

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Morley College

August 1997

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education every four years. The inspectorate also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum and gives advice to the FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge and experience in the work they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member who does not work in education and a member of staff from the college being inspected.

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GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are set out in the Council Circular 93/28. During their inspection, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also use a five-point grading scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses.

The descriptors for the grades are:

- grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

By June 1996, some 329 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 329 colleges are shown in the following table.

College grade profiles 1993-96

Activity	Inspection grades				
	1	2	3	4	5
Programme area	9%	59%	29%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	14%	50%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	12%	54%	30%	4%	<1%

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 104/97

MORLEY COLLEGE
GREATER LONDON REGION
Inspected September 1996-April 1997

Summary

Morley College has a national reputation as a specialist provider of adult education. A diverse range of courses is offered, including many in unusual subjects. The quality of most teaching is good and some is outstanding. High standards are achieved by many students. Over 80 per cent of its courses are non-accredited. The college effectively celebrates students' achievements through public performances, exhibitions and publications. The governors have much valuable expertise. Most curriculum areas are effectively managed. Students are offered a range of opportunities to become involved in college decision-making processes and to help improve the quality of provision. A system of classroom observations works well and leads to improvements in teaching. Staff make frank and accurate assessments of the quality of provision. Teachers are well qualified in their subject areas and many are national experts in their field. Social areas and large performance spaces are well used and enrich students' experience of study. To make further progress the college should: improve the quality of teaching in languages; assess students' progress on non-accredited courses; improve retention rates on some courses and pass rates on GCE A level courses; further develop marketing strategies; improve management information systems; extend additional learning support provision; implement the recently-devised quality assurance policy and procedures; systematically monitor academic performance; improve information technology resources and some other specialist facilities; and improve access to the buildings for students with restricted mobility.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	3
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	3
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Exercise and health	2	Foreign languages	3
Visual and performing arts	2	Humanities, including access to higher education	2
Music	2	Basic skills	2

INTRODUCTION

1 Morley College was inspected between September 1996 and April 1997. Ten inspectors spent 45 days in the college. The team observed 112 classes and examined students' work and college documentation. Meetings were held with governors, staff, students and representatives from the University of London, South Bank University, the London Guildhall University, the University of Middlesex, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Contemporary Dance Foundation, the National Opera Studio, the Centre for Young Musicians, the Royal Festival Hall, Costain Group, Southwark Education and Training, the Imperial War Museum and the London Open College Federation.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Morley College, one of the oldest adult education institutions in England, was founded in 1889 to enable working men and women to study subjects not connected with handicraft, trade or business. It developed from a series of popular 'penny lectures' by eminent scientists and other experts given at the 'Old Vic' theatre. The college grew and, by 1924, it had moved from the theatre to an adapted eighteenth-century building on its present site. The college enjoys a national reputation as a provider of adult education and its teachers have included many distinguished specialists, for example, Bertrand Russell, Gustav Holst, Sir Michael Tippett, Virginia Woolf and Margaret Drabble.

3 After the demise of the Inner London Education Authority in 1990, Morley College received funding from the London Residuary Body and was given a remit to provide specialist adult education not offered by the boroughs. Following the *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, the college became a designated institution within the further education sector and, in 1993, was established as a charitable company limited by guarantee. Morley College provides some courses identified under schedule 2 of the *Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, but the majority, some 84 per cent, are non-schedule 2 and not accredited.

4 In 1995-96, the college provided 1,102 courses, nearly all part time. Courses range from introductory to advanced levels and are in the fields of exercise and health, visual art, drama, dance, music, food studies, languages, humanities and basic education. Accredited courses include general certificate of secondary education (GCSE), general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) and courses accredited by the London Open College Federation, City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) and various professional bodies. Some courses, such as the Morley access programme and the foundation art course, prepare students who do not have the normal entry qualifications for study in higher education. The college franchises a small amount of provision to the well-established Centre for Young Musicians. In 1995-96, 11,902 students enrolled at the college. Many enrolled on more than one course, resulting in 19,766

enrolments. Student numbers by age are shown in figure 1. Enrolments by level of study and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 2 and 3.

5 The principal, the vice-principal and the head of finance and administration comprise the college directorate. The directorate, the six directors of studies, the head of learning resources, the administrative and finance officers and the premises manager comprise the college management group. There are 43 full-time staff and some 460 part-time staff. Most courses are taught by part-time teachers. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

6 The college operates from three buildings on its main site on the borders of the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark and on one other site. In 1995-96, 95 per cent of students were from London, including 45 per cent from the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. There are several other providers of further and adult education in the area, including Lambeth College, South Thames College, Southwark College, The City Literary Institute, The Mary Ward Centre and the local boroughs' adult education services.

7 The college mission is to 'be a quality provider of adult education in London and the home counties by achieving excellent standards in all our programmes and activities'. The college continues to support the college's original 'objects' of promoting advanced levels of non-vocational study for working class men and women, providing opportunities for those who had little schooling to develop basic skills and developing a social community of adult learners.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 The college successfully achieves the primary object of its mission to promote the study of advanced non-vocational subjects for adults from different backgrounds. In 1995-96, the college provided 1,102 courses at a variety of levels ranging from introductory to advanced. Some courses are designed for those with high levels of skills and experience, such as the Morley Opera Group and professional level classes for pianists and string players. Others, for example, the pre-access course and introductory courses in humanities, are designed to prepare students for more advanced study. In some subject areas, it is possible for students to progress from introductory courses to more advanced courses in the same subject.

9 In 1995-96, a total of 11,902 students enrolled on courses. Students' ages range from 18 to 96. Nearly 40 per cent of students are between the ages of 25 and 34. Two-thirds of students are female, 25 per cent are from minority ethnic backgrounds, 6 per cent are unemployed and 50 per cent are eligible for concessionary fees. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds has remained fairly constant over the last few years, although the college aims to increase recruitment from these groups. Most courses are part time and involve attendance at the college

for two or three hours a week. Other modes of study include full-time, drop-in workshop provision in basic education, and short intensive courses such as summer school courses. Weekend courses are popular and a growing number of early morning courses are provided.

10 The range of courses is rich and diverse. Many distinctive and unusual courses are offered such as Spanish cinema, the dance of Isadora Duncan, and Igbo language and culture. Some 16 per cent of courses are accredited, although the proportion varies significantly between curriculum areas. Some progress has been made in identifying learning outcomes for the non-accredited courses. The Morley access programme offers students a wide choice of subjects from some 30 different modules. Its flexible structure enables students to design a programme of study to meet their particular needs.

