

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

North Derbyshire Tertiary College

May 1994

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

THE FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) has a statutory duty to ensure that there are satisfactory arrangements to assess the quality of provision in the further education sector. It discharges the duty in part through its inspectorate, which inspects and reports on each college in the sector every four years. The Council's inspectorate also assesses and reports on a national basis on specific curriculum areas and advises the Council's quality assessment committee.

College inspections involve both full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have specialist knowledge and experience in the areas they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member from outside the world of education and a nominated member of staff from the college being inspected.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are described in the Council Circular 93/28. In the course of inspecting colleges, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also summarise their judgements on the balance between strengths and weaknesses using a five-point scale. 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.*

*Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone 0203 863000
Fax 0203 863100*

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 31/94

NORTH DERBYSHIRE TERTIARY COLLEGE

EAST MIDLANDS REGION

Inspected September 1993 – February 1994

Summary

North Derbyshire Tertiary College, Clowne, is one of the major providers of post-16 education in north Derbyshire, offering a wide range of learning opportunities to school leavers and adults. Its community learning opportunity centres and training centres, which cater for adults in rural areas, are a major feature of the provision. Senior managers, actively supported by the governors, give the college firm leadership. The new management structure is beginning to operate effectively and comprehensive systems for quality assurance are in place. Resources are managed carefully, enabling the college to offer students free transport to and from Clowne, and free nursery care. Students receive strong support and guidance, and the recently-established key skills unit is helping to improve basic numeracy and literacy skills. Teachers strive to meet the needs of students, many of whom have relatively low levels of achievement when they enter college. Results in external examinations are modest and there are considerable differences in levels of performance between subjects. The college should strengthen its links with local employers, develop further its management information systems, improve the levels of communication between faculties and establish a rolling programme for the replacement of equipment.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	1
Governance and management	2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	1
Quality assurance	2
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	3
accommodation	2

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics	3	Social care	2
Computing	3	Nursery nursing	2
Engineering	3	Hairdressing & beauty	3
Business administration	3	English & communications	3
Access to higher education	2	SLDD	2

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INTRODUCTION

1 North Derbyshire Tertiary College was inspected in two stages during December 1993 and February 1994. In December, 21 inspector days were used for the inspection of specialist subject areas. Aspects of cross-college provision were subsequently inspected by a team of five inspectors who spent 25 inspector days in the college from 7-11 February 1994. There was also a visit in September 1993 to inspect the enrolment and induction of students. Inspectors visited 85 classes, examined representative samples of students' work and held discussions with governors, staff, students, local employers, representatives of the local training and enterprise council, and local school and careers service staff.

2 The inspection was carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines set out in Council Circular 93/28. The framework describes a four-year inspection cycle. When this cycle becomes fully established, colleges will have the opportunity to respond to the findings of earlier inspection visits before their quadrennial inspection and the subsequent published report. As the inspection of North Derbyshire Tertiary College occurred early in the cycle, the opportunity for such a response was not available.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3 North Derbyshire Tertiary College, which has its origins in a mining and technical institute dating from 1931, opened in September 1991. It operates from a main campus in the centre of the small town of Clowne, and from six community learning opportunity centres and three training centres based in the surrounding rural areas. A second campus at Creswell, a small village some two miles from Clowne, accommodates one of the community centres and provides higher education and some further education courses. The college also has an enterprise unit providing customised courses for local businesses.

4 The college serves a community of approximately 95,000 which in the past has relied mainly on the coal mining industry for employment. The number of coal mines has declined from approximately 28 in 1950 to the present single working pit which is also due to close. Following the recent acceleration of the pit closure programme the unemployment rate is now 20 per cent.

5 The college's mission statement sets out two central purposes: to assist the regeneration of the local community through the provision of high quality education and training; and to increase participation in education and training among all age groups. To help in achieving the second aim, the college provides free transport throughout its catchment area and free nursery places. Strategic oversight of the college's activities is undertaken by the college corporation which has its own offices on the main campus.

6 The college employs 179 teachers, of whom 103 are full-time, and a further 112 support staff, of whom 56 are full-time. Full-time equivalent staff are shown in figure 1. At the time of the inspection, 3,063 students (1,638 full-time equivalents) were enrolled at the college. Approximately 1,400 students were attending on a full-time basis. Fifty-six per cent were over 19 years of age. Enrolments by age are shown in figure 2.

7 The college has six faculties: business and technology, general and social education, community education, training programmes, learner services and administration and finance. The faculty of business and technology, and the faculty of general and social education offer further and higher education courses in business studies, secretarial studies, motor vehicle maintenance, construction, engineering, care, nursery nursing, hairdressing, catering, recreation and leisure, social sciences, computing and programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are also responsible for a range of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects, programmes leading to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) levels 1, 2 and 3, or their equivalents, and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) at intermediate and advanced levels or their equivalents. The faculty of community education offers open learning programmes delivered through the community learning opportunity centres. The faculty of training programmes provides training for young people and adults in a wide range of vocational areas, some of it conducted under the youth training scheme. The faculty of learner services operates across the college and includes student services, marketing, and counselling and guidance. It also manages the free transport scheme. The faculty of administration and finance co-ordinates personnel, finance, registry and property services. Enrolments by level of study are shown in figure 3. Enrolments expressed as full-time equivalents by curriculum area and mode of attendance are shown in figure 4.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 Staff are aware of and respond to the government's aims and policies for further education. The college's student charter is distributed to all students and is readily available at reception and in the library. The college's strategic plan was developed by senior management in response to government policies and takes account of FEFC guidelines. Heads of faculty have developed operational plans for their faculties in line with the college strategic plan and have set objectives in collaboration with tutors and support staff which are being monitored at monthly meetings. Team leaders have devised their own plans based on the agreed faculty targets and plans. Plans are aimed at increasing full-time recruitment, reducing unit costs, streamlining curricula in response to NVQs, GNVQs and national targets for education and training, ensuring quality by monitoring and evaluation, and meeting agreed targets with demonstrable outcomes.

