

**REPORT  
FROM THE  
INSPECTORATE**

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# **North Devon College**

**May 1997**

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**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

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**THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
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**

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

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# FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 42/97

**NORTH DEVON COLLEGE**

**SOUTH WEST REGION**

**Inspected April 1996-January 1997**

## Summary

North Devon College is a tertiary college committed to meeting the needs of a large, mainly rural, area of North Devon. It offers a wide range of provision. The college is closely involved with local communities in North Devon. Governors give strong support to the college and have a good understanding of its work. The revised management structure is developing well and internal communications are good. The college has developed productive links with employers and a number of exchange visits and projects with European countries. There is a wide range of services to support students, including an effective core skills workshop. There is much effective teaching. Examination results are generally good, particularly on GCE A level subjects. The college should: further develop the setting of targets, standards and performance indicators; share good practice in teaching and learning; improve the accuracy of its data on students' achievements; improve the effectiveness of its middle managers; increase consistency in tutorial practice; improve the effectiveness of its quality assurance system; ensure effective monitoring of students' attendance and retention; improve access for students with restricted mobility; and improve weaker aspects of its accommodation.

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

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

| <b>Curriculum area</b>             | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Curriculum area</b>  | <b>Grade</b> |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| Science, mathematics and computing | 2            | Health and community care   | 2            |
| Construction                       | 2            | Hair and beauty   | 3            |
| Engineering                        | 2            | Art and design  | 2            |
| Business                           | 2            | Humanities  | 2            |
| Catering and leisure               | 2            | Basic education and provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities | 2            |

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1 North Devon College was inspected between April 1996 and January 1997. A team of 20 inspectors spent 80 days in the college. Humanities provision was inspected in April 1996. The college's enrolment and induction procedures were inspected in September 1996. Other curriculum areas and aspects of cross-college provision were inspected between October 1996 and January 1997.

2 Inspectors visited 289 classes involving 3,179 students. They examined students' coursework and college documentation. Inspectors met with college governors, managers and staff, students, and representatives from the community, local schools, employers, the Devon and Cornwall Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), and other education and training providers. Off-site collaborative provision was inspected at various locations in Devon and Cornwall.

## **THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS**

3 North Devon College was opened in September 1972 and is one of the longest established tertiary colleges in the country. It has one main site in the south west of Barnstaple, a business development centre and an information technology facility in the centre of Barnstaple, garage premises for full-time craft courses, and a business link centre at Bideford eight miles away. The college serves a large, mainly rural area of approximately 800 square miles, which has a population of 110,000. Barnstaple is the largest town and has a population of 23,500. There is little public transport between many of the small towns in the area. There is a good link road across Exmoor to the south of the county and the M5.

4 In July 1996, there were 16,636 students enrolled at the college, of whom 2,190 were full time. Student numbers by age, by level of study, and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2, and 3. Of the 14,446 part-time students enrolled during 1995-96, 9,612 were on programmes organised through collaboration with community colleges or schools or business training providers. Approximately 50 per cent of these students were on one-day programmes. The college employs 346 full-time equivalent staff, 187 of whom are teachers. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

5 Within the area from which the college recruits students, there are nine secondary schools, two of which have sixth forms, and two special schools. The nearest further education college is East Devon College at Tiverton which is 34 miles away. In 1995-96, of all 16 to 19 year olds in the area, 69 per cent remained in full-time education and 56 per cent of these entered further education. Twenty-two per cent of school-leavers went into employment. The unemployment rate for the area is 6.2 per cent compared with an average of 5.5 per cent for the south west region.

6 The college's mission is to be 'a centre of excellence in post-16 education in the communities of North Devon and to provide quality vocational training in the south west region'.

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## **RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION**

7 The college's wide range of provision reflects its mission statement and commitment to meet the needs of students from a large rural catchment area. General and vocational programmes are offered in nine of the 10 programme areas of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The college offers 13 vocational programmes at advanced level. Nine lead to general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) at advanced level and four to Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diplomas. There are 11 intermediate programmes, comprising seven GNVQ subjects, and four courses leading to BTEC first diplomas and certificates. At foundation level there are two GNVQ programmes. There are national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes from levels 1 to 5, and a wide range of full-time and part-time programmes at levels 2 and 3.

8 The college offers 30 general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects and six GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects. Full-time students usually take GCE A level subjects over two years. In 1996-97, the college reduced its provision of general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) subjects to six, but increased its range of GNVQ courses. There are part-time access to higher education courses in art and design, business, science, performing arts and humanities. Higher education provision is limited to two full-time and five part-time courses.

9 The college has carefully organised its courses to meet the needs of students. For example, in construction, business administration, hairdressing and catering, students can start at any time of the year and work on their own individual programmes. Students in any vocational area can receive accreditation for relevant experience or learning they have acquired before starting their course. In some subjects for which enrolments have been low, groups are combined to make the course viable.

10 In 1995-96, over 95 per cent of full-time students obtained qualifications in addition to those for which they had primarily studied. Currently, 39 students combine their vocational course with study for a GCE A level or AS subject. Over 170 students are taking a modern foreign language in addition to their main course. Students can also enrich their main studies by choosing a cultural or recreational activity from a programme of over 70 options. Full-time GCE A level students who lack basic skills in information technology must take an introductory course in order to acquire these. They also study for the Further Education Award Scheme validated by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network.

11 There is an appropriate range of full-time and part-time courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which offers them good opportunities to progress towards vocational qualifications and employment. Through one innovative programme, the college provides vocational workshops for year 10 and year 11 school pupils who have been excluded from, or who refuse to attend, school. The college has strong links with local special schools and other agencies.

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12 The college meets the needs of students in rural locations in a variety of ways. It has collaborative agreements with nine community colleges and schools. In 1995-96, there were over 2,100 enrolments of mainly adult students on a wide range of general, vocational and basic education courses. Since September 1996, the college provides information technology training in rural locations, using a small bus equipped with computers. People who cannot attend classes may also study for qualifications by open learning, using materials provided by the college and working at times which suit them. Most GCE A level and GCSE subjects are offered in this way, together with some vocational qualifications, for example, in accounts and information technology. In 1995-96, 431 students, not already attending the college, enrolled on open learning programmes.

13 The college meets the needs of employers effectively by providing part-time courses for their employees, short training courses, courses tailored to specific needs including courses in the workplace, and assessment for NVQs. In 1995-96, the college had collaborative arrangements with 12 providers of business training whereby over 8,000 students were enrolled on courses, mainly in food hygiene and small business development. In 1996-97, the number of such collaborative arrangements has been reduced to six. Links with employers are maintained in various ways. Employers serve on college advisory boards and on the governing body. Staff liaise with employers over arrangements for the provision of work experience for students.

14 The college has a good relationship with the Devon and Cornwall TEC. It has contracts from the TEC to provide training for over 200 young people who have training credits or who are on modern apprenticeships. The college has a substantial TEC contract to provide 'business start up' training throughout Devon and Cornwall. It has also developed a 'Preparation for Business Certificate' which in April 1997 will be launched nationally and courses leading to it will be offered by several colleges outside the region. The college has also successfully bid for TEC-funded projects. One project has enabled over 200 employees at one local firm, representing nearly one half of its workforce, to attend evening classes at the college. Most of these employees had no formal qualifications and had not studied since leaving school. The TEC regards the college as a responsive and high-quality provider. However, the number of NVQs obtained by trainees at the college with training credits is below the average for TEC contractors. The college also has contracts with the Employment Service to provide job clubs and courses for the unemployed at several centres across the county.