11 The college is responsive. New courses are offered every year. For example, recent introductions have included complementary medicine, outreach work in dance, intensive revision courses and more accredited courses. Suggestions for new courses come mostly from teachers, student class representatives and the student executive committee. Market research is inadequate. The college plans and advertises more courses than it intends to provide, sometimes on a speculative basis. A significant proportion of the courses advertised each year recruit fewer students than the number specified in the enrolment target and are closed on economic grounds. In 1995-96, the college closed 21 per cent of the courses offered because of low enrolments. Students enrolled on courses which are subsequently closed are offered alternatives. However, occasionally students are disappointed when they cannot study the course they originally chose.

12 The college's approach to marketing is not systematic. Some analysis of need is undertaken, drawing on economic and labour market surveys but it is not specifically related to subject areas. Courses are advertised through the college prospectus, London-wide course guides, newspapers and word of mouth. There are few promotional leaflets. Statistics are collected and used to monitor the effectiveness of publicity strategies. A profile of the students who enrol is available, but is not used effectively for marketing purposes. The recently-introduced course review and development procedure applies only to longer, accredited courses and has not yet been fully implemented. The procedure has not been used to inform marketing, for example, by defining client groups, setting target numbers of students for courses, or monitoring the outcomes of courses. Although many students come from Lambeth and Southwark, the college does not have marketing strategies designed specifically for these areas.

13 A variety of productive links with other agencies helps to inform the design of existing and new provision. For example, the London Open College Federation and various higher education institutions influence the Morley access programme; the Contemporary Dance Foundation and the

Royal Festival Hall assist with development projects; and the Imperial War Museum provides information and resources to enhance a number of history courses. The National Opera Studio, the Centre for Young Musicians and Birkbeck College have long-standing connections with Morley College and provide courses at the college. Useful relationships are beginning to be developed with the new Central London Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). Morley College works closely with several other specialist adult education institutions in the London area.

14 The college is committed to equal opportunities. Its policy on equal opportunities covers most key areas, including student and staff recruitment, staff training, disciplinary and grievance procedures, reviewing courses and assuring academic quality. The equal opportunities policy is available on tape and in large print. A draft policy on harassment is currently being discussed. However, arrangements for monitoring and reporting on equal opportunities are underdeveloped. For example, monitoring through course reviews is not systematic. The equal opportunities committee of the governing body is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the policy but it is not yet effective. The college's disability statement indicates who is responsible for implementing the statement and the range of support available for students. However, the college does little to promote this support.

15 Students speak highly of the cultural and social activities offered by the college. For example, there are exhibitions of students' art work, lunchtime music recitals and poetry readings, plays performed at the college, visits to theatres, overseas study visits and social events arranged by a student association, the 'Friends of Morley'.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

16 The college is governed by a board of directors which has a clear understanding of its duties and operates in a business-like manner. The members have a wide range of experience at senior levels in the public and commercial sectors and expertise in educational, legal, financial and personnel matters. The board also includes two members of staff and one student. Attendance at board meetings is good. The board has recently set up a register of interests and is considering a code of conduct. It has yet to agree ways to monitor its own performance. The board has eight committees: finance, personnel, audit, equal opportunities, health and safety, the academic board, a search committee and a remuneration committee. The equal opportunities and the health and safety committees have not met for some time. The board is reviewing membership of these committees.

17 The board has given a high priority to the financial security of the college and to setting up systems to achieve this. However, it has not given sufficient attention to monitoring the academic performance of the college against agreed operational targets. Governors are discussing their

information requirements with managers so that they can monitor the college's performance more effectively. Currently, the range and accuracy of management information collected is not sufficiently reliable or comprehensive to inform monitoring or planning. Figures provided by the college indicate that it has met its target enrolments over the last three years. Information on retention rates and student destinations is not systematically collected.

18 Governors, managers, staff and students share a commitment to the original objects of Morley College. The college mission statement has recently been revised and further changes are being considered. Further work needs to be done to develop a shared vision for the future of the college and to communicate this to staff and students. The board's responsibilities and those of management are clearly distinguished. Communication between senior managers and chairs of committees is effective. The chairman of the board visits the college regularly. The principal calls on the specialist skills of individual board members when the need arises.

19 Suitable policies and procedures have been introduced or updated for most areas of work. There are some exceptions, for example, learning support. Responsibilities for implementing and monitoring policies are generally well understood. However, the directorate does not always ensure that policies and procedures are put into practice, for example, those relating to personnel record keeping have not been implemented.

20 Strategic planning processes have recently been improved and now involve all key staff in the college. For 1996-97, strategic objectives were revised by the directorate and modified as a result of consultations with the management group and governors at a 'strategy day'. A management training weekend was held subsequently, at which operating objectives were decided. The strategic plan does not prioritise its objectives and does not sufficiently address the issues of risk analysis and contingency planning.

21 The management structure and lines of communication are generally clear and well understood by staff. There are opportunities for students to become involved in the decision-making processes of the college. Directors of studies have developed a range of strategies to communicate with the largely part-time teacher workforce. For example, newsletters and minutes of team meetings are sent to teachers' home addresses. There are some difficulties in ensuring compliance with college procedures such as those relating to registers. For example, some teachers do not differentiate between absence and withdrawals from a course. Sometimes the teachers do not know if a student has left or not. When registered, absences are usually followed up by contacting the student promptly in order to determine the reason for the absence.

22 Most curriculum areas are well managed and benefit from strong curriculum leadership. However, curriculum planning and curriculum

development are not well co-ordinated centrally in the college. Few college-wide priorities are set against which planning can take place and decisions can be made. The links between financial planning and curriculum development are weak.

23 The college's average level of funding for 1995-96 was £13.24 per unit for its schedule 2 provision. The median for specialist designated institutions was £14.64 per unit. Funding for non-schedule 2 provision was £13.87 per unit. The college's estimated income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1997 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

24 There is tight centralised financial control and regular monitoring of income and expenditure. The college is heavily dependent on Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) funding and fee income; together these constitute 92 per cent of the college's income. Little attention has been given to generating income from other sources. Unit costs have not been calculated at departmental or course level. Middle managers have little understanding of how funding operates. Several measures have been introduced to improve efficiency. For example, over the past two years, the college has reduced its energy costs by some £19,000 and, since August 1996, staff overtime has been reduced resulting in a saving of over £10,000.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

25 Students enjoy studying in an adult education environment and value the guidance and support given by staff. Generally, students are able to make an informed choice about their studies. The college prospectus provides accurate information about courses and in most cases, course information sheets give further useful details about course content and intended learning outcomes. The facility for students to attend a class before enrolling to help them choose what to study is appreciated and well used by students. The student handbook provides useful information about college services, such as the library, and also advises students on their rights and responsibilities. The Morley access programme booklet includes clear information about enrolment, how the programme works, the content of each module and suggested curriculum pathways to enable progression to higher education.