9 The college operates an open-access policy to encourage students to enrol and to choose, with guidance, the course suitable for them. The policy is designed to eliminate barriers to sections of the community traditionally under represented in further education including the newly and the long-term unemployed. The policy is widely publicised.

10 The siting of the community learning opportunities centres in rural areas to provide education and training programmes for the community is an important aspect of the college's open-access strategy. The free tuition and free creche/playgroup facilities help potential students to overcome any barriers there may be to participating in education and training. Appropriate, individually-negotiated programmes of study in numeracy, literacy, information technology, and word processing; GCSEs in English and mathematics; the production of curriculum vitae; and help with job search, are provided in a friendly, adult environment. Tutors who have good interpersonal skills and are able to teach across all subjects are a key element in the success of the provision. The community education programme is of a high quality and student numbers are increasing.

11 There is a wide range of options for school leavers which includes some opportunities for the creation of individualised learning programmes. The majority of 16-19 year old students are recruited to GCE A level courses and courses in care, nursery nursing and service industries. There is a good range of business courses available to adult returners but the uptake is limited. In mathematics and information technology the modular courses, including provision offered by the City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI), GCE A levels, and Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) continuing education units, address the needs of mature students and the unemployed. There is a wide range of social care provision and the college is currently extending this by introducing an access course. Care courses currently include significant numbers of male students.

12 The college access course enables mature students to improve their qualifications and to progress to employment or to further and higher education. Its modular structure increases its flexibility and allows the creation of individual learning programmes which extend students' choice. There are strong links with higher education institutions and the aim is to develop the college's Markland site at Creswell as a higher education campus. The college offers the first years of degree programmes franchised from Sheffield Hallam University and Derby University. It is currently working with Sheffield University on a joint project to expand higher education in North Derbyshire.

13 A consultancy project to develop a framework for the accreditation of prior learning has been established. A handbook of systems and procedures and a step-by-step guide is being developed. Pilot projects in hairdressing and business administration are planned for this academic year and a summary report is to follow.

14 The college is tackling a range of educational support issues involving students with physical disabilities, sensory impairment, mental health problems and behavioural difficulties. It aims to allow students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to follow mainstream programmes wherever possible. The full-time provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is relatively small. Currently, there are 34 students on an extended education course, 15 of whom are following individual programmes within the mainstream provision. Students attending mainstream classes receive a good level of learning support.

15 On the main site, the college provides nursery facilities for students' children aged from six weeks to five years old. The facility is excellent. It provides total day care and evening meals. It is well staffed and has an environment which is welcoming, stimulating and comfortable. It is over subscribed and the criteria for allocating places is related to the college's equal opportunities policy for increasing the participation of groups traditionally under represented in post-16 education.

16 The college has effective curriculum liaison with local schools. There are school link and taster courses in a variety of subject areas. A good example of co-operation is the Bolsover School Tertiary Education Centre which is sited within the Bolsover school. Its students are automatically enrolled as students of the college and as such are entitled to the benefits offered to college students. Their courses are provided at the centre and they are taught by staff of the school.

17 Currently, the main form of liaison with local employers is through work placements. The college employs four field officers to manage work placements, to establish links between the college and employers and to provide pastoral support for students on placement. There is an enterprise unit, whose remit includes business advice and consultancy, which works in partnership with the North Derbyshire TEC, the local district councils, the rural development commission and a number of companies. The majority of the full-cost courses run by the unit are for the community and community organisations. They include, for example, courses in first aid and aromatherapy. There are some good courses for local employers in information technology, food hygiene, electrical safety and the operation of abrasive wheels, but the scale of provision is limited and should be extended. The enterprise unit markets a portfolio of management and business courses although the uptake is limited. Whilst recognising that the local industrial base has been affected greatly by pit closures, the college should forge relationships with a wider range of employers, and involve employers more closely in the evaluation of courses and of students' work.

18 On Wednesday afternoons, students are offered a choice of personal interest activities. These are not compulsory but students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are expected to attend and others are encouraged to do so. The offer is diverse and interesting. It includes recreational activities such as bowling, skating, horse riding, snooker and

water sports, and academic activities such as GCSE re-sits and self-study. All the activities are free to students and the college pays the admission and transport costs. Staff are appointed by the college to supervise these activities.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

19 The college corporation consists of the principal and 11 governors who represent a good cross-section of community and industrial concerns. There is currently no staff or student representative but this position is to be reviewed in March 1994. There are a number of subcommittees. These include the finance and general purposes committee whose six members consider a broad range of issues, including employment. The governors take an active interest in the college and are extremely proud of its achievements, particularly the community learning opportunity centres. Meetings of the corporation have a clear strategic focus and members are provided with well-presented papers. There is an industrial relations advisory group, which includes an external industrial relations consultant and the college industrial relations manager, whose role is to advise the principal and governors on industrial relations within the college.