15 The college has many strong links with local schools. The vice-principal/director of studies is secretary of the area joint planning group for post-11 education. Links with schools have been established in relation to the curriculum in vocational areas such as art and design, public services and technology. The college provides some GNVQ and NVQ units in



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construction to pupils in four local schools. Year 11 pupils in special schools come to the college for one morning each week in the year before they join their college course. Some students undertake their work experience in schools.

16 The college has a European policy and an active European group. Links with seven institutions in four European countries have led to overseas work experience and exchange visits for over 80 students. One such visit involved eight students with learning difficulties going to Gothenberg for two weeks to work with Swedish students and visit Swedish companies. Funding from the European Union enables the college to help with the economic regeneration of the area by running courses for the long-term unemployed. Other European Union funding pays for exchange visits and curriculum projects run jointly with other European countries. Such funding will finance a theatrical production by the college to be staged at a school in Amsterdam.

17 The college is active in the local community. Students were involved with the prize-winning 'Barnstaple in Bloom' campaign. They constructed a large floral train and painted several murals. There are regular musical and theatrical performances at the college. The college facilities are let to various local organisations and community groups.

18 Effective publicity maintains a high profile for the college in the local community. The college secures good press and local radio coverage, including a radio 'recipe of the week' presented by the marketing manager. Market information is mainly derived from informal contacts with schools, employers and careers officers and is not recorded. There is little formal market research, and market information does not play a significant part in curriculum planning.

19 The college has a detailed equal opportunities policy which includes aims and allocates responsibilities for implementation and monitoring. It covers all main areas of operation, but there are no supporting codes of practice. The co-ordinator and the equal opportunities committee are currently reviewing the policy. The committee has had some influence on marketing literature and on guides produced for tutors. Recently the Royal National Institute for the Blind carried out a detailed survey of college premises. As a result, the college has produced an action plan to meet some of the recommendations of the survey.

## **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

20 Governors have a sound working knowledge of the college and a good understanding of the challenges it faces. The college decided to establish a large board of governors in order to have members from across the wide rural area it serves. There are 20 members comprising 12 members from the business community, one member from Devon and Cornwall TEC, one from the North Devon Academic Board (an area planning group for post-11 education), two co-opted members, the principal, two staff and one student. Five members of the board are women. Members have

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experience of finance, estates and personnel management. There are effective procedures for appointing new members. Several training events have been organised and these have been well attended. There is an induction programme for new governors on the mission and character of the college, its curriculum and the legal framework within which it operates.

21 The board conducts its business effectively. There is an appropriate range of committees and good use is made of governors' experience and expertise. The main committee is the management committee. This comprises 10 members and it meets monthly to consider matters related to finance, personnel and the college's premises. It makes recommendations to the full board. Governors who are not members of the management committee receive all its papers and are entitled to attend its meetings. Relationships between the governors and the principalship are good. Governors have role descriptions which identify the main focus of their involvement with the college for the year. Some governors have direct involvement with the curriculum through visiting departments and attending employer liaison meetings and prize giving; others are involved with aspects of cross-college provision such as student services. Governors are beginning to monitor their own performance, but have yet to set agreed targets that will enable them to assess their effectiveness.

22 The board has been fully involved in the strategic planning process. Governors are responsible for agreeing the nine strategic priorities that are at the core of the college's strategic planning process. Three governors considered the preliminary draft, prior to approval by the full board. The board monitors the college's performance against the objectives in the strategic plan.

23 The strategic planning process in the college is generally effective and follows a clear timetable. All members of staff have the opportunity to take part in this process. The plan contains broad objectives set out under the nine strategic priorities. The accompanying operating statement identifies some targets, such as those for student numbers and costs, but it does not identify targets for students' retention and achievements. All departments produce operating plans, although these vary in detail and quality.

24 The college's management structure was reorganised in August 1996 following consultation with staff. Eight teaching departments were reduced to five and the senior management team was extended to include cross-college managers. The senior management team now comprises the principal, vice-principal/director of studies, the vice-principal/director of resources, five heads of department and the respective heads of the business development centre, student services and marketing. Meetings are held weekly. Regular discussion of academic, financial and strategic issues is fostering a shared understanding of key issues among members of the management team. Senior managers are providing clear direction for the college. Middle managers now have greater responsibility for the

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management of the curriculum and for cross-college services. An improved level of administrative support has been provided for departments as a result of the introduction of departmental administrators. The reorganisation of the management structure has been successful in improving the effectiveness of college management. Within departments the management of teaching sections is, however, of variable quality and there is insufficient liaison between staff within sections. Some section and support staff meetings lack focus and are inadequately recorded.

25 Communications within the college have recently improved. A working group has produced a staff handbook, provided noticeboards in classrooms, revitalised the weekly staff 'Bulletin' and has established termly 'open forum' events when the principalship meets staff to discuss college issues. A team briefing system involves all staff, who as members of a 'communications team' meet fortnightly to be briefed on issues that have arisen at senior management team meetings. There is a structure of meetings for cross-college committees and departments.

26 The college council overviews curriculum developments within the framework of the strategic plan. Ten subcommittees, covering most aspects of the college, support the work of the college council. The council is an effective forum for discussion on the curriculum, but it does not focus sufficiently on the monitoring of the quality of the college's provision. The college has developed an appropriate range of policies. These policies and their related committees are being reviewed. Three policies have been reviewed to date. The college's health and safety policy clearly sets out staff responsibilities for health and safety matters. The policy is monitored by a health and safety committee. There are some effective health and safety practices in the college. Heads of department have, however, been slow in reporting on the procedures they are establishing to discharge their responsibilities under the health and safety policy.

27 Since September 1996, all capital resources have been allocated on the basis of student numbers. Heads of department consider this system of allocation to be fairer than the previous one. Capital and revenue budgets are allocated in line with strategic plan priorities and bids can be made for additional resources. Some staff are not fully aware of the costs of provision. Middle managers are identified as resource managers, but they are not involved in decision making in relation to the allocation of budgets. There are inconsistencies in the methods of budget allocation to middle managers between departments.

28 The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The college receives over 80 per cent of its income from the FEFC. In 1995-96, the total allocation from the FEFC was £7,960,000 and the college's average level of funding was £16.77 per unit. The college's average level of funding for 1996-97 is £16.76 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges in 1996-97 is £17.97 per unit.

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29 The college's collaborative provision is organised from the business development centre in Barnstaple. There is a clear framework for management of this provision in accordance with FEFC guidance. Over the last year, staff have worked hard to strengthen management and monitoring arrangements. There are regular meetings with community colleges and business providers. Management records held at the business development centre are generally thorough, although not all the required visits to providers have been made. The collation of information on students' numbers, retention and achievements needs further refinement in order to give managers a complete picture of students' performance.

30 The college's system for recording students' achievement data is inadequate. The college is aware of this and is taking steps to improve the system. Management information is generated through two computerised systems which are currently undergoing further development. One system provides information on students' admissions, enrolments, examination entries, achievements and on personnel. A separate system provides financial information. The different systems cannot easily exchange data. The system for generating information on finance is developing well, but the system dealing with students' records is less effective. Information on students is reported regularly to governors, the principalship and the senior management team, but it is of variable accuracy. Senior managers and some middle managers have access to management information on the computer network, but there are plans to extend its accessibility to all middle managers. Heads of departments appreciate having access to the management information system, but they do not yet have full confidence in its accuracy.

31 The college has met its enrolment targets for the last two years. A slight decline in the numbers of full-time students has been accompanied by a significant increase in students enrolled on off-site collaborative programmes. Enrolment targets are currently set for the college, but not for individual courses. Before September 1996, the college was unable to produce reliable information on students' retention rates. Since September, checks every six weeks on student numbers have been introduced to improve the accuracy of data for each course and for the college as a whole. It is, however, too early to judge the effectiveness of these checks. Heads of department are now required to provide an explanation for retention rates which fall below 90 per cent on any course. Information is collected on the destinations of students and recorded in a destinations handbook.

#### **STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

32 Students generally receive good support. All the main student services have recently been brought together under the management of a head of student services who is a member of the senior management team. He is responsible for the student services co-ordinator, the guidance centre, central admissions, counselling and welfare advice and careers education and guidance. Staff involved in providing these services are experienced

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and well qualified. There is a college nurse who works to the head of student services. Regular reviews of students' opinions indicate that the services are valued. The work of the different services is supported by a well-established student services committee which includes representatives from the governing body, teaching departments and students.

33 Pupils in the college's partner schools are provided with a thorough programme of information and guidance to help them make the right choice of subject and course when they enrol in the college. 'Taster' days and general events are organised for year 10 and year 11 pupils when they can obtain a range of information about the college. Adults interested in joining a course are offered several advice days at which the local education authority (LEA) awards section, benefits agencies and job centres are represented as well as college staff. There is an adult guidance service funded by the LEA which works with the college to provide advice for adults. The college's guidance centre is open throughout the year and in the evening during major enrolment periods.

34 Guidance centre staff check all applications for full-time courses and applications for part-time courses which involve a substantial number of hours of attendance. Where appropriate, applicants are offered an interview with either the head of student services or a member of staff from the relevant teaching department. The learning support co-ordinator attends interviews of candidates whose applications suggest that they may need additional support for their learning. Since the start of the college year, the learning support co-ordinator has attended approximately 100 interviews. After checking by guidance centre staff, applications are passed to departments for course interviews to be arranged. There are guidelines for staff on the conduct of interviews and specifications of the timescale within which applicants can expect a response to their applications. The promptness with which they deal with applications varies. In a few instances, the quality of interviews was adversely criticised by students and parents. In general, however, the amount of time which staff devote to dealing with applications is valued by schools and students.

35 It is college policy that all students, including those who start their course late, should receive induction. Departments are responsible for arranging induction in accordance with the college guidelines. Induction includes introduction to central college services such as the library, the counselling support team and careers guidance, as well as general course induction. The length of induction varies between one week and one month and is determined by the amount of detail students need to know about a particular course. Some induction sessions were well planned and gave students a useful and clear introduction to college life and their programme of study. There is, however, some variation in the quality of induction between courses.

36 The college has a well-established core skills workshop which provides support to any students who need additional help with their

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learning. It is college policy that all students are assessed in order that their needs for additional learning support may be identified. Each department is responsible for deciding the most appropriate method of initial assessment following guidelines agreed with the core skills workshop. Students' needs for learning support are met in a variety of ways. They may be met within the department, by support provided on courses from core skills staff, or by the students' attendance at the core skills workshop. This workshop is well resourced and is located centrally in the college's main study centre. It offers help with literacy and communications support at all levels, basic mathematics, adult basic education and support for dyslexic students. The workshop provides training to staff on the teaching of basic skills. Twenty teachers are currently studying for a City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) qualification in basic skills. The workshop monitors the numbers of students receiving additional learning support. However, the college does not yet have systematic procedures for ensuring that all students receive appropriate initial assessment and that all their identified needs are met.

37 Students on full-time and part-time courses which entail a substantial number of hours of students' attendance receive regular tutorial support. This includes action planning to help them identify personal objectives. Students are given course and tutorial guides which are produced in a college format. Other part-time students on courses which do not include tutorials receive a summary of the services available to them. Most students are content with the frequency of tutorials. They feel well supported by their tutors and consider that they have ready access to them. However, the quality and nature of tutorial support, and the records kept of tutorials, vary across the college. There is a statement of tutorial policy for the college, but there is no handbook for tutors. The extent to which national records of achievement are used and maintained varies across departments.

38 Students and parents felt that both students' attendance and progress were well monitored in the college. Parents are informed about their child's progress through parents' evenings and regular written reports. Heads of department and tutors regularly discuss students' attendance in departmental and team meetings, but there is no procedure for collecting and analysing attendance data so that senior managers can analyse attendance patterns.

39 Students make good use of careers education and guidance services. In 1995-96, 532 students had interviews either with a careers adviser from the Cornwall and Devon Careers Service or with the college's careers tutor. In addition, a large number of general enquiries were logged by guidance centre staff. Since September 1996, the college has not had a careers tutor. The Cornwall and Devon Careers Service adviser now liaises with each department to arrange provision of careers advice to students through individual tutors. Student services publicise national and local careers events and they organise an annual Higher Education and

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Employment Conference for students in their first year. There is a comprehensive range of information about careers in the careers library.

40 The college has three trained and experienced counsellors who work to clearly specified standards. The college's counselling service is well used and appreciated by students. In 1995-96, 880 appointments were held with 350 different individuals. Counselling takes place in two rooms which are set aside for counselling. The rooms are quiet, but are situated away from the main guidance centre. Students who attend for interviews do not, therefore, benefit from the reception service provided at the guidance centre. This year the counselling team's role has been extended to include more provision of advice on financial and welfare matters. There is still some confusion among students about this changed role.

41 Students are encouraged to be fully involved in the life of the college. There are student representatives on the student services committee, the college council, and the majority of course teams. There is a weekly student newsletter and a full programme of extra-curricular activities. One of the student services staff works closely with the students' association on fund-raising events. Last year the students' association raised over £25,000. These funds are used to provide loans or grants to students in need.

#### **TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING**

42 In 60 per cent of the teaching sessions inspected the strengths clearly outweighed weaknesses. This compares with an average of 62 per cent for all tertiary colleges inspected between 1993 and 1996 as recorded in the *Chief Inspector's Annual Report 1995-96*. Five per cent of teaching sessions had weaknesses which outweighed strengths. This compares favourably with an average of 8 per cent for all tertiary colleges inspected between 1993 and 1996. The average attendance at sessions inspected was 79 per cent. This compares with an average of 77 per cent for all tertiary colleges inspected in 1995-96. Attendance varied between 74 per cent in hairdressing and beauty therapy and 89 per cent in art and design. The following table gives the grades awarded to the teaching sessions inspected.

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**Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programmes of study**

| <b>Programmes</b>          | <b>Grade 1</b> | <b>2</b>   | <b>3</b>   | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| GCE AS/A level             | 9              | 29         | 29         | 3         | 0        | 70            |
| GCSE                       | 1              | 9          | 4          | 0         | 0        | 14            |
| GNVQ                       | 2              | 21         | 24         | 5         | 0        | 52            |
| NVQ                        | 10             | 25         | 16         | 2         | 0        | 53            |
| Basic education            | 3              | 16         | 7          | 3         | 0        | 29            |
| Access to higher education | 2              | 3          | 2          | 0         | 0        | 7             |
| Other*                     | 13             | 30         | 19         | 2         | 0        | 64            |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>40</b>      | <b>133</b> | <b>101</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>289</b>    |

*\*includes BTEC national diplomas, national certificates, higher education, craft and professional awards.*

43 Teaching and learning in science is generally effective. Lessons are generally well planned and there is a balance between theoretical and practical work. Handouts for practical work are clear and useful. In classes where there is a wide range of ability the work is not sufficiently demanding for some students. Group work is encouraged. Much marking of students' work is detailed and constructive, but some is too cursory and superficial. Sports science students gain valuable experience from work experience in local schools. In some sessions, teachers missed opportunities to make use of appropriate visual aids.

