

Sir John Deane's College

REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1999-00

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

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

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Grade Descriptors

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

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

Audit conclusions are expressed as good, adequate or weak.

Aggregated grades for aspects of cross-college provision and curriculum areas, for colleges inspected during 1998-99, are shown in the following table.

| | Grade | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|----|----|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | % | % | % | % | % |
| Curriculum areas | 10 | 53 | 30 | 7 | – |
| Cross-college provision | 14 | 54 | 23 | 7 | 2 |

Source: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report*
Sample size: 104 college inspections

Student Achievements

Where data on student achievements appear in tables, levels of achievement are shown in three ways:

- as number of starters, which is the number of enrolments on qualifications where the student was expecting to complete the qualification that college year. For example, a student on a two-year programme who began their programme in October 1995, would appear in the results for 1996-97 because this is the year in which they expected to complete their qualification
- as a retention rate, which is the percentage of qualifications which students have completed as expected or where they are continuing their studies beyond the expected end date of the qualification. For programmes of study of two years or more, retention is calculated across the whole programme, that is, from the start to the end of the qualification
- as an achievement rate, which is the number of qualifications students have fully achieved as a percentage of completed qualifications with a known outcome. Partial achievements are not included.

Summary

Sir John Deane's College

North West Region

Inspected October 1999

Sir John Deane's College is a sixth form college in Northwich, Cheshire. Most of its students are aged 16 to 19, attend college full time and study three or more subjects at GCE A level. The college produced a detailed and thorough self-assessment report that involved all staff in its preparation. The self-assessment report was subject to scrutiny by senior staff and governors. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths recognised in the self-assessment report but identified a few additional weaknesses. They were able to validate all but three of the college's self-assessment grades. The college offers courses in five of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Provision in four of these was inspected, together with aspects of cross-college provision. The college curriculum focuses on the academic needs of students aged 16 to 19. There are a wide range of GCE A/AS level courses, GNVQ advanced level, GCSE courses and a range of short courses. Recent developments include evening and weekend courses for adults.

Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements to the college's main campus. The college's accommodation is of a very good standard and students have access to an excellent range of specialist and leisure facilities. Access for students with restricted mobility to a small number of older college

buildings is poor. Students are given outstanding guidance and support and have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum provision in mathematics, computing and IT, business, art, performing arts, design technology and textiles, geography, history, politics and religious education is outstanding. Arrangements to assess the quality of mainstream curriculum provision are good and include lesson observations and a thorough analysis of student retention and achievement rates. Arrangements to assess the quality of adult provision are less well developed. Governors demonstrate a high level of commitment to the college and have a clear overview of the college mission and strategic planning. They work well with senior managers. The college benefits from good management supported by clear management structures. The college should address: the full integration of the adult programme with college management and quality assurance structures; the improvement of recruitment and support strategies for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; the delivery of key skills across the curriculum; the sharing of good practice in teaching and learning; the improvement in the procedures for the conduct of corporation business; and the monitoring and implementation of the equal opportunities policy.

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

| Curriculum area | Grade | Cross-college provision | Grade |
|--|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Mathematics, computing and information technology | 1 | Support for students | 1 |
| Business | 1 | General resources | 1 |
| Art, performing arts, design technology and textiles | 1 | Quality assurance | 2 |
| Geography, history, politics and religious studies | 1 | Governance | 2 |
| | | Management | 2 |

The College and its Mission

1 Sir John Deane's College was established in 1978 as a voluntary-controlled sixth form college. It is located on the site of a former grammar school that was founded in 1557. The college occupies a single site adjacent to the River Weaver, half a mile from the centre of Northwich in the Vale Royal district of Cheshire. The college mainly provides full-time, level 3 courses for students aged 16 to 19, but has recently introduced an adult education programme. Sir John Deane's College is the only sixth form college in Cheshire. Educational provision in the local area for students aged 16 to 19 is shared with eight 11 to 18 schools and a large further education college. Within the broader catchment area of the college, there are two other sixth form colleges, three general further education colleges, one tertiary college and a large number of 11 to 18 high schools.

2 The Vale Royal district has approximately 120,000 inhabitants. The main economic activity, once dominated by agriculture and chemical engineering has diversified in recent years to include light engineering, high technology and service industries. Despite the shrinking employment opportunities within the chemical industry, the local economy is buoyant. Northwich is rapidly expanding as a result of a strong communications infrastructure and the creation of several major housing developments. In the Vale Royal borough, 50% of students aged 16 achieved five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) grades at grade C or above in 1998, compared with 46.3% nationally. The great majority of students attending the college are seeking to go on to higher education.

3 There are 1,100 full-time students and approximately 300 part-time adult students studying at the college. Younger students come from a large number of schools both within and outside Cheshire. Currently, 49% of the 16 to 19 cohort come from five partner high schools close to the college. Full-time student numbers have grown by 26% since incorporation. The college

currently offers 36 general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) courses, 15 GCE advanced supplementary (AS) courses and a general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) advanced level in business, together with a small number of level 2 courses. Students' core programmes of three advanced level courses are augmented by a variety of enrichment programmes. These include general and leisure studies. The adult programme is currently composed of 13 courses in a variety of subjects. The college's leisure centre offers a range of leisure activities to the local community.

4 The college's senior management team comprises the principal, two vice-principals and an assistant principal who have specific responsibility for quality assurance, personnel and student services, curriculum development and management and business support and adult education services, respectively. Subject teachers and learning support staff work within 19 departmental areas, each managed by a head of department. At the time of inspection, the college employed the full-time equivalent of 66 teachers, 6 staff who directly supported learning and 29 other support staff.

5 It is the college's mission to 'aim at excellence in its provision to post-16 learners, focusing on academic achievement, but paying close attention to the wider skills and competencies required for lifelong learning, and alive to the needs of the wider community'.

