South East Essex College of Arts and Technology

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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

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

Contents

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 1997-98, are shown in the following table.

| | Grade | | | | |
	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %
Curriculum areas	9	60	29	2	–
Cross-college provision	18	54	24	4	–

Source: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1997-98: Chief inspector's annual report
Sample size: 108 college inspections

Student Achievements

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

- as expected completions, which is the number of initial enrolments on qualifications where the student expected to complete the qualification in a given 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 the students have completed as expected (or are continuing with the prospect of late completion). 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 shown.

Summary

South East Essex College of Arts and Technology

Eastern Region

Inspected March 1999

South East Essex College of Arts and Technology is a large general further education college located on two main sites in Southend-on-Sea. The college has a well-established self-assessment process. The self-assessment report was comprehensive and evaluative. The college has taken action to address some of the weaknesses it identified. The statistical data on students' achievements were accurate. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report. Some strengths had been overstated and inspectors identified some additional weaknesses.

The college offers courses in nine of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Five of these programme areas were inspected. The college is well managed. There is rigorous analysis and monitoring of college performance. Management information is of high quality and is effectively used. The college is in a sound financial position. Governors have a wide range of skills and experience and make a strong contribution to the strategic direction of the college. Quality assurance procedures are well established. There are strong and productive external links with other educational institutions, Essex TEC and collaborative partners. Courses are well managed and most teaching is of a good standard. In media and performing arts it is outstanding. There are appropriate, well-organised work placements on most vocational courses. Pass rates are high on most courses. Support for students is outstanding and includes effective tutorial and learning support. Accommodation and most specialist facilities are excellent. The college has extensive IT facilities in well-equipped learning resource centres. The college should address: retention rates on a number of courses; some weaknesses in teaching and learning; the underdeveloped careers education and guidance provided for students; and the lack of rigour in some course reviews.

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

Curriculum area	Grade
Computing and information technology, incorporating collaborative provision	2
Business	2
Lesiure and tourism	2
Media and performing arts	1
Basic education	3

Cross-college provision	Grade
Support for students	1
General resources	1
Quality assurance	2
Governance	2
Management	1

The College and its Mission

1   South East Essex College of Arts and Technology is the largest provider of education and training in south Essex. The college has a wide catchment area comprising the local authority districts of Southend-on-Sea, Castle Point (including Canvey Island) and Rochford. It also attracts students from outer London and from mid and east Essex. The college is located on two major sites in the centre of Southend. A smaller building, also in the town centre, has recently been refurbished as a hairdressing and beauty salon.

2   Employment in south-east Essex is concentrated on the service sector, notably financial and business services, retailing, and tourism. In addition there is a small manufacturing base which includes electronics, light engineering, printing, clothing, and plastics. Southend has few medium to large employers but contains the highest density of small employers in the county. Unemployment in the district is declining, although the current rate of 6.6% is 3% higher than the Essex average and above the national average of 4.1%.

3   The college operates in a highly competitive market for post-16 students. Five other further education colleges are located within the south Essex travel-to-work area: Basildon College; Seevic College; Thurrock College; Palmer's College; and Chelmsford College. Twenty-one of the 23 secondary schools in south-east Essex are grant maintained; four are selective grammar schools; and nine are 11 to 18 schools. The participation rate of students in education after the age of 16 in Southend is 70%. This is slightly above the average staying-on rate for the county of Essex.

4   The college's approach to learning is based on large open-plan learning centres for all its curriculum areas. The college provides a wide range of full-time and part-time courses in all the Further Education Funding Council's (FEFC's) programme areas except agriculture.

Most of the courses are vocational and include general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs), national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and courses to provide access to further and higher education. General certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) courses in over 20 subjects are offered on a full-time basis. A wide range of higher education courses is offered in collaboration with the universities of Greenwich, North London and Leicester. The college has plans to extend its provision of higher education by entering into partnership with the University of Essex. The college has partnership agreements with five local training providers and with the two local adult community colleges. Under these arrangements, courses are offered in engineering, construction, information and business technology, and hairdressing. Together these courses account for approximately 18% of the college's enrolments.

5   At the time of the inspection, the college had 6,920 students of whom 4,250 were full time. Students aged 16 to 18 account for 49% of enrolments. Of the college's total enrolments, 59% are female; 6% of students identify themselves as having a disability and 3% are of minority ethnic origin. The college employs 353 full-time equivalent staff of which 120 are support staff. The curriculum is delivered through 11 teaching teams. In addition, learning support is provided by teams of academic advisers and learning centre support staff. There are 11 business support teams.

6   The college carried out a major review of its strategic direction in 1997 which resulted in a new mission statement. The college seeks to provide 'exciting and relevant learning experiences for students, empowering them through flexible learning and the use of new technology to become autonomous learners'. Twelve strategic priorities have been identified. These reflect the college's commitment to be the leader for the development of education and training in the area and to maintain a high quality of provision.

Context

The Inspection

7   The college was inspected over two separate weeks. During the week beginning 15 February 1999, collaborative provision in computing and information technology (IT) was inspected. The direct provision of the college was inspected in the week beginning 1 March 1999. In planning and carrying out the inspection the team used the college's self-assessment reports and information about the college held by other directorates of the FEFC. Inspectors used data on students' achievements drawn from the college's individualised student record (ISR) returns to the FEFC for 1996 and 1997. The college submitted its own data on students' achievements for 1998 which were checked by inspectors against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examination bodies.

8   The college was notified approximately two months before the inspection of the sample of its provision to be inspected. The inspection was carried out by 12 inspectors and an auditor working for a total of 57 days. They observed 61 lessons, including tutorials, and examined students' work and college documentation.

Meetings were held with governors, managers, college staff and students. Inspectors evaluated the links which the college has with external bodies such as the Essex Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), local employers and community groups.

