

Stockton and Billingham College of Further Education

**REPORT FROM
THE INSPECTORATE
1997-98**

THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL***

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education according to a four-year cycle. It also 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.

*Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
Telephone 01203 863000
Fax 01203 863100*

© FEFC 1998

You may photocopy this report. A college may use its report in promotional material provided quotes are accurate, and the findings of the inspection are not misrepresented.

Contents

Paragraph

Summary

Context

The college and its mission	1
The inspection	7

Curriculum areas

Science, mathematics, computing and information technology	9
Engineering	14
Business administration	19
Management and professional studies	24
Health and social care	29
English, communication and education	34

Cross-college provision

Support for students	39
General resources	46
Quality assurance	51
Governance	59
Management	66
Conclusions	76

College statistics

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.

Aggregated grades for aspects of cross-college provision, curriculum areas and lesson observations, for colleges inspected during 1996-97, are shown in the following table.

	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
	%	%	%	%	%
Curriculum areas	9	59	30	2	–
Cross-college provision	18	51	27	4	–
Lesson observations	19	42	31	7	1

Source: *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report.* Grades were awarded using the guidelines in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*.
Sample size: 122 college inspections

Retention and Pass Rates

Where data on students' achievements appear in tables, levels of achievement are shown in two ways:

- as a retention rate, which is the proportion of students who completed a course in relation to the number enrolled on 1 November in the first year of the course
- as a pass rate, which is the proportion of students which passed examinations in relation to the number entered. Pass rates for GCE A level are quoted for grades A to E unless otherwise specified. Pass rates for GCSE courses are quoted for grade C or above unless otherwise specified. Pass rates for vocational and professional awards are for successful completion of the full award.

Summary

Stockton and Billingham College of Further Education

Northern Region

Inspected March 1998

Stockton and Billingham College of Further Education is situated in the borough of Stockton-on-Tees. The college's self-assessment process involved governors, managers, and many staff in evaluating their own and the college's performance. This was achieved in an open and honest way. Inspectors found the college's self-assessment report helpful when planning and carrying out the inspection. The report contained evidence relating to poor students' examination pass rates but identified few weaknesses relating to these. Inspectors were unable to place reliance on the college's data relating to students' achievements. Most of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were identified in the college's self-assessment report but their significance was often understated.

The college offers courses in all of the FEFC's 10 programme areas. Provision in five of those areas was inspected. The college works well with a number of agencies to attract those who would not normally enter further education and is careful to ensure that courses are offered at convenient times for students. Retention rates

are generally good. Support for students is effective: the induction of students to the college and to courses is good; the information and guidance centres are well placed and provide a good service to students; the school liaison programme is well organised. There are productive links with Teesside TEC and with community groups. Governors set a clear strategic direction for the college. They have given priority to relocating the college's provision to central Stockton. The college has achieved its targets for enrolment and funding units. Communication is open and generally effective. Computing resources are up to date and those in learning centres are of high quality. Accommodation is clean and well maintained. The college should: overcome its poor financial position; report more effectively to the corporation; implement college policies more rigorously; improve course reviews and find ways of measuring the effectiveness of equal opportunity commitments in the curriculum; enhance the quality and dissemination of college management information, especially that relating to students' achievements and their attendance in lessons; raise examination pass rates; improve tutorial arrangements; and strengthen the college's quality assurance framework.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Cross-college provision	Grade
Science, mathematics, computing and information technology	3	Support for students	2
Engineering	3	General resources	3
Business administration	2	Quality assurance	3
Management and professional studies	3	Governance	3
Health and social care	2	Management	3
English, communication and education	3		

The College and its Mission

1 Stockton and Billingham College of Further Education was established in 1958 as a result of the merger of two colleges, one in Stockton and one in Billingham. The college's two main sites are both in the borough of Stockton-on-Tees, the largest of the four unitary authorities on Teesside. The population of the borough is 177,700. The college serves its local community and the wider conurbation of Teesside. It collaborates with several partners across Teesside.

2 The college operates in a competitive environment. Each of the college sites is within half a mile of a sixth form college. Within five miles, there are two 11 to 18 schools and two independent schools. Within 10 miles of the college there are three tertiary colleges, one general further education college, one art and design college and five sixth form colleges. In 1997, approximately 62 per cent of school-leavers in the borough continued in full-time education compared with 67 per cent nationally. Thirty-eight per cent of the borough's general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) pupils gained five or more subjects at grade C or above in 1997. This is better than the Teesside average of 34 per cent but worse than the national average of 45 per cent.