20 The college is well led. A strategy for the future direction of the college has been established and there are structures in place for achieving stated objectives. The full effects of the new management structure, introduced in April 1993, have yet to be felt. There are six senior managers at head of faculty level, each with a number of team leaders who, in turn, have line management responsibilities for teams of teaching or support staff. Women are well represented at senior management level and half the team-leader posts are held by women. The new structure provides clear lines of accountability and efficient day-to-day management. There is an acute awareness of planning at all levels of management and an understanding of the need for tight financial control if the college is to continue its current level of service to the community. The teaching team leaders have a broad range of responsibility and generally manage their teams effectively. Some require opportunities for staff development.

21 Communications within the college are generally good. Team and faculty meetings, planning meetings and staff conferences, complemented by staff bulletins and the college newsletter, provide an efficient communications network for full-time staff. More effective communication should be maintained with part-time members of staff. There is also scope for increased liaison between faculties, to facilitate joint curricular and staff development, and for greater collaboration between staff working across mainstream courses, youth training and community learning programmes.

22 North Derbyshire Tertiary College's unit of funding for 1992-93, inherited from the local education authority, is recorded in the FEFC report, *Funding Allocations 1993-94* as £2,706 per weighted full-time student. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £2,436.

Resource allocations are controlled by the head of the faculty of administration and finance in consultation with the principal. These are currently calculated on a mixture of historical factors, curriculum need and student numbers. A system based on unit costs is planned but not yet in operation. Team leaders are provided with regular statements of expenditure against budget. The college is working towards an accumulated reserve at the end of this financial year and current predictions indicate that this should be achieved. The college is able to provide a number of services to its students free of charge: transport, nursery places, community learning opportunities and personal interest activities. Summaries of the college's recurrent income and estimated expenditure for 1993-94 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

23 The academic board, which advises the principal on curriculum matters, consists of the principal, one member of the senior management team, and one staff and student member from each faculty. Much important business is conducted through subcommittees, for example the quality subcommittee and the health and safety subcommittee.

24 The college's management information system is developing rapidly. A variety of computer systems are in place to produce data on student applications, admissions, enrolments, timetabling, finance, attendance and payroll, and work is underway to link them. As yet, the systems are not able to satisfy the demands of all users.

25 Statistics on retention rates, examination results and destinations of students are collected through various means, including monitoring and evaluation surveys. In some curriculum areas, examination results are compared with national averages. There are also measurements of the value added to students' qualifications by comparing their achievements on entry with their final examination results. However, such comparisons are not published in the annual report, nor are they available for the whole institution. Enrolment targets are set in consultation with team leaders and these are closely monitored throughout the year.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

26 The college's policy for recruitment, guidance and support is clear and aligned closely with its other strategic and operational plans. Its marketing policy has been approved by the TEC. Many aspects of a comprehensive service to students are being drawn together under the umbrella of the learner services faculty. The college has taken a number of initiatives to optimise its recruitment and to retain students after enrolment.

27 The college provides a free transport system. It has an annual contract with a local bus company for specified routes which allows the college to recruit students throughout its catchment area. In addition, the college has three mini-buses of its own which provide transport for adult women returners after they have taken their children to school. These

arrangements allow students who might otherwise not have been able to attend the college to do so.

28 A registration tutor has been appointed recently to monitor and follow up student absences and to attempt to improve retention rates. An analysis of registration returns is used to identify students who absent themselves from class on two consecutive occasions. Suitable follow-up procedures are then initiated. The system is still at a developmental stage but first results appear promising.

29 The learner services faculty has a marketing unit and a student services unit each with a team leader. The range and quality of the services provided are soundly based. The careers officer has recently left the college but a new careers specialist is being appointed. The Derbyshire Careers Service has seconded a member of its staff to the college to provide support. There is also a one-year contractual agreement with the careers service to liaise with and support the provision made by the college.

30 There are plans for a physical move of the careers provision to a purpose-designed learner services unit. Nevertheless the existing provision is well resourced. It consists of office space shared by the careers tutor and the student counsellor and a designated private student counselling room. In addition to the wide range of reference materials and literature available, TEC funding has been used to purchase careers software.

31 The marketing unit has established a workable marketing plan. The plan sets out the venues to be visited for promotional purposes, the events, target audiences, advertising activities, projected costs and staffing. Key information is collected and stored on the student services database. A regular status summary updates the plan and provides information to faculty heads. A marketing digest is produced twice each term to keep team leaders informed about the progress made and about other careers issues, including national initiatives. The information helps to inform curriculum development by identifying areas for potential development. Data on student retention and destinations from courses are used by the marketing unit in monitoring and reviewing its activities.

32 A major part of the marketing unit's activities is to inform school leavers of the range of courses the college provides and to help them make an informed choice of post-16 options. Some schools restrict this service to pupils who express an interest in attending the college. Good-quality promotional materials, produced in house, are used to support visits to schools' careers events, local careers conventions and college information days. During school visits, pupils are asked to complete an interest form which records their personal details and study interests. They are also invited to the college for taster courses. Information from the completed interest forms is stored on the student services database. Information days are held regularly throughout the year from November to the following August. Further events of public interest are promoted through the local press.

33 Mature students are recruited through the community learning opportunity centres. During a week specially designated as 'adult week', careers guidance and support are provided to highlight the opportunities provided in the college for this age group. Mature students seeking to enrol on the access or degree courses are counselled by staff who teach on the programmes and have expertise in adult work. The initiatives taken are sound and have succeeded in attracting students in reasonable numbers. The high-quality promotional materials produced for main stream full-time students could also be developed for the community learning opportunity centres.

34 Careers advice and guidance for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is provided by the Derbyshire Careers Service's special-needs careers officer who is also a member of one of the college's teaching teams. Individual students' needs are monitored and reviewed annually. The quality of provision is sound and the guidance is helpful to students.