44 Courses in mathematics and computing are well organised and managed. Much of the teaching and learning is sound. Most teachers have clear objectives which they share with students. Topics are developed with confidence and students readily ask questions or raise issues. In many instances, however, teachers use a restricted range of learning methods and rely mainly on exposition followed by worked examples and practice. Detailed records are kept of students' achievements. In some instances, students' motivation was not well sustained when they were given tasks to work at on their own. Teachers provide useful assistance to individual students, but in so doing, the pace of the work sometimes slackens. Insufficient attention is paid to the wide range of ability found in some classes.

45 In construction, teachers make effective use of their own industrial experience. In a plumbing class the lecturer examined different clauses of the water bye-laws. At each stage students sketched an interpretation of the clause under consideration. Visual aids such as valves and fittings were well used to illustrate the session. On both NVQ and GNVQ courses, students are given booklets which contain specifications for assignments and dates by which work should be completed. Students' learning is strengthened by talks given by outside speakers and through appropriate visits to firms and building sites. Students are regularly informed of their



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progress. In some less satisfactory sessions, the range of teaching and learning activities was too limited and some teaching aids were of poor quality.

46 The overall standard of teaching on engineering courses is good. Students respond well to questions and to set tasks. On NVQ courses, teachers have developed rigorous methods of testing students' knowledge. They have been imaginative in developing assignments for GNVQ students. For example, students on a GNVQ intermediate level course took part in a mock interview for an appropriate post in a local company. They had visited the company and had been supplied with the firm's literature. The application and interview procedures were based on those used by the company. On some courses, assessment is not recorded in enough detail.

47 Business courses are generally well planned. Most teachers explain the aims of the sessions clearly to students. At both the college, and in the centres where collaborative provision is located, teachers build effectively on students' experience when introducing new skills and concepts. In the better lessons teachers established good links between topics and used a variety of appropriate activities to develop students' personal and social skills. In sessions held at the college, students were encouraged to work in groups. In some sessions, however, teachers made insufficient use of a variety of teaching methods and failed to arouse students' interest. In some of the sessions held at the collaborative provision centres, there was too much talking on the part of the teachers and too little response and activity on the part of the students.

48 Students on full-time hotel and catering courses gain a realistic insight into the world of work. They benefit from well-planned and carefully-monitored work experience on employers' premises which lasts for up to four weeks. Students develop their practical skills through working in the college's restaurant, coffee shop, kitchens and bakery. Teachers maintain careful records of students' progress. In some sessions on NVQ courses, which take place in the kitchens or college restaurant, teachers failed to ensure that students had a thorough appreciation of the knowledge and understanding which underpin practical skills. In some weaker sessions the work lacked momentum, failed to challenge the students and did not extend their learning. In some instances, students are unclear what is expected of them. In some sessions on more advanced courses, students were given insufficient opportunity to develop skills of analysis and evaluation.

49 On leisure and tourism courses students are provided with well-produced learning materials and a wide variety of appropriate class activities. They also benefit from work experience, residential and day visits and guest speakers. GNVQ courses are carefully planned. For example, teachers ensure that students learn key skills throughout their course. Assignments enable students to develop research skills and the ability to work in teams. Marking is generally thorough and students are

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kept well informed of their overall progress. In some sessions, however, teachers failed to provide a clear structure for discussion and analysis. In some sessions the work lacked excitement and insufficiently challenged the students.

50 Most of the teaching of courses in health and social care is good. Particularly successful learning took place in classes of part-time adult students. All students benefit from the provision of work experience. The content and level of work are generally appropriate. Videos and overhead projectors are used regularly, mostly to good effect. Teachers have been successful and innovative in developing open learning materials in health and social care which students may work at by themselves. Assessment for NVQ students is detailed and thorough and it is carried out in close collaboration with employers. In some weaker sessions, the teaching failed to stimulate students' interest or generate their enthusiasm. Some session plans and teaching schemes were insufficiently detailed.

51 In hairdressing and beauty therapy, there are some well-planned sessions in which teachers use a wide range of appropriate teaching methods. Course induction gives students a useful introduction to their studies. Teachers' knowledge of their subject is up to date. Teachers ensure that students are fully prepared, through practical training, for the demands of the workplace. However, a shortage of clients prevents many students from developing the necessary skills and speed to work effectively under pressure. Some assignments reach a high standard and good design projects are on display. The work in some sessions failed to challenge the students and teachers did not question the students sufficiently in order to check their understanding. In some instances, the way the course is organised does not provide students with a realistic timescale within which to complete their studies.

52 Much of the teaching in media and the performing arts is good. Most classes are well managed and have a clear sense of purpose. Staff have substantial specialist expertise. Visits and talks by visiting speakers enrich the curriculum. Students concentrate hard on their work. In general, teachers provide students with firm guidance and encourage them to work on their own. Some marking of written work is particularly clear, thorough and helpful. At the time of inspection, the experience of GCE A level music students was impoverished by an absence of opportunities for ensemble playing, choral work or instrumental performance.

53 Teaching is mainly good in art and design. All courses are well structured. Assignments are appropriate to the level of study. Through their varied project work, students are helped to develop and extend their knowledge of the media and of relevant media techniques. Staff devote time to discussion with individual students about their progress. Students negotiate with their teachers over timescales for completing work and, once agreed, these are carefully monitored. Teachers have rewritten GNVQ documents in order to make them more easily understandable by students. Some students, however, remain uncertain about aspects of

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assessment on GNVQ courses. In a minority of sessions the work lacked rigour and students were insufficiently challenged. Some students found it difficult to concentrate, wasted time and made little progress.

54 Teaching and learning in humanities is generally effective. Students appreciate the interest and support they receive from their teachers. Teaching is generally well managed. Some teachers are skilful in their use of questioning to develop their students' thinking and to test their understanding. Only a minority of teachers regularly use audio-visual aids. Modern languages students receive material for coursework from the Internet. They also have ready access to a language laboratory and a recently developed open learning centre where they may study on their own, at times of their choosing. Some teaching plans are poor and fail to outline clear teaching objectives. There is scope for more teaching which encourages students to think for themselves and develop the skills of enquiry and debate. On teacher education courses, all aspects of teaching and learning are carefully planned and documented.

55 On adult basic education courses, students receive good individual tuition. In the best practice, students work effectively in pairs or in groups. There is, however, scope for further development of group work. Teachers at the various centres and community colleges have insufficient opportunities to discuss and to share good practice. Volunteer tutors play a valuable part in helping students to succeed in their learning. In the better sessions, the activities provided for students are both relevant and stimulating. Records of students' work are kept, but learning objectives are not sufficiently clear and measurable. In some cases, the assessment of students' progress needs to be more detailed and more frequent.

56 Most teaching and learning for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well planned and effective. Students on the bridging course hold a weekly meeting. Students discuss issues such as course content, their own behaviour and the planning of activities. An agenda is prepared and minutes are kept. Agreed action from one meeting is meticulously followed up at the next. Students learn to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. They also learn the required procedures for getting things done. In some sessions, however, students are not purposefully employed in activities that contribute to their preparation for adult life. Some marking of students' work is superficial or unhelpful.

### **STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

57 Most students are developing appropriate levels of knowledge and skill and are well motivated. In general, students who complete their courses achieve the qualification for which they are aiming. The results of GCE A level students are good. In several areas of the college's vocational work, overall pass rates exceeded national averages. Students' coursework is mostly of a good standard, although some is poor.

58 Students are learning key skills in number, communication and information technology in various ways. Hotel and catering students learn

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key skills through their main coursework. Construction students attend the core skills workshop where they work individually to develop the skills they need. Craft construction students have been successful in achieving GNVQ foundation units in key skills. First-year GCE A level students who do not possess basic information technology skills are now required to follow a C&G computing course.

59 In 1996, there were 865 entries for 31 GCE A level subjects. The college's overall GCE A level pass rate was 89 per cent, an improvement on the pass rate of 86 per cent achieved in each of the two previous years. The overall pass rate has been above the national average for the last three years. The total number of GCE A level entries has declined slightly over this period. Eighty-seven per cent of all GCE A level entries are from students between the ages of 16 and 18. In 1996, students aged 16 to 18 scored, on average, 4.9 points per entry (where grade A=10 points, E=2). This places the college in the top third of all further education colleges on this performance measure according to data published by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE). In 27 out of the 31 subjects taken by students aged 16 to 18, pass rates were at or above the provisional national averages for all students in England. Pass rates of 100 per cent were achieved in seven subjects: English literature, electronics, further mathematics, German, religious studies, Spanish and statistics. Pass rates of 90 per cent or higher were obtained in a further nine subjects. Similar proportions of good results were achieved in 1995 and 1994. In three subjects, pass rates in 1996 fell below the provisional national averages: English language and literature (73 per cent), law (58 per cent) and theatre studies (44 per cent). In the previous two years, results in English language and literature and theatre studies were above the national averages. In 24 out of 31 subjects, the proportion of students, aged 16 to 18, who gained passes at grades A to C was above the provisional national average. There were only 15 entries from students of all ages post-16 for a total of three GCE AS subjects. Results were poor in mathematics (33 per cent), but better in contemporary French (75 per cent) and contemporary German (100 per cent). There were 106 GCE A level entries from students aged 19 and over. Results were variable, ranging from 12.5 per cent in accountancy to 83 per cent in English. In 1995-96, there were 96 GCE A level entries from students at the college's seven community colleges and schools partner centres. The overall pass rate at grades A to E was 69 per cent. In 1996, the national average pass rate for 19 year olds and over in further education colleges was 64 per cent.

60 The college has recently started to calculate a value-added score of students' achievements in their GCE A level examinations, based on a comparison of their GCE A level grade with their original GCSE grades. There is scope for a more rigorous analysis of students' performance.

61 There were 334 entries in 13 GCSE subjects in 1996. Of these, 237 were from students aged 16 to 18. Forty-four per cent achieved grades

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A to C and this proportion compares with a national average of 39 per cent for 16 to 18 year old students in further education colleges in 1996. Of students aged 16 to 18, 61 per cent and 36 per cent gained grades A to C in English and mathematics compared with national averages of 47 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively. Of students aged over 19, the proportions gaining these grades were 68 per cent and 81 per cent, compared with national averages of 71 per cent and 48 per cent, respectively. At the college's seven community college collaborative centres, there were 117 entries in 14 GCSE subjects. Seventy-four per cent of candidates achieved grades A to C, compared with an average in 1996 of 62 per cent for students aged 19 and over in further education colleges.

62 The results of students taking vocational qualifications are variable, although the majority are good. In 1996, 76 per cent of students in their final year of advanced vocational courses included in the DfEE's 1996 performance tables were successful. This places the college in the middle third of all further education colleges on this performance measure. This does not fully reflect the college's achievement because the college failed to submit all the relevant information to the DfEE. On four out of seven full-time GNVQ advanced level vocational courses, 85 per cent or above of all students completing their course achieved a full award. There was a pass rate of 100 per cent on the Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education national diploma. At intermediate level in 1996, 72 per cent of students were successful and this places the college in the top third of all further education colleges, according to performance data in the tables published by the DfEE. In 1995-96, on one-year, full-time vocational courses, there were pass rates of 100 per cent in BTEC foundation studies in art and design, GNVQ foundation level in construction and built environment, and GNVQ intermediate level leisure and tourism. There were pass rates of 75 per cent or above on six out of eight GNVQ intermediate courses. By contrast, only 25 per cent of GNVQ intermediate construction students gained their award. Pass rates on NVQ courses varied widely. Results at NVQ levels 2 and 3 ranged from 100 per cent in plumbing to 20 per cent in beauty therapy. Of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, 74 per cent were successful in achieving an NVQ level 1 award. Of the entries made by students based at the college's collaborative centres, 83 per cent of entrants in computer literacy and information technology, preparation for business certificate and health and safety courses achieved their full qualification.

63 It is difficult to obtain an accurate picture of retention rates because the college only started systematic monitoring of attendance in September 1996. Information gathered during the inspection indicates that retention rates are generally higher on part-time (mainly adult) courses than on full-time courses for 16 to 18 year olds. There are high retention rates on some courses in health and community care, engineering, and construction. Retention rates are low on NVQ level 2 courses in brickwork,

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carpentry and joinery (50 per cent), NVQ level 2 and 3 courses in hairdressing (29 per cent), and on GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism courses (42 per cent). In some instances, there are factors such as students leaving for employment which moderate the significance of these figures. The college should ensure that improved monitoring of retention is accompanied by careful analysis so that reasons are understood and appropriate action taken.

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

64 The college is working hard to develop further its quality assurance procedures. A booklet giving a revised overview of quality assurance in the college was issued in October 1996. Staff were consulted about the document, and briefed on its implications. In the light of this document the college's quality assurance policy has been rewritten. Staff understand and support the policy and the quality assurance procedures. Some elements of quality assurance, such as the course review process, are well established. Others, such as clear specifications of standards and internal quality audit, are currently being developed.

65 The vice-principal/director of studies is the senior manager responsible for quality assurance. She is assisted by three quality assurance co-ordinators. The college council has responsibility for monitoring quality assurance policies. The curriculum review committee, a subcommittee of the college council, is responsible for monitoring quality assurance procedures and new course proposals. A quality strategy committee is responsible for the development and implementation of procedures and the staff services committee monitors staff development.

66 Course reviews are conducted according to a well-established and widely understood process. Students' views on the quality of provision are collected by course teams using standard questionnaires. These are taken into account when course teams review their programmes and complete an annual course review which includes an action plan. The action plans are discussed with section heads and heads of department, who record their comments and return the forms to the course team leader. Each head of department presents a course review report to the curriculum review committee. Students' views on induction, tutorial provision and related topics are collected centrally by student services.

67 Course reviews generate much useful information and have resulted in improvements. However, some action plans are too brief or do not address significant issues raised by the review to which they relate. The action plans do not establish timescales within which action must be completed, or specify who has responsibility for carrying the action out. There has been some inaccuracy in the statistical information recorded and some inconsistency in the way the information has been collected. For example, some retention rates have been based on students' attendance since enrolment and other rates have been based on attendance since 1 November.