26 Effective advice and guidance is available on enrolment days at the start of each term. Guidance is also offered to students in each department at specific publicised times each week. There is little monitoring of the guidance provided by departments. Effective initial guidance is provided for students on most accredited courses. It is particularly thorough for those interested in enrolling on the Morley access programme. However, there is no systematic guidance for those wanting to enrol on GCE A level programmes or some other courses, such as those in massage, anatomy and physiology. As a result, a few students who are not ready for the level of study involved have enrolled on these courses.

27 Enrolment procedures are flexible and deal efficiently with over 1,500 enrolment inquiries a day at peak times. Students can enrol by telephone, post, fax or in person. Just under half of the students who join courses choose to enrol in person on the college's enrolment days so that they can meet staff and see round the college. Enrolment days are well organised and effective. Students appreciate the free childcare and refreshments provided. During the rest of the year, arrangements for enrolling in person are not always satisfactory. The inquiry counter at the front of the college lacks confidentiality. Some students complained of being given inaccurate information from reception staff and waiting a long time to pay. The front entrance to the college is poorly signposted and unwelcoming. Inquirers sometimes have to make several telephone calls before they can get through to the switchboard and they are not always transferred efficiently to appropriate staff.

28 Accreditation of students' prior learning is not appropriate for most of the courses offered. However, this facility is offered to students enrolling on national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses in exercise and health and on the Morley access programme. There are effective procedures to enable students to transfer to other courses. Between November 1996 and April 1997, some 272 students transferred to alternative courses.

29 The college has a clear fees policy which generally works well. However, charges on some courses, such as those for the Morley access programme, constitute a barrier to students on low incomes. Students can pay for courses on a termly basis and can apply for financial assistance.

30 Most students receive an effective induction to their course and the college. Although a helpful tutors' handbook includes a checklist of points to cover during the first session of a course, students on a few courses receive no formal induction.

31 Arrangements for assessing students' support needs are adequate on most accredited courses. However, students on GCE A level courses and non-accredited courses have no such assessment. In 1996-97, some 375 students declared a disability when they enrolled, compared with 294 the previous year. There are no arrangements to find out if these students require additional support. Teachers either respond as best they can or refer students to their director of studies or staff in basic education. Improving learning support is identified as a priority in the college's strategic plan and the student charter.

32 Students requiring individual help with study skills, essay writing, punctuation and grammar can attend a support workshop. However, this service is not well advertised and many students are unaware of it. Students who attend the workshop are mainly from one department. Liaison between workshop staff and course teachers is weak. Numeracy support is underdeveloped. Support for students with dyslexia is good. There are assessments, weekly support sessions, a dyslexia handbook and a useful computer software package. Between September 1996 and March

1997, 31 students sought help with dyslexia of whom 15 received a full assessment and written report.

33 Tutorials are an integral part of most accredited courses. Effective and carefully recorded tutorial support is provided for students on the Morley access programme. The access tutors' handbook includes useful guidance on the role of the personal tutor and the function of tutorials. Tutorial support for students on GCSE and GCE A level courses is inadequate. On non-accredited courses, teachers often provide students with some informal tutorial support.

34 There is no counselling service in the college. Many teachers are aware that they can refer students to external personal counselling services, if required. Where appropriate, students requiring careers advice are encouraged by staff to attend local careers centres. Students commented positively on these services. Careers advice is an integral part of the Morley access programme. The college does not encourage students to keep a record of their achievements.

35 The college has a creche and playgroup which are appreciated by students who are parents. In a few cases, creche opening hours do not match the timing of daytime courses. The Friends of Morley group has helped to provide a range of services for students, for example, by donating funds for social facilities. Some friends are voluntary helpers in the library and on enrolment days.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

36 Of the 112 lessons inspected, 78 per cent had strengths which outweighed weaknesses. In 4 per cent of lessons the weaknesses outweighed the strengths. These percentages compare favourably with 63 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, for all colleges inspected in 1995-96, according to figures published in the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. In the lessons inspected, the average attendance level was 69 per cent. This is below the average of 76 per cent recorded in the same report. The average number of students in each lesson was 10. The following table summarises the grades given to the lessons observed.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade 1	2	3	4	5	Totals
Non-schedule 2	16	24	11	1	0	52
Access to higher education	4	11	2	0	0	17
Basic education	2	9	2	1	0	14
Other accredited courses	5	5	4	0	0	14
Other	3	8	1	2	1	15
Total	30	57	20	4	1	112

37 Many students find the teaching at Morley College inspiring, challenging and supportive. Some teaching is outstanding and most is of good quality. Some teachers are distinguished in their subject areas and professions and draw on their expertise effectively in their teaching. A minority of the teaching is not well planned and fails to take account of the different needs of students in the group. A few teachers lack teaching and classroom management skills. Few teachers on non-accredited courses assess and record individual students' progress in a systematic way.

38 Exercise and health courses are well planned and documented. Schemes of work are regularly revised and updated. They take account of students' needs and achieve an appropriate balance between the theoretical and practical aspects of courses. Most teaching is of good quality. In particular, teachers give excellent practical demonstrations and support students as they develop new skills. For example, in a champissage session, the teacher effectively guided each student as they practised new massage techniques. Occasionally, teachers do not adapt their teaching to meet students' differing abilities and fail to check on students' understanding. Some teachers give students too little opportunity to discuss new concepts and topics during lessons.

39 In visual and performing arts, there are clear schemes of work and lessons are well planned. Teachers make appropriate use of a variety of teaching methods. For example, in a dance workshop, students performed choreographed routines and evaluated each other's work, encouraged by sensitive leadership and prompting from the teacher. Teachers are skilful in building students' confidence and supporting them whilst effectively promoting good work practices and the rigours of academic study. A few sessions were marred by poor teaching techniques or the lack of appropriate materials and equipment. For example, one teacher gave practical demonstrations without attracting the group's attention or checking that all students could see.

40 In music, teaching is effective and some is outstanding. Many teaching sessions are carefully structured and include varied teaching methods. Teachers often encourage students to lead parts of sessions. For example, in a jazz orchestra session, the group rehearsed an arrangement written by one of the students. The student also directed the group with guidance from the teacher. Many practical sessions, including those which involved large groups such as the Morley Opera Group and choir groups, were of a high standard. Many sessions included activities which extended students' musicianship, for example, by providing the historical context for musical pieces, focusing on listening skills and talking about responses to different kinds of music. The planning of teaching is developing but is not yet fully effective. In a few sessions, a lack of suitable equipment adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning.