35 The college is careful to maintain the interest of prospective students prior to enrolment. Following applicants' acceptance of a place, the college sends a letter inviting them to attend an introduction day before the end of the summer term. The letter includes bus timetables and a refectory pass for a meal. Time is allocated for students to meet with group tutors for further counselling about their proposed course of study.

36 Group tutors are responsible for arranging induction programmes for full-time students within an overall framework which provides for inputs from the careers officer and the student counsellor. These programmes vary in length and content, and objectives are not always explained clearly. Some students, particularly those who had attended an introduction day during the summer, reported some repetition and questioned the length of the programme. However, most students felt that the induction was useful. Enrolment and induction for part-time students are continuous throughout the year.

37 The quality of student counselling is good. The service is available daily throughout the year. A qualified full-time counsellor is based on the college main site but is available for consultation by students from the satellite sites and community learning opportunity centres. Where necessary, the counsellor refers students to outside agencies which provide support across a range of services including health, housing and finance. The counsellor receives regular assistance from a visiting psychotherapist. The governors have recently approved the creation of the post of ecumenical chaplain to the college.

38 Students may refer themselves to the counsellor by making an appointment directly or, with their agreement, they may be referred to the service by their group tutor or another member of the teaching staff. The service is strictly confidential, although contact is made with social services if this is required. The use of the service is monitored. In 1992-93,

approximately 300 students used the service: almost half of these students referred themselves, the majority of whom were full-time 16-19 year olds. Students who had used the service valued it highly. Part-time students were less aware of the facilities offered by the counselling service.

39 All full-time students have timetabled tutorial periods. Opportunities are provided for group tutors and individual students to have at least one session each term to up-date the student's record of achievement. It is planned to strengthen the framework for the conduct of tutorials and to introduce careers education and guidance. Mature students attending programmes of study in the community learning opportunity centres have access to a personal tutor or may seek the support of the student counsellor. Seminars are provided to assist teaching staff in developing counselling skills although attendance is optional. A more formal system of development would ensure that all staff have some training in the competencies required for tutoring students. No provision has been made for the student counsellor to contribute to the induction of new staff.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

40 Approximately 50 per cent of the teaching sessions inspected had strengths which outweighed weaknesses. The distribution of inspection grades is shown in the table below.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE A/AS level		0	4	5	0	0	9
GCSE		0	0	4	0	0	4
GNVQ		0	4	3	0	1	8
NVQ		0	2	4	1	0	7
Other		3	29	18	7	0	57
Totals		3	39	34	8	1	85

41 Learning programmes are logical and coherent, but the level of detail contained in schemes of work and lesson plans varies considerably. For example, GCE A level English schemes of work describe the course content, teaching methods, learning objectives and skills to be acquired, while engineering schemes provide little more than lists of the topics to be covered.

42 In many of the curriculum areas, teachers successfully employ a variety of teaching methods. Students respond well to changes of activity which increases their motivation and help them to develop their knowledge and skills. The new GCE A level syllabus in mathematics encourages the use of a broad range of learning activities and teachers are using this opportunity profitably. In contrast, GCSE mathematics students experience a limited range of teaching strategies and there are few opportunities for them to engage in group discussion or to exchange ideas and experiences.

43 The youth training programme enables student to start and finish their programme when they are ready to do so, and this appears to work effectively. Many students on other courses also have the chance to work at their own pace, using study materials designed to meet their individual learning needs. GCSE English work is based on creative individual learning programmes. Students are provided with clear and comprehensive documentation introducing them to the use of the workshop where their attendance and activities are recorded. However, the exclusive use of the workshop method of working restricts the development of oral and group skills.

44 There are good examples of documentation which is used to support learning and to monitor the progress of students. In motor vehicle and electrical craft studies, work books describe students' tasks and provide a record of their achievements. Mathematics teachers provide good supporting material which takes account of the anxieties many students harbour about mathematics, although, at GCSE level, the study materials fail to provide sufficient opportunity for students to practice mathematical skills. In computing, handouts are clearly worded and presented. Social care handouts, although they include suitable content and challenging tasks, would benefit from a more professional presentation.

45 Staff maintain good working relationships with students, although in a minority of classes, the methods of teaching reduce the opportunities teachers have to check students' understanding of topics. The majority of staff are well-motivated, hard-working and knowledgeable. The college should monitor part-time staff more effectively to ensure that they are familiar with courses and able to work with the team. In the English workshop, processes to ensure effective liaison between teachers sharing GCSE groups should also be improved and formalised

46 The attention given to core skills varies between subject areas. For example, information technology and interpersonal skills are well developed amongst students studying business administration and nursery nursing courses but are weak in engineering. Learning support is provided through a comprehensive programme of tutorials and the central student support services. Tutorials include the development of records of achievement, careers education and guidance, and counselling. A key skills unit complements this activity. Students can refer themselves for work in the unit or be referred by tutors. This year over 200 students took an initial screening test. Approximately 25 per cent of students were identified as requiring support and arrangements were made for some of them to attend the key skills unit for regular individual tuition. In the skills unit, learning materials are well organised and good records are kept of students' attendance and progress. Care is taken to ensure that students can gain accreditation for the work they undertake in the unit.

47 For students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, teaching is well planned and sensitive to individual needs. Records of achievement are used effectively to record students' progress. In the better sessions

there is a positive emphasis on the development of independence in learning. Some of the weaknesses included a failure to differentiate the nature of the work or the learning objectives so as to cater effectively for individual abilities, the inappropriateness of the learning resources and the lack of positive feedback to students on their levels of achievement.

48 The more general weaknesses identified in teaching were the slow pace of work, the failure to explain difficult language, a reluctance to challenge weak responses to questions, failure to take account of the range of students' abilities and ineffective use of the students' own experience. Theory was not always related to practice, and tasks in some of the practical sessions were too trivial to extend students' thinking.

49 Written work is set and marked regularly. Teachers' written comments are generally helpful, particularly so in engineering and GCE A level English courses, where the teachers' contributions are both critical and sensitive.

50 The methods used to assess student achievement include oral feedback, timed assessments and extended assignment work. In BTEC engineering and computing courses, the criteria for the successful completion of assignments and for the grades awarded are clearly stated for the benefit of students. There is some good practice in recording student achievement, particularly in the motor vehicle and electrical workshops.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

51 On most courses, students achieve satisfactory standards in classwork and assignments. In some areas, such as computing informatics, standards are high. There is some imaginative and realistic work for NVQs in business administration. Practical work in engineering is carried out competently and safely, and practical standards in hairdressing are equal to those found in the work place.

52 Most students appear interested in their studies and well motivated. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are studying on mainstream courses achieve good standards. In some areas of work, students demonstrate an ability to take control of their learning by setting and achieving their own targets. However, the flexibility given to students to work at their own pace requires careful monitoring. Some hairdressing and business administration students, for example, clearly failed to achieve the goals they had set themselves.

53 In 1993, the overall GCSE pass rate at grades A-C was 45 per cent, approximately 7 per cent below the national average for all students. Performance in individual subjects varied considerably. In English and French, results were above the national average. In mathematics, only 20 per cent of students gained A-C grades.

54 In 1993, the pass rate at GCE A level grades A-E was 52 per cent compared with a national average of 66 per cent for general further education colleges. The results achieved in 1992 were better overall. The weakest areas at GCE A level were the sciences and mathematics, with

notably poor results in mathematics, chemistry and biology. The college is reviewing its procedures to ensure that students receive appropriate initial guidance on the selection of courses.

55 In 1993, 79 candidates in their final year of study achieved BTEC national awards. This represented some 77 per cent of candidates.

56 Student completions are collated and analysed by the college. At the end of the academic year 1992-93, the results of this analysis indicated that 75 per cent of full-time enrolments had completed their courses. Completion rates on some courses are particularly low, for example, on the national diploma in computing and the national diploma in social care. The college has set itself the target of achieving an 81 per cent completion rate for the current academic year.

57 Destinations are recorded and analysed. A majority of students continue their education and training or succeed in gaining employment. Recent figures are shown in the following table:

Destination	Per cent
Higher education	11
Further education	49
Employed (full-time)	15
Employed (part-time)	6
Unemployed	5
Other	9
Not known	5

QUALITY ASSURANCE

58 Most of the college's quality system is now in place and beginning to work, but it will be at least a year before the system is fully operational. There are policy statements covering human resource development, equal opportunities, health and safety, marketing and market research, customer care, and quality. These are contained in a manual which also describes how the system operates. The system is managed by a quality committee consisting of senior managers and the quality team leader who is currently the acting chairperson. It is proposed to ask a member of the board of governors to chair this committee.

59 The quality systems and procedures encourage close links between teaching teams and senior managers so that teams know what action has been proposed in relation to any quality issues which they have raised with senior management.

60 Each faculty has its own quality policy manual which sets out local roles and responsibilities. All faculties have recently-published policies and procedures for equal opportunities, customer care and marketing. Within the faculties, the course teams and the support teams play a major

part in agreeing quality characteristics and setting targets.

61 Annual course reviews have a well-established use as working documents for course teams and they continue to play an important role in the new quality system. In some cases, their usefulness would be improved if the data were compiled more carefully. Teams, and team leaders, make considerable use of the 'student perception of college' surveys which are issued three times a year. Faculty heads and team leaders consider the annual course reviews and prepare an action plan. The head of faculty then writes an overview for the quality committee.

62 The development of the quality system has benefited from the appointment of a quality team leader and the use of an external consultant. A quality development unit has been set up in a central location. Its accommodation offers sufficient space for small meetings and for storing materials including staff-development records.

63 A quality audit unit has been established to monitor the quality system. It will work across the college and look in depth at a sample of curriculum areas each term. Its membership will consist of four teaching and two support staff. Teaching staff in the unit will receive a day's remission from their teaching duties each week. Arrangements for support staff are being considered.

64 The quality team leader is also responsible for co-ordinating staff development. The staff development programme covers all teaching and support staff and appropriately reflects the college's priorities. A staff appraisal process is being piloted. The college is working to achieve designation as an Investor in People and expects to submit an application for approval in September 1994. There is a general induction programme, run by the personnel unit, for all staff. New teaching staff are also inducted by their team leader and by the staff of the quality development unit.

RESOURCES

Staffing

65 There are sufficient teachers with appropriate qualifications to cover the range of courses offered by the college. In the faculties offering academic programmes, the majority of staff have a teaching qualification. In a few curriculum areas, staff lack the relevant expertise to enable them to relate the academic work to realistic work situations. Team leaders ensure that staff are deployed efficiently. Part-time teachers are on half-termly contracts which are reviewed at the end of each half term.

66 Teaching staff are organised in teaching teams. Non-teaching staff are also organised into teams within the faculties of administration and finance and learner services. Technicians have become full members of teaching teams. There is an efficient property services team which works on a two-shift basis to provide general maintenance and caretaking for the college.

Equipment

67 The level and quality of equipment are generally satisfactory. However, the college does not have a rolling programme for the replacement of capital equipment. In secretarial studies, new equipment includes fax facilities and a multi-line switchboard. There is some new equipment in the motor vehicle workshop but there are no modern vehicles with electronic ignition and anti-lock braking systems. The mechanical workshop is suitable for teaching basic skills but has no facilities for computer-assisted design. There is a satisfactory range of computers and software for use in mathematics. Basic materials for supporting the work of the early years team are generally adequate but there is a lack of visual material and books to promote equal opportunities and of equipment to practise health care routines for babies. Work in beauty suffers from a lack of specialist equipment. There is a good provision for construction at the Eckington training centre.

68 Information technology facilities are co-ordinated centrally in order to improve efficiency. There is an appropriate number of personal computers and the available software generally meets course requirements. However, some personal computers are not suitable for specialist computing students. Opportunities are being taken to up-date the college information technology facilities in a new building. The level of technician support is currently insufficient to ensure that computing equipment is efficiently maintained for students' use during term time.

69 The college library occupies new modern accommodation which has facilities for group as well as individual study. There is a suitable selection of books in some subject areas, for example in engineering and hairdressing, but the overall stock is small and the college has allocated approximately £80,000 to increase it. There is a good range of journals and periodicals. Students have access to three personal computers with CD-ROM facilities and a photocopier. The college lacks a computer-based management system which could be networked over the main and satellite sites giving all students access to the library catalogue and other library information. A library module is being developed as part of a cross-college study skills package.

Accommodation

70 The main site is being improved systematically by repainting, carpeting, and by the installation of extra windows to improve the lighting in rooms. The recently-completed refectory, library, and student lounge have greatly improved the environment for students. Some of the remaining accommodation, for example, the hydraulics and electronics laboratories and the huts used for business administration studies, is poor. The college plans to continue improving its buildings and to re-allocate rooms as the new teaching block becomes available. Physical access for students with restricted mobility is relatively good.

71 The college places an emphasis on self-help. Much of the general maintenance and improvement work is being undertaken by the college property services staff. The motor vehicle workshop has been moved from Hartington to the main site with help from property and technical services' staff.

72 Teaching rooms are assigned to course teams. Arrangements for pooling the teaching accommodation have helped to improve their utilisation. Although the teaching day is restricted owing to the numbers of students who can attend only for certain hours, overall room utilisation rates are satisfactory and will improve when plans are implemented to extend the teaching year. The provision of resource and workshop areas to support curriculum teams has helped to create greater flexibility in the organisation of learning.

73 Science, design and technology are located on the Markland site. The science laboratories are bright and spacious and suitable posters are displayed on walls. Laboratory benches are arranged in clusters to provide group teaching areas. There is a good technology/science resource area which provides learning materials for GCSE and AS level courses in science and technology, and which also provides study space and information technology support for all science and technology students. The sports hall at Markland is used by sports studies students. There is a sports field and a floodlit hard surface.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

74 The college is making good progress towards achieving its mission of serving the needs of the local communities. Particular strengths of the provision inspected are:

- the range of learning opportunities
- the provision of learning centres throughout the college catchment area
- the effective use of resources
- the good support for students afforded by the learner services unit, free transport and child care
- the use of the key skills unit to improve basic numeracy and literacy skills
- a comprehensive quality system
- the recent improvements made to the accommodation.

75 If it is to maintain and improve the quality of its provision, the college should:

- improve links with local employers
- provide further staff development for team leaders and teachers so as to disseminate best practice in teaching and learning
- establish a rolling programme for the replacement of equipment
- develop further the management information systems so that they satisfactorily meet the demands of all users
- strengthen lines of communication between faculties
- improve weak examination results.

FIGURES

1 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1993-94)

2 Enrolments by age (1993-94)

3 Enrolments by level of study (1993-94)

4 Enrolments expressed as full-time equivalents by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1993-94)

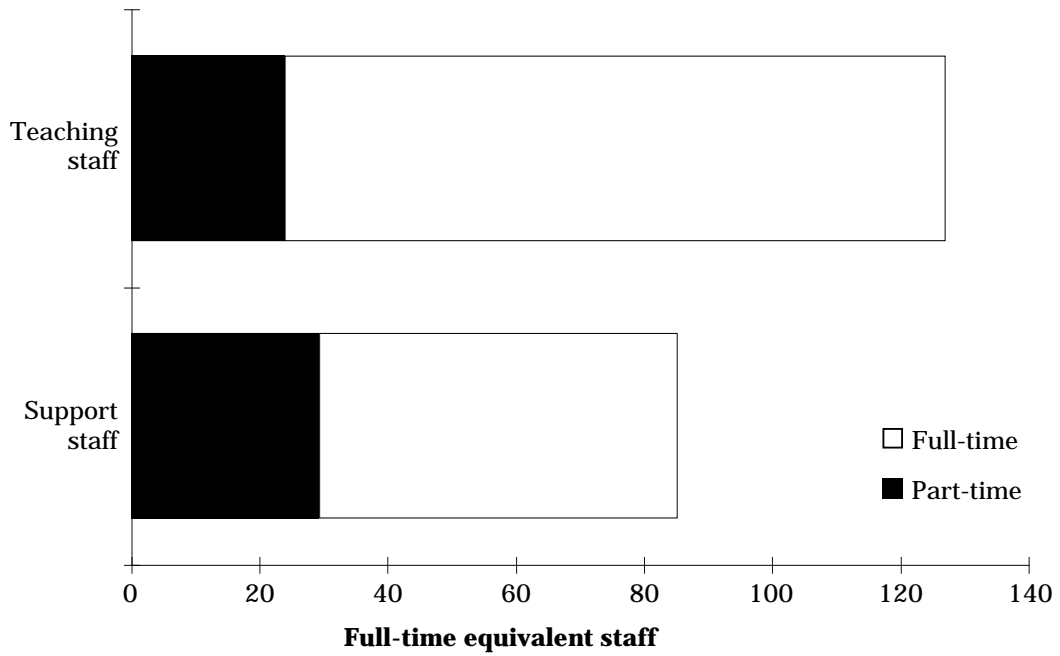
5 Recurrent income (1993-94)

6 Estimated expenditure (1993-94)

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

Figure 1

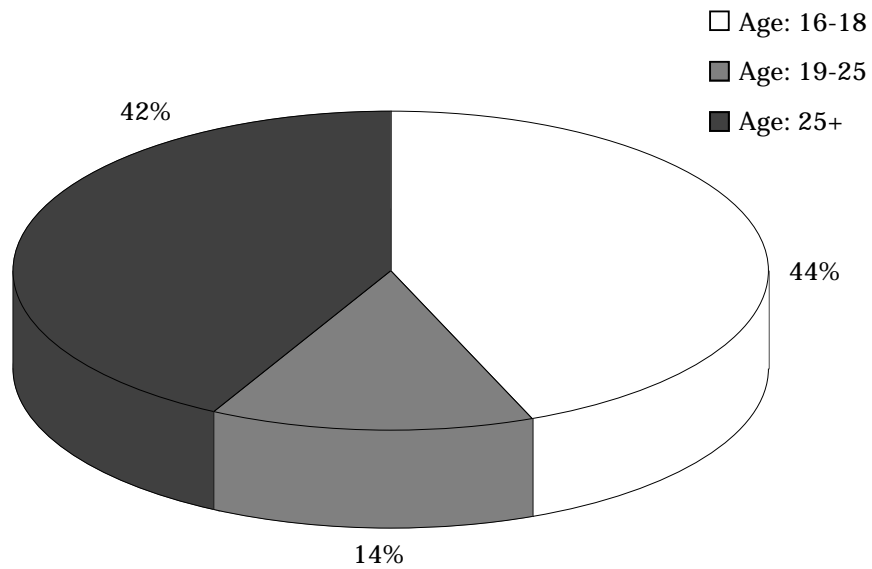
North Derbyshire Tertiary College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1993-94)



Full-time equivalent staff: 213

Figure 2

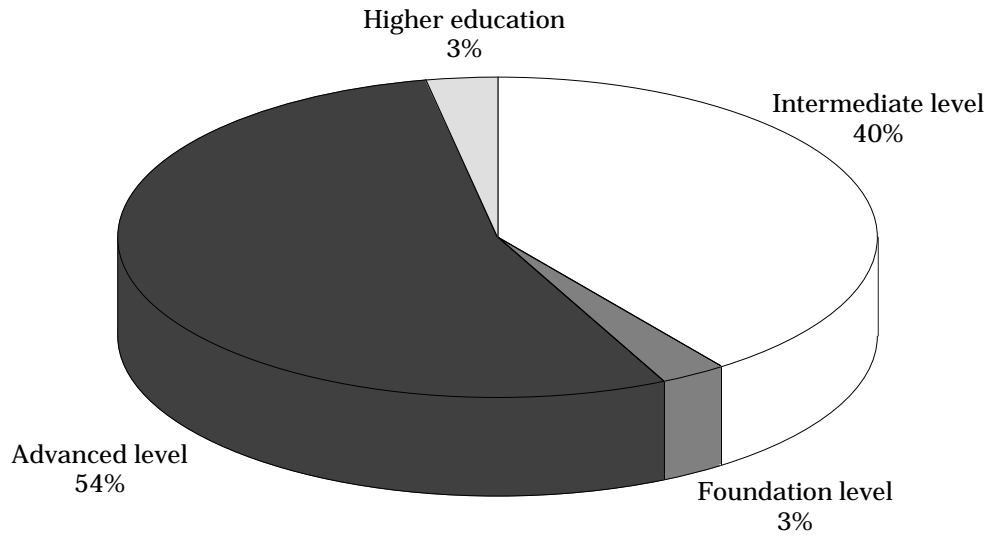
North Derbyshire Tertiary College: enrolments by age (1993-94)



Enrolments: 3,063

Figure 3

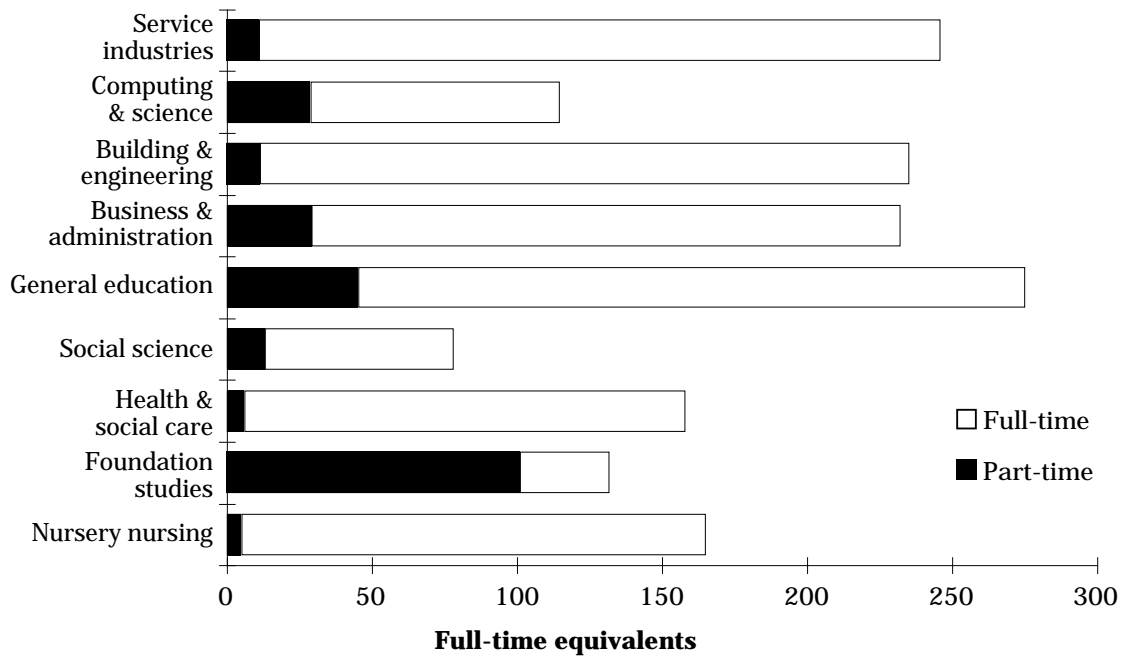
North Derbyshire Tertiary College: enrolments by level of study (1993-94)



Enrolments: 3,063

Figure 4

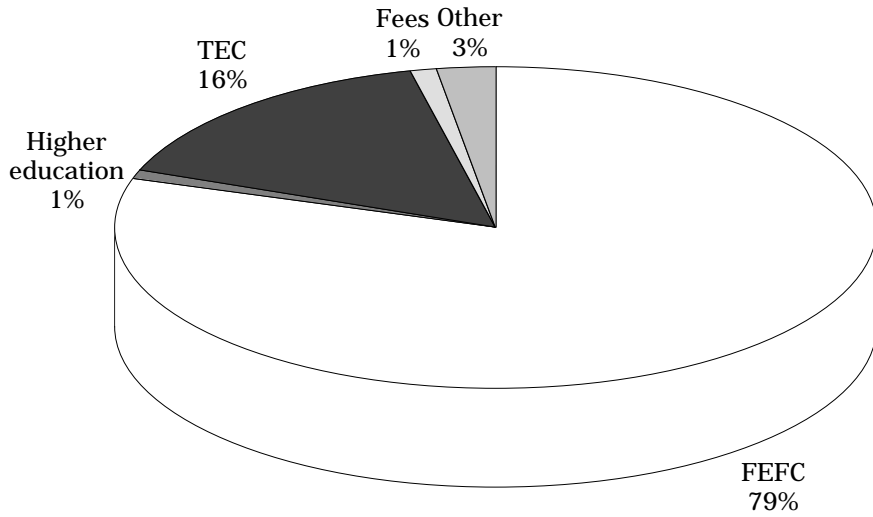
North Derbyshire Tertiary College: enrolments expressed as full-time equivalents by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1993-94)



Full-time equivalent enrolments: 1,638

Figure 5

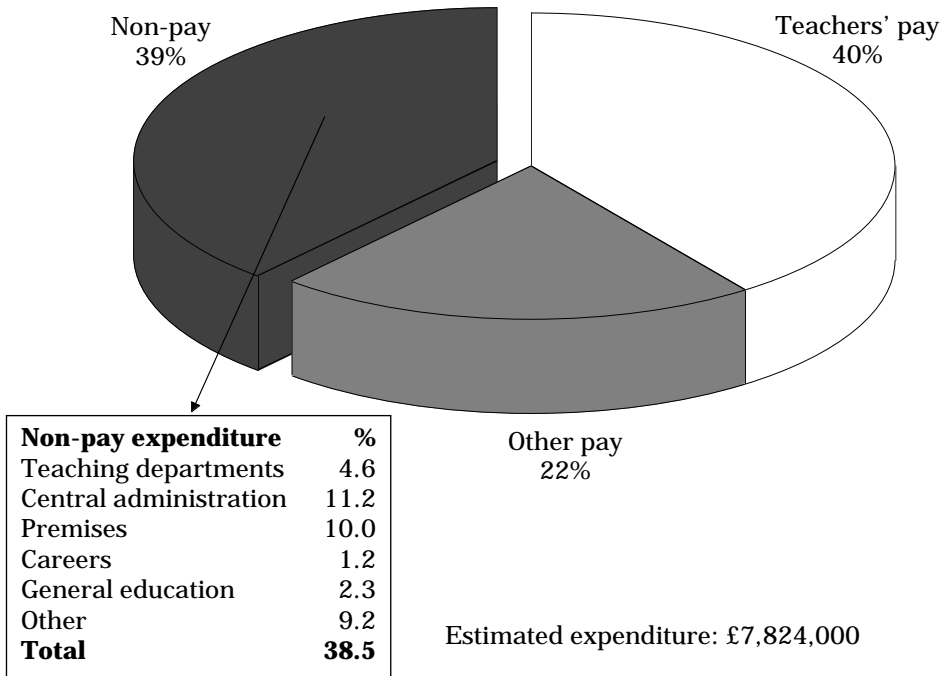
North Derbyshire Tertiary College: recurrent income (1993-94)



Recurrent income: £7,824,000

Figure 6

North Derbyshire Tertiary College: estimated expenditure (1993-94)



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