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68 The college is seeking to improve the accuracy of its course reviews. Nine per cent of the course review action plans for 1995-96 were thoroughly and productively audited for compliance with quality standards and procedures. The audit demonstrated that fewer than half of the reviews checked had accurate statistical information, or included any statement on the outcome of the previous years' action plans, or adequately covered students' retention rates and achievements. Course managers are now taking action to improve the consistency and reliability of reviews. Reports by heads of departments summarise much useful information and give a valuable overview of each department's provision. These reports vary in layout, level of detail and usefulness as quality monitoring documents as they are largely dependent on the effectiveness of the course reviews.

69 A team of internal auditors has been established to carry out regular auditing of quality at course level. It is intended that these auditors will report to the audit committee of the governors. At present, governors discuss students' achievements, but they have no performance indicators by which they may measure the quality and standards of the college's provision.

70 All proposals for new and substantial part-time courses, and for course changes and deletions, are submitted to the curriculum review committee for approval before being submitted for external validation. The committee considers submissions carefully. It has frequently referred submissions back for clarification or for reconsideration of strategic priorities.

71 The students' handbook, which includes the students' charter, has an attractive layout and design. It is clearly written and contains some general statements about the quality of provision students may expect and their entitlements. The charter has recently been reviewed by a group which included students. Awareness of the charter and its role is widespread amongst staff and students. An internal services charter specifies some standards for support services and these were reviewed and amended in May 1996. There is no requirement for monitoring the standards achieved although, for example, some staff work to service standards for responses to enquiries and complaints.

72 Course and tutorial guides are produced to a common format. Some of them specify the standards of provision which students can expect and give details of students' entitlements. For example, students are entitled to receive guidance from their teachers on assignments and to have these marked and returned to them within three weeks of handing them in. However, the level of detail about standards and students' entitlement varies from one course guide to another. Complaints and appeals procedures are clearly explained in course guides and in the students' charter.

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73 The operating plans for departments contain some targets which relate to the quality of provision. The specification of standards for teaching and learning, students' achievements, recruitment and the guidance and support of students, is currently under consideration. At present there are no targets for students' achievements across the college. The lack of reliable statistics on retention is being addressed by a process of regular checking and monitoring, with a view to establishing retention targets.

74 The college has taken steps to monitor the quality of its collaborative provision. Before agreements are signed, providers are assessed against set criteria including quality assurance. Over the last year the college has concentrated on implementing a revised management framework which complies with FEFC guidance. This has taken considerable staff time and some aspects of quality assurance now need further development. For example, the course reviews completed by community college centres are unsatisfactory.

75 A common appraisal procedure for all college staff was introduced in September 1996. It includes observation of teaching staff in the classroom and, where relevant, can include observation of non-teaching staff in their workplace. Appraisal is focused on staff development rather than the management of performance or on target setting. As a result of management reorganisation, some staff have not been appraised for 18 months or two years. Staff generally view the appraisal process as helpful and productive. Staff commented that staff-development needs which are identified during appraisal are met.

76 Staff development is well managed and evaluated against strategic priorities. In 1996-97, the budget for staff development is equivalent to 1.7 per cent of the college's staffing budget. There is a clear staff-development plan which includes a review of the previous year's training targets and a list of activities carried out. Recent staff-development priorities include middle management training following the reorganisation of the college's management structure. There is an induction programme for new full-time staff and part-time staff who work a substantial number of hours and this includes mentoring arrangements. The college is committed to progress towards the Investors in People award, and is aiming to apply for it in the summer of 1997.

77 The self-assessment report was produced by a thorough process of consultation with staff at all levels of the college. The report is comprehensive, contains plenty of informative detail, and is helpfully cross-referenced to source documents. It provided a useful checklist for inspectors. Some of it corresponds with the findings of the inspection. The report is, however, insufficiently rigorous in its identification of weaknesses.



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## **RESOURCES**

### **Staffing**

78 Most teaching staff are well qualified and experienced. Seventy per cent of full-time staff have first degrees or their equivalent and 86 per cent hold teaching qualifications. Most staff teaching vocational programmes had extensive relevant experience before their appointment. The rate of staff turnover is low, and has been only 2.7 per cent in the last three years. Some staff lack recent commercial and industrial experience. The college is addressing this. Twenty-four full-time teachers have updated their experience through the staff-development programme in the last three years. Just under 20 per cent of teachers are part time. Many part-time staff have valuable experience of current industrial and commercial practice and they are able to draw on this in their teaching.

79 The college is making good progress in training assessors and internal verifiers. Twenty-eight per cent of all teachers have vocational assessor awards and a further 12 per cent are working towards them. Action is being taken to ensure that both teaching and non-teaching staff are equally involved in the college's administrative procedures. Non-teaching staff are represented on the main college committees and they have become more involved in departmental management groups. The number of women who are senior and middle managers has increased significantly. Staff with first aid qualifications are on duty when the college is open.

80 In general, there are sufficient suitably-qualified administrative staff. They show great commitment to the college and provide it with valuable support. The newly-instituted role of an administrator for each department is proving useful.

81 The college's personnel records have been entered on the management information system and are being integrated with staff-development data. However, they currently lack some essential information. The college has a full range of personnel policies in place.

### **Equipment/learning resources**

82 There is a good level of general teaching equipment. With the exception of those in some temporary buildings, most teaching rooms have good basic equipment, such as whiteboards, screens and overhead projectors. There is an efficient reprographics service which produces audio-visual aids and paper-based learning materials and it is appreciated by staff and students. The equipment in the rooms used by the college's collaborative providers in community colleges and business centres is generally satisfactory and, in some cases, it is good.

83 Over the last few years, the college has added to its stock of specialist equipment. Much specialist equipment is adequate and, in some well-provided areas such as mathematics and information technology,

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hotel and catering, electronics, modern languages and art and design, it is good. Electrical engineering students benefit from a new computer-based learning system purchased with European Union funding. A realistic-work environment has been established to enhance teaching and learning in business administration. There is, however, some outdated equipment for mechanical engineering, hairdressing and beauty therapy, textiles, photography and sport.

84 There is a five-year rolling programme for the replacement of capital equipment. Funding for capital equipment is allocated to departments according to a clear procedure. The college has also devised an effective central purchasing policy for capital equipment.

85 The college has invested steadily in information technology in recent years. There are currently 433 computers giving a ratio of students to computers of 7:1. Most of the older machines have been updated, but a small number remain which can only operate a limited range of software. Information technology systems are well supported by a systems support section. One member of the teaching staff has responsibility for co-ordinating the development of information technology across the curriculum.

86 Students have open access to computers in the main study centre which houses 30 computers. They also have limited access to two other computer suites. Students are generally satisfied with the availability of machines, although some said they have difficulty in gaining access to a computer at peak usage times. In the main study centre, tutor support is available for students who need assistance. In Barnstaple town centre, the college has opened a well-equipped 'drop-in' information technology centre in one of the main shopping centres.

87 The library is situated near the main entrance. It is small and the college is planning improvements to the library through its accommodation strategy. In the meantime it has established resource centres in various parts of the college, some of which provide good specialist resources to complement the stock available in the library. Bookstock in the main library is relatively small. It is unsatisfactory in a few subjects such as construction, business studies and social science. Action is being taken to improve the bookstock. The library budget has been increased by 37 per cent in 1996-97. The provision of periodicals is generally good. The main study centre is situated above the library and, together with the adjacent core skills workshop, it provides a good resource for the support of students' learning.

### **Accommodation**

88 Most teaching takes place on the main college site in Barnstaple. This site consists of seven substantial blocks built between 1952 and 1974, two recent art and design buildings and 16 less satisfactory huts. The main site is pleasant and has room for expansion. There are good parking

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facilities for 550 vehicles. Some signposting is, however, unclear and road access is restricted. The accommodation is carefully managed. The buildings are clean, well maintained and generally in good decorative order.