9   This college was one of 30 in the current cycle of inspections which agreed to participate in the joint Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) and FEFC assessment of careers education and guidance. The joint assessment was guided by the inspection framework, with careers education assessors contributing to judgements made by inspectors. The emphasis in this report on careers education and guidance will help colleges and careers services to improve the quality of the careers education and guidance they offer and help the DfEE to disseminate good practice.

10   The following table shows the grades given to all lessons inspected and the national profile for all colleges inspected in 1997-98. Of the 61 lessons inspected, 61% were rated good or outstanding and 11% were less than satisfactory. This compares with 65% and 6%, respectively, for all lessons observed during 1997-98.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	1	5	5	0	0	11
GNVQ	6	10	7	3	0	26
NVQ	0	3	1	0	0	4
Other vocational	5	4	0	0	0	9
Other	2	1	4	4	0	11
Total (No)	14	23	17	7	0	61
Total (%)	23	38	28	11	0	100
National average, all inspected colleges 1997-98 (%)	19	46	29	6	0	100

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1997-98: Chief inspector's annual report

Context

11 The following table shows the attendance rates in the lessons observed and the national average for all colleges inspected in 1997-98.

The average level of attendance was 82%. This compares favourably with the average for general further education colleges of 74%.

Attendance rates in lessons observed

	Average number of students	**Average attendance (%)**
South East Essex College of Arts and Technology	13.5	82
National average, all inspected colleges 1997-98	10.4	77

Source for national average: Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1997-98: Chief inspector's annual report

Curriculum Areas

Computing and Information Technology, incorporating Collaborative Provision

Grade 2

12   Inspectors observed 18 lessons covering courses within the college and at two partner providers. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified some additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths
- wide range of courses and opportunities for progression
- effective course organisation
- relevant work experience on GNVQ programmes
- high standard of most assignment work
- good pass rates on many courses
- high quality of resources

Weaknesses
- poor retention on GCE A level course
- ineffective teaching in some theory lessons
- high staff turnover adversely affecting some students' learning

13   Inspectors agreed with the college that the range of courses and opportunities for progression are strengths. Provision includes a successful 'IT for all' introductory course, GCE A level in computer studies and IT, GNVQ foundation, intermediate and advanced in IT, City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) certificates and diplomas and a higher national certificate and diploma in computing. This provision is enhanced by NVQs, RSA Examinations Board (RSA) computer literacy and information technology, and C&G courses offered by college partners. Many of the courses offered by the college's partners attract the long-term unemployed, and adults seeking to change career or to update their IT skills. Students often progress from these courses to provision within the college.

14   Courses are effectively organised. All students receive a course plan that contains useful general information about the college and an assignment schedule. Induction into the GNVQ advanced IT course is particularly effective. The standard two-day college programme is extended to include field trips and visits to employers that set the context for the study of computing. Tutors keep comprehensive records of students' progress. Cross-marking and internal verification of assignments is thorough although the latter does not include a record of dates and signatures. Course files are well maintained and contain records of agendas and the decisions taken at the regular team meetings. There is no recorded follow-up or review of action points at subsequent meetings. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff over the last two years. Some have left at relatively short notice. The self-assessment report acknowledged that high staff turnover has adversely affected the motivation and progress of some students.

15   There is an appropriate balance between practical and theory lessons. Students generally work conscientiously and their progress is carefully monitored. Practical lessons are effectively managed. The work set is appropriate and links effectively with the research undertaken by students. There was ineffective teaching in some theory lessons. For example, on occasions while the teacher was working with one group of students, others had insufficient work to occupy their time fully. Work experience for GNVQ students is well planned. Students keep a log of their work placement, evaluate their experience and share this with the rest of the class. Few NVQ students are given the opportunity to undertake work experience. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

16   Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that the college is well equipped for the computing and IT courses offered. The latest specialist software is available on computers networked across the college. The college intranet, which holds course information, some learning materials and assignments, is used effectively by students. An appropriate range of information sources is available to support courses and includes periodicals, textbooks, library reference materials and access to the internet.

17   Students' practical computing skills are generally good. In a GNVQ IT foundation lesson, students were completing an assignment to design logos and produce different types of commercial documents. Students had a good understanding of applications packages and were able to produce high-quality products.

The standard of the best GNVQ assignments is high and they contain evidence of extensive research. A minority of assignments barely meets the minimum required standards. There are good pass rates on many courses. In 1998, the pass rate on the GNVQ intermediate improved to 82% and on the GNVQ foundation course was 100%. Pass rates at NVQ levels 1 and 2 have been consistently high over the last three years. Retention on GCE A level computer studies has been poor over the last two years and the pass rate for 1998 was significantly below the national average.

A summary of achievement and retention rates in computing and information technology, incorporating collaborative provision, 1996 to 1998

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1996	1997	1998
GNVQ foundation and intermediate and precursors	1/2	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	34 100 94	45 71 69	64 80 86
Other vocational provision (C&G and NVQs)	1/2	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	210 87 83	287 90 89	627 87 86
GCE A level computer studies	3	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	* * *	17 59 85	32 63 48
GNVQ advanced and precursors	3	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	110 66 96	89 73 97	67 81 74
Higher national certificate computing	4	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	41 46 100	39 82 94	41 68 96

Source: ISR (1996 and 1997), college (1998)
*course not running

Curriculum Areas

Business

Grade 2

18   The inspection covered full-time and part-time courses in business studies and public services. Ten lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report, but some strengths were overstated and some weaknesses were not identified.

Key strengths

- well-planned and managed courses
- good teaching in most lessons
- high pass rates on most courses
- high-quality specialist resources

Weaknesses

- declining retention rates
- some students organise their work ineffectively

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19   The college offers a broad range of business courses from foundation to advanced level, including GNVQ courses at intermediate and advanced level, first and national diplomas in public services, and GCE A level courses in accounting and business studies. Business administration and professional courses are also offered, including NVQs in administration up to level 3 and specialist accounting qualifications. Some courses have been unsuccessful in recruiting students and course managers have been slow to develop and utilise links with local employers to identify more precisely what is needed. Inspectors agreed with the college that the courses which run are effectively planned and managed.