The Inspection

6 The college was inspected during the week beginning 11 October 1999. Before the inspection, inspectors reviewed the self-assessment report and considered information from other directorates of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Inspectors used data from the individualised student record (ISR) for 1997 and 1998. The college provided data for 1999. These were checked by inspectors against primary sources of evidence, such as registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies, and were found to

Context

be reliable. Eight inspectors and an auditor worked for a total of 39 days during the inspection. They observed lessons, evaluated students' work and scrutinised college documents. Meetings were held with governors, managers, other staff, students, parents and representatives from the local community.

7 The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected and the national profile for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. The proportion of lessons judged to be outstanding was more than double that found nationally.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

| Programme | Grade | | | | | Totals |
|--|-------|----|----|---|---|--------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| GCE A/AS level | 19 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 37 |
| GCSE | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| GNVQ | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Other vocational | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Tutorials | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Total (No.) | 22 | 16 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 47 |
| Total (%) | 47 | 34 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99 (%) | 20 | 45 | 29 | 6 | 0 | 100 |

Source for national average: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report*

8 The following table shows the attendance rates in the lessons observed and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1998-99. The average level of attendance during the inspection was 92%; this compares with the average of 84% for sixth form colleges and 78% for all colleges.

Attendance rates in lessons observed

| | Average number of students | Average attendance (%) |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Sir John Deane's College | 13.3 | 92 |
| National average, all inspected colleges 1998-99 | 11.2 | 78 |

Source for national average: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1998-99: Chief inspector's annual report*

Curriculum Areas

Mathematics, Computing and Information Technology

Grade 1

9 The inspection covered GCE A level mathematics, computing and information technology (IT), GCSE mathematics and courses in computer literacy. Twelve lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with the judgements made in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- a wide range of effective teaching and learning methods
- the enjoyment and involvement of students in mathematics lessons
- excellent project work by GCE A level IT students
- high retention and pass rates in GCE A level and GCSE mathematics
- very good achievements in GCE A level computing and IT
- effective curriculum management by highly motivated staff
- thorough assessment, good recording and careful monitoring of students' progress

Weaknesses

- insufficient sharing of good practice
- limited arrangements for additional mathematical support

10 Mathematics, computing and IT courses have recruited well at all levels. In particular IT provision has grown with the introduction of computer literacy and evening courses and GCE A level IT doubling its recruitment since 1996.

11 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that courses are well planned and well managed. Subject teams meet regularly and departmental management files are

carefully maintained. Staff keep accurate and detailed records of students' work. Students' progress is rigorously and regularly monitored and reviewed. Each student has his/her own achievement targets. There is a clear and effectively implemented policy for the setting and marking of homework and the scheduling of coursework and assignments. Course reviews are detailed and take into account students' views. Students are issued with comprehensive course handbooks.

12 Most of the teaching was good or outstanding. The range of teaching and learning methods used has increased since the previous inspection in 1995. In mathematics, students now experience the use of videos, mathematical software, graphical calculators, practical apparatus in mechanics, and group work. There was a high level of discussion in mathematics lessons which helped students to develop their understanding. In some lessons, students were confident enough to develop their own ideas for the class on the blackboard or overhead projector. For example, in one lesson investigating the sliding and toppling of wooden blocks on a range of surfaces, there was a discussion of the mathematics governing the stability of a double-decker bus. Students on the GCE A level IT course use software development techniques used in the IT industry. An increasing range of IT teaching materials is delivered through the college's IT network. The self-assessment report identified these improvements in teaching. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that there are still opportunities for the best practice to be more effectively spread, developed further and made more explicit in schemes of work.

13 All the full-time and part-time courses have excellent retention and achievement rates. More than 90% of GCSE mathematics students complete the course and more than three-quarters pass at grade C or above. Most students on the three main GCE A level courses complete their studies and pass their

Curriculum Areas

examinations. The proportion obtaining grades A to C is significantly above the average for sixth form colleges. The college's self-assessment recognises these strengths in students' achievements. Coursework is of a high standard. Students studying GCE A level IT develop software for companies and small businesses outside the college as part of their course projects. The resulting reports reflect good professional practice in implementing and documenting software projects. There are good opportunities for students to enhance their learning. For example, mathematics students enter competitions and many students visit relevant university departments.

14 The provision is well resourced. In the mathematics department students are issued with course texts and many use graphical calculators. There is a suite of modern

classrooms with attractive displays of mathematical material. A group of six computers outside the classrooms provides good access to IT for individual students. When working in the classrooms, mathematics teachers have to rely on one portable laptop computer linked to a projector. There is a well-equipped mathematics resource room where students can obtain extra help. However, the times when mathematics staff are available to provide help is limited by their teaching commitments. In the computing and IT department there are two well-equipped computer rooms for practical work and a classroom for theory. There is a good range of computer magazines and journals. Both departments have a good range of learning materials but library stock for the subjects is low.

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

| Type of qualification | Level | Numbers and outcome | Completion year | | |
|--|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------|------|
| | | | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
| Computer literacy and information technology | 1 | Number of starters | - | - | 682 |
| | | Retention (%) | - | - | 94 |
| | | Achievement (%) | - | - | 75 |
| GCSE mathematics | 2 | Number of starters | 33 | 29 | 29 |
| | | Retention (%) | 97 | 97 | 93 |
| | | Achievement (%)* | 97 | 93 | 74 |
| GCE A level computing | 3 | Number of starters | 16 | 14 | 22 |
| | | Retention (%) | 100 | 79 | 80 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| GCE A level IT | 3 | Number of starters | 40 | 70 | 77 |
| | | Retention (%) | 100 | 80 | 84 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 100 | 100 | 98 |
| GCE A level mathematics | 3 | Number of starters | 160 | 193 | 169 |
| | | Retention (%) | 88 | 91 | 92 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 94 | 97 | 95 |

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

*grades C or above

-course not offered

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 1

15 Inspectors observed 10 lessons covering GCE A level business, GNVQ advanced business and integrated business technology. They agreed with the majority of the judgements in the self-assessment report but considered that one strength was overstated. At the time of the inspection, 89% of students in this area were following GCE A level business courses.

Key strengths

- high-quality teaching
- achievement rates significantly above national averages
- high levels of retention
- good-quality students' written and practical work
- effective curriculum management
- stringent internal verification procedures
- stimulating learning environments

Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses

16 The management of the department is effective. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that course teams meet regularly. All meetings have agendas. Minutes of meetings identify actions to be taken within agreed timescales. Curriculum review and evaluation forms a regular agenda item. Teams carry out a detailed analysis of performance indicators and of surveys of students' satisfaction. They use the results of their analyses to inform their judgements as to where action is required to make improvements to courses. Target-setting as part of monitoring students' performance is well developed. All students have individual achievement targets

set. Teachers carefully monitor the performance of students against these targets. GCSE points scores on entry are used to predict GCE A level performance. The results of actual performance against these predictions are not used as evidence in the self-assessment report.

17 Inspectors agreed with the college that teaching is of high quality. Of the 10 lessons observed by inspectors, eight were judged to be good or outstanding. Schemes of work are thorough and produced to a common standard. Most lessons begin with a recap of the learning from the previous lesson and an outline of the aims and objectives for the current lesson. In a well-structured lesson on marketing concepts, a short video clip was used to introduce the topic. Small group work, discussion, and a question and answer session followed the introduction. Students were encouraged during these activities to draw on their own experiences and relate them to the relevant theory. In a GNVQ lesson students worked in small teams on an integrated project involving the administration and marketing of the college production of *West Side Story*. Students were required to work closely with performing arts and music students as part of this project.

18 Students' written work is of a high standard. GNVQ portfolios are well presented and the use of IT applications is a strong feature. GNVQ assignments make good use of real industrial and commercial situations for their scenarios. Each year GNVQ students undertake a real market research project for a company and present the results to the company. GCE A level students each choose a company to act as a focus for the application of the theories and concepts they study in college.

19 Achievement rates are significantly and consistently above national averages. On the GCE A level business course, pass rates are consistently very high with 98%, 97% and 99% of students achieving passes in 1997, 1998 and 1999, respectively. At the same time, the

Curriculum Areas

proportion of high grades achieved was well above the national average for sixth form colleges. Some GNVQ students are supported to complete any remaining external tests after the end of their two-year course. Final achievement on the GNVQ advanced course has been 20% above the national average since the college's first group of GNVQ students achieved their awards in 1997. Retention rates on the GCE A level business course have been good over the last three years. The retention on GNVQ business has shown a decline from 100% in 1998 to 79% in 1999. The 79% retention rate is still above the national average. Teachers carefully follow up the reasons why students leave courses. The guidance given to students has been identified as a cause of the decline in GNVQ retention and action has been taken to address this. The decline in GNVQ retention rates is not included in the self-assessment report. Students' attendance in lessons was high with an average of 88% compared with national figures of 84%.

20 As stated in the self-assessment report, lessons are taught in a dedicated suite of well-furnished and well-equipped rooms. Materials produced by the students are used to good effect in wall displays to provide lively and stimulating learning environments. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that teachers are well qualified and experienced and attend regular subject updating training events. However, inspectors judged that the commercial experience of most teaching staff is dated.

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

| Type of qualification | Level | Numbers and outcome | Completion year | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------|------|
| | | | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
| Integrated business technology | 2 | Number of starters | 57 | * | 160 |
| | | Retention (%) | 91 | * | 98 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 72 | * | 87 |
| GVNQ advanced business | 3 | Number of starters | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| | | Retention (%) | 93 | 100 | 79 |
| | | Achievement (%) | ** | ** | 91 |
| GCE A level business | 3 | Number of starters | 114 | 133 | 131 |
| | | Retention (%) | 89 | 93 | 86 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 98 | 97 | 99 |

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

* course not offered

** data incomplete

Curriculum Areas

Art, Performing Arts, Design Technology and Textiles

Grade 1

21 Ten lessons were observed covering the range of GCE A level courses in art, performance and design technology. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report. Most weaknesses identified in the report had been addressed by the time of the inspection.

Key strengths

- good and outstanding teaching
- high standard of students' work
- a rich, stimulating environment
- extensive student enrichment activities
- excellent achievements in GCE A level art, performing arts and dance
- excellent progression to higher education

Weaknesses

- poor access to IT in art and design
- insufficient key skills development

22 Most teaching is of a high standard. Lessons are well prepared. Of the 10 lessons observed, inspectors judged eight to be good or outstanding. Teachers set students high standards. Exciting learning activities and approaches keep students challenged and interested. This is highlighted in the self-assessment report as a strength and inspectors agreed. In a choreography workshop in dance, the students discussed a video about movement and action. In the following practical dance activity students successfully developed a movement sequence using a chair to create six images based on restriction, barrier and support. In art lessons, students are encouraged to develop unique styles and experiment with new techniques and materials. One student

used gravy browning and inks to highlight the colour and texture of a painting. Individual and group activities are used effectively to develop team skills and work on specific themes.

First-year students in an art class efficiently shared resources and ideas in a group exercise to create textile samples. In a performing arts music lesson, students devised, rehearsed and performed melody-based pieces. The tutor effectively combined demonstration, theory and group tasks. Students participate well in discussion. There is insufficient formal development of key skills, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report. Some students do not appreciate the value of these skills in the context of learning and career prospects. The integration and assessment of key skills is at an early stage of development in creative arts.

23 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that students' achievements in art and performing arts are outstanding. The quality of drawing and painting and the range of work in art and design is exceptional. Students' drawings and paintings are vigorous and often on a large scale. Compositions are strong. Effective use is made of mixed media and texture. There is good observation study and skilful use of scale in small and large sculptures. Students develop supporting sketch books which are full of vitality and experiment. There are attractive displays in design technology and textiles. A good standard is achieved in performance and drama. The development of processes is demonstrated in theatre work and students perform at the highest level to a wide range of audiences at national events. They are members of a variety of youth performance groups, have performed in the Chester Mystery plays and have worked with the police in role-play interviews.