89 There is some good specialist accommodation, such as the training restaurant and kitchens, plumbing practical areas, the new art buildings and the new hairdressing salon. There is also some unsatisfactory accommodation. This includes the second hairdressing salon, the beauty salon, and accommodation for health and social care, music practice, dance and motor vehicle programmes and for students with learning difficulties.

90 There is a shortage of teaching spaces for groups of more than 18 students and a shortage of spaces for private study. There is a social area for students near the main entrance, but there is no student common room. The lack of social and work areas for students is a particular issue. Many students travel from a considerable distance and are on site all day. Some of the work areas for teaching and non-teaching staff are too small for the numbers of staff using them. The college recognises these deficiencies and aims to address them through its accommodation strategy.

91 The main college is built on a hill and the original design did not take account of the needs of students who have restricted mobility. Despite significant improvements in recent years, approximately 40 per cent of teaching rooms, including some specialist accommodation, are inaccessible to wheelchair users. It is college policy to relocate teaching where necessary to ensure that students with restricted mobility have appropriate physical access. However, the inaccessibility of many of the college's rooms remains a significant problem.

92 Teaching provided through collaborative arrangements takes place in community colleges and schools and on the premises of business partners. Most of this accommodation is satisfactory and some is very good. Some rooms, however, are not accessible to wheelchair users. The college leases buildings in the town centre for its business development centre, its 'drop-in' information technology centre and a garage used by students on motor vehicle courses. These buildings provide good and suitable accommodation.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES**

93 The main strengths of the college are

- a wide range of courses which meets the needs of the large rural community served by the college
- its close involvement in the communities of North Devon
- its good links with employers and its development of European initiatives
- committed governors who have a good understanding of the college

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- a revised management structure which is developing well
  - good communications within the college
  - an effective core skills workshop
  - a good range of services to support students
  - much effective teaching
  - good examination results, particularly at GCE A level.

94 In order to improve the quality of its provision, the college should:

- further develop the setting of targets, standards and performance indicators
- improve the accuracy of data on students' achievements
- ensure effective monitoring of students' attendance and retention
- share good practice in teaching and learning
- improve the effectiveness of middle managers
- increase consistency in tutorial practice
- improve the effectiveness of the quality assurance system
- improve access for students with restricted mobility
- improve the weaker aspects of its accommodation.

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## FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)

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  - 2 Percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)

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  - 3 Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)

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  - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)

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  - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1996)

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  - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

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

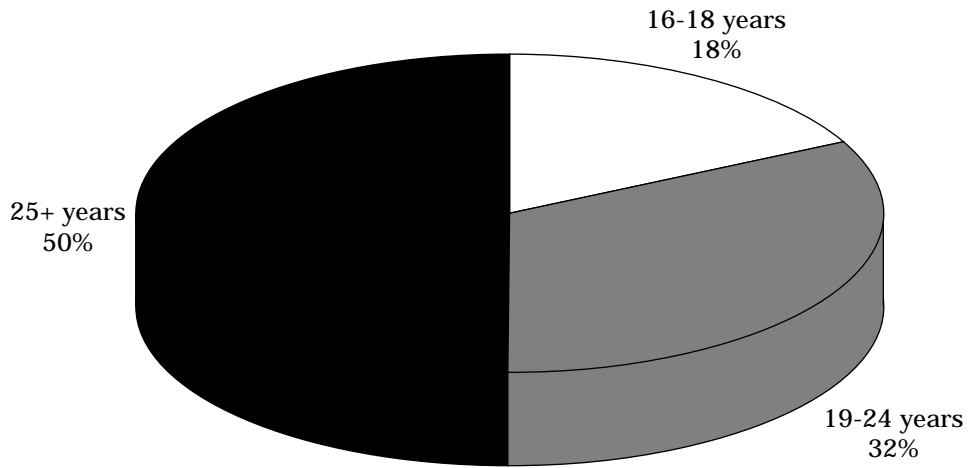
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**Figure 1**

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**North Devon College: percentage student numbers by age (as at July 1996)**



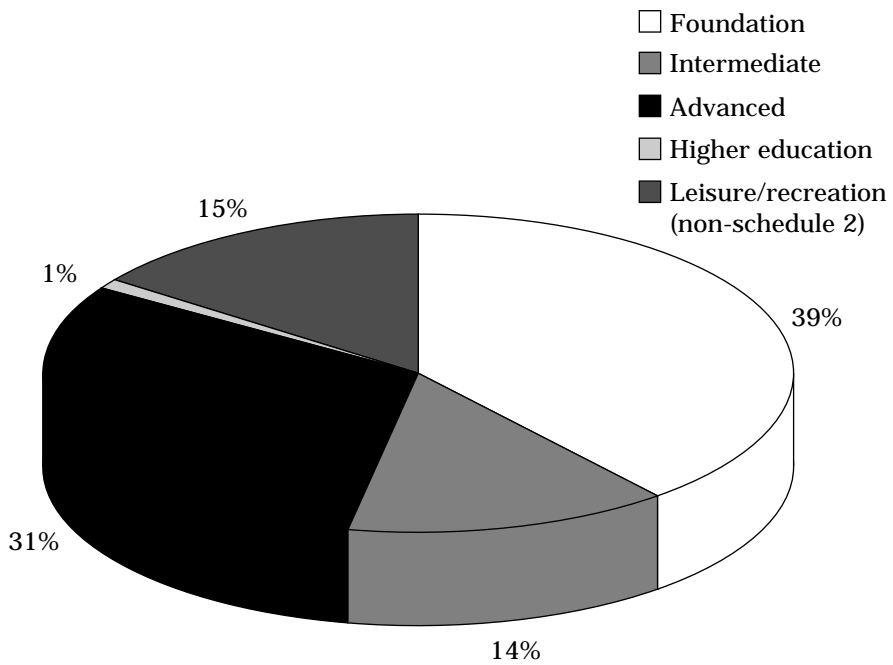
Student numbers: 16,636

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**Figure 2**

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**North Devon College: percentage student numbers by level of study (as at July 1996)**

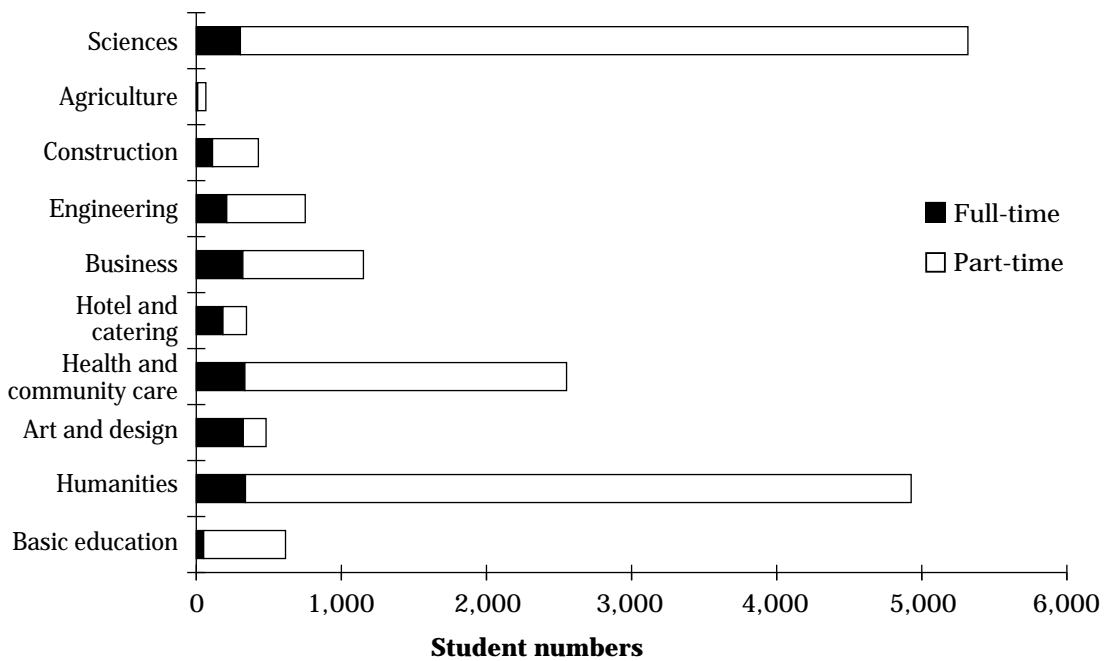


Student numbers: 16,636

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**Figure 3**

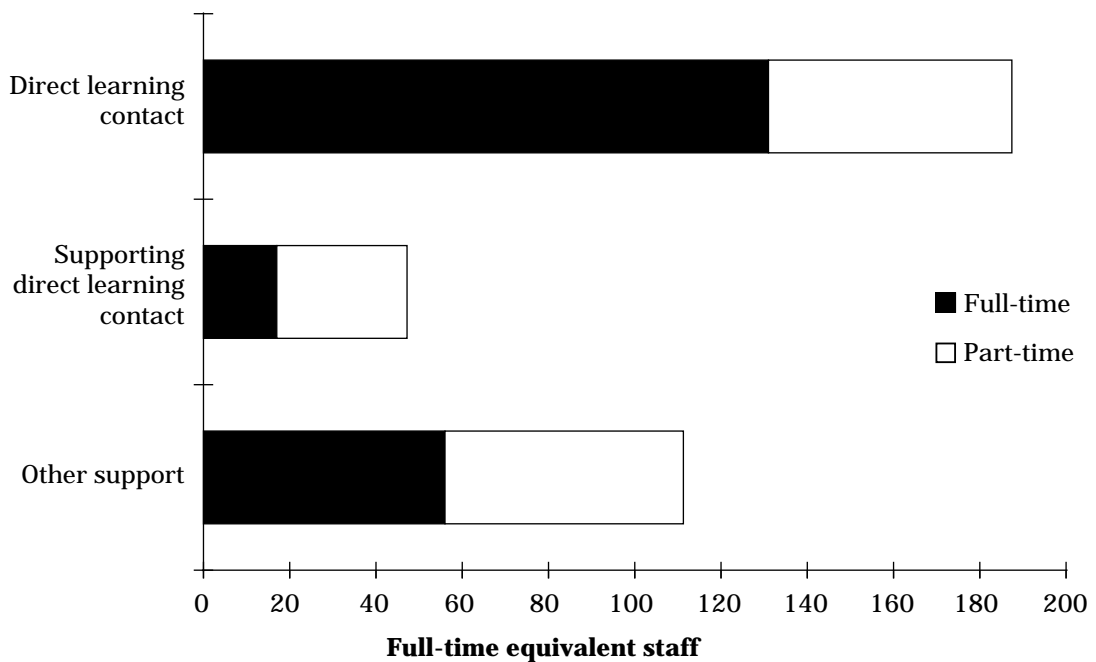
**North Devon College: student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1996)**



Student numbers: 16,636

**Figure 4**

**North Devon College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1996)**



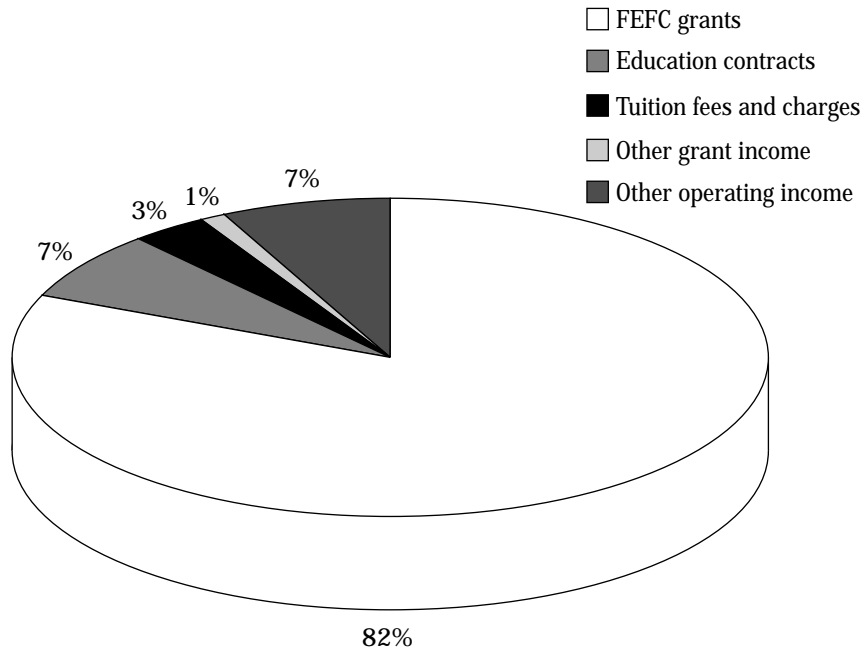
Full-time equivalent staff: 346

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**Figure 5**

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**North Devon College: income (for 12 months to July 1996)**

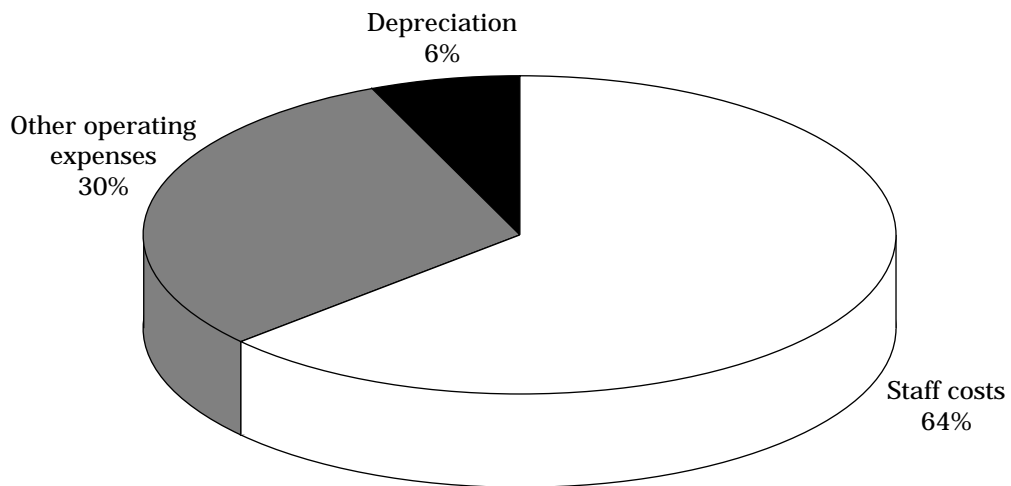


Income: £9,814,000

**Figure 6**

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**North Devon College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)**



Expenditure: £9,724,000

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