41 The quality of teaching in foreign language classes is inconsistent. Just over half of the sessions observed had significant weaknesses. In the

most effective lessons, the teaching was lively; teachers created a friendly and encouraging environment with a sense of fun and enjoyment. They mainly used the language being taught and adopted a variety of teaching methods to achieve the planned learning objectives. For example, in a French class on the weather, the teacher spoke in French throughout the session and introduced new vocabulary using question and answer methods, well-prepared overhead transparency slides and props such as coats and umbrellas. She also used gesture well to indicate mood and reactions to different weather conditions. In the less effective sessions, teachers made little use of the foreign language, did not involve all students and made poor use of teaching aids. Students were given too little opportunity to practise the language. In a few sessions, students learned little.

42 In humanities, most courses are well planned and have clear learning objectives. Teachers give clear explanations of topics and use a range of teaching methods which take account of the different needs of students. For example, in a journalism session, the teacher gave students valuable, up-to-date information on how publishing houses operate; this was followed by a skilfully-led group discussion which built well on ideas students had explored in pairs and in an individual writing exercise. Humanities teaching is supported by high-quality printed learning materials and effective use of visual aids, such as video and slides. In a local history class on the Great Exhibition, teaching was enriched by samples of original commemorative pottery, a copy of the Exhibition catalogue and an extensive collection of relevant slides and books. In the few weaker teaching sessions, teachers had inadequate schemes of work and lesson plans and the teaching lacked clear purpose. Occasionally, teachers did not manage group discussions well and did not give all students the opportunity to contribute. On the Morley access programme, students' written assignments are marked promptly and teachers give constructive comments on ways in which students could improve their work. On other courses, the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and, in some cases, grammar and spelling errors are not commented on.

43 The teaching of literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is generally effective. Teachers carry out detailed initial assessments which they use to devise suitable learning programmes for each student. Courses are carefully planned to meet students' needs. Teachers use a range of successful strategies to meet students' different learning needs and abilities. For example, in a beginners' class designed to improve skills in sentence construction, students worked in groups asking each other questions to practise using the present tense. The exercise was suitably challenging and supportive. Teachers' wide knowledge of different cultures and languages is used effectively to improve students' learning. Students' progress is systematically monitored and recorded. Occasionally, teachers did not make effective use of learning resources and students in workshop sessions were given too few opportunities to develop their oral skills.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

44 Many students on non-accredited courses demonstrate high levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. The standard of some students' work is outstanding. Students value studying at Morley College and appreciate the college's learning environment which they find encourages them to achieve. The college has a strong tradition of celebrating students' achievements through performances, exhibitions and publishing their work. Although only a small proportion of students enrol on accredited courses, many of those who take examinations perform well and pass rates are often higher than national averages for students aged 19 or over in further education colleges. Some students progress on to more advanced study or employment on completion of their courses. There are examples of students going on to become accomplished professional musicians, artists, authors and journalists, after studying at Morley College.

45 The college has little data for judging the progress made by students on non-accredited courses. It has piloted a Further Education Development Agency national initiative for measuring students' learning outcomes over the last few years but work is still at an early stage of development. The lack of systematic assessment of students' progress on non-accredited courses makes it hard for students and staff to measure achievements. The college's information on students' examination results, retention rates and destinations is incomplete and unreliable. For example, the college could not supply inspectors with information on retention rates for most courses and some examination results were only available for 1995-96. Generally, GCE A level examination results are poor. In 1995-96, 41 per cent of candidates who sat GCE A level examinations failed. Retention rates across the college vary, but on some courses are less than 50 per cent. At the time of inspection, several courses had retained less than 40 per cent of enrolled students.

46 In exercise and health courses, students are highly motivated and most achieve good levels of skill and understanding. They learn a range of relevant techniques and apply newly-learned theory effectively. Students pay careful attention to health and safety issues in practical exercises. On accredited courses, most students who complete their course gain the qualification. In 1995-96, an average of 86 per cent of students gained the qualification they were seeking. In a few subjects, for example, the certificate in sports massage, there were 100 per cent pass rates. Results on the GCE A level sports studies course are consistently low; pass rates have declined from 33 per cent in 1994-95 to 25 per cent in 1995-96.

47 Students on non-accredited courses in the visual and performing arts achieve well. Students' practical work in textiles, ceramics and printmaking is of a particularly high standard. Many students have their achievements recognised by exhibiting their work or through public performance of dance and drama. A few students gain the confidence to teach other students about their areas of special interest, for example,

medieval costume and stained glass. Most students develop a range of key skills, including skills in communication and working in groups. Examination results are consistently good. For example, over the last three years, an average of 80 per cent of students on the C&G creative arts courses gained the full certificate; all the other students completed part awards and one student was awarded a C&G national bronze medal for the exceptionally high standards she achieved. Students who wish to progress to higher education generally do so. For example, an average of 70 per cent of students on the arts foundation course have progressed to higher education each year since 1994-95. Over the last few years, two groups of students have gone on to establish their own drama companies after completing courses in acting.

48 Students on courses in music develop good levels of skill, creativity and general musicianship. The college offers students a rich variety of opportunities to demonstrate their achievements through performance. Each year, several hundred music students perform in orchestras, choirs, operas, chamber music groups and jazz concerts. Some students effectively hone and develop their musical skills over several years at Morley College, moving from introductory or intermediate level music classes to advanced classes, and achieve professional levels of expertise. In contrast, some students remain on the same course at the same level for several years, although they extend their repertoires. The lack of piano and keyboard equipment is a restriction for some students.

49 The standards achieved by students in languages vary. Some students develop confidence and competence in speaking a foreign language, but others do not develop skills appropriate to the level of their course. Most students work effectively on exercises in pairs and small groups and move with ease from listening and speaking to written work. Some students' written work is below the standard required for their course. Examination results are mixed. In GCSEs, results are above the national averages for students aged 19 and over in further education colleges. Good results are also achieved in the Institute of Linguists French certificate and the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry courses. Most of the GCE A level examination results are below the national average for students aged 19 and over in further education colleges. For example, in 1995-96, 44 per cent of candidates gained grades A to C in French and 67 per cent of candidates gained grades A to C in Italian; both figures are below national averages.