3 The average level of unemployment in Stockton (9.2 per cent) is higher than the national average (6.2 per cent) and there are some wards within the borough in which unemployment rates and other indicators of social and economic deprivation are substantially higher than both local and national averages. Local labour market information points to a decline in the population of Teesside and a slight increase in the population of Stockton. Major local employers include steel and chemical industries and the local authority. More light industry is being attracted to the area following a protracted period of economic decline.

4 The college provides courses in all of the 10 Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) programme areas. It also provides support services for sensory-impaired students in colleges across Teesside. The college works with a number of agencies to attract and support people from groups which are traditionally under-represented in further education. It provides a range of programmes for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It also offers courses for year-10 and year-11 pupils excluded from schools in Stockton. The college employs 414 staff on a range of employment contracts. It enrolled 12,752 students in 1996-97 compared with 12,241 in 1995-96.

5 The college's statement of purpose is 'to promote education and learning for the twenty-first century'. The statement is underpinned by aims and values which include: providing high-quality and continuously improving education services that meet local needs; meeting the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; developing partnerships within the community; developing and using technology to support learning; valuing the contributions of staff; making effective and efficient use of college resources; and developing services beyond Teesside where this contributes to the local or regional economy.

6 The college has a strategic objective to relocate its facilities on one site in the centre of Stockton, as a way of ensuring its long-term viability and improving its provision for the community. The college states that this is the most effective way it can provide 'education and training which meets the global needs of the community for the new millennium'. It intends to achieve the relocation in partnership with private developers. The development strategy includes the establishment of a new but smaller education centre on the existing Billingham site to continue the provision for the local community. At the time of the inspection, the

Context

college had completed public consultation on its proposals and was awaiting the outcomes of planning applications.

The Inspection

7 The college was inspected in March 1998. Before this, inspectors evaluated the college's self-assessment report and reviewed information about the college provided by other FEFC directorates. The college's data on students' achievements for the three years 1995 to 1997 were also checked against course team records and pass lists from examination bodies. Inspectors found significant inconsistencies in the data, and they were unable during the inspection to rely on much of the data. The inspection was carried out by a team of 12 inspectors working for a total of 40 days within the college and at other centres in the community. An FEFC auditor was also a member of the team, working for five days. Inspectors observed 80 lessons and examined samples of students' work and a variety of college documents. Inspection team members met representatives of the Teesside Training and

Enterprise Council (TEC), students, college governors, managers and staff, and a range of other people with an interest in the work of the college.

8 Of the lessons inspected, 53 per cent were rated good or outstanding and 9 per cent were rated less than satisfactory. The figure of 53 per cent is lower than the average (61 per cent) for all colleges inspected in 1996-97, according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of attendance in the lessons observed was 71 per cent, compared with the sector average of 77 per cent for 1996-97 according to the same report. The highest average level of attendance was in business administration (84 per cent) and the lowest in English, communication and education (61 per cent). The average size of classes was 8.3 compared with the national average of 10.8 recorded in the chief inspector's annual report. The following table shows the grades given to the lessons inspected.

Lessons: inspection grades by programme of study

Programme	Grade					Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	
GCE A/AS level	0	1	2	2	0	5
GCSE	1	2	2	2	0	7
GNVQ	1	6	7	2	0	16
NVQ	3	6	4	0	0	13
Other vocational	8	13	9	0	0	30
Other	1	0	7	1	0	9
Total	14	28	31	7	0	80

Curriculum Areas

Science, Mathematics, Computing and Information Technology

Grade 3

9 The inspection covered courses leading to: general national vocational qualifications (GNVQs) in information technology (IT) and science; GCSE subjects; general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) subjects; and access courses in mathematics and science. It also covered part-time IT provision accredited by a number of awarding bodies. Fifteen lessons were observed. Inspection identified important weaknesses not included in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- good support for students of computing and IT
- attentive and hard-working students
- good access to and use of computer-based resources by students
- programmes offering flexible patterns of study which help to widen participation in further education
- effective development of key skills

Weaknesses

- some poorly-planned and poorly-taught lessons in mathematics and science
- work occasionally set at the wrong level for students
- poor pass rates in mathematics and science
- declining retention rates and poor attendance rates

10 The college offers a range of full-time GNVQs in IT at the Stockton site. Computer literacy, science and mathematics programmes are offered at the Billingham site. GCE A level

chemistry, physics, mathematics and biology-related subjects are offered in units of study that are continuously assessed. Although these 'modular' schemes offer students greater flexibility with their studies, the result is that students in some subjects do not achieve the full qualification in the normal timescale. Students who cannot attend the college regularly are offered part-time IT courses through a variety of modes of study. Course team files are up to date. The internal verification procedures to ensure consistency of assessment on some part-time IT courses are underdeveloped. This was not mentioned in the self-assessment report.

11 The teaching of IT is good but that of science and mathematics is less effective. In computing and IT lessons, teachers are well prepared and use a variety of teaching methods to suit the students' wide ability range. The college supports small classes in GCE A level sciences and mathematics. In its self-assessment report the college acknowledges that students' attendance rates are low. Inspectors agreed with this judgement. Practical activities and related theory are closely linked in most courses. Students receive good support from teachers, including helpful feedback on their performance. In the GNVQ advanced in IT, imaginative use was made of projects that encouraged students to work in groups with local employers and schools, solving real problems and developing sound key skills.

12 Students are attentive and work hard in lessons. Examination results for GNVQs at advanced and foundation level in IT are above the national average. Achievements and retention on part-time IT programmes, including those provided in community centres, are satisfactory or good. Many students in science and mathematics, however, find the level of work difficult, and this leads to poor examination results and varying levels of retention. Only five students out of 71 who studied GCE A level biology, chemistry and physics over the last three years successfully

Curriculum Areas

completed their studies and no students have successfully completed the GNVQ intermediate in science course for the last three years. Although the self-assessment report recorded poor pass rates in science and mathematics it did not identify these as weaknesses. Pass rates in intermediate level computing and IT courses were also low in 1997.

13 The college has established new learning centres that students can use at convenient times. They are open from 09.00 hours until late evening, allowing students to continue their learning outside timetabled periods. Well-trained curriculum support workers provide effective help to students and maintain computing resources in good working order. All the software is of industrial standard and can be used on computers throughout the college. High-quality learning materials are available in

all computer workshops. However, the stock of library books for computing and IT is small. Some of the science laboratories have old benching and uncomfortable seating, and there are few computer facilities in these laboratories. There is no policy on the use of IT in science and mathematics subjects, an issue which is recognised in the self-assessment report. The college operates a well-equipped technology bus that provides up-to-date computing facilities at centres based in the community. This enables students to study in convenient and effective ways.

Examples of students' achievements in science, mathematics, computing and information technology, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced computing and IT (GNVQ, GCE A level, national diplomas and certificates)	Retention (%)	71	71	92
	Pass rate (%)	82	81	92
Advanced programmes in science and mathematics (GNVQ, GCE A level and national certificate)	Retention (%)	100	81	60
	Pass rate (%)	44	26	21
Intermediate computing and IT (GNVQ, GCSE and first diplomas)	Retention (%)	90	100	69
	Pass rate (%)	50	60	31
Intermediate courses in science and mathematics (GNVQ, GCSE)	Retention (%)	90	99	67
	Pass rate (%)	31	14	43
Other intermediate vocational computing and IT (RSA, computer literacy and information technology, C&G)	Retention (%)	96	98	86
	Pass rate (%)	30	80	78

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Engineering

Grade 3

14 Inspectors observed 11 lessons in mechanical and electronic engineering at intermediate and advanced levels. They agreed with some of the strengths and weaknesses stated in the self-assessment report. They also identified as a weakness the poor student pass rates.

Key strengths

- well-planned student activity in several classes
- good learning materials that help students work at their own pace
- high levels of student motivation and performance, especially in practical lessons

Weaknesses

- mundane teaching in too many lessons
- low numbers of full-time students completing their courses
- poor pass rates on several courses
- shortcomings in specialist resources that hinder teaching

15 The college offers an adequate range of electrical and mechanical engineering courses at craft and technician level. There is no foundation level technician course. Some courses allow for differing modes of attendance to attract more students; other courses are taught together to ensure viable class sizes. A few courses are well below their intended enrolment figures. There are few formal links with industry, apart from a small work experience programme for students. This shortcoming is partly offset by the good personal links teachers have formed with employers, some of whom have donated important specialist equipment. The programme area maintains close links with private training

companies and some courses are taught jointly. Most course files are appropriately maintained but a few lack important details, for example, records of students' progress. Course teams meet regularly. Minutes show that important issues are discussed appropriately and that the implementation of proposed actions is monitored. The self-assessment report did not evaluate the organisation and management of the area.

16 Inspectors agreed with the curriculum area's own assessment that most teachers work to thorough schemes of work and lesson plans. Students' assignments are scheduled in such a way as to ensure they have a balanced workload. Assignment briefs contain appropriate guidance on the development of key skills and subject content. However, the achievement of key skills is not systematically evaluated on some courses. Teachers generally make good use of detailed handouts in supporting their students. An effective combination of practical activity and theory helps to motivate students. In some lessons, the pace of teaching is too slow for many students while in others, teachers fail to check sufficiently that students understand what is being taught. Students' attendance and progress is monitored satisfactorily and reports of progress are sent to parents or employers as appropriate.

17 In practical classes, students apply themselves to their allotted tasks well and adopt a mature approach to learning. Appropriate attention is paