus	£12,000	-£34,000	£19,000

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

ALF - Funding Allocations 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)

Student achievement 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	270	441	323	758	971	1,061
	Retention (%)	85	80	87	81	77	87
	Achievement (%)	25	37	64	53	56	72
2	Number of starters	296	464	493	477	656	1,108
	Retention (%)	77	76	85	80	80	87
	Achievement (%)	71	52	59	82	62	72
3	Number of starters	218	227	286	570	635	701
	Retention (%)	85	72	77	82	73	84
	Achievement (%)	74	53	53	80	67	75
4 or 5	Number of starters	1	1	1	63	54	56
	Retention (%)	100	100	100	87	80	96
	Achievement (%)	100	100	100	93	50	40
Short courses	Number of starters	96	205	278	1,062	1,677	1,955
	Retention (%)	92	95	92	92	91	93
	Achievement (%)	74	62	77	74	64	68
Unknown/unclassified	Number of starters	442	295	225	974	851	550
	Retention (%)	84	82	80	83	77	83
	Achievement (%)	97	63	67	96	78	69

Source: ISR

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