50 Generally, students develop suitable skills and knowledge in humanities. They contribute well to class discussions. For example, students in a session on the romantic poets made perceptive comparisons between their philosophy and style of verse and that of classical poets. The standard of students' written work is generally good. Some students on creative writing classes have had their work published in a Morley College writers' anthology. A good proportion of students who complete

the Morley access programme achieve the access to higher education certificate; some 78 per cent in 1995-96. Almost 100 per cent of students enrolled on the access programme gained some credits. An impressive proportion of access students progress to higher education. In 1995-96, almost all of those who achieved the full access certificate, and a significant number of those who achieved some credits towards the certificate, went on to study at university. In contrast, most GCE A level examination results are poor. For example, in 1995-96 only 21 per cent of candidates gained a grade A to C which is significantly below the national average for students aged 19 and over in further education colleges.

51 In basic skills, the majority of students make good progress. They gain in confidence and develop skills in ESOL and literacy and numeracy which enable them to achieve their learning objectives. Students respond well in class and participate effectively in exercises in groups. A minority of students do not cope effectively with the way lessons or workshops are organised, prompting some to leave the course; others remain on the course but fail to achieve their learning goals. In 1995-96, only 12 per cent of students enrolled gained accreditation. Some students choose not to take up the offer of accreditation. Pass rates on courses for most of the qualifications offered are around 60 per cent of those entered for the examination. In a few cases, pass rates are outstanding. For example, in 1995-96, there were 100 per cent pass rates on the Cambridge Proficiency Certificate and the C&G certificate in numeracy courses. There are many examples of students progressing from basic education to more advanced further and adult education.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

52 Some well-established and effective quality assurance arrangements operate within teaching departments. The college has recently developed a policy for quality assurance building on the different departmental practices. The policy for academic quality assurance was approved by the academic board in April 1997 and, at the time of the inspection, had not yet been disseminated to the staff. Clear commitments are made in the college mission statement and charter to achieve excellent standards in programmes and activities. Several college documents, for example, the tutors' handbook, identify some standards the college is seeking to achieve.

53 One of the college's strategic aims is 'to develop and implement a comprehensive quality assurance system'. However, the 1996-97 annual operating statement of key tasks does not specify how this aim will be achieved. The academic board meets at least termly and is the principal forum for monitoring the academic work of the college, but it is not fully effective in carrying out this role. Much of its time has been spent on course approvals. The intention to establish a quality assurance subcommittee of the academic board, set out in the 1996-97 strategic plan, had not been implemented at the time of the inspection. Governors have some involvement in overseeing the quality of provision in the college.

For example, a governor with particular expertise in quality assurance and education, observes classes and reports on findings. Quality assurance on the provision franchised to the Centre for Young Musicians is effective; the college receives regular attendance and progress reports on students.

54 The college's management information system contributes little data to the quality assurance processes. Some data produced are of limited value. For example, information about the number of students attending classes each week does not distinguish between students who are absent and those who have left the course. There is scope for much greater use of management information for quality assurance purposes. The use of performance indicators is at an early stage of development.

55 A valuable vehicle for quality assurance is the class representatives' association which has a termly, minuted meeting with the principal. Some 80 representatives have been elected this year by course groups; some students represent more than one course. At these meetings, representatives raise a range of issues about teaching, students' experience at college and college facilities. The principal arranges for complaints to be addressed and gives a verbal report on progress at each meeting. Students value the class representative system and appreciate the improvements made in response to their comments.

56 At department and course level, systems for quality assurance are adequate and are being further developed. The main elements are classroom observation, questionnaires to students, end-of-course reviews and, more recently, departmental self-assessment reports. Line managers' observations of classes have proved effective in helping to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers value managers' sensitive and perceptive comments and their suggestions about areas for improvement. The frequency of classroom observations varies between departments, although each gives priority to observing new teachers. In exercise and health, teachers are observed at least twice a year whereas in music about a quarter of the teachers are observed each year. Useful college-wide guidelines for classroom observation have been introduced. The findings from classroom observations are beginning to be used more systematically to inform end-of-course reviews and departmental self-assessments.

57 The college has an ethos which encourages informal dialogue between students and their teachers about the quality of provision. Questionnaires are regularly used to gather information from students about their perceptions of course quality. Although a standard college questionnaire is available, departments have developed their own to suit different types of courses. Most questionnaires are appropriately designed but some do not effectively identify specific strengths and weaknesses and the action needed to address weaknesses. Some students prefer to discuss issues with their teachers and think that there are too many questionnaires. In the best practice, questionnaire responses are analysed, the results are used to draw up clear action points for teachers and managers, and action

is subsequently taken at these various levels. Some students expressed frustration that staff are sometimes slow to respond to criticisms and suggestions expressed in questionnaires.

58 Some departments see questionnaires as the main means of reviewing courses. A few departments conduct effective end-of-course reviews using standard evaluation forms. Most course reviews are thorough, but a few do not identify the action needed to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

59 Systems to assure the quality of college support services are developing. Some sections seek their customers' views on the services provided. For example, the library, the creche and the refectory have used questionnaires to find out students' views. The media resources section has canvassed teachers to assess their needs for audio-visual equipment and training. Some service standards are being developed, for example, for audio-visual and library services. Almost all support sections participated in producing a self-assessment report.

60 A college charter was prepared in 1994 and has been reviewed and revised three times subsequently. The students' executive committee contributed to its formulation and revision. The charter provides a clear statement of the service students can expect from the college. It is widely available and is produced in a number of formats, including audiotape. The college does not evaluate systematically the extent to which the commitments expressed in the charter are met. There is a college complaints procedure. Most complaints are dealt with informally but a few are lodged formally. These are recorded and dealt with by the principal, vice-principal or head of finance and administration. No log is kept of oral complaints. There is inadequate analysis of the complaints made.

61 The college has a policy for staff development. In 1996-97, the budget was £20,000, representing an increase of over 50 per cent on previous years' budgets and some 0.9 per cent of the college's total 1996-97 salaries budget. Staff development is organised through 'Morley Learning', a division of the college originally set up in 1992 to provide staff training and consultancy for external organisations. Staff-development activities include attendance at external courses and conferences and a core programme provided by the college which focuses on practical teaching skills. The college encourages staff to undertake training. The take up of development opportunities by individual staff is not monitored adequately but the proportion who attend training is low. There are procedures to evaluate staff-development activities. All new members of staff receive an induction which includes mentoring, a one-day staff conference and departmental induction events. The tutors' handbook gives useful information about college policies and procedures. Arrangements for the appraisal of staff have recently been devised but are not yet being implemented.

62 The college prepared a comprehensive self-assessment report for the inspection which included indicative grades for curriculum areas and aspects of cross-college provision. The report is clearly presented and based on the headings set out in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. The report was informed by detailed evaluative statements prepared by each teaching and main administrative department. The self-assessment reports are searching and frank. In almost all respects, the strengths and weaknesses identified were confirmed by inspectors.