24 Students' pass and retention rates in GCE A level art and design and performing arts are consistently above the national average for sixth form colleges. In art and design, design and technology and dramatic arts, students'

Curriculum Areas

achievement of high grades at GCE A level are exceptional. In art and design the proportion achieving higher grades was 33% above the national average in 1999. The proportion of students achieving higher grades in performing arts and dance exceeded the national average by 18% and 16%, respectively. In design and technology and theatre and dramatic arts there has been a decline in retention and achievement in 1999 but these are still above national averages. The college recognises the decline and is taking appropriate action. Inspectors agreed that there are good opportunities for students to progress to art-related higher education courses. In 1998, over 40% of students studying GCE A level art and performing arts went on to study related subjects in higher education.

25 Accommodation for art and design courses provides a rich and stimulating learning environment. Studios are light and spacious and visual display and other resource materials provide a fertile stimulus for students' creativity. There are good specialist facilities in performance and music, design technology and textiles. Most teachers practise their subject and make effective use of their specialist expertise. In art, access to appropriate IT and applications in graphic and visual software is poor. Art staff lack confidence and the expertise necessary to develop technology as a tool to enrich students' learning.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in art, performing arts, design technology and textiles, 1997 to 1999

| Type of qualification | Level | Numbers and outcome | Completion year | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------|------|
| | | | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
| GCE A level art and design | 3 | Number of starters | 56 | 78 | 76 |
| | | Retention (%) | 84 | 92 | 89 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 100 | 99 | 100 |
| GCE A level performing arts | 3 | Number of starters | 24 | 44 | 52 |
| | | Retention (%) | 79 | 89 | 88 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 95 | 100 | 100 |
| GCE A level theatre dramatic arts | 3 | Number of starters | 23 | 34 | 33 |
| | | Retention (%) | 87 | 91 | 88 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 100 | 87 | 86 |
| GCE A level design technology | 3 | Number of starters | 20 | 32 | 25 |
| | | Retention (%) | 75 | 91 | 83 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 87 | 97 | 85 |
| GCE A level dance | 3 | Number of starters | – | 11 | 14 |
| | | Retention (%) | – | 100 | 100 |
| | | Achievement (%) | – | 55 | 93 |

Source: ISR (1997 and 1998), college (1999)
 – course not offered

Curriculum Areas

Geography, History, Politics and Religious Studies

Grade 1

26 Ten lessons were observed in GCE A level history, geography, religious studies and politics. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report, but identified a few other strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- highly-proficient curriculum management
- well-structured lessons effectively taught
- good level of student motivation
- comprehensive monitoring of students' progress
- high pass rates and achievement of higher grades
- retention rates well above national figures
- good rate of progression to subject-related higher education courses
- good-quality resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient emphasis on key skills

27 The curriculum is well managed. The self-assessment report recognised this strength and inspectors agreed. Course management files contain comprehensive work schemes that are carefully related to examination syllabuses. Team reviews are rigorous and informed by the views of students. Performance indicators are used to measure and monitor performance. Part-time staff are included in decision-making and the preparation of annual self-assessment reports. Students' progress is carefully monitored through the assessment of regularly-set assignments and the detailed completion of progress sheets. These records are used to set targets with individual students

and to keep parents informed about the progress students are making. Good-quality student handbooks include course information and sound advice on examination skills. The geography department has recently introduced an innovative procedure as part of induction which identifies individual students' preferred learning styles. There is little dissemination of good practice in teaching, but peer observations have recently been introduced to address this.

28 In nine of the 10 lessons observed teaching was good or outstanding. Inspectors agreed with the college that lessons are well structured and have clear aims and objectives that are shared with students. Students enjoy a range of learning activities supported by a rich variety of resources. These include copies of primary source material, such as, extracts from the Northwich Chronicle of May 1854, local propaganda leaflets from the anti poll tax campaign, film footage from the time of the Kronstadt rebellion and video reference to the views of historians. In religious studies an invigorating lesson effectively used an extract from a film on the resurrection and a reading from *The Ballad of the Bread Man*. Lessons on urban regeneration in geography made good use of photographs, maps and charts and information from the tourist board to support fieldwork. Video material was used to extend students' understanding of the problems and management of flooding in Bangladesh. In some lessons, some of the learning activities are not sufficiently demanding for all students. Opportunities are missed across subject areas to ensure the formal development of students' key skills by including their development in work schemes and lesson plans. This weakness is not recognised in the self-assessment report. Curriculum enrichment activities contribute to a high level of student motivation. For example, history students visit Hampton Court, politics students visit parliament and attend conferences organised by the Politics Association, religious studies students visit the Regent's Park mosque

Curriculum Areas

and attend workshops at Chester College, and geography students study tourism in Chester and North Wales.

29 Inspectors agreed with the college that students' achievements are very good. Pass rates in GCE A level geography and politics are consistently above the national average for sixth form colleges. Students achieving higher grades in these subjects are at or above national averages. The proportion of pass rates in GCE A level religious studies improved from 55% in 1998 to 92% in 1999. Most subjects exceeded the college's own achievement targets. Student retention on all courses exceeds the national average. Students' punctuality and attendance in lessons is very good, the average attendance of students in lessons observed was 91%. Students demonstrate good levels of knowledge and understanding. Students' written assignments are well presented. Teachers' marking of written assignments does not always include sufficient constructive comments to help students to improve their work.

30 There are good-quality resources for teaching and learning. All staff are well qualified and experienced. Accommodation in specialist suites is good. Private study areas are available for students. All classrooms have appropriate audiovisual equipment and storage facilities. Students are encouraged to use the computers in the IT suite, library and resources centre. Packs of reprographic material are of a good standard. Geography has a satellite system, an automatic weather station and links with the Meteorological Office. There is a good stock of modern books, CD-ROMs, periodicals and articles in the library.