20   There are good schemes of work which identify appropriate learning outcomes. In the best lessons, teachers use appropriate teaching methods and establish productive working relationships with their students. Effective use is made of the learning resource centres for group work and to enable students to develop the skills to work on their own. For example, in a public services lesson, the teacher gave students an introduction to their forthcoming work placement by asking them to prepare a letter of introduction and a curriculum vitae for a prospective employer. In the business resource centre, students had easy access to IT equipment, which enabled them to complete their tasks to a high standard. In some less successful lessons, teachers failed to ensure that all students were fully involved in learning activities. For example, in a GNVQ advanced business lesson, the teacher failed to make sufficient checks on students' understanding and progress or to ensure that all students contributed to the discussion. Teachers are not effectively utilising opportunities for sharing good practice. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report. Staff set clear assignment tasks which are appropriate and relevant to industry. The development of key skills is an integral part of GNVQ assignments, and students are encouraged to develop their computing skills further by studying for the RSA computer literacy and information technology qualification.

21   Teaching staff generally have appropriate qualifications. The self-assessment report acknowledged that there is a lack of adequate teaching expertise on public services courses and recognised the need for more professional updating across the programme area. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that the quality of learning resources and accommodation is high. The learning centres are comfortable and well furnished and provide attractive, welcoming learning environments and a good standard of IT equipment. Teachers have developed a wide range of handouts and case studies to support teaching and learning activities.

22   Most students are well motivated, and demonstrate an appropriate level of subject knowledge. For example, in a GCE A level business studies lesson, students discussed the

importance of crisis management and contingency planning in business organisations. They spoke with knowledge and self-confidence, and engaged in a lively and informed debate about the key issues. A few students do not pay attention, and cannot work on their own or organise their learning effectively. Students' written work is of an appropriate standard. GNVQ students' portfolios are well presented; the best demonstrate a good understanding of the practical application of business principles. Pass rates on most courses are high. Those for GNVQ intermediate business and GCE A level business studies are well above the national average. Students on the higher national certificate business studies course have achieved a 100% pass rate in each of the last two years. However, as acknowledged in the self-assessment report, retention on all courses has declined in recent years.

A summary of achievement and retention rates in business, 1996 to 1998

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1996	1997	1998
GNVQ intermediate business	2	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	44 86 84	26 88 91	39 82 97
First diploma public services	2	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	* * *	38 71 70	31 68 90
GNVQ advanced business	3	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	* * *	91 68 84	85 66 80
GCE A level business studies	3	Expected completions Retention (%) Achievement (%)	14 57 86	19 89 88	19 63 100

Source: ISR (1996 and 1997), college (1998)
*course not running

Curriculum Areas

Leisure and Tourism

Grade 2

23   The inspection covered GNVQ foundation, intermediate and advanced leisure and tourism courses. Ten lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- effectively managed courses
- comprehensive course documentation
- appropriate learning activities
- good students' achievements on GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses
- rigorous procedures to monitor students' progress and achievements
- well-planned work experience

Weaknesses

- some teaching not matched to individuals' learning needs
- poor retention on the GNVQ foundation course
- insufficient attention given to the development of students' communication skills

24   Leisure and tourism courses are offered at GNVQ foundation, intermediate and advanced level. These courses are effectively managed but this strength was not mentioned in the self-assessment report. Staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and communications are good. Course leaders make effective use of the college's management information to plan and monitor their courses. The course team has a policy of continuous improvement but the actions its members take to secure improvements are not documented fully. Staff development includes short periods of industrial updating for some teachers.

25   Inspectors agreed with the college that teaching and learning are managed effectively. Schemes of work are carefully planned and detailed. In the best lessons, teachers set targets for achievement and involve all students in appropriate learning activities. They make appropriate use of video, handouts and study packs to assist learning. However, some lessons do not sustain the interest of students and a significant minority of students do not participate in learning activities individually or as part of the group. In a few lessons, students were unclear about the purpose of the activity in which they were engaged. Some teachers do not take full account of students' different abilities. For example, the more able students were bored when working on undemanding, repetitive tasks while other activities overestimated students' abilities. Procedures for work experience on GNVQ courses are well documented. Employers are given comprehensive information and provide the college with feedback on students' performance.

26   There are rigorous procedures to monitor students' progress throughout the year. Assessment briefs are clearly written and are of an appropriate standard. Topics are interesting and frequently refer to local amenities. There is a good system to verify assignments before they are issued to students. Key skills are assessed as part of the assignments but insufficient attention is given to the development of students' communication skills. Marking is thorough. Teachers' written comments give a clear indication of how improvements can be achieved. Effective use is made of the action-planning and portfolio reviews during tutorials to help students improve their performance.

27   The majority of leisure and tourism lessons take place in a large, open-plan learning centre. Seminar rooms are used when appropriate. Access to computers within the learning centre is good and students frequently use IT when carrying out research activities. There is an extensive range of specialist books, periodicals

and CD-ROMs. The well-equipped travel centre, although not fully commercial in its operations, provides an effective teaching and learning resource. GNVQ intermediate students use a local sports and leisure centre to develop their sports coaching skills.

28   Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that most of the students' written work is well organised and presented. Students demonstrate competent IT skills in the presentation of their work. For example, GNVQ advanced students used spreadsheets to prepare graphs on holiday price comparisons and a wordprocessing package to prepare publicity materials for a theme park activity. Students' inability to take useful notes during lessons is not fully recognised by all teachers. Students' achievements are above the national average on the GNVQ intermediate and advanced courses. In 1998, 76% of intermediate students progressed to higher level courses within the college. On completion of the advanced course, the majority of students progress to vocationally relevant employment; relatively few progress to higher education. The self-assessment report recognised that retention on the GNVQ foundation programme is poor. Action is being taken to remedy this weakness.

