

York College

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
2000-01**

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL***

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

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

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Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

Audit conclusions are expressed as good, adequate or weak.

Aggregated grades for aspects of cross-college provision and curriculum areas, for colleges inspected during 1999-2000, are shown in the following table.

	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	%	%	%	%	%
Curriculum areas	6	44	44	7	0
Cross-college provision	9	45	38	8	0

Source: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1999-2000: Chief inspector's annual report*

Sample size: 112 college inspections
Note: percentages subject to rounding

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 1996, would appear in the results for 1997-98 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

York College

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

Inspected December 2000

York College is a large tertiary college serving the City of York and the surrounding region. It provides an extensive range of full-time and part-time courses and also a significant amount of higher education provision. The creation of the present college resulted from a merger in April 1999 of York College of Further and Higher Education and the adjacent York Sixth Form College. The college has improved the quality assurance procedures it inherited from the two former colleges. Students' examination pass rates are now higher. The college's strategic planning is more systematic than that of its predecessors. The college produced a self-assessment report for the inspection. The report was comprehensive and analytical. It contained separate assessments on the quality of courses at both the sixth form centres and the further education centre. Inspectors agreed with many of the college's judgements and found some additional strengths and weaknesses. The report placed insufficient emphasis on poor retention rates on some courses. Inspectors agreed with all the grades in the self-assessment report.

The college offers courses in nine of the FEFC 10 programme areas. Provision in six

programme areas was inspected together with basic skills and aspects of cross-college provision. The college is well managed. Communications with staff are good. There are strong and productive links with a wide range of local organisations. Governors demonstrate a strong commitment to helping the college fulfil its mission. The college has well-established and effective quality assurance processes that lead to improvements. There is effective support for students, including good tutorial support. There is particularly good support for students with disabilities. Accommodation and resources for learning are mainly good. Much teaching is good. In psychology and sociology the quality of teaching is outstanding. Pass rates on many courses are good and are improving. Action taken by the college has led to improvements in student retention and achievement rates but they remain low on a number of courses. The college should improve: student retention rates on a number of courses; some teaching; the accessibility of some accommodation for wheelchair users; some aspects of its management information systems; liaison between teachers and careers staff. In addition it should: review the grading criteria of its lesson observation scheme; standardise working practices for all staff.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Science	2	Support for students	2
Business studies	2	General resources	2
Hospitality and catering	3	Quality assurance	2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2	Governance	2
Art and design	2	Management	3
English and communications	2		
Psychology and sociology	1		
Basic skills	3		

The College and its Mission

1 York College came into existence on 1 April 1999 as a result of the merger between York College of Further and Higher Education and York Sixth Form College. Located on the outskirts of the city, approximately 3 miles from the city centre, it operates on the two sites of the predecessor colleges which are a quarter of a mile apart. In addition, there are a number of centres across the city used by the council of the City of York for its adult and community education programme, which is franchised from the college. This work earns the college approximately 5% of its funding from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

2 The local economy is generally buoyant. There has been a shift in employment towards the service sector, contributing to the net growth in employment from which the York economy has benefited. Employment has expanded in the distribution, retail and hotel sector, transport and communications, banking and financial services, public administration and other services. There has been a contraction of employment in manufacturing, particularly in the railway industry and in confectionery. Unemployment is currently less than 4% compared with the United Kingdom average of 5.6% in September 2000. There are, however, eight central inner-city wards with unemployment rates above the national average.

3 Approximately 73% of young people leaving school in York enter further education. In 2000, 53% of the City of York school-leavers achieved five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) passes at grade C or above compared with 48% nationally. The City of York has seven 11 to 16 schools, four 11 to 18 schools and a number of independent schools. The college plays a major role in local partnerships and is an active partner in the City of York Lifelong Learning Partnership. The college also works closely with North Yorkshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) in providing work-based training.

4 York College offers a wide range of courses from entry level to degree level, providing many opportunities for students to progress within the college. Courses are offered in nine of the 10 FEFC programme areas. It does not offer agricultural provision. In 1999-2000 enrolments totalled 14,800, of which 3,400 were for full-time courses and 11,400 for part-time courses. The college is the main provider of post-16 education and training in the city and it draws 38% of its students from a much wider geographical area. There is a specialist agricultural college on the outskirts of York. The college is the largest of six further education colleges in North Yorkshire. It also offers a range of higher education courses and has close links with the two other higher education institutions in York, the University of York and the College of Ripon and York St John.

5 The college's senior management team comprises the principal, three deputy principals, three assistant principals and the human resources manager. There are cross-college and curriculum managers who have responsibility for managing operational activity. The college has two large sites which operate as a sixth form centre and a further and higher education centre.

6 The college's mission is to be a centre of excellence for education and training in the City of York and the surrounding area. The college seeks to achieve this by working in partnership with individuals and organisations to meet the needs of the City of York and the region. The mission is supported by seven key strategic objectives:

- to strive to meet the needs of all students to enable them to progress to their full potential within an inclusive learning environment
- to provide a wide range of high-quality education and training opportunities in relation to levels, modes and location, to meet present and future needs of the whole community

Context

- to work in partnership as appropriate to achieve its own objectives and to contribute to the economic and social well-being of the wider community
- to maintain and enhance its financial strength in order to achieve its other objectives
- to demonstrate by its actions that it sees its staff as its most valuable resource
- to make efficient and effective use of its physical resources to meet learners' needs with due regard to the impact on the environment
- to pursue excellence rigorously in all its activities.

administration, hairdressing and catering. They observed training sessions in the workplace and in the college, held meetings with employers and trainees and examined a range of documentation. Where it was appropriate to the FEFC inspection framework, evidence gathered by TSC inspectors was taken into account when grading college provision.

8 The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected and the national profile for all colleges inspected in 1999-2000. Of the 99 lessons inspected, 65% were judged to be good or outstanding and 7% less than satisfactory compared with the national averages of 62% and 6%, respectively.

The Inspection

7 The college was inspected during December 2000. The FEFC inspection team had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and considered the information about the college held by other directorates of the FEFC. Inspectors used data on students' achievements drawn from the college's individualised student record (ISR) returns to the FEFC for 1998 and 1999. The college submitted its own data on students' achievements for 2000, and inspectors checked these against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies. Inspectors found the data to be reliable. The inspection was carried out by 14 inspectors and an auditor, working for a total of 59 days. They observed 99 lessons, evaluated students' work and examined documents relating to the college and its courses. Meetings were held with governors, managers, other college staff, students and representatives from the college's external partnerships. Eight inspectors from the Training Standards Council (TSC) worked with the inspection team during the college inspection. The TSC inspectors concentrated on work-based training supported by the college in construction, engineering, business

Context

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	10	22	6	2	0	40
GCSE	2	2	2	1	0	7
GNVQ	3	3	5	1	0	12
NVQ	3	7	5	0	0	15
Other vocational	1	9	8	3	0	21
Other	0	2	2	0	0	4
Total (No.)	19	45	28	7	0	99
Total (%)	19	46	28	7	0	100
National average, all inspected colleges 1999-2000 (%)	17	45	31	6	0	100

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1999-2000: Chief inspector's annual report

Note: percentages subject to rounding

9 The following table shows the attendance rates in the lessons observed and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1999-2000.

Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	Average attendance (%)
York College	12.4	80
National average, all inspected colleges 1999-2000	10.3	76

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1999-2000: Chief inspector's annual report

Curriculum Areas

Science

Grade 2

10 Inspectors observed 10 lessons covering GCSE and general certificate of education advanced level/advanced subsidiary (GCE A/AS level) biological science and chemistry. They agreed with the judgements in the college's self-assessment report but felt that retention had not been given sufficient consideration.

Key strengths

- pass rates above national averages
- effective teaching
- students' well-developed practical skills
- good subject management
- excellent laboratories at the further education centre

Weaknesses

- poor and declining retention rates
- organisational shortcomings

11 Two curriculum managers co-ordinate and manage the science and mathematics courses across two sites. Subject leaders, including those for biology and chemistry, assist them. There is a strong team spirit among staff. Subject management is good. There are good external links. Student enrolment, retention, achievement and progression data are carefully considered when courses are reviewed. Much of these data are compared with local and national averages. As stated in the self-assessment report, schemes of work and lesson plans are good and are used well. For example, when a teacher was absent at short notice, the curriculum manager was able to ascertain exactly what had to be covered in the lesson. There is good subject support. For example,

students on chemistry courses who wish to revise or extend their understanding of the subject can attend additional sessions.

Arrangements for co-ordinating and managing the teaching of science across the two sites are underdeveloped. There have been some inconsistencies in working practices on the two sites and the workloads for staff have not been equitable. An attempt to merge the electronic networks across both sites has led to a number of problems. In previous years, teachers and students used an intranet but this is currently unavailable. A highly effective electronic registration system operated at the sixth form centre did not become fully operational in the new college until halfway through the autumn term.

12 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that teaching is good. The profile of lessons observed judged to be good or outstanding is higher than the national average for similar colleges. Discipline in lessons is good and students are expected to work hard. Lessons are lively and include much debate and discussion between the teacher and students. Teachers set homework regularly and maintain meticulous records of students' progress. They question students closely to ensure they understand the lesson. However, there were a few examples where students were not given sufficient encouragement when trying to answer questions. Teachers ensure that all students participate fully in lessons. For example, students delivered a series of presentations on the use of alternative fuels. These were managed and chaired effectively by the students themselves. The teacher made an assessment of each student's performance in the presentations and this counted towards their completion of the key skills unit for communication. The key skills of application of number and information technology (IT), however, are not taught effectively as an integral part of science courses. Separate lessons are devoted to key skills. Some

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students find these lessons dull or unexciting and they have to carry out work that is insufficiently demanding for them.

13 Students perform well in lessons. They enter into discussion with the teacher and often reveal a level of understanding of the subject higher than that required by the course syllabus. They have acquired good practical skills. They carry out practical work with care and demonstrate a keen awareness of the necessity to have good technical abilities in order to perform practical tasks successfully. In 2000, the pass rates on two-year GCE A level chemistry and biology courses were above the national average for the sector. The pass rate on one-year courses, with the exception of human biology, has been above the national average for the last three years. The proportion of students who obtain grade C or above on GCSE courses has been above the national average in two of the last three years. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, many GCE A level students progress to relevant higher education courses. Retention rates are in decline for a number of subjects and are below the national figures in all cases. For example, the retention rate on the one-year GCE A level biology course has declined from 85% to 62% between 1998 and 2000.

14 Teachers are well qualified. All have relevant degrees and teaching qualifications. Support staff are highly valued and manage the laboratories well. Two science technicians at the sixth form centre have recently started to share a job as learning assistants. They are, however, unclear of their role. A similar post has been established at the further education centre. The specifications for this have been defined more clearly and the post of a learning assistant is proving helpful to the students. The laboratories, classrooms and corridors have a clear subject identity and contain colourful and relevant wall displays. Students are provided with relevant textbooks and topic booklets which they find particularly useful. Laboratories at the

further education centre are relatively new and are well equipped with computers and peripherals for use in lessons. An additional work area at the sixth form centre has a number of computers which students may use in their private study. These are not well maintained. Staff at the sixth form centre do not have specified work areas. They often have to prepare their lessons or mark students' work in vacant laboratories or classrooms.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in science, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
GCSE chemistry	2	Number of starters	23	17	23
		Retention (%)	61	59	61
		Achievement (%)	57	30	57
GCSE human biology	2	Number of starters	35	34	29
		Retention (%)	66	68	70
		Achievement (%)	48	35	58
GCE A level chemistry (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	20	9	18
		Retention (%)	55	78	67
		Achievement (%)	73	86	67
GCE A level human biology (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	15	17	25
		Retention (%)	77	82	79
		Achievement (%)	60	71	68
GCE A level biology (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	101	100	102
		Retention (%)	75	73	74
		Achievement (%)	80	75	91
GCE A level chemistry (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	73	61	69
		Retention (%)	81	72	70
		Achievement (%)	86	95	92

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

Curriculum Areas

Business Studies

Grade 2

15 Inspectors observed 11 lessons covering GCE A/AS level courses in business studies, economics and accounting together with general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) programmes at intermediate and advanced level and the advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) course. They agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- students' outstanding achievements on most GNVQ courses
- students' good achievements on GCE A level economics and business course
- effective use of topical stimulus material in teaching
- thorough organisation of most full-time courses

Weaknesses

- some ineffective teaching methods in some lessons
- students' poor achievements on part-time GCE A level accounting and business studies courses
- declining enrolments on level 2 courses

16 The organisation and management of most full-time courses are good. The GCE A/AS level accounting courses and the GNVQ advanced level course at the further education centre are less well organised and well managed. The self-assessment report failed to acknowledge the decline in enrolments for many courses. For example, enrolments on intermediate level courses have declined and the college no longer offers a GCSE accounting course. Enrolments

on the GNVQ intermediate course have declined by 50% between 1997 and 2000. Enrolments for the GCE A level in economics and business fell sharply on the course which ran from 1998 to 2000 but subsequently recovered. Similarly, the number starting the GNVQ advanced programme has been falling although the offer in September 2000 of single and part awards, as well as the full AVCE qualification, has contributed to some recovery in this area.

17 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that in the best teaching, learning materials are topical and reflect local and global events. In a GCE AS level economics lesson for example, students employed demand and supply analysis to consider the effects of rail disruption on the market for domestic airline travel. On an AVCE course, a relevant newspaper article was used as stimulus material, and the students considered strategies that computer retailers might adopt to redress the recent global decline in demand for their products. The best lessons were carefully structured and in them, there was a close rapport between teacher and students. In a lesson on a GNVQ intermediate course, an assignment required the students to make an oral report on the importance of customer service in business. The students recorded on a flip chart what they thought were their strengths and weaknesses in presentation skills. A discussion then followed in which the teacher successfully helped students to allay their anxieties about making presentations and boosted their self-confidence. In some lessons, the teacher spent most of the time talking and did not check students' levels of understanding. In some instances, the students were given undemanding and unimaginative tasks such as copying notes, at great length, from overhead transparencies. Most teachers marked students' work clearly and fairly. At the sixth form centre, the teachers gave students on the GNVQ advanced programme a detailed commentary on ways of improving their work. Some of the teachers' comments in students' portfolios at the

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further education centre, however, were perfunctory and less helpful to the students.

18 Students' work on the GCE A level economics and business course is often of a high standard. It demonstrates careful use of evidence drawn from local primary research. Portfolios of GNVQ students' work at the sixth form centre were comprehensive and well presented. Student achievement rates on some courses are high. In 2000, all students on the GNVQ intermediate course obtained their qualification. In the last three years, all students on the GNVQ advanced course at the sixth form centre achieved their qualification. In 1999, 96% of students on this course achieved high grades. During the same period, student achievement rates on other GNVQ advanced courses have been below the national average for the sector. In 1999, the pass rate on the combined economics and business course at the sixth form centre was 97%. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, the

student achievement rates on some courses are poor. For example in 1999, no student passed on the part-time GCE A level accounting course, and the pass rates on the GNVQ advanced course in business at the further education centre have been well below 50% over the last three years.

19 Teachers are appropriately qualified and experienced. Most possess appropriate assessor and verifier awards. Few, however, have been able to update their industrial and commercial experience. Specialist rooms contain some good displays of students' work and other relevant commercial posters. The self-assessment report failed to acknowledge that there are few or no computers in some of the classrooms at the further education centre. In a lesson timetabled in one of these, students on a GNVQ course were unable to present an oral report using computers because there was no IT equipment in the room.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in business studies, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
GNVQ intermediate	2	Number of starters	28	21	15
		Retention (%)	93	90	100
		Achievement (%)	88	89	100
GNVQ advanced	3	Number of starters	87	81	57
		Retention (%)	74	70	84
		Achievement (%)	66	63	75
GCE A level economics and business (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	110	122	68
		Retention (%)	75	78	84
		Achievement (%)	86	97	89
GCE A level business studies and accounts (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	45	50	50
		Retention (%)	64	64	66
		Achievement (%)	45	25	61

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

Curriculum Areas

Hospitality and Catering

Grade 3

20 Inspectors observed 11 lessons in hospitality and catering. They agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report but considered that some statements of strengths related to practices that should be normal. Some weaknesses were given insufficient weight. Inspectors from the TSC observed hospitality and catering provision for trainees on government-funded programmes of work-based training.

Key strengths

- high standard of students' practical cookery skills
- students' good and well-presented portfolios
- effectiveness of foundation provision in meeting students' needs
- strong links with local industry

Weaknesses

- some ineffective teaching
- poor retention rates on national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses
- students' low achievement rate on the NVQ level 2 course
- inadequate attention to hygiene and health and safety in some lessons

21 The college offers courses leading to GNVQ, AVCE and NVQ qualifications. There are full-time and part-time courses in food preparation, food and beverage service and supervisory skills. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that there are opportunities for students to obtain additional qualifications, including the intermediate hygiene certificate and the Wine

and Spirit Educational Trust certificate. AVCE students can also combine their vocational studies with a GCE AS level subject or work towards an NVQ. The strength of the foundation provision is not acknowledged in the self-assessment report. Vocationally qualified support staff give students valuable help in lessons. Teaching activities are varied to meet the different needs of individual students.

22 Courses are well planned. There are comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans. Teachers work well together as a team. They meet frequently to plan the curriculum and discuss teaching methods and assessment practice. Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that the college's arrangements for industrial liaison are a strength. The vocational relevance of full-time courses is strengthened by carefully monitored and appropriate work placements for students. On GNVQ and AVCE courses, students broaden their learning through industrial visits. The college has productive links with the York and District Hospitality Association and is involved in the York Festival of Food and Drink. A hospitality advisory group meets regularly but has had little impact on the curriculum. Students compete successfully in regional and national competitions.

23 Through its lesson observation scheme, the college, proportionately, graded more lessons at 1 or 2 than inspectors did. Of the 11 lessons they observed, inspectors judged five to be good or outstanding. This amounts to a proportion below the national average for the programme area. In the better lessons, teachers provide an appropriate range of activities and these excite and hold the students' interest. Learning activities link theory to practice. For example, in one practical lesson, first-year students evaluated the relative advantages and disadvantages of using freshly made puff pastry rather than a commercially produced product. Students with learning difficulties receive a great deal of effective help in practical and theory

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lessons. Learning activities are organised carefully. Students are given individual learning tasks which match their ability. Some lessons do not sustain the interest of students. In these, students are given uninteresting and undemanding tasks. Some students finish these quickly but are then given nothing else to do. In several lessons, the teacher talked a great deal and the students did very little. The teacher did not question the students, engage them in discussion, or give them learning activities that enabled them to exercise initiative and discover information for themselves. Key skills are taught and assessed more effectively on some full-time courses than on others.

24 Teachers help students to develop good skills in cookery. The students' skills in food and beverage service are less well developed. Whilst attention is paid to hygiene and health and safety regulations on daytime courses this was not the case on some evening courses. In some lessons held in the evening there were poor standards of hygiene and insufficient attention was given to potential health and safety hazards. The standard of work in most students' portfolios is good. NVQ portfolios include a good range of written work showing that the students have a good grasp of theory. All written work is corrected and teachers provide students with detailed feedback on ways of improving it. The work of students on GNVQ courses includes some examples of good research into industrial practices but this is seldom supported by reference to books or articles in journals. Students' progress is systematically reviewed and recorded. The retention rate on the GNVQ hospitality and catering course is good and significantly above the national average. The self-assessment report acknowledged that student retention and achievement rates on some courses are poor. In 1999, the retention rate on the NVQ level 2 course fell, and in 2000 it was only 53%, significantly below the national average. The pass rate on this course also declined in 1999.

The retention rate is also poor on the NVQ level 3 programme.

25 Accommodation and physical resources are good. The kitchens and restaurant are adequately equipped. The kitchens provide a realistic work environment of industry standard. The design of the training restaurant does not allow students to experience different ways of serving food. The learning resource centre is well equipped with a good range of appropriate books, journals, videos and CD-ROMs. Teachers are appropriately qualified. They have or are working towards, assessor and teaching qualifications. Some learning support assistants also have vocational qualifications.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in hospitality and catering, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
NVQ in food preparation and cookery	1	Number of starters	27	22	13
		Retention (%)	78	77	69
		Achievement (%)	81	93	100
NVQ in food preparation and cookery	2	Number of starters	41	32	60
		Retention (%)	81	60	53
		Achievement (%)	71	50	66
Basic hygiene certificate (short course)	2	Number of starters	69	141	125
		Retention (%)	96	99	100
		Achievement (%)	97	84	93
GNVQ advanced hospitality and catering	3	Number of starters	23	12	12
		Retention (%)	74	92	100
		Achievement (%)	47	73	60
NVQ in food preparation and cooking	3	Number of starters	*	**	16
		Retention (%)	*	**	44
		Achievement (%)	*	**	57

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

*course not running

**fewer than 10 starters

Curriculum Areas

Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy

Grade 2

26 The inspection covered courses in hairdressing, beauty therapy and media make-up. Inspectors observed 12 lessons and one individual tutorial. They agreed with the findings in the college's self-assessment report. TSC inspectors observed provision by the college for trainees on government-funded programmes of work-based training.

Key strengths

- students' good achievements in aromatherapy and reflexology
- flexible arrangement of courses to meet individual students' needs
- effective integration of key skills with the vocational content of courses
- good course management
- excellent industrial links in media make-up
- well-equipped modern facilities

Weaknesses

- adverse effect of lack of salon clients on students' learning experience
- poor retention and achievement rates on some courses
- failure to provide some students with sufficiently demanding learning activities

27 The college offers a range of full-time and part-time courses in hairdressing and beauty therapy at levels 1, 2 and 3. It has recently introduced a full-time media make-up course. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, all courses are arranged flexibly to give students the opportunity to return after a period of absence, join classes on other courses or attend

lessons on a Saturday. For example, a student from the media make-up course was attending a hairdressing lesson in order to gain the basic hairdressing skills needed by the media industry. During the summer, students can work in the college's salon in order to continue practising their skills, complete assignments and maintain contact with their clients. All students work towards certification in key skills at levels 1 and 2. A particular strength of the key skills provision is that learning materials for key skills have a vocational relevance and key skills are taught as an integral part of courses. For example in a beauty therapy lesson, the teacher taught the key skills of number by using practical examples of eyelash tinting and the mixing of face masks to demonstrate ratio and proportion.

28 Curriculum organisation and management are good. Course teams meet regularly and produce a self-assessment report, which contributes to the curriculum area report. Targets for student retention and achievement rates are set for each course and staff monitor progress towards reaching these. Team meetings are well attended. They have clear agendas and are carefully minuted. Well-attended team meetings have agenda and minutes. Hairdressing students attend a work placement for 80 hours of their course. They organise this themselves. They have to apply to an employer for a placement and be interviewed by the placement provider. Staff implement health and safety checks on all placements. Where appropriate a work placement assessor assesses students in the workplace. Staff teaching media make-up have excellent industrial links and the college has a partnership with a television company. Beauty therapy students currently do not go out on work placement but it is planned that level 3 students will later in the year. Students participate in competitions. Educational visits are organised. Companies visit the college to give students product training and careers advice.

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29 As identified in the self-assessment report teaching and learning are planned effectively to meet the needs of individual students. Work schemes and lesson plans are comprehensive. The aims and objectives of the course and of lessons are shared with students. Teachers use a wide variety of appropriate teaching methods. For example, in an aromatherapy lesson students were divided into small groups. Each group engaged in lively discussion and provided stimulating feedback to the whole class. In some lessons, teachers assess the key skill of communication. In a beauty therapy lesson, students practised the application of make-up for a competition while the teacher assessed their communication skills with their clients. In a few lessons, students were not challenged to think for themselves, to find things out through their own initiative, or explore ideas together. For example, in a beauty therapy lesson, students were used as models but did not give feedback to their fellow students on the quality of their work. Teachers encourage students to work to commercially acceptable standards. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that students are enthusiastic and well motivated. Students were proud of their curriculum area, their tutors and courses. Students in hairdressing and beauty therapy fully understand the assessment process and many take responsibility for initiating their own assessments. There are not enough clients in the salon to afford all students the opportunity to practise their skills on customers with different needs, and be assessed in a realistic working environment. The college is trying to address this issue by promoting salon sessions to other college students and the local community and by offering treatments during the summer holidays.

30 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that students' practical work is of a high standard. Students work safely and competently. Work in students' portfolios is excellently presented with appropriate use of

wordprocessing, photographs and diagrams. Students' achievements are good on many courses. On NVQ level 2 beauty therapy courses, students' achievements are well above the national average for the sector. They are consistently high on NVQ level 3 aromatherapy and on the reflexology course. Student achievement rates on the NVQ level 2 hairdressing course have fallen below the national average. Retention rates on some courses have improved. They are good on hairdressing and aromatherapy courses. On the course leading to the NVQ in beauty therapy at level 2, the retention rate has fallen to 66%, below the national average.

31 Inspectors agreed that the college has well-equipped modern salons. The reception area has a computer system. The salons are spacious. The beauty therapy area has a spa bath and sauna area and provides students with the opportunity to work under realistic health care conditions. Most IT rooms have enough computers for the large number of students in some groups.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in hairdressing and beauty therapy, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
NVQ in beauty therapy	2	Number of starters	43	*	35
		Retention (%)	84	*	66
		Achievement (%)	33	*	87
NVQ in hairdressing	2	Number of starters	131	96	52
		Retention (%)	63	70	90
		Achievement (%)	68	84	63
NVQ in beauty therapy	3	Number of starters	18	25	33
		Retention (%)	94	84	85
		Achievement (%)	69	100	75
Diploma in aromatherapy	3	Number of starters	19	38	25
		Retention (%)	89	84	96
		Achievement (%)	94	93	100
Diploma in reflexology	3	Number of starters	26	20	19
		Retention (%)	77	80	53
		Achievement (%)	100	100	90

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

*fewer than 10 starters

Curriculum Areas

Art and Design

Grade 2

32 Inspectors observed 12 lessons covering art and design, crafts, fashion and graphical communication. They agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- extensive range of well-managed courses
- much good and some outstanding teaching
- students' high retention and achievement rates on most courses
- high standard of students' work
- good progression routes for students
- good specialist facilities

Weaknesses

- students' low retention rates on some courses
- inadequate technician support
- insufficient space in some specialist rooms for large classes

33 The college's range of full-time and part-time courses is wide and more extensive than that offered by the predecessor colleges. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that these new courses are a significant strength of the college's provision. The programme area is effective in widening participation in education for people in York and North Yorkshire and enabling them to progress to employment or to further or higher education.

34 Courses are well managed. Curriculum area meetings and course team meetings are held regularly. Minutes of these show there has been appropriate discussion on such topics as

resources, course review and evaluation and students' progress. Managers and teachers agree and set targets for students' achievements and retention. The division of responsibilities among staff in the programme area is not entirely clear. There is some duplication of responsibilities and some staff are carrying out the same activities. This has led to some communication problems. The college is addressing these problems.

35 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that schemes of work are well prepared. Much teaching is good and some is outstanding. Most teaching is carried out through assignments and projects. Teachers give students clear learning objectives, assessment criteria and deadlines for completion for these. Lessons are planned thoroughly. Learning activities include class discussion, seminars, small group work and one-to-one teaching in the studio and workshops. The best lessons were carefully planned. In these, the teacher presented information in an imaginative and stimulating way and defined the students' tasks clearly. For example, in one outstanding lesson, a large group of students on the diploma course in foundation studies were working on a still life set. Teachers had hung musical instruments, tools, chairs, and a variety of objects from the studio ceiling and students had to produce several different drawings and paintings. Background music was played which the students enjoyed and found stimulating. All the students in the group were absorbed in their task and worked with great enthusiasm. In another lesson, first-year AVCE students were introduced to a new assignment. The students were of varying abilities and the teacher succeeded in exciting their interest in drawing, colour theory and design through a lively and imaginative presentation. Teachers make good use of a variety of contacts with local employers, and students work on some commercial projects. Students on the GCE A level course in design, technology and graphical communication

Curriculum Areas

work on a range of commercial and community projects. These projects help students to understand the requirements of employers. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that key skills are not yet an integral part of the content of all courses. On some courses, however, the students carried out some good and innovative work in key skills.

36 As the self-assessment report recognises, students' achievements are good. For example, pass rates on national diploma courses in fashion, design crafts and graphic design have been above the national average for the sector for the last two years. Pass rates on the GNVQ advanced course and the diploma in foundation studies are consistently high. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, student retention rates on the GNVQ advanced and intermediate courses and GCSE photography course are below the national average. In all areas, much of the students' work was good, particularly creative and of a high standard. Many students demonstrate good research techniques and produce detailed sketchbooks. Students have good opportunities to develop an extensive range of practical skills in areas such as ceramics, design and technology, metalwork and jewellery. They are developing personal styles and are confident about discussing their work.

37 Specialist facilities are good with a wide range of studios and workshops. Teachers make good use of displays of students' work and are particularly effective in creating a stimulating learning environment. Specialist equipment is good and students benefit from working in some excellent simulated professional environments. The college has good specialist computer facilities. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, some specialist accommodation is too small to enable students in some of the larger classes to work comfortably. Teachers are well qualified, dedicated to ensuring their students succeed and many have commercial experience. Specialist

technician support in areas such as fashion, and printmaking is insufficient to meet the growing numbers of students working in a wide range of practical activities.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in art and design, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
GNVQ intermediate art and design	2	Number of starters	26	23	24
		Retention (%)	68	83	71
		Achievement (%)	65	79	76
GNVQ advanced art and design	3	Number of starters	42	26	22
		Retention (%)	55	68	57
		Achievement (%)	86	88	91
National diplomas in graphic design, design (crafts) and design (fashion)	3	Number of starters	58	46	74
		Retention (%)	73	81	84
		Achievement (%)	76	84	83
Diploma in foundation studies	3	Number of starters	81	72	93
		Retention (%)	93	96	91
		Achievement (%)	93	96	87
GCE A level fine arts	3	Number of starters	64	68	53
		Retention (%)	80	75	74
		Achievement (%)	94	100	97
GCE A level graphical communication	3	Number of starters	25	36	43
		Retention (%)	100	75	74
		Achievement (%)	88	89	†

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

† achievements for 1999-2000 are the subject of appeals

Curriculum Areas

English and Communications

Grade 2

38 The college's assessment of its English and communications provision is covered in two self-assessment reports which cover broader curriculum areas. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements but considered that some strengths were overstated and some weaknesses were understated. They observed 12 lessons.

Key strengths

- students' good achievements
- many good and additional curriculum enrichment activities
- students' perceptive and intelligent contributions to group discussions

Weaknesses

- little sharing of good practice across sites
- insufficient use of IT in teaching and learning

39 The college offers the full range of GCSE and GCE A level English courses. English modules at levels 2 and 3 form part of the access to higher education course. Teachers of English also teach the key skill of communication. Courses are taught by two teams, one within each of the college's two main centres. Course teams meet regularly and communication between staff is good. However, management of the curriculum across the two centres is not co-ordinated. Teachers of English jointly moderate students' work and they have recently attended their first joint planning meeting. Opportunities for staff to learn from colleagues' valuable experience of such initiatives as curriculum 2000 developments and the teaching of some GCE A level courses, such as those for part-time adult students, have been missed. A coherent approach to the sharing of

good practice has not yet been fully developed. The English course teams have a range of productive links with employers and higher education providers.

40 Teaching is good. Lessons are carefully structured and students are given tasks that challenge them to think analytically and use their skills to the full. Teachers inspire the students with their own enthusiasm for their subject. Syllabus content is comprehensively covered. Teaching material is interesting to the students, appropriate and well produced. Teachers excite the students' interest. In one lesson on interpersonal communication, after watching a video, students enjoyed analysing issues of self-esteem through a lively discussion, drawing on personal experience to clarify theories. Students receive high levels of individual support and teachers pay close attention to their learning needs. Students review their progress regularly and thoroughly with their subject tutors. Students' contributions to discussions during lessons and group work demonstrate a mature, sophisticated approach to the subject. They are confident, work hard and co-operate well with teachers and each other. The self-assessment report acknowledges there is little use of IT in English lessons. Many students, however, use the Internet for their own research. Latecomers disrupt the start of some lessons.

41 Students make good use of the extensive opportunities to enrich their curriculum. Full-time students enjoy visits to productions and subject conferences. A group of students recently took part in a National Poetry Day initiative which involved working with a practising poet, making local visits such as those to the office of the local evening press and York Minster, to gather material for their writing. They then performed their work in venues around York. Each year, groups of students benefit from residential writing workshops. Many full-time GCE A level English students undertake work experience.

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42 Students' written work is of a high standard. Teachers' marking is thorough and constructive. Pass rates are consistently above the national average for the sector. In 1999, all of the 81 students who took the GCE A level English literature course over two years, passed the examination. The pass rates on one-year GCE A level English language and GCE A level English literature courses are significantly above the national average. In all GCE A level subjects, other than English literature studied over two years, the proportion of students gaining higher grades was significantly above the national average. The proportion of students on GCSE English courses who gain grade C or above is in line with the national average. The achievement rate, however, of students on GCSE English courses at the sixth form centre, is low. Value-added analysis of students' performance on GCE A level English language and English literature courses taken over two years shows that most students achieve results higher than those predicted for them on the basis of their GCSE grades. Retention rates are improving on all courses and some are at, or close to, the national average. However, inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment report that retention rates are a weakness on some courses.

43 Teachers are well qualified and suitably experienced. Three of the seven teachers at the sixth form centre are examiners or senior examiners. Library stock is good. There are good links between the library staff and tutors and the bookstock is sufficient and relevant. Students at the sixth form centre do not have enough access to computers. There are 30 modern computers with Internet access in the learning resources centre. Most teaching rooms are well equipped and many have attractive displays. As the self-assessment report acknowledges, however, many teaching rooms at the sixth form centre are cluttered and overcrowded.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in English and Communications, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
GCSE English language	2	Number of starters	245	230	176
		Retention (%)	77	67	72
		Achievement (%)	51	53	58
GCE A level English language (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	156	158	117
		Retention (%)	81	74	78
		Achievement (%)	94	90	95
GCE A level English literature (two-year course)	3	Number of starters	90	81	92
		Retention (%)	77	77	80
		Achievement (%)	96	100	96
GCE A level English language (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	36	48	41
		Retention (%)	68	46	68
		Achievement (%)	83	64	89
GCE A level English literature (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	45	37	36
		Retention (%)	64	62	78
		Achievement (%)	79	83	100
GCE A level communication skills (one-year course)	3	Number of starters	17	17	14
		Retention (%)	65	65	71
		Achievement (%)	91	36	80

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

Curriculum Areas

Psychology and Sociology

Grade 1

44 The inspection covered GCSE and GCE A/AS level courses in psychology and sociology. Inspectors observed 10 lessons. They agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report. The college has made progress rectifying some of the weaknesses.

Key strengths

- outstanding teaching
- students' outstanding achievements on full-time GCE A level courses
- good development of critical and analytical skills by students
- effective assessment methods
- students' good attendance and punctuality
- good curriculum development to meet students' needs
- good specialist resources

Weaknesses

- poor retention rates on some part-time courses

45 Courses at GCSE and GCE A level for full-time students are offered at the sixth form centre and one-year courses for part-time students are provided at both centres. The provision is well managed. Teachers are alert to curriculum and syllabus changes in their subject areas and have introduced changes where appropriate, such as adopting a modular course in GCE A level psychology, and changing examining bodies. Teaching and learning are underpinned by efficient administration and organisation at subject level. Minutes of course team meetings reflect an informed and focused approach to emerging curricular trends, retention issues and students' needs. Effective action plans are used

to address emerging issues and progress in implementing these is reviewed regularly.

46 Teaching is good and, as the self-assessment report recognises, often excellent. Teachers use an impressive variety of classroom activities. Schemes of work and lesson plans are comprehensive. Staff have a systematic approach to the planning and teaching of the curriculum. Learning handouts are good, up to date, and well presented. Teachers encourage students to examine the validity of data carefully and adopt a critical and questioning approach to information they receive. Well-organised lessons have clear objectives that are shared with students. Teachers convey information in a structured and well-ordered fashion, often making complex theories accessible and understandable to students. In a GCE A level sociology lesson, the teacher handled a difficult subject well and made sure that the students understood it fully by asking them questions and engaging them in discussion. The students became totally absorbed in the lesson. Teachers use overhead projectors well and their overhead transparencies are clear and well presented. They make extremely effective use of 'gapped' handouts which the students have to complete. Teachers involve students, where appropriate, in discussion. In a GCE AS psychology lesson, students developed the key skill of communication through effective group work. Lively discussions took place and both the teacher and students worked together with enthusiasm. Teachers place importance on good note-taking skills and help the students to acquire these. In a GCSE sociology lesson with students of varying abilities, the teacher constantly checked students' understanding and gave individual attention to those students who required it. The students were given good handouts, they took part in a range of stimulating learning activities and their interest was sustained throughout the lesson. In a few lessons, the teacher spent too much time

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imparting information without making sure the students understood it.

47 Students attend regularly and are punctual. During the inspection, the average attendance rate in lessons was over 80%. Students respond well in lessons and do their homework conscientiously. Their written work is well organised and demonstrates good use of analytical skills. Teachers use assessment effectively as a means of helping students to improve their learning and understanding. They make helpful comments on students' work and explain on a form how their marking relates to specific and clear criteria. There has been a consistent and significant improvement in examination pass rates over the last three years. In 1999 and 2000, the student achievement rate on the full-time GCE A level sociology and psychology courses was significantly above the national average and the proportion of students gaining grades A to C was also well above the national average. In 2000, the proportion of GCE A level psychology students who obtained high grades was 93%, compared with the national average of 61%. Full-time students studying GCE A level psychology and sociology consistently achieve higher grades than those predicted for them on the basis of their GCSE results. Retention rates on a minority of courses, notably on the part-time GCSE psychology course, are below the national average, a weakness that is acknowledged in the self-assessment report. However, teachers are implementing measures to improve retention rates and these are beginning to prove effective.

48 As the self-assessment report recognises, subject teachers are well qualified. Some make good use of their experience as examiners and moderators for the benefit of students. Teachers have undertaken a range of staff development activities in recent years. Teaching accommodation is mostly good though some of the rooms are small and their size and layout inhibit movement and make it difficult for students to engage in group activities. Rooms

are well furnished and well equipped, and have a clear subject identity. Library and IT resources are good. There is an impressive range of learning resources for both psychology and sociology. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that there is further scope for the development of IT in the curriculum and in teaching and learning activities. Teachers have started to identify suitable CD-ROM software and Internet resource materials.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in psychology and sociology, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
GCSE psychology	2	Number of starters	45	56	44
		Retention (%)	60	66	53
		Achievement (%)	50	54	61
GCSE sociology	2	Number of starters	34	26	30
		Retention (%)	79	73	90
		Achievement (%)	76	68	62
GCE A level psychology (two-year, full-time course)	3	Number of starters	138	152	130
		Retention (%)	70	73	78
		Achievement (%)	100	100	100
GCE A level sociology (two-year, full-time course)	3	Number of starters	91	106	94
		Retention (%)	78	60	74
		Achievement (%)	87	89	96
GCE A level psychology (one-year, part-time course)	3	Number of starters	75	67	49
		Retention (%)	60	67	57
		Achievement (%)	62	47	78
GCE A level sociology (one-year, part-time course)	3	Number of starters	37	28	29
		Retention (%)	63	71	62
		Achievement (%)	77	55	90

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

Curriculum Areas

Basic Skills

Grade 3

49 Inspectors observed 13 lessons in basic skills across the college. They agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report and identified a few additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- some good retention and achievement rates
- well-organised and well-structured programmes
- successful collaborative partnerships
- good training and support for teachers

Weaknesses

- some teachers' use of ineffective teaching methods and poor learning materials
- failure of learning activities to meet the needs of some students
- inadequate assessment methods
- narrow range of provision

50 The inspection covered: basic skills for adults within the college and in the community; communication and number key skills elements of the pre-vocational education programme; and literacy and numeracy learning support for students on vocational courses. Learning support is managed separately from the other provision. The scale of provision is small. In 1999-2000, only 242 students enrolled for basic skills courses and only 222 in 1997-98. The Basic Skills Agency (BSA) has estimated the scale of need in the college's catchment area to be about 15% of the population. Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that the college has productive links with employers, community groups and the City of York Community Education Service for the

provision of tuition in basic skills. The college works in partnership with the City of York to provide guidance and some basic skills courses in the centre of the city and to provide family literacy at venues in the community. The college recruited 96 local employees who were taught basic skills in the workplace in 1999-2000. A college manager chairs a city-wide basic skills steering group. The self-assessment report failed to acknowledge that the college has not yet developed a full response to the report of the committee chaired by Sir Claus Moser on the national development of basic skills, *Improving Literacy and Numeracy: A fresh start*. There are regular meetings of the separate teaching teams for basic skills, pre-vocational education and learning support. The teams do not share expertise and resources sufficiently.

51 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the college's self-assessment report that there are some significant weaknesses in teaching and learning. The programmes are well structured and all teachers have schemes of work and lesson plans. Some lesson plans, however, have vague objectives. In lessons, students are sometimes all taught together as a class and at other times, they undertake learning tasks in pairs or in small groups. Students spend most time working individually on printed task sheets, but many of these are inadequate. The poorest are handwritten or copied from books, old and out of date, irrelevant to the students' experience, or contain childish concepts. The best teachers are confident and they make lessons exciting. They give their students learning activities that are not only stimulating and imaginative, but are also designed to ensure the students meet the requirements of the relevant examination or accreditation bodies. Many teachers, however, feel constrained by these requirements and make all their students carry out the same routine tasks and these are sometimes dull. Some less effective lessons lacked momentum and were not lively enough. In these, the teacher failed to respond flexibly

Curriculum Areas

and effectively to the learning needs of students of varying abilities. The learning goals of some students are inappropriate. These students are given little opportunity to broaden their learning experience and acquire knowledge and skills beyond the immediate requirements of the examination and accreditation bodies.

Volunteers work alongside many tutors and provide useful help for students. In one lesson, the roles of the tutor and six volunteers were unclear to the students, and the tutor's instructions were largely ignored. Teachers do not carry out systematic assessment of students' work that includes help and advice on ways of improving it. Individual learning plans and progress records are not updated to take account of the progress individual students have made.

52 Most students have their learning accredited through the National Open College Network (NOCN). A few students work towards Associated Examining Board (AEB) achievement tests, and other awards. Inspectors agreed with the strength in the self-assessment report that retention and achievement rates have improved in the curriculum area during the last two years. In 1999-2000, the student retention rates on basic skills courses accredited by the NOCN were significantly higher than the national average for the sector. In the same year, the student achievement rates on these courses were satisfactory. These achievement rates include students achieving one or more NOCN credits at entry level or level 1. Many achieve one credit. Of the students studying in the workplace during 1999-2000, 94% achieved a NOCN award. In 1999-2000, the student retention and achievement rates on the AEB basic numerical skills certificate course were above the national average. The attendance rate of students in the lessons inspected was slightly higher than the national average. Many students, particularly those on the pre-vocational programme, progress to other

courses in the college. Many of these students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

53 Teachers on basic skills and pre-vocational programmes are well qualified. Of the core team of 14 teachers, most are graduates and have a teaching certificate or equivalent qualification. Although less than half have a relevant specialist qualification, teachers, including part-time teachers, have good opportunities for training and development in basic skills teaching. The self-assessment report failed to mention that during the last year, the college has organised a programme of training events in which most teachers have participated. Teachers benefit from support from managers and a teacher seconded to help them. Volunteers receive adequate support, including a handbook designed specifically for them. Most teaching rooms have good equipment and facilities, but some lack sufficient IT resources. Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that the lack of IT resources for this curriculum area is a weakness and restricts the scope of some teaching activities significantly.

Curriculum Areas

A summary of retention and achievement rates in basic skills, 1998 to 2000

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1998	1999	2000
Wordpower foundation C&G 3794 (long courses)	Entry	Number of starters	127	41	*
		Retention (%)	76	76	*
		Achievement (%)	22	3	*
AEB basic test in numerical skills (short courses)	1	Number of starters	*	28	58
		Retention (%)	*	46	97
		Achievement (%)	*	81	89
NOCN literacy (long courses)	Unclas- sified	Number of starters	*	119	160
		Retention (%)	*	97	97
		Achievement (%)	*	62	74
NOCN numeracy (long courses)	Unclas- sified	Number of starters	*	46	33
		Retention (%)	*	96	85
		Achievement (%)	*	73	79
NOCN literacy (short courses)	Unclas- sified	Number of starters	*	*	96
		Retention (%)	*	*	92
		Achievement (%)	*	*	94

Source: ISR (1998 and 1999), college (2000)

Note: NOCN achievement rates include students achieving one or more credits at entry level or level 1

*course not running

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 2

54 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report, but identified an additional strength and weakness.

Key strengths

- effective pre-course guidance and induction
- good tutorial arrangements
- effective individual support
- wide range of personal and welfare services
- excellent liaison with schools and the community
- outstanding additional support for students with sensory impairments

Weaknesses

- insufficient links between careers staff and teachers
- poor co-ordination of the diagnostic process for assessing students' key skills
- little awareness of students' union at the further education centre

55 The college places high importance on providing good support for students. The two student support services of the predecessor colleges have recently been amalgamated. They are now centrally co-ordinated. The range of student support services is well managed. Staff work across both centres. They monitor, audit and report on all aspects of their work regularly. The college has good arrangements for providing prospective students with pre-entry guidance. This includes an information base in the city centre. Prospective students are well informed about the college and its services.

There are close and productive links with 11 to 16 partner schools. The college prospectus is available in a variety of formats including Braille and in large print. Course publications are well designed and informative. This year, over 3,000 students enrolled on courses using a telephone call centre. Prospective students attend and enjoy 'taster' days which are organised for all curriculum areas.

56 The admissions process for courses is effective. Interviews take place at both school and college with college staff. Students on the college's community-based franchised courses are well informed about opportunities to use the college's support services. Students receive a good induction to the college. Most students find it useful and informative. The student handbook provides helpful information on the college and informs students of their rights and responsibilities.

57 A new tutorial framework has recently been introduced. Tutors have a detailed handbook which includes policies and useful information. College staff have developed good teaching materials for use in tutorials, when appropriate. The coverage of tutorial topics and the use of tutorial documentation are audited with the aim of ensuring tutorial practice is standardised properly. The self-assessment report failed to recognise fully that tutorials are good and constitute a strength of the college's provision. Students value the effective individual support they receive from their teachers and tutors. Tutors use detailed action plans to improve students' performance, and records are well maintained. Some students do not receive clear information about their progress. Tutor managers provide advice and guidance to the tutors. They meet regularly with the student services manager. Counsellors have insufficient links with tutors. There are no formal meetings between careers staff and tutors to share information about students. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

Cross-college Provision

58 A comprehensive range of support services is available to all students. Staff provide advice on finance and benefits, counselling, careers guidance and advice, support with transport and childcare. The college has a day nursery with 35 places. Crèche facilities are provided in community centres and these have proved extremely helpful to students who are parents and have young children. The college has worked with the City of York Council to provide a further 222 childcare places, by co-ordinating childminder facilities in the community. There are three part-time counsellors and a college chaplain. Careers services are well used by students. A range of useful information on higher education opportunities and employment is located in the learning resource centres. Students, however, do not have enough access to computers that have careers information software.

59 As the self-assessment report recognises, the procedures for the provision of additional support for students with particular learning needs are outstanding. The college maintains close links with schools which make provision specifically for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in order to ensure that pupils from these schools receive all the help and support they need during their transition to the college. Application forms are carefully screened to identify applicants with a particular need. The arrangements for students who are referred by their tutors for particular diagnostic tests such as those for dyslexia or dyspraxia are monitored carefully. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the wide provision of additional support is well organised. In a lesson on a GNVQ advanced business course, the teacher wore a radio microphone to assist a student with hearing impairment and a learning support assistant made notes to help the student. The college is currently providing support for 11 students with visual impairments and 38 with hearing impairments. The retention and achievement rates of students receiving additional support have improved.

60 The college does not give literacy and numeracy tests to all students joining level 2 or level 3 courses. Instead, the needs of these students for help with literacy and numeracy are identified through careful scrutiny of the students' application forms. Students can be referred for help with literacy and numeracy by their teacher. They also work towards the new key skills qualification. Diagnostic assessment for key skills is carried out using computer-based materials, which staff have designed, to identify at what level a student should study. The self-assessment report failed to acknowledge that the diagnostic testing process is not co-ordinated well. Monitoring of the performance of those students who take the test is poor. The results of those taking the test were not available.

61 Students take part in a wide variety of enrichment activities as part of their course. These include artistic and creative activities; music, drama and theatre; media and IT; technology; sport and self-development activities such as 'projecting an image'. A well-established students' union has facilities at both centres, including an attractive common room at the sixth form centre. There is little awareness of the students' union at the further education centre. The college has recently appointed a student development worker to improve communication between students and their representative bodies.

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General Resources

Grade 2

62 Inspectors agreed broadly with the judgements in the college's self-assessment report. Some of the weaknesses had been rectified by the time of the inspection.

Key strengths

- spacious, attractive campuses
- well-equipped and well-managed learning resource centres
- major investment in IT for learning
- good sports facilities

Weaknesses

- inaccessibility of some parts of the college to wheelchair users
- some shortcomings in accommodation

63 The college estate consists of two attractive and spacious campuses. The college also leases a building in the city centre which contains an information and guidance centre, classrooms and IT facilities. The merged college has duplication of some resources. The teaching accommodation at the further education centre is underused, whilst that at the sixth form centre is not big enough for many of the classes. The college has begun to relocate some of its provision to redress the balance of usage between the two sites. Governors and managers are currently discussing an accommodation strategy for the merged college. Their preferred option is to undertake a new building programme.

64 The college buildings are modern, clean and mostly in good decorative order. The reception areas are welcoming. The further education centre has an attractive foyer with access to the reception desk, learning resource centre, bookshop, coffee bar and student

services area. Signage is good. There is a three-year programme for the refurbishment of teaching areas, based on a room condition survey, and most classrooms are well furnished and suitably equipped. Some classrooms and corridors, however, lack suitable displays and are drab. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the college is well provided with a variety of catering outlets, although these become congested at peak times. The snack bar at the sixth form centre was recently refurbished in response to students' concerns, and has been considerably improved by the creation of a separate social area. There remain, however, insufficient social areas for students. The college nursery, at the further education centre, is not big enough to cater for the demand for the care of babies. Sports facilities are good. Each site has a large sports hall and a fitness room, and there are extensive playing fields.

65 The estates staff provide a prompt response to maintenance requests, and day-to-day maintenance of the college's premises is good. However, the planned maintenance programme has been restricted to priority areas as a result of financial constraints and whilst the accommodation strategy is developed. A recent survey has identified the need for essential repairs to the fabric of the buildings. Staff and students have raised concerns over leaking roofs, some poor toilets, insufficient lighting in car parks and the poor condition of temporary classrooms. The offices for central support staff are good. However, the self-assessment report recognised that office and workroom accommodation for some teachers and additional learning support staff is too small.

66 Both sites have well-designed learning resource centres which combine a library with an IT suite. They are well equipped and well managed. The centre on the further education site is particularly well laid out by curriculum area, and consists of an open-plan study and

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resource area, with help desks appropriately positioned, and a suite of seminar rooms and bays where teachers can work with individuals and groups. The centres on both sites are popular and can be congested at certain times of the day. The links between the centres and curriculum areas are excellent. Each learning resource assistant liaises with a group of curriculum areas and works with staff in these to ensure that there are appropriate learning resources for the courses offered. The libraries at both centres are electronically linked and managed as one unit. The services the learning resource centres provide are subject to evaluation through the use of performance indicators. The results of this show that the learning resource centres are well used and provide a valuable service for the college. In their responses to questionnaires, students rate the learning resource centres highly.

67 The college has invested considerably in IT over the last year, in response to demand from students and in order to be ready to provide curriculum 2000. The ratio of computers to students is in line with the average for the sector. The majority of the computers are modern and give access to the Internet. All students have an electronic mail address. A central academic network links both sites with five access points in the community. The college has made good progress in linking computers to the new network, although a significant proportion, including some in the main sixth form centre IT suite, remain unconnected. Despite the installation of 120 extra computers in summer 2000, there is heavy demand for computers and it is often difficult for students to gain access to a machine. The college's information learning technology strategy provides a clear vision and action plan for the development of IT as a means of learning. An information learning technology steering group brings together IT staff, curriculum managers, learning resource managers and information learning technology champions, and meets monthly to oversee developments. The close

links between the providers of IT and those responsible for curriculum development represent a considerable strength, which was not recognised in the self-assessment report.

68 As the self-assessment report indicates, the central reprographics facility provides a wide range of particularly good learning materials for students. These include adaptation of materials for students with visual and hearing impairment. The college has an extensive bank of specialist equipment for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A detailed audit has been undertaken to measure the accessibility of the college's accommodation for students with disabilities. The audit identified a significant number of barriers to access including poorly functioning lifts and insufficient toilets for wheelchair users. Overall, 25% of the college is inaccessible to wheelchair users.

Quality Assurance

Grade 2

69 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- good integration of quality assurance with operational planning
- comprehensive and properly co-ordinated quality assurance system
- rigorous auditing of curriculum and support service areas
- close involvement of staff in self-assessment
- effective arrangements for course validation
- well-managed and extensive staff development
- comprehensive monitoring of franchised provision

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Weaknesses

- inconsistencies in the quality of curriculum and support service reviews
- lack of clear criteria for grading lessons
- failure of quality assurance to lead to improvement in some retention rates

70 The college's mission statement and strategic objectives emphasise the importance of the quality assurance system. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the quality assurance system is comprehensive. It covers teaching and cross-college functions. All staff are keen to participate in the quality assurance process. The college's quality assurance committee and its committees for curriculum and college services monitor compliance with quality assurance procedures effectively, set standards and disseminate good practice. Quality assurance procedures are applied rigorously. The self-assessment report, however, did not identify the failure of the quality assurance system to identify some poor student retention rates, particularly for students aged 19 or over, and some poor achievement rates on level 1 courses. Rates for some courses are well below the national average for the sector and have not improved over the last three years.

71 The college has successfully integrated the self-assessment process with its other quality assurance procedures. All course teams produce annual self-assessment reports and action plans. They regularly review progress in implementing the plans. Some curriculum reports still reflect the structures that operated in the two former colleges. The action plans drawn up for curriculum areas incorporate action for improvement identified through self-assessment, and action required by the college's operational plans. Members of the curriculum quality committee audit curriculum area action plans three times each year. Outcomes of audits are reported to this

committee. The quality of course and curriculum area reports varies considerably and some reports are poor. In the better reports, there is systematic comparison with national benchmarking data on students' achievements. Some reports, however, do not take enough account of the views of students, staff, external verifiers, parents and employers. Few contain data on students' destinations. Processes for reviewing new course proposals and revalidating existing courses are thorough. Senior managers monitor reports from external verifiers before forwarding them to the relevant assistant principal and course teams. Prompt remedial action is taken to address identified weaknesses.

72 All support services produce action plans. Most also specify the standards against which their performance may be evaluated. In some areas, for example clerical services, standards are well established. Other areas have only recently set service standards. Some of these standards, however, are general rather than specific and progress towards reaching them cannot be easily measured. Some service area reviews lack rigour. An audit team from the service quality committee monitors progress in implementing the action plans three times a year. It reports to the service quality committee. Staff speak positively of the process.

73 Teachers, including part-time teachers, are observed annually through a well-devised lesson observation scheme. Observers receive good training. Findings are thoroughly analysed. In some curriculum areas, there is a lack of sharing of good practice in teaching and learning, and curriculum management. The college graded a significantly greater number of lessons as good or outstanding than inspectors did. The self-assessment report identified weaknesses associated with observers' grading of lessons. The college has not established clear grading criteria.

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74 The college charter is updated annually. It includes sections for students, employers and the local community. The extent to which the college meets the commitments it makes through its charter is monitored regularly and is reported upon to governors. There is a comprehensive complaints system and a detailed summary of complaints is presented annually to governors. Students answer questionnaires regularly about the quality of the college's provision and their responses are compared with those from earlier questionnaires. Summaries of the responses are displayed around the college, but few course teams discuss the issues the students raise. The views of employers and parents of students under the age of 18 are not gathered systematically. Few student representatives consider their attendance at students' union meetings worthwhile.

75 Staff development is well managed, well structured and comprehensively evaluated. All staff are encouraged to undertake staff development activities. A comprehensive in-house programme, linked to strategic objectives and reflecting the training needs of staff identified during appraisal, is widely advertised. For example staff receive information about training events with their pay slips. New staff receive a comprehensive induction. All full-time staff and almost all part-time teachers are appraised annually. Staff say they find the appraisal process supportive and effective. The college was re-accredited as an Investor in People in February 2000.

76 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the college monitors the quality of its franchised provision effectively. For example, a separate annual self-assessment report on franchised provision includes analysis of students' achievements. In 1999-2000, 10% of staff teaching on franchised courses were observed. Governors receive a detailed annual report on the franchised provision.

77 The college produced a self-assessment report in preparation for the inspection. This followed three annual self-assessment reports produced by the predecessor colleges. The self-assessment process was thorough and involved all staff. Members of the governors' quality committee also took part. There was no external moderation of the judgements or gradings in the self-assessment report. Strengths and weaknesses are clearly stated. A detailed action plan addresses weaknesses but does not indicate how existing strengths are to be built upon.

Governance

Grade 2

78 Inspectors and auditors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report, but found some additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- governors' strong commitment to helping the college fulfil its mission
- good induction and training arrangements
- good attendance by governors at corporation and committee meetings
- clear procedure for communications with curriculum areas
- open style of governance

Weaknesses

- inadequate evaluation of the corporation's performance
- insufficient monitoring of progress towards strategic objectives by the whole corporation

79 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that governors are

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firmly committed to enabling the college to succeed. They are closely involved in determining the college's educational character and in setting the college's strategic direction. They played an active role in steering the merger of the predecessor colleges. The governors have a clear understanding of the respective roles of the corporation and the principal. The corporation has recently reaffirmed the college's mission. It receives many reports on aspects of the college's operating plan but it does not carry out a formal review of progress in implementing the plan during the year, a weakness the self-assessment report failed to acknowledge. The corporation's quality committee carries out such a review in some detail on behalf of the corporation.

80 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.

81 The corporation has a determined membership of 20. There is currently one vacancy for a parent governor. The search committee has played an active part in the transition to the revised determination of membership. The process for appointing governors is fully documented and the corporation plans to establish a database of potential new governors. Inspectors and auditors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that there is an effective induction process for new governors, involving a useful checklist. New governors are briefed well by the clerk, issued with a comprehensive handbook and mentored by an existing corporation member. A governor training programme is arranged annually. The chair has encouraged members to participate in the new governance training modules. In response to a recent evaluation, additional presentations on

the curriculum have been arranged to keep members informed of developments in curriculum areas.

82 The corporation has held four ordinary and two special meetings in the last 12 months. The clerk to the corporation has a detailed job description covering his role. He has no other responsibilities within the college. Governors appreciate his organisational abilities and the timely receipt of agendas and papers. In addition to the search and quality committees, the corporation has committees covering finance and general purposes, audit, personnel and remuneration. Governors' attendance at corporation and committee meetings over the last year has been good at 80%, a strength not identified in the self-assessment report. An annual schedule of agenda items provides a framework for the content of meetings. The corporation has also undertaken a formal annual review of its decision-making processes.

83 The finance and general purposes committee meets five times a year and reviews the college management accounts at each of its meetings. The accounts are also presented at each corporation meeting. Governors have decided that they do not wish to receive the management accounts between meetings. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement, given the college's weak financial position. The committee has closely overseen the restructuring programme, undertaken to assist the college's financial recovery. Membership of the audit committee includes two external co-optees with relevant financial expertise. The committee monitors closely the implementation of agreed recommendations, but has yet to set criteria against which to monitor the performance of the internal and external auditors. The quality committee regularly monitors the college's academic performance.

84 Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that the corporation is committed to open governance. There are few confidential items of

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business, although the corporation has yet to determine formally criteria for confidentiality. Corporation and committee minutes are available on the college intranet and from the clerk, who produces regular governance newsletters. These are well received by college staff. A file containing a range of documents, including recent corporation minutes, standing orders and the register of interests, is kept at college reception areas. The register of interests covers senior staff, in addition to governors, and is annually updated. The college's annual report includes information on, for example, corporate objectives, staffing and financial out-turn.

85 As noted in the self-assessment report, governors undertook an assessment of their own performance. However, inspectors considered the process to be inadequate, as not all governors were sufficiently involved in it. A principal from another college validated the governance self-assessment report. The corporation recognises the importance of measuring its own performance, but, with the exception of an attendance target, has not yet produced performance indicators and targets to measure its effectiveness. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

86 Governors take keen interest in college affairs. They use their expertise and participate on many of the college committees, such as those for accommodation and information and learning technology. There is a well-devised programme whereby governors maintain links with specific subject areas, a strength not identified in the self-assessment report. Governors have demonstrated good practice in determining clear terms of reference for their link activities. They also participate in lunches with curriculum and service areas, which staff have found to be very productive. However, following changes in membership of the corporation, some links have not been maintained.

Management

Grade 3

87 Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report but identified an additional weakness.

Key strengths

- open and approachable management style
- good communications
- effective and productive external relationships
- well-supported college initiatives

Weaknesses

- some fragmented curriculum management
- lack of standardised and common working practices across the college
- some deficiencies in management information systems
- insufficient use of measurable targets

88 Following the merger in April 1999, an interim senior management structure was implemented. This structure is scheduled to be reviewed by April 2001. It was established to deal with the distinctive challenges of transition faced by the college in the post-merger phase. A detailed project plan was drawn up to aid transition. However, whilst there has been good progress in consolidating the new college, particularly by harmonising support services and in the addressing of the financial deficit, management of some curriculum areas is fragmented. There is some duplication of management activities. Some management procedures are unclear. Staff have not engaged in sufficient development and sharing of good practice. Working practices across the college

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have yet to be harmonised and standardised although it is the college's objective that they shall be by the summer of 2001.

89 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that communications within the college are good. Staff receive regular information through a variety of forums, which include briefings by the principal, senior staff and governors. These are complemented by a series of 'listen and learn' sessions with staff teams. Teams and managers all meet frequently at both centres. In addition, minutes of the various meetings are available in printed form and on the college intranet. The college also has a series of newsletters, which help to keep staff informed of key college issues and initiatives. Many staff use electronic mail effectively but some staff have yet to gain access to this facility. Staff welcome the open and approachable management style and the easy access they have to senior managers.

90 The strategic planning process is thorough and well organised. It is informed by a sound analysis of the business environment and assessment of local labour market trends. Curriculum and support service teams produce consolidated action plans that are taken into account in the college's operating plan. Within the planning cycle there are clearly defined dates when managers meet formally to review progress in implementing existing action plans and in drawing up new ones. These plans take into account action to rectify weaknesses across all aspects of the college's provision identified in the self-assessment report. The self-assessment report failed to acknowledge that few of the action plans specify quantifiable targets, against which progress in rectifying weaknesses may be measured.

91 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is adequate. During 1998-99, the college incurred a historical cost deficit of £603,000. A benchmarking exercise

confirmed that staffing costs were high compared with sector norms. A restructuring programme was undertaken, reducing payroll costs by £700,000. This programme resulted in a further historical cost deficit of £702,000 and a deficit balance of £700,000 on the income and expenditure reserve account at 31 July 2000. However, whilst the college's financial position is currently weak, payroll costs in relation to income have fallen to 69%. The latest forecasts indicate a further reduction to 66% and a small operating surplus in 2000-01. The college resources group closely monitors the college's finances. Management accounts, including a rolling 12-month cashflow forecast, are produced monthly, and report progress against a range of performance indicators. Consumable and part-time staffing budgets are delegated to curriculum managers, although the finance department exercises tight control. The college's financial regulations are updated annually and are largely comprehensive. The college managers have concentrated on the implementation of recommendations made by the internal auditors in order to improve the college's internal control systems.

92 Inspectors agreed with the finding in the self-assessment report that the college's comprehensive and productive links with a wide range of external partners constitute a strength. Involvement in partnership activities is one of the college's key strategic objectives. Senior staff contribute extensively to the York Higher Education Consortium, the City of York Lifelong Learning Partnership and the careers service. The college collaborates effectively with North Yorkshire TEC. Good links exist with the 11 to 16 partner schools. The college frequently assumes the lead role in these partnerships. The various partners consider the college to be both responsive and committed to the successful completion of all the initiatives it is involved in. The college markets adult education in collaboration with 19 local partners.

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93 Good progress has been made in updating and correcting data. The several management information systems inherited from the two former colleges have been brought together largely successfully. However, staff still experience difficulties with aspects of the different systems. The extent to which staff use and have access to management information varies widely across the college. A new strategic framework for the college's information system, including the hardware, is currently in preparation with the aim of giving staff easy access to a wide range of management information. The college is proposing changes in senior management responsibilities with a view to providing better co-ordination and use of management information. Weaknesses relating to management information systems were recognised in the self-assessment report.

94 The college is committed to supporting and promoting new initiatives. For example, a learning development unit has been established that aims to improve teaching. It is also committed to promoting both information and learning technology and inclusive learning. Equal opportunities are actively promoted in the college. The college has a policy and code of practice for equal opportunities, a harassment policy and an action plan for improving the promotion of equal opportunities throughout all aspects of its work. A working group on equal opportunities monitors the effectiveness of the college's equal opportunities policy. The group produces a self-assessment report and an annual report to the corporation.

Conclusions

95 The self-assessment report used for the inspection provided a sound basis for planning the inspection. Inspectors mainly agreed with strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. The self-assessment report reflected the views of staff and governors and presented a clear and comprehensive evaluation of the college's work. Judgements were supported by good evidence, including extensive use of the findings from lesson observations and comparison of students' achievements with FEFC benchmarking data. A helpful updated self-assessment action plan was produced shortly before the inspection. Inspectors agreed with all the judgements and grades in the self-assessment report. They found some additional strengths and weaknesses not identified in the self-assessment report.

96 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 (October 2000)

Age	%
Under 16	1
16-18 years	38
19-24 years	14
25+ years	45
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (October 2000)

Level of study	%
Level 1 (foundation) and entry level	10
Level 2 (intermediate)	16
Level 3 (advanced)	35
Level 4/5 (higher)	6
Level not specified	0
Non-schedule 2	33
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (October 2000)

Programme area	Full-time	Part-time	Total provision (%)
Science	610	986	17
Construction	265	501	8
Engineering	149	268	5
Business	255	729	11
Hotel and catering	213	166	4
Health and community care	404	680	12
Art and design	658	414	12
Humanities	749	1,853	29
Basic education	89	86	2
Total	3,392	5,683	100

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1998-99 ISR data, the college recruited 8% of students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions' Index of Local Conditions.

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (October 2000)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	193	12	33	238
Supporting direct learning contact	81	10	2	93
Other support	201	12	20	233
Total	475	34	55	564

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1998	1999	2000
Income	*	£17,262,000	£18,012,000
Average level of funding (ALF)	*	£16.45	£16.74
Payroll as a proportion of income	*	69%	68%
Achievement of funding target	*	100%	97%
Diversity of income	*	71%	67%
Operating surplus	*	-£1,020,000	-£1,127,000

Sources: Income – college (1999 and 2000)

ALF – Funding Allocations 1998-99 (1999), college (2000)

Payroll – Council Circular 00/10 (1998), college (1999 and 2000)

Achievement of funding target – college (1999 and 2000)

Diversity of income – college (1999 and 2000)

Operating surplus – college (1999 and 2000)

*data not available due to college merger

Students' achievements data

Level	Retention and pass	Students aged 16 to 18			Students aged 19 or over		
		1998	1999	2000	1998	1999	2000
1	Number of starters	1,053	1,101	1,326	1,348	1,278	1,154
	Retention (%)	82	86	85	73	71	73
	Achievement (%)	35	48	64	55	58	53
2	Number of starters	1,596	1,496	1,673	1,222	999	1,041
	Retention (%)	71	72	78	75	71	75
	Achievement (%)	69	72	72	68	68	72
3	Number of starters	3,545	3,318	3,027	1,665	1,531	1,481
	Retention (%)	71	68	75	68	79	73
	Achievement (%)	84	86	84	57	59	63
4 or 5	Number of starters	19	16	11	544	563	536
	Retention (%)	53	100	55	72	81	73
	Achievement (%)	70	77	33	60	63	64
Short courses	Number of starters	1,972	2,090	1,557	6,114	5,857	6,114
	Retention (%)	92	94	95	94	93	94
	Achievement (%)	69	77	59	70	70	61
Unknown/unclassified	Number of starters	1,873	3,009	4,159	1,353	1,507	1,462
	Retention (%)	82	90	89	80	85	85
	Achievement (%)	29	17	27	66	62	58

Source: college

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