A summary of retention and achievement rates in geography, history, politics and religious studies, 1997 to 1999

| Type of qualification | Level | Numbers and outcome | Completion year | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------|------|
| | | | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
| GCE A level geography | 3 | Number of starters | 86 | 112 | 70 |
| | | Retention (%) | 92 | 90 | 93 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 97 | 94 | 95 |
| GCE A level history | 3 | Number of starters | 81 | 60 | 83 |
| | | Retention (%) | 100 | 98 | 93 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 81 | 92 | 88 |
| GCE A level politics | 3 | Number of starters | 34 | 29 | 28 |
| | | Retention (%) | 76 | 79 | 82 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 92 | 100 | 96 |
| GCE A level religious studies | 3 | Number of starters | 9 | 12 | 14 |
| | | Retention (%) | 89 | 92 | 93 |
| | | Achievement (%) | 75 | 55 | 92 |

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

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 1

31 The self-assessment report for support for students was thorough. Inspectors largely agreed with the judgements.

Key strengths

- effective admission and induction processes
- careful monitoring of students' progress
- a high level of support for individual students
- wide-ranging enrichment opportunities
- excellent careers and higher education guidance

Weaknesses

- there are no significant weaknesses

32 Prospective students are well informed about the college and its courses. Year 11 pupils get information from college staff and students at open evenings. Well-produced publicity materials give a clear picture of college life. Links with partner schools are well established. Procedures for interviewing prospective students are thorough. All applicants are interviewed twice and records are kept. Great care is taken over processes for induction. An introductory day informs students about all aspects of college life. New students particularly value the involvement of existing students on this day.

33 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that students' academic progress is carefully monitored. Individual attainment targets are set and progress against these targets is regularly discussed. Students indicate that this helps to motivate them. There are formal reviews of students' progress with subject teachers and personal tutors at appropriate intervals throughout the course. Attendance at daily

registration and in lessons is carefully scrutinised. Teachers are assiduous in following up absence. This year, the college has introduced two part-time GCE AS courses for adult students and recognises the need to modify existing procedures to include this provision. Induction and training for staff on evening courses currently make little reference to guidance.

34 A high priority is given to supporting individuals. Personal support is a key part of the role of the personal tutor who meets students daily. There is good communication between subject teachers and tutors about students who are experiencing difficulties. The college employs a full-time counsellor. Students are well aware of the counselling service. There is close liaison between the counsellor and senior tutors. Guidance is provided for staff working with students who are experiencing emotional difficulties. The counsellor is also responsible for supervising the student mentors, students in their second year at the college who provide peer support for new students. The college has recently appointed a learning support co-ordinator to work with the small number of students identified as having learning disabilities and/or difficulties and others who need extra support with literacy and time management. Current systems for identifying learning support needs and providing learning support are being improved. Good progress has been made, but at the time of the inspection it was too soon to judge the impact on students' achievements.

35 Inspectors agreed with the college that careers and higher education guidance is a particular strength. The cycle of support is carefully planned and fully integrated with the tutorial calendar. Tutors are well briefed and monitored. Parents are offered guidance on the process through well-produced documents and a parents' higher education information evening. There is an impressive selection of guides for students to steer them through each stage of the process. The careers library has excellent

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resources and offers a welcoming environment for students seeking advice from the guidance team. Guidance staff have a high profile with students. Personal tutors, senior tutors and the careers team provide effective individual support in the application process for higher education. A series of events is organised throughout the year to help students make informed decisions. The college hosts the Cheshire higher education fair and runs its own higher education briefing day. Of students applying for higher education, 75% gain admission to their first choice of institution and course. There are strong links with the Cheshire Guidance Partnership which supplements the work of the college, in particular in supporting students seeking employment. Links with higher education institutions are particularly extensive and are particularly well used after the publication of examination results. The college has achieved the Investors in Careers Award.

36 Students are involved in a wide range of enrichment activities. Most students follow a general studies course. As well as addressing learning and study skills, this course leads to a GCSE and then to an GCE A level qualification. Over 40% of students participate in the extensive range of leisure studies courses offered. Some of the more popular activities include rowing and fitness training. Many students opt to follow a short course in computing and IT to develop their skills. The self-assessment report acknowledges that students play an important role in the running of the college. There is a student council which has representation from all tutor groups and is active in organising popular social events. Council members are represented on college committees. A team of students is appointed by a vice-principal and governors to serve on the student executive committee which plays a key role in organising college events. The 11 college sports teams are well supported. There is lively involvement in music and drama with a major dramatic production each year and good levels of participation in the various musical groups.

General Resources

Grade 1

37 Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified a few additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- well-planned development of accommodation
- much excellent accommodation and sports facilities
- well-maintained, secure premises
- extensive improvements to IT resources
- well-planned and furnished teaching and adjacent communal areas

Weaknesses

- overcrowding in the cafeteria and a few classrooms
- poor access for students with restricted mobility to a quarter of the accommodation

38 The college is housed in 10 buildings on a single campus. The main building dates from 1907. Inspectors agreed that, since the last inspection, the college has significantly improved the quality of its accommodation. Developments set out in the accommodation strategy for 1997 to 2000 have largely been completed. These include landscaping, a perimeter fence, internal roads, car parks, an all-weather floodlit pitch, six tennis courts and new buildings for art and sociology. Adult reception and site management offices have been relocated. A successful lottery bid enabled the refurbishment of the large swimming pool. Premises are well maintained. The site manager monitors implementation of the maintenance plan. The college allocates 3.5% of its annual budget to fund maintenance costs. A safe, secure environment is provided with a buildings alarm system, closed-circuit television and radio communication system between caretakers, premises manager and reception.