A summary of achievement and retention rates in leisure and tourism, 1996 to 1998

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1996	1997	1998
GNVQ intermediate	2	Expected completions	58	58	42
		Retention (%)	78	84	79
		Achievement (%)	84	71	91
GNVQ advanced	3	Expected completions	*	83	60
		Retention (%)	*	71	67
		Achievement (%)	*	90	98

Source: ISR (1996 and 1997), college (1998)
*course not running

Media and Performing Arts

Grade 1

29   Inspectors observed 12 lessons covering further education courses in media and performing arts. They agreed with the main findings in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- effectively organised and managed courses
- effective linking of theory and practice
- carefully designed assignments
- high standards of students' written work and presentations
- consistently high pass rates
- outstanding range of media equipment

Weaknesses

- low retention on a minority of courses

30   The college provides a broad range of courses in media and performing arts from introductory to degree level. The provision comprises mainly full-time courses at intermediate and advanced level and two access courses designed for adult returners to education. A range of shorter courses is offered at weekends and during the Easter and summer breaks. Inspectors confirmed that courses are effectively managed and well documented. Course teams meet regularly. They set clear targets for improvement in retention and achievement which are rigorously monitored through termly review and evaluation.

31   Inspectors agreed with the college that courses are appropriately structured and vocationally relevant. Comprehensive schemes of work are issued to students and are available on the college intranet. Lessons are planned thoroughly and a wide range of teaching methods is used. The most successful lessons include a careful balance of activities which fully engage students' interests. Theoretical knowledge is clearly linked and applied to practical work. Students on the GNVQ advanced media studies course were introduced to the concepts of semiotic analysis through a presentation by the teacher, discussion and use of the internet. The teacher made effective use of visual exemplars and handouts in developing students' understanding. In a performing arts lesson, students rehearsed a play by Kafka; careful sequencing enabled them to gain a real insight into the various stages of the rehearsal and production process. In a few lessons, teachers had difficulty in involving all students in discussions and in others they made insufficient checks on students' learning.

32   Teachers produce highly imaginative and challenging assignments, some of which have been revised to accommodate ideas generated by students. For example, staff and students on the GNVQ advanced media studies course have worked together to devise an assignment based on filming a football match at the local football ground. The objective is to recreate the atmosphere of a televised premier league game. Assignment briefs are clear, attractively produced, and vocationally relevant. Performing arts assignments are carefully designed to incorporate key skills. A GNVQ advanced media studies assignment involved students working in groups to create a media guide for the 16 to 19 age group. The assignment enabled students to practise research skills and to combine text and graphics to create a convincing and visually exciting product. Assessment on all courses is thorough. There is an effective system of internal verification. Teachers provide constructive written comments to help students improve their performance.

33   Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that staff are appropriately qualified. The teaching and support staff have a wide range of experience in relevant disciplines. This is enhanced by visiting speakers from industry and by part-time teachers, many of whom are

practitioners. There are outstanding professional resources for media courses. The media centre contains a variety of industry standard equipment and provides a high-quality learning environment. The performing arts centre is also well resourced although the soundproofing is poor in some areas.

34 Many students produce creative work of a very high quality. In a performing arts lesson, students reached exceptional depths of characterisation in a piece of drama about mental illness. In another lesson students displayed highly developed technical skills and considerable originality in a dance project. Students make effective and appropriate use of learning technology, such as wordprocessing and graphics software, to present their work to a professional standard. Video documentary work displays high levels of technical proficiency. In 1997, students on the national diploma in media studies course produced a drugs awareness video in conjunction with Essex police. The video was highly commended in the Beacon Awards scheme. Pass rates for all courses are consistently above the national average. Students on the national diploma in media studies course achieved a 100% pass rate in each of the last three years. The pass rate for the national diploma in performing arts and for GCE A levels in film studies and media studies have been over 90% over the same time period. The self-assessment report recognised that retention on the two access courses is poor. Steps are being taken to improve matters and there has been a significant increase in retention during the current year.

A summary of achievement and retention rates in media and performing arts, 1996 to 1998

Type of qualification	Level	Numbers and outcome	Completion year		
			1996	1997	1998
GNVQ intermediate media	2	Expected completions	*	45	46
		Retention (%)	*	76	85
		Achievement (%)	*	97	97
Entry to media occupations	2	Expected completions	32	40	37
		Retention (%)	74	88	59
		Achievement (%)	94	95	59
Entry to performing arts	2	Expected completions	*	12	18
		Retention (%)	*	58	56
		Achievement (%)	*	100	100
GCE A level film and media	3	Expected completions	*	24	45
		Retention (%)	*	63	71
		Achievement (%)	*	93	100
National diploma media studies	3	Expected completions	69	70	83
		Retention (%)	91	84	87
		Achievement (%)	100	100	100
National diploma performing arts	3	Expected completions	41	34	44
		Retention (%)	63	74	73
		Achievement (%)	100	100	94

Source: ISR (1996 and 1997), college (1998)
*course not running

Basic Education

Grade 3

35   The inspection covered the range of basic skills courses provided in the college. Eleven lessons were observed and inspectors visited students on work experience. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths identified in the self-assessment report, but found some additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- effective initial assessment to identify students' needs
- well-managed and effective work experience
- effective systems to monitor students' achievements and progression
- progression and destination outcomes that match programme aims

Weaknesses

- insufficient attention in some lessons to the learning needs of individuals
- ineffective checks on students' learning
- inappropriate activities undertaken to meet accreditation requirements

36   Inspectors agreed with the college that there is a clear curriculum framework which enables students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to progress to other college courses, and to supported or open employment. The provision includes: a pre-work skills course; a vocational preparation course; basic skills training; and work-related training as an introduction to employment. There are good links with special schools and other agencies, as noted in the self-assessment report.

37   There is an effective induction process for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students receive good levels of tutorial support. These strengths were identified in the self-assessment report.

All students have individual learning plans. There are close working relationships between teachers and learning support staff. Many lessons are well planned; teachers analyse students' learning goals and set specific objectives for the development of skills and knowledge. In these lessons, teaching is at an appropriate level and pace, learning resources are carefully selected and prepared, and effective assessment methods are used to determine whether the learning objectives have been achieved. The self-assessment report acknowledged that in some lessons insufficient attention is paid to meeting students' individual needs. Some learning activities are attempted by students before they have developed the necessary underpinning knowledge and skills. Some teachers do not routinely monitor progress in skill development; others use inappropriate tracking methods. Progress reports are often descriptive rather than evaluative. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report.

38   Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that work experience for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a strength. A work placement co-ordinator ensures that placements are effectively managed and monitored. Three other members of the support staff provide specific short-term support for students in their work placements. Issues arising during work placements are fed back into the students' learning programmes. Work placement providers provide evidence of progress and achievement that is used by students to gain external accreditation or college certificates of achievement. Students take responsibility for keeping their work placement folder up to date and ensuring work placement providers complete the relevant sections.

39   The self-assessment report noted that student progression is effectively tracked and recorded. At the end of the college year 1997-98, seven out of eight students on the bridge course progressed in the college to

vocational programmes. One student on the vocational preparation course progressed to NVQ level 2 hairdressing whilst another, having completed NVQ level 1 hairdressing at college, progressed to NVQ level 2 with one of the college's partner providers. Three students on the skillpower course progressed to GNVQ foundation IT, one to the certificate in childcare and one to vocational training. Twelve students progressed to supported employment, seven students to open employment and 27 to the job seekers programme. There is some inappropriate use of accreditation: activities are undertaken to meet the requirements of the awarding bodies which do not address the needs of individual students.

40   The basic education team has produced a development plan which includes clear initiatives to address weaknesses which have been identified in the provision. One initiative aims to integrate individual learning objectives with other aspects of students' learning programmes. Staff development activities have been designed to facilitate this. The college also recognises the need to introduce more differentiated learning materials. Although the planning of these initiatives is well advanced, there is no clear timescale for their implementation.

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 1

41   Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report but considered that the college had underestimated the significance of some of the strengths.

Key strengths

- impartial pre-entry guidance and advice
- comprehensive and effective individual learning support
- effective tutorial support
- high quality of support for students progressing to higher education
- accessible and effective welfare services

Weaknesses

- underdeveloped careers education and guidance

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42   Support for students is well managed. Responsibility is shared by managers of student services, marketing and academic support. Each team has a comprehensive brief and there is close liaison between team members. Members from all three teams contribute to task groups formed for planning and reviewing specific events such as enrolment and induction.

43   The college provides well-organised, impartial and effective pre-course guidance. There are comprehensive procedures for applications and admissions, well-designed publicity materials and a range of promotional events. Prospective students have many opportunities to make enquiries and obtain advice at several locations. Student service areas provide a welcoming environment. Students value the thoroughness and helpfulness of the advice and information they are given. Standards for guidance interviews are closely defined and well documented. Student advisers carry out observations of each other's interviews

to ensure consistency and impartiality. Guidance and admissions procedures are regularly reviewed in the light of feedback from students. There is a well-planned induction programme which introduces students to the college and to their courses. The college recognises that there are some inconsistencies in induction for part-time students.

44   Inspectors agreed with the college that learning support is well managed and effective. Assessment of needs is thorough. Focused questions on the application form enable specialist staff to make an initial assessment at pre-entry interview. Diagnostic tests in literacy and numeracy take place during induction. Specifically designed assignments are undertaken to assess students' ability to cope with coursework. The outcomes of these assessments are reviewed carefully by a central team and the appropriate on-course learning support is then arranged. The progress of each student is tracked rigorously on a weekly basis. Effective monitoring is possible through detailed records which are held centrally. Staff and student surveys overwhelmingly indicate that this support enhances students' learning. There is a thorough dyslexia support programme catering for 60 students, who receive weekly specialist individual help. Experienced staff provide communication support for students with hearing impairment and good, wide-ranging practical support for individuals with other disabilities.

45   There is an effective tutorial programme for full-time and part-time students. Tutorial activity focuses on target-setting, action-planning and review. There is substantial agreement among students and staff that the emphasis on striving to meet agreed targets enhances achievement. The tutorial arrangements for adult students are well matched to their needs. Those students who are assessed as having a high risk of non-completion receive an additional, individual tutorial each week. Of the students identified as

being at risk in September, 70% were still on their courses in March. Nearly all students express a very high level of satisfaction with personal tutor arrangements.

46   Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that students receive good levels of personal support. The student services team provides a comprehensive range of services which are responsive to students' needs. The team is well co-ordinated and regularly reviews its service. Advice on matters relating to finance and accommodation is provided sensitively. Students receive good support from the specialist counselling service which is effectively promoted and well used. The service has extensive contacts with welfare agencies in the community. The college counsellor is appropriately qualified and receives external supervision. There is a small on-site nursery for students and staff and financial support is available towards the cost of other childcare. These arrangements enable some students with young children to attend college who would not otherwise be able to do so.

47   There is a comprehensive programme of advice and assistance for students considering, and applying for, higher education. Centralised arrangements ensure that all applicants have an individual interview with a member of the student services team and that they are given detailed feedback before completing their application. However, students progressing to employment or further training do not receive such a high or consistent level of support. The college has made concerted efforts to improve the guidance opportunities for those students who leave before completing their courses. The college acknowledges that there is no structured careers education programme. There are a few examples of effective careers work in curriculum areas which utilise the services of careers advisers from Essex Careers and Business Partnership, such as a mock interview programme for nursery nurses. Such developments are currently unco-ordinated and

are not consistently applied across the college. The college policy on careers education is not yet finalised. The college has made a commitment to achieving the Recognition of Quality Award in careers education and guidance, supported by the careers service. An action plan has been produced to remedy the current weaknesses in careers education.