RESOURCES

Staffing

63 The full-time teaching staff are well qualified in their specialist field, many to postgraduate degree level. About half of them have a teaching qualification. In departments which run NVQ programmes, staff have, or are working towards, relevant assessor and verifier awards.

64 Part-time hourly paid staff undertake around 90 per cent of the teaching. Most are well qualified and experienced in their specialist subjects, and there are a number of distinguished national experts who teach courses in music, arts, journalism and history. Some part-time teachers have a professional teaching qualification or have followed an introductory programme to learn teaching techniques. Volunteer tutors are used effectively to support students in basic skills. Part-time tutors are provided with a useful handbook which sets out essential information about key staff, facilities and details of employment.

65 Management information on staff is incomplete. The absence of accurate data on existing staff hinders progress in monitoring and managing personnel matters. There are procedures for appointing new teachers which most directors follow.

66 Support staff are well qualified and have appropriate experience. In learning resources, administration and premises management, flexible teamwork improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided. Technicians support the work of students in electronic music and in ceramics but, in other areas, support functions which are normally carried out by technicians are carried out by teachers. Clerical support is inadequate. In many cases, part-time clerical staff are responsible for marketing and liaising with up to 70 part-time teachers and large numbers of students. Insufficient time is available for them to provide support to directors and teachers on curriculum matters.

Equipment/learning resources

67 Equipment is adequate to meet the needs of most courses, including some specialist courses in languages, exercise, visual arts and radio production. Specialist equipment is inadequate in a few subject areas. For example, in music there is no keyboard studio and equipment for

electronic music is dated. The college's photography equipment is insufficient for the range of visual art programmes offered. Some equipment is available to support students with visual impairment, and induction loops for students with hearing impairments are well advertised.

68 Since 1996, when a new department of learning resources was created, considerable progress has been made in improving the co-ordination of audio-visual facilities, the library and information technology services. The separate physical location of media resources and learning resources has hampered the development of a fully integrated service. The lack of a central comprehensive inventory of learning resources means that some teachers are unaware of the resources available. Some learning resources, for example certain collections of books and videos, are dispersed across the college and many staff are unaware of them.

69 The library is well managed. The opening hours of 11.00 hours to 20.00 hours on most days coincide with the times of the majority of lessons. The library is not open at weekends. Recent computerisation of the library stock has improved security and the effectiveness of cataloguing. There are about 25,000 books. Those in general fiction, music, humanities and visual arts are good, and the stocks in other areas are improving. There is a range of large print, Braille and audio and video tape facilities. The library is an unusual design, comprising a series of interlinked rooms and narrow corridors. The layout does not make it easy for students who are researching a topic to combine the use of the different resources available, for example, records, books, periodicals and compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) database facilities. The media resources area, located on the ground floor, stocks sufficient audio-visual equipment and videos to meet demand, although much of the equipment is old.

70 Provision of information technology resources for teachers and students is insufficient. The Ursula Hyde Learning Centre, bequeathed and named after a former student, is an open learning centre which has six up-to-date computers, with a wide variety of software packages and CD-ROM material. The centre is supported by a full-time member of staff who also provides some cross-college support for information technology. The computers are in great demand by staff seeking training and preparing course materials and by students wishing to develop computing skills and information technology skills. In addition to these machines, there are two old computers for staff use in the media resources area and two computers with some computer-aided design facilities in the visual arts department.

Accommodation

71 Most teaching takes place in three buildings on the main site and at one other site. Some teaching rooms are well decorated and furnished but most have little display material to brighten and enliven them as learning environments. Two large performance spaces and studios provide

appropriate environments for public performances and practical work in exercise and dance. The Morley Art Gallery, a converted public house, is open to the public and is used to exhibit the work of students, teachers and other artists. There are several other large rooms suitable for teaching groups of over 20 students. Most teaching rooms are adequately equipped with whiteboards and screens. Some furniture is in poor condition and there is no strategy for replacement. Generally, teaching rooms are timetabled appropriately to meet any particular course requirements. There is a need for more specialist teaching rooms, for example, soundproofed music rooms and beauty therapy rooms fitted with sufficient sinks.

72 The college has a number of social areas for students, including a large refectory, a colourful 1970s style bar, a spacious seating area close to reception and seating areas with coffee-making facilities in the Nancy Seear Building. These are well used and provide valuable opportunities for social interaction and relaxation and help the college meet one of its original objects, to create a social community of learners. The seating area by reception is attractively furnished and has striking displays of students' work, such as pottery, jewellery and paintings. Nursery accommodation and play areas are well furnished and equipped.

73 Estates management has recently been reorganised. Effective systems for routine maintenance are now in place and minor faults are attended to promptly. Premises assistants work flexibly in undertaking minor repairs, portering and caretaking activities. Generally, the standard of cleaning is satisfactory, but the appearance of some areas is spoiled by poor floor surfaces which are hard to keep clean, and untidiness resulting from the lack of storage space.

74 Room use has been made more efficient by the introduction of two evening class sessions and letting rooms during the day to tenant groups. Saturday room lettings are restricting the further development of the popular Saturday class programme. In 1995-96, data on room use were calculated for the first time. The method of calculation is inadequate; it is based on course timetable information and does not take into account the numbers of students using rooms.

75 Half of the main building is not accessible to wheelchair users, including the reception area, the refectory and common room, most of the library and the theatre. By arrangement, those with restricted mobility can enter the college through the back of the main building using an electronic entry tag, but uneven surface areas and heavy doors make this potentially hazardous without a helper. Although there are lifts in two buildings, accessibility is only partial because of further small flights of stairs between parts of the main building. The visual arts block, the Morley Art Gallery and Pelham Hall are inaccessible to wheelchair users.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

76 The main strengths of the college are:

- the quality of the teaching, which is usually good, and sometimes outstanding
- the high standards achieved by some students
- the emphasis given to celebrating students' achievements through public performances, exhibitions and publications
- the diverse range of courses offered, including some in unusual subjects
- the expertise of governors which matches the needs of the college
- effective leadership and management in most curriculum areas
- the involvement of students in decision-making and quality assurance processes
- the system of classroom observation which leads to improvements in teaching
- the frank and accurate assessments made by staff about the quality of provision
- well-qualified teachers, many of whom are national experts in their fields
- well-used social areas and large performance spaces.

77 To make further progress the college should:

- improve the quality of teaching in languages
- establish ways of assessing students' progress on non-accredited courses
- improve retention rates on some courses
- improve pass rates on GCE A level courses
- develop marketing strategies
- improve the range, accuracy and use of management information
- develop systematic arrangements for providing additional learning support
- implement the recently-devised quality assurance policy and procedures
- systematically monitor academic performance
- improve information technology resources and some specialist facilities
- improve access to the buildings for students with restricted mobility.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (1995-96)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (1995-96)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1995-96)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at March 1997)

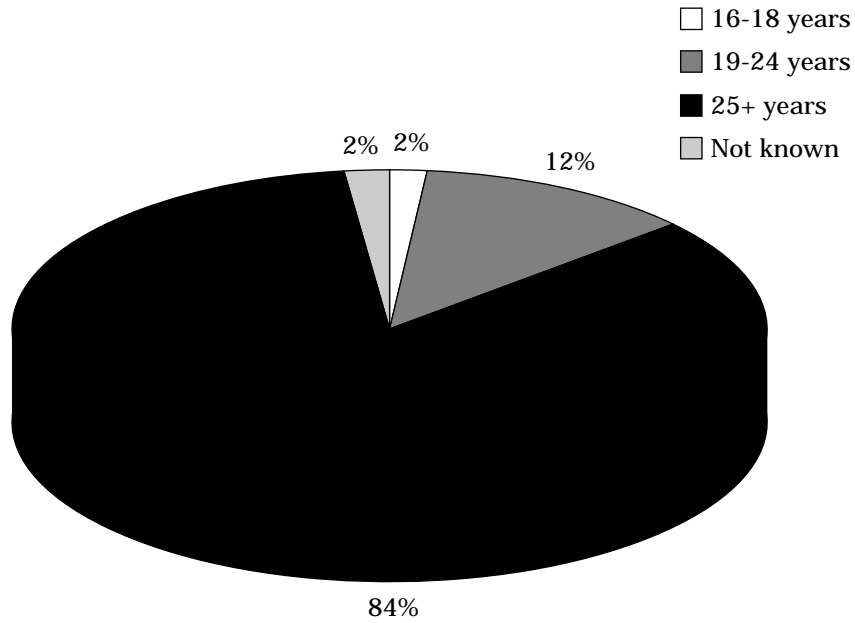
 - 5 Estimated income (for 12 months to July 1997)

 - 6 Estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1997)

Note: the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.

Figure 1

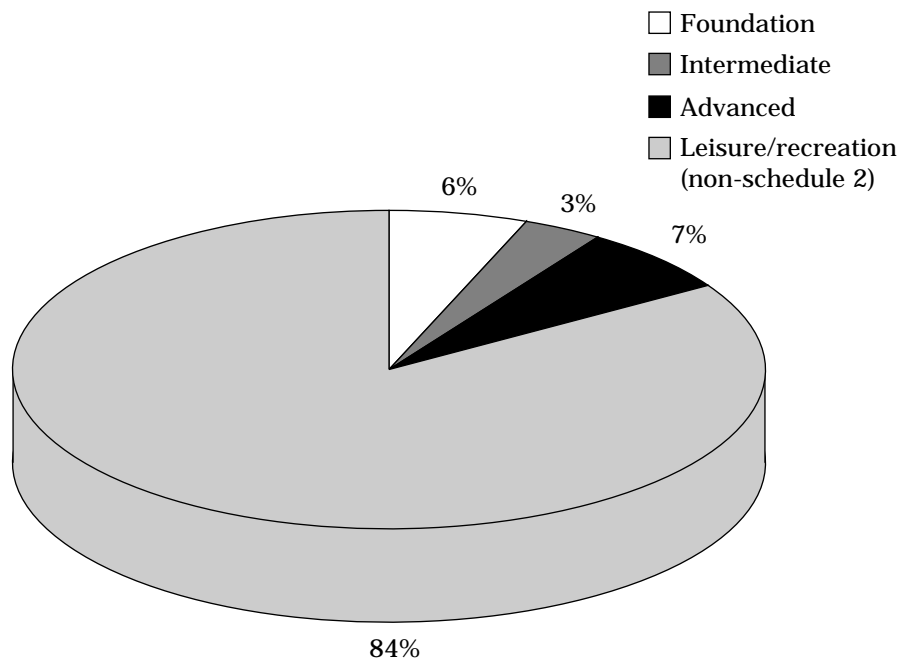
Morley College: percentage student numbers by age (1995-96)



Student numbers: 11,902

Figure 2

Morley College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1995-96)

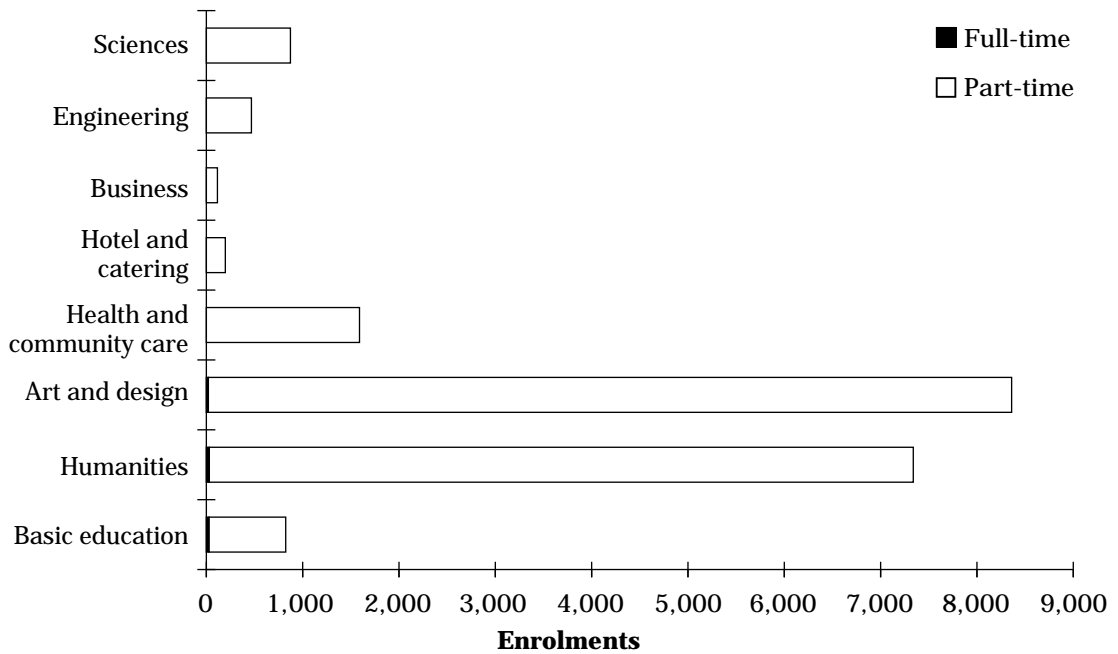


Enrolments: 19,766

Note: many students enrol on more than one course. The college was not able to supply figures for student numbers by level of study.

Figure 3

Morley College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1995-96)

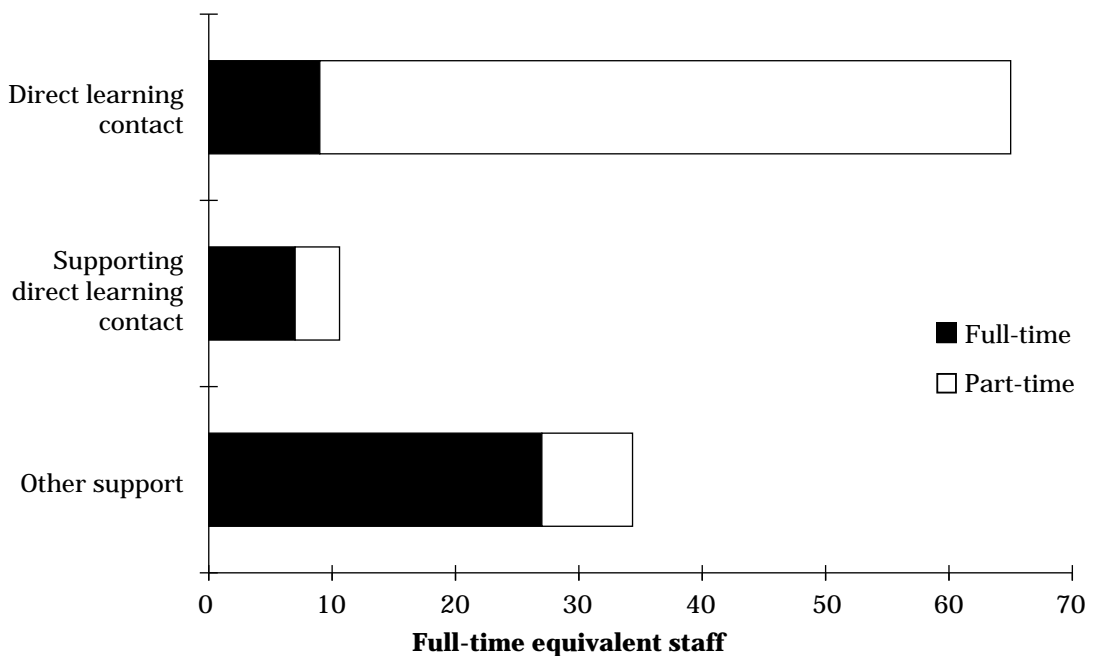


Enrolments: 19,766

Note: the college was not able to supply figures for student numbers

Figure 4

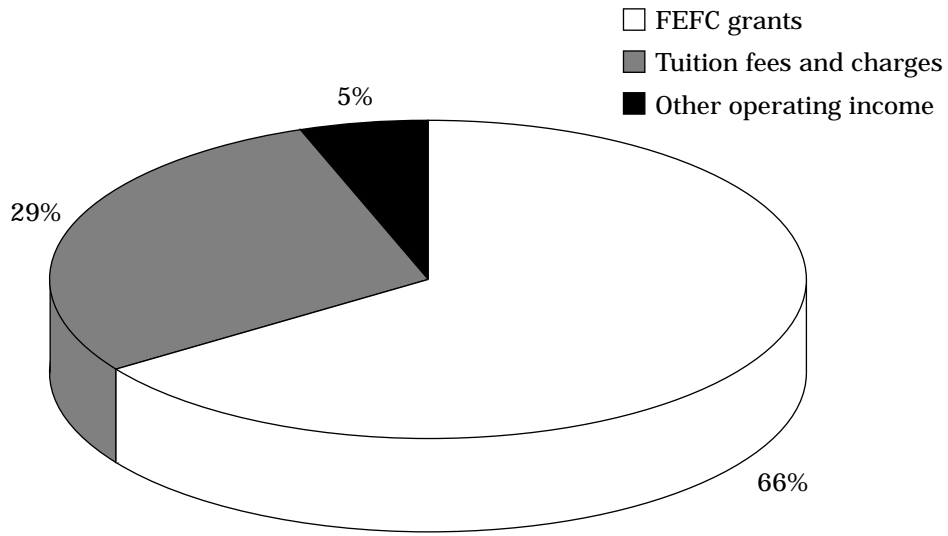
Morley College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at March 1997)



Full-time equivalent staff: 110

Figure 5

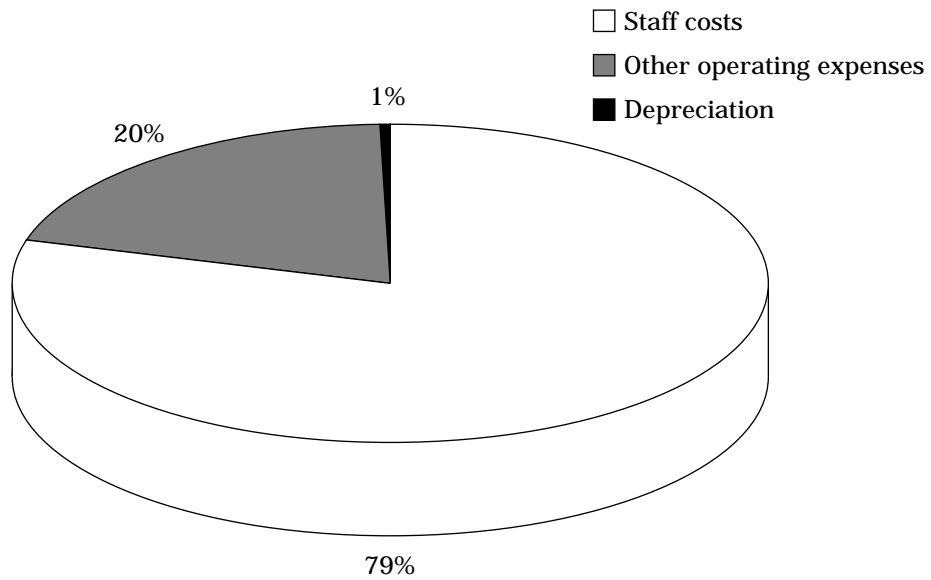
Morley College: estimated income (for 12 months to July 1997)



Estimated income: £2,968,000

Figure 6

Morley College: estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1997)



Estimated expenditure: £2,960,000

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