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39 Inspectors agreed that teaching areas and staff rooms are efficiently organised in subject area groups. Most subject accommodation includes a small private study area and a small bank of computers adjacent to classrooms. Good displays of students' work celebrate their achievements and create attractive learning environments. Displays in the art building are particularly impressive. Classrooms are well furnished and have overhead projectors and screens. The sports hall is well equipped to accommodate a wide range of sporting activities. Staff rooms have improved storage and working space. The staff lounge and work areas are well decorated and have an adjoining kitchen and a shower room.

40 The college has made a substantial investment in improving IT resources. A modern computer network serves all the college's buildings. The ratio of computers to students has improved to 1:9 from 1:11 in 1998. All 116 computers are modern and 74 of these are available for 'drop-in' use. Students can use computers in the library, study room and careers library to gain access to the Internet. There are networked computers in all staff rooms and the staff lounge. All staff have access to electronic mail. The college has recently employed an additional IT technician. Evening provision is inadequately served by technician support.

41 The library provides a small, pleasant study environment for students. It is supplemented by a large study room seating 80 students and study areas in all college buildings. There are 270 study spaces located around the college. Students have clear information about the library service and are provided with a detailed induction early in their course. The library houses a good range of periodicals, videos, CD-ROMs and books. The bookstock is small and some books and periodicals are dated. A recent audit identified that the library budget is smaller than the national average for sixth form colleges. This was noted in the

self-assessment report. However, a generous budget is allocated to departments and many have good subject libraries. Others spend their budget through the library. There is a central cataloguing service and good links between the library staff and teachers in curriculum areas ensure effective use of resources. The well-qualified librarian monitors the use of the library through a computerised system. She regularly reports to curriculum managers on the use students make of library services.

42 Much accommodation is excellent. The new art building has spacious studios and good specialist and display areas. The new sociology building blends in with existing buildings. The refurbished reprographics area and dedicated computer rooms have air conditioning and are well equipped. Modern sports facilities include a large swimming pool, an all-weather pitch, a sports hall and a sports dome. The campus is adjacent to the River Weaver. The college boathouse contains modern rowing equipment which students use in national competitions. The cafeteria is modern and well laid out but becomes overcrowded at lunchtimes. To address this weakness the college uses the large hall as a snack bar at lunchtimes and break times. This alleviates overcrowding but the combined areas do not meet students' needs for refectory facilities. Some mathematics rooms are too small for the size of classes. Single-story buildings have ramps and wide doors to main entrances. About 25% of the teaching accommodation is inaccessible to students with restricted mobility, a weakness the college recognises. The college tries to address the problem of restricted access to older buildings by timetabling courses attended by students who use wheelchairs in ground floor rooms. The college disability statement sets out the college's position on facilities for students with disabilities and part of this is reproduced in the prospectus. Signposting to parts of the campus is unclear.

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Quality Assurance

Grade 2

43 Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report and identified a few additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- extensive commitment to quality assurance
- effective curriculum review
- good use of feedback from students, parents and service users
- useful evaluations of the quality of service functions
- rigorous concentration on measuring and improving retention and achievement
- good self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- insufficient rigour in some quality assurance processes
- underdeveloped quality assurance for the adult education programme
- students unaware of charter entitlements

44 There is a strong commitment to quality assurance by governors and staff. Senior managers are closely involved in processes for reviewing quality. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that quality assurance procedures are well understood and supported by all staff. A cross-college committee of senior and middle managers initiates audits and receives reports. In addition to curriculum reviews there are useful evaluations of service functions such as marketing, reception and building maintenance. All reviews lead to the production of clear action plans which result in improvements. The college's self-assessment report overestimates the rigour of some review processes. Some judgements are based on staff

discussion and user feedback rather than on critical external observation and analysis of outcomes. An example of this is tutorial review. Systems for assuring the quality of the adult education programme are underdeveloped.

45 The self-assessment process is self-critical and effective in curriculum areas. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report grades for all the curriculum areas inspected. The process is comprehensive and well organised. Curriculum and service teams carry out self-assessment based upon a comprehensive list of quality statements. Statements include cross-college issues as well as the work of the department. To identify strengths and weaknesses teams review the outcomes of lesson observations, questionnaires to students and comparisons between college student retention and achievement rates and national benchmarking data produced by the FEFC. Team self-assessments lead to a departmental summary report and a useful action plan to address weaknesses. The principal and vice-principal meet each team to review the report and agree an action plan. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the team review process is effective. The reports from all teams are collated to produce the college's self-assessment report. The report is verified by the quality assurance committee, and approved by governors. The college's self-assessment report recognises that there is insufficient checking of the evidence used in the identification of strengths and weaknesses.

46 Self-assessment is informed by lesson observations. Teachers are observed once every two years by subject specialist external observers. Teachers are judged against a comprehensive list of quality standards and a report is provided for teachers and their managers. At the time of the inspection, each teacher had been observed once by an external observer. In the intervening year teachers assess their own strengths and weaknesses against the criteria used by external observers.

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Heads of departments observe all new teachers. Lesson observations by peers are being introduced but at the time of inspection this was not taking place in all departments. Lessons are not individually graded but a summary department grade is produced. The outcomes of lesson observations are effectively used to identify staff training needs and improve the quality of teaching. For example, one department introduced additional learning materials for more able students following feedback from observations of teaching.

47 Questionnaires are used effectively to obtain the views of students, parents and service users. Students' views of courses and college services are regularly surveyed. Evaluation of services such as reception and building maintenance include an analysis of user opinion. Results are analysed and lead to improvements. The college charter includes commitments to students, parents and the wider community. The statements describe broad intentions rather than quantitative promises. Students understand their responsibilities but not their rights as identified in the charter. The college does not recognise this weakness in the self-assessment report.

48 There is a strong concentration on measuring and improving student retention and achievement. A detailed analysis of retention and examination results for each subject is used effectively by managers and teachers to monitor and improve course performance. Targets for retention and achievement for each department have been set after consultation with the principal. Value-added information is used well to set targets for individual students but less effectively in monitoring and evaluating course performance. The college is working with similar colleges to develop appropriate benchmarks for comparing performance.

49 Staff development needs are identified through quality reviews, self-assessment and team meetings. There is no formal assessment of individual staff performance but staff are entitled to discuss their job role and training

needs. They have access to appropriate training, which often concentrates on teaching and learning. Current priorities include advanced level curriculum changes and inclusive learning. Five days each year are allocated to staff and curriculum development events. In 1999, 85% of teachers undertook training in accessing the Internet. New staff are well inducted and supported. Teachers often disseminate training outcomes to colleagues. The college has recently been reaccruited as an Investor in People. The college's self-assessment report acknowledges that there is little formal evaluation by managers of the effectiveness of the college's substantial investment in staff development.

Governance

Grade 2

50 The inspection team agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report but considered that some strengths had been overstated and identified a few additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- governors' high level of commitment
- clear overview of the college mission and strategic planning
- frequent monitoring of financial performance
- close scrutiny of student recruitment, achievement and destinations

Weaknesses

- ineffective monitoring of the equal opportunities and harassment policies
- deficiencies in some procedures for corporation business

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51 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is adequate. The corporation substantially conducts its business in accordance with the instrument and articles of government. It also substantially fulfils its responsibilities under the financial memorandum.

52 Inspectors and auditors agreed that governors are highly committed to the success of the college. Many are long serving. Most attend college functions and college committee meetings. They find these useful in furthering their understanding of college business. Average attendance at governors meetings in 1998-99 was good. Governors are fully involved in determining the college's mission and strategic direction. They review the 1997 to 2000 strategic plan regularly and also review and amend the mission statement. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Governors work well with senior managers. Minutes of senior management control meetings are presented to governors and governors have observed senior management team meetings. The principal provides a written report for every board meeting. Senior postholders attend meetings to speak on aspects of the report. There are appropriate arrangements for appraising senior postholders and considering their pay awards.

53 Governors effectively monitor the college's financial performance. The college's budget for 1999-2000 was debated and approved by governors in good time. All governors receive monthly management accounts and copies of the senior management team minutes which they discuss. Governors consider management accounts at policy and resource committee and corporation meetings. They approve clear financial targets, including safe limits within which to monitor solvency. The college recognises these strengths.

54 Governors closely scrutinise students' recruitment, achievements and destinations. They receive detailed subject reports on pass rates together with national benchmarking data produced by the FEFC so that they are able to compare college performance with that of other sixth form colleges. The policy and resources committee receives and discusses information on student retention and college targets by course. However, reports to the whole board on student retention lack detail and comparisons with national averages are not made. The policy and resources committee, not the board, formally approved the college targets for student retention and achievements before sending them to the FEFC. The college did not identify these weaknesses. Governors monitor the college's statutory policies but do not formally monitor implementation of the equal opportunities and harassment policies. This weakness is recognised by the college.

55 A search committee has been established. A written appointment procedure is in place, though it is not publicly available and it does not include a policy for the scrutiny of reappointments. A formal skills audit has recently been undertaken in preparation for filling future vacancies.

56 The corporation has an established and appropriate committee structure and approved procedures for the conduct of business. These include a code of conduct and a 'whistleblowing' procedure. All governors and senior managers complete a comprehensive register of interests which is publicly available. Minutes of corporation and committee meetings are posted on a noticeboard. Minutes of committees are presented to the corporation together with an oral report. The policy and resources committee relies too much on oral reports and allows key documents to be tabled rather than distributing them before meetings to give members time to read them. In contrast to its terms of reference this committee did not consider the latest financial statements or budgets and the

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three-year financial forecast. Governors have approved internal audit plans which are based on a low level of resources and as a result this has reduced the assurance available from internal audit work. The strengths were included in the self-assessment report, but the weaknesses were not.

57 The clerk to the corporation is also secretary to the senior management team. Her role as clerk is set out in a separate job description and contract and she is paid separately for this work. She has received training and attends clerks' network meetings. The clerk services all of the corporation's committees. The time to be spent in the role of clerk has not been defined and the clerk has not yet been appraised though arrangements for this are in place for the future.

58 The college recognises that arrangements for governors' training are in need of development. Governors regularly receive information on external training courses. Until recently the college provided little structured training for governors. A well-attended half-day training event on the role of governors was held in July 1999. It is intended that two similar events will be held each year. Governors have few links with curriculum areas.

59 As the self-assessment report states, governors carry out an annual self-assessment process. The report from governors' annual self-assessment is validated before being approved by the board. The resulting action plan becomes the annual operating statement. Progress made towards implementing this is assessed in the next self-assessment cycle. Though governors use quality statements to assess their performance, these do not cover all aspects of their work. They do not set targets against which they can monitor their performance.

Management

Grade 2

60 The self-assessment report was thorough. Inspectors agreed with the majority of strengths identified but considered that some were overstated. Two weaknesses were not identified but did feature in the college's operating statement.

Key strengths

- clear management structure
- effective senior management team
- good financial management
- effective curriculum management
- clear planning procedures well linked to monitoring
- good development of college facilities

Weaknesses

- limited progress in achieving some of the objectives in the strategic plan
- adult education not well integrated with college structures

61 The mission of the college is well understood. It was revised recently to take account of the establishment of adult classes, but the main purpose of the college remains the provision of high-quality advanced courses to school-leavers. The college is well managed and has clear management structures. The college operating plan allocates responsibilities to a member of the senior management team for monitoring the achievement of specific objectives. Progress made towards these objectives is monitored at monthly control meetings. Senior staff meet regularly with the principal to appraise progress. Whole-college conferences are held where relevant staff and managers address key issues and new initiatives. Termly staff forums allow issues to be debated. A formal, regular meeting structure is in place for all levels of staff. Actions arising from meetings are carefully monitored.

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62 The planning process is well developed. Staff appreciate the open style of management. Formal team reviews look at the progress made against previous action plans and monitor strengths and weaknesses against performance indicators. Teams meet with senior managers to set objectives that are linked to the strategic plan for the next year. Work towards achieving objectives is monitored throughout the year. Inspectors agreed with the college's self-assessment that staff take the review and planning process seriously. The college has not made sufficient progress against some of the objectives in the 1997 to 2000 strategic plan. For example, the plan outlined the objective to improve access to advanced qualifications for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The self-assessment report indicated that this remains a weakness. Action has been taken to improve the situation with the appointment of a learning support co-ordinator. It is too early to judge if this action is effective. Another example is the slow progress made on formalising the development of students' key skills.

63 Curriculum management is generally strong. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities which are well understood. Communication is effective throughout the college. Heads of departments are responsible for maintaining subject expertise and ensuring that courses are taught effectively. Close attention is paid to students' progress and achievements. There are few links between departments that would facilitate the sharing of good practice. The developing adult education programme is not well integrated with college structures. Heads of departments have little to do with the adult education programme which is managed by the services section of the senior management team. Although heads of departments have been involved in selecting adult education teachers to teach the courses, new teachers are not integrated with curriculum teams. The college recognises the need to address this.

64 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The college employs a qualified and experienced accountant and appropriately-trained support staff. Financial targets have been set and are monitored. Management accounts and reports to budget holders are timely, frequent and regular. The senior management team documents their monthly review of the management accounts. Financial regulations have been recently updated. The college enjoys good financial health. The college's internal and external auditors have not raised any issues of concern.

65 The management information system provides useful and timely information, which informs operational and strategic decisions. There are no external checks to validate the accuracy of the information. The self-assessment report recognised that data on attendance in lessons was inadequate and has taken action to improve the system. Senior tutors find the new system helpful in monitoring absences.

66 Purposeful links with the Borough of Vale Royal and other colleges in the Cheshire College consortium have led to successful joint applications for project funding and the development of the college site. Although the college has effective links with partner high schools, it remains dependent on recruiting students from outside its immediate area. A marketing audit carried out in the summer 1999 listed a number of issues that affect prospective students' perceptions of the college. The college recognises the need to develop 'taster' courses. Inspectors did not fully agree with the self-assessment report that needs analysis is a strength.

67 The self-assessment report recognises the need to give equal opportunities a higher profile. The college has an equal opportunities policy, backed up by a policy on harassment. There is an implementation strategy for the policies and

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the committee has discussed an audit of policies. Meetings of the equal opportunities committee were infrequent in 1997-98, though in 1998-99 they took place twice a term. Some training for equal opportunities has been undertaken, but inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that annual action is required to ensure that the policy is being effectively implemented.

Conclusions

68 Inspectors found the college's self-assessment report a useful basis for planning the inspection. The report was detailed and thorough in its identification of strengths and weaknesses. It concentrates on students' experiences in the college. All areas have produced an action plan. Responsibilities for action are clearly allocated and timescales are agreed for the completion of action. Action plans are carefully monitored and the college has already begun to take action on some of the issues identified. Inspectors generally agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report, although some weaknesses identified by inspectors had not been recognised. The inspection team agreed with all of the curriculum grades awarded by the college and two of the grades awarded for aspects of cross-college provision.

69 Strengths and weaknesses identified during the inspection are listed under each section of this report. The main strengths and weaknesses are identified in the summary.

College Statistics

Student numbers by age (July 1999)

| Age | % |
|-------------|-----|
| Under 16 | 1 |
| 16-18 years | 75 |
| 19-24 years | 2 |
| 25+ years | 21 |
| Not known | 1 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (July 1999)

| Level of study | % |
|------------------------|-----|
| Level 1 (foundation) | 23 |
| Level 2 (intermediate) | 0 |
| Level 3 (advanced) | 75 |
| Level 4/5 (higher) | 0 |
| Non-schedule 2 | 2 |
| Total | 100 |

Source: college data

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

| | Full time | Part time | Total provision % |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Science | 404 | 0 | 29 |
| Business | 107 | 280 | 28 |
| Hotel and catering | 0 | 24 | 2 |
| Art and design | 144 | 0 | 10 |
| Humanities | 423 | 20 | 31 |
| Total | 1,078 | 324 | 100 |

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 2% of students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment Index of Local Conditions.

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (July 1999)

| | Perm- anent | Fixed term | Casual | Total |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--------|-------|
| Direct learning contact | 58 | 7 | 1 | 66 |
| Supporting direct learning contact | 5 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Other support | 21 | 6 | 2 | 29 |
| Total | 84 | 14 | 3 | 101 |

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

| | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Income | £3,186,000 | £3,167,000 | £3,359,000 |
| Average level of funding (ALF) | £16.62 | £16.25 | £16.23 |
| Payroll as a proportion of income | 72% | 75% | 77% |
| Achievement of funding target | 123% | 102% | 102% |
| Diversity of income | 4% | 5% | 7%* |
| Operating surplus | £23,000 | £42,026 | £53,374 |

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

ALF – (1997), Funding Allocations 1997-98 (1998), Funding Allocations, 1998-99 (1999)

Payroll – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1997-98 (1997 and 1998), college (1999)

Diversity of income – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

Operating surplus – Council Circular 98/43 (1997), college (1998 and 1999)

*provisional data

Students' achievements data

| Level | Retention and pass | Students aged 16 to 18 | | | Students aged 19 or over | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------|------|------|
| | | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 |
| 1 | Number of starters | 89 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | 92 | 100 | 92 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | 42 | 50 | 82 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Number of starters | 228 | 183 | 85 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | 85 | 89 | 92 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | 84 | 89 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Number of starters | 2,505 | 2,280 | 2,532 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | 90 | 85 | 89 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | 91 | 92 | 92 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 or 5 | Number of starters | n/a | n/a | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | n/a | n/a | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | n/a | n/a | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Short courses | Number of starters | 18 | 16 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | 100 | 75 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | 100 | 92 | 79 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unknown/unclassified | Number of starters | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Retention (%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Achievement (%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: ISR

n/a not applicable

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