General Resources

Grade 1

48   Inspectors broadly agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths
- the outstanding quality of most accommodation
- well-managed accommodation
- high-quality and accessible IT
- well-resourced learning centres
- high-quality staff work areas

Weaknesses
- the lack of designated car parking spaces for those with disabilities

49   The college is located on three sites in the centre of Southend: the Carnarvon Road centre built in the 1960s; the London Road centre built in the 1950s; and the Queens Road studio. The two main sites are just under 1 mile apart. The Queens Road studio accommodates hair and beauty provision and is close to the London Road site. Recently, the total floor area of the college was reduced by 8% by the closure of a fourth site, Kingswood House. Some of the existing accommodation was extensively remodelled to house the displaced provision. New areas created since the last inspection include: a leisure and tourism centre, a sixth form studies centre, a business administration centre, an early years centre and a performing arts centre. The land outside the Carnarvon

Road site has been landscaped to a high standard.

50   Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that accommodation is well managed. The utilisation of the teaching spaces is monitored closely and calculations presented to inspectors indicate that the college uses space efficiently. Areas in each learning centre are timetabled allowing a mixture of different groups to be accommodated. There is a seven-year planned maintenance programme, with indicative annual financial allocations under broad headings.

51   The quality of most of the college's accommodation is outstanding. The Carnarvon Road site has been refurbished over the last few years to provide a modern, imaginative learning environment based on subject learning centres. Each learning centre has carefully designed seminar rooms, open-plan teaching areas and clusters of computing equipment. The quality of the furnishings and fittings is high. Centres are well equipped with learning aids. Common areas are clean and decorated to a high standard. The Queens Road studio has been decorated externally and internally to provide an appropriate environment for hairdressing and beauty therapy. The London Road site has been modified in a style similar to Carnarvon Road although some areas, which could not be adapted easily, have been retained as conventional classrooms. Some of the external fabric is in poor condition.

52   Work areas used by teaching and business support staff provide the same high-quality working environments as the learning centres. The three work areas for teaching staff have designated desk spaces, private meeting rooms, and communal computing facilities. There is a good level of administrative support for teaching staff in each work area.

53   The self-assessment report indicated the high quality of the computing resources. Over 800 modern workstations are available for student and staff use. The ratio of students to workstations is approximately 6.5:1. There is an extensive student network across and between the two main sites and a separate administrative network. The fact that some computing rooms become too warm has been recognised by the college and air conditioning is to be installed. Modern office suite software and a good range of other relevant software is available. A suitable range of CD-ROM titles is accessible over the computer network. Spending on computing equipment has averaged approximately £500,000 annually for the last six years. An intranet is being developed to provide a mix of daily news, administrative information, and learning material. Teams are developing their own intranet sites within parameters set by the college. The two general learning centres at Carnarvon Road and London Road are open for 67 hours a week over six days during term times. As noted in the self-assessment report, the centres are well resourced with books, journals, newspapers, annual publications, videotapes, and computer workstations. Approximately £60,000 a year is spent on the bookstock. The stock catalogue is computerised; wider access to the catalogue is being developed through the college intranet.

54   There are attractive refectories on both main sites which are open for 59 hours over six days. Hot food is available all day and a reduced service is provided on Saturdays. The college has corporate membership of the Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre which provides access to recreational facilities for students and staff. There are no recreational facilities on college sites.

55   Nearly all of the college is accessible to wheelchair users. Ramps have been added in a number of locations to improve access to the college facilities both internally and externally. Maps of the college identify the few inaccessible areas. There are no designated car parking spaces for those with disabilities. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report.

Cross-college Provision

Quality Assurance

Grade 2

56   Inspectors broadly agreed with most of the strengths in the self-assessment report but their judgements on weaknesses differed from those of the college.

Key strengths

- demonstrable improvements in key areas of performance
- rigorous analysis and reporting of achievement data
- systematic use of student feedback
- well-managed and wide-ranging staff development

Weaknesses

- some persistent weaknesses in self-assessment reporting
- insufficient rigour in course team reviews

57   The college demonstrates a clear commitment to improving quality. There is a comprehensive set of procedures for continually assessing the quality of college activities. Corporate targets for retention, achievement and student satisfaction are clear and challenging. The academic board scrutinises detailed performance reports on students' achievements. Senior managers are closely involved in the measures to achieve improvements. For example, they attend annual review meetings which hold course teams to account for their performance. Course targets are set at these meetings for the forthcoming year. Senior managers have directed special attention at those teams which have the greatest need for improvement and additional support has been arranged such as the use of external consultants and targeted staff development. Achievement rates have risen over a period of time with notable improvements of around 10% in 1998 on GNVQ intermediate and advanced pass rates. Retention in some areas of collaborative provision has improved and the partner providers recognise the value of the college's approach to data collection and analysis.

58   Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that achievement data are collected rigorously and used effectively. The annual student performance report provides a thorough analysis and evaluation of students' achievements. In the past, less attention has been paid to ensuring the quality of new provision at the outset. This was not acknowledged in the self-assessment report, but an improved process of new course approval is now being applied.

59   Considerable importance is attached to obtaining students' views on the quality of provision. The termly student surveys are well established and have a high response rate. Students who do not have the skills needed to respond to a conventional survey are encouraged to contribute their views, for example by the use of symbols instead of text. Student satisfaction ratings are rigorously analysed in course reviews. A college student council, elected from course representatives, meets the principal and other senior managers regularly. The representatives raise issues of concern and receive reports on the results of student surveys and on actions taken. Students have a good understanding of the complaints procedures. Following comments raised by students, the college revised and improved its charter in 1998 to increase its relevance for partner providers. The new charter contains defined and measurable commitments. The survey of students' views is used to monitor performance against some of the commitments. Business support teams are developing service standards which include references to charter commitments. Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that student feedback is drawn on appropriately for self-assessment.

60   The self-assessment report acknowledged that some course team reviews are insufficiently rigorous. This weakness was also identified in the previous FEFC inspection. Some course teams have unsystematic methods of gaining feedback from employers. Lesson observations do not always give sufficient information to make judgements on teaching and learning. Action plans identify clearly the personnel responsible for taking action and include target dates for review and completion. The understanding and effectiveness of analysis of retention rates in two-year programmes is variable. The college recognises the need to make more use of national benchmark data in course reviews.

61   The college has an established self-assessment process. At the time of the inspection, the college had recently produced its fourth annual report. The self-assessment report is a summary document based on separate reports produced by each business support and teaching team and by the college's collaborative partners. Self-assessment is comprehensive in its approach and makes extensive use of performance indicators. However, some aspects of weak self-assessment reporting have been recognised by the college in both its 1996-97 and 1997-98 self-assessment reports, including some of those from collaborative partners. For example, there is overuse of description at the expense of evaluation and some of the judgements are not expressed clearly.

62   The college delivers an effective staff development programme which is carefully evaluated. The college has a well-established annual appraisal process which informs the staff development plan for teaching and support staff. Staff development activities are prioritised against the college's strategic objectives. Examples of good practice include the scholarly activity scheme which enables staff to pursue individual research, updating and curriculum development.

Governance

Grade 2

63   Inspectors and auditors agreed with many of the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- governors' wide range of skills and expertise
- effective oversight of the college's strategic direction
- thorough and regular review of corporation performance
- regular and effective monitoring of students' achievements
- frequent and regular monitoring of the college's financial position

Weaknesses

- failure to approve the annual budgets and financial forecasts within appropriate timescales
- insufficient monitoring of internal audit arrangements
- inappropriate arrangements for some committees

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

65   Inspectors and auditors agreed with the college that governors possess a wide range of relevant skills and expertise and demonstrate a high level of commitment to the college. The self-assessment report identified difficulties in filling vacant posts on the corporation. Public

advertisements have been used to retain openness of the process and attempt to overcome this problem. The corporation has an effective process to monitor its own performance. Corporation members complete an annual individual self-assessment and identify measures to improve their own, and the corporation's performance. The chair analyses the outcomes of this process following individual interviews, and this is used to inform the corporation's self-assessment.

66   Governors are fully involved in the development and annual review of the strategic plan. Members' awareness of strategic priorities has been strengthened by the use of corporation development days. In March 1998, a summary of key strategic issues, 'Vision 2000', was presented by governors to two well-attended public meetings. The strategic plan contains clear statements of corporate priorities. Inspectors agreed that governors have a thorough understanding of key issues relating to students' achievements including performance indicators and target-setting.

67   Inspectors and auditors agreed with the self-assessment report that there are some effective policies and procedures for the conduct of corporation business. The corporation has established a code of conduct and standing orders. There is an annual timetable for corporation business although this does not identify the key items to be covered. Corporation agendas clearly identify items for decision or for information and there is appropriate use of confidential corporation minutes. The clerk to the corporation has an appropriate role description and reports directly to the corporation. The clerk is not currently subject to annual appraisal by the corporation.

68   Inspectors and auditors agreed that the corporation's monitoring of college finances is a strength. The policy and resources committee meets monthly and receives comprehensive management accounts. Achievement of targets for funding units is closely monitored.

Governors set financial targets as part of strategic planning and these are monitored annually. The financial contribution relating to the college's significant collaborative provision is not clear from the management accounts. Governors did not approve the annual budgets and three-year forecasts within the correct timescale and this weakness is not recognised in the self-assessment report. The corporation's approval of the annual budget and financial forecasts was after the forecasts had been submitted to the FEFC and also after the start of the first financial year to which they related.

69   The self-assessment report acknowledged weaknesses in the corporation's oversight of the college's audit procedures. Governors' monitoring did not promptly identify the severe delays in the work of internal audit. In 1998-99, when this problem was identified, approval of internal audit plans was inappropriately delegated by the corporation to the principal.

70   The corporation has decided that the register of interests for governors and that for senior postholders will not be publicly available. The externally co-opted members of the audit committee have not completed a register of interests. Governors have delegated significant strategy and policy making decisions to the principal although there is no formal programme for the review of these arrangements. The corporation's policy for the delegation of powers requires there to be an annual review of the operation and appropriateness of this delegation but this has not been carried out methodically. There are inappropriate arrangements for some committees. The remuneration committee is clerked by the chair of the committee, and minutes of its meetings are not circulated to the corporation. Recommendations for action from the search committee and task groups are presented to the corporation in the form of a written report but there is no formally minuted record of the meetings in which the recommendations were arrived at.

Cross-college Provision

Management

Grade 1

71   Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report.

> **Key strengths**
> - clear management structure
> - outstanding budget holder reports
> - productive and wide-ranging external partnerships
> - effective communications
> - high-quality and timely management information
> - continuous improvement in students' achievements
>
> **Weaknesses**
> - no internal audit work performed in 1997-98
> - occasional failure to implement college procedures at course team level

72   There is a clearly defined process of strategic planning. All staff contribute to planning through team meetings and staff conferences. Teaching teams regularly review their provision and identify development needs and targets for improvement. Operational statements are directly related to strategic aims. Challenging targets are set for retention, achievement and attendance. The college has successfully developed strategies to raise the overall level of students' achievements. In 1998 the number of main qualifications gained by students rose by 12% compared with the previous year. Strategies to raise levels of retention are at an earlier stage of development. Retention in 1997-98 was slightly below the sector average.

73   The college is well managed. Senior managers provide firm and effective leadership.

Management roles and individual responsibilities are clearly defined. The executive management group comprises the principal and seven directors, and is responsible for the direction and supervision of the work of the college. Middle managers are responsible to each executive director for relevant aspects of their work. There is a weekly meeting cycle for all management groups. A range of task management and cross-college management groups contributes to the development of policies and procedures to ensure consistent practice across the college. These groups cover areas such as New Deal, GNVQ provision, and the introduction of a new management information system. The self-assessment report recognised that, on occasions, some managers have not implemented procedures effectively at team and course level.

74   Inspectors agreed with the college that there is an appropriate vision statement incorporating developments in higher education, accommodation, collaboration with other providers and learning strategies. The college's aims and values are understood by staff who are kept well informed of strategic and operational matters. There are well-established procedures for consultation. An employee council, consisting of representatives from all teaching and business support teams, meets regularly with the principal. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that communication is good at all levels. Established procedures such as staff conferences and team meetings have been further enhanced by the introduction and wide use of electronic mail and a college intranet.

75   The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is good. The college prepares timely monthly management accounts and reports for budget holders. The reports are clear and comprehensive, with detailed analysis of staff utilisation and progress towards the achievement of funding unit targets. A rolling,

12-month cashflow forecast is prepared. The college has maintained a high level of solvency. Large operating surpluses have been generated and the college has been able to fund major capital investments from its own resources. The college did not take steps to ensure that an internal audit was carried out in 1997-98. Subsequent action has been taken to correct this error.

76   Management responsibilities have been redefined to strengthen business links and collaborative partnerships. The college has made successful bids for external funding. A partnership with three other training providers has supported the college's work with New Deal students. There are productive working relationships with a broad range of local businesses and agencies, Essex TEC and the new unitary authority. The college has played a key role in the development of a Lifelong Learning partnership for South Essex.

77   Management systems comprehensively meet the overall information needs of the college. High-quality, timely and reliable information is provided to the executive management group and curriculum managers on students' attendance, achievements and reasons for withdrawal. Staff have excellent access to, and make good use of, most of the information provided to inform their planning. Many reports have been collected systematically for many years. For example, in 1998 the college produced its eighth annual report on student performance. The college has consistently made timely returns to the FEFC.

78   There is a well-established framework for human resource planning and management. Priority is given to ensuring the quality of staff in the college through rigorous interview and induction procedures. Staff are encouraged to extend their skills and knowledge and to work towards promotion. Centralised business support units covering areas such as finance, human resources and external funding play a key role in supporting the college's strategic development.

79   The college has an appropriate range of policies and procedures which are widely publicised through its intranet. The procedures for monitoring the equal opportunities policy have recently been strengthened in the light of progress made against objectives. Over 50% of college managers are female. The college's disability statement was introduced in 1996, and subsequently updated in 1997 and 1998.

Conclusions

80   The inspection team found the self-assessment report to be detailed and evaluative. The report was complemented by supplementary reports produced by teaching teams and business support teams. Some of the judgements were unclear as they were presented in a narrative commentary. Inspectors agreed with the broad findings of the report, although they considered some strengths had been overstated and found some additional weaknesses. Inspectors agreed with all but one of the curriculum area grades and with three of the five cross-college grades in the self-assessment report.

81   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 (November 1998)

Age	%
Under 16	0
16-18 years	49
19-24 years	12
25+ years	39
Not known	0
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (November 1998)

Level of study	%
Foundation	8
Intermediate	35
Advanced	42
Higher education	12
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	3
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (November 1998)

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	682	763	21
Construction	99	163	4
Engineering	156	217	5
Business	741	481	18
Hotel and catering	234	12	3
Health and community care	544	452	14
Art and design	1,118	171	19
Humanities	607	403	15
Basic education	69	8	1
Total	4,250	2,670	100

Source: college data

Widening participation

Based on a postcode analysis of 1995-96 ISR data, the college recruited 16% of students from disadvantaged areas defined in relation to the Department of the Environment Index of Local Conditions.

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (November 1998)

	Perm-anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	130	4	29	163
Supporting direct learning contact	54	2	14	70
Other support	108	2	10	120
Total	292	8	53	353

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1996	1997	1998
Income	£13,423,000	£14,056,000	£14,208,000
Average level of funding (ALF) Out-turn to 1997; funded 1998	£17.77	£16.45	£16.60
Payroll as a proportion of income	53%	51%	50%
Achievement of funding target	95%	107%	103%
Diversity of income	16%	15%	17%
Operating surplus	£1,040,000	£805,000	£833,000

Sources: Income – Council Circulars 97/35 (1996), 98/43 (1997), college (1998)
ALF – Performance Indicators 1996-97 (1996 and 1997), Funding Allocations 1997-98 (1998)
Payroll – Council Circulars 97/35 (1996), 98/43 (1997), college (1998)
Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1996-97 (1996 and 1997), college (1998)
Diversity of income – Council Circulars 97/35 (1996), 98/43 (1997), college (1998)
Operating surplus – Council Circulars 97/35 (1996), 98/43 (1997), college (1998)

Students' achievements data

Level	Retention and pass	Students aged 16 to 18			Students aged 19 or over		
		1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
1	Expected completions	303	388	1,678	583	907	1,311
	Retention (%)	73	75	91	84	76	85
	Achievement (%)	81	87	87	54	83	80
2	Expected completions	983	949	1,047	478	672	1,018
	Retention (%)	67	75	74	69	68	79
	Achievement (%)	82	81	88	83	79	76
3	Expected completions	–	1,567	1,545	–	771	930
	Retention (%)	–	71	74	–	78	75
	Achievement (%)	90	89	90	84	87	86
4 or 5	Expected completions	–	11	19	–	236	281
	Retention (%)	–	73	89	–	69	78
	Achievement (%)	56	83	50	68	77	75
Short courses	Expected completions	69	587	725	775	1,165	1,359
	Retention (%)	91	100	99	95	94	97
	Achievement (%)	90	94	95	78	86	84
Unknown/ unclassified	Expected completions	28	385	649	485	493	312
	Retention (%)	93	82	78	76	72	79
	Achievement (%)	100	70	58	88	88	79

Source: ISR
–ISR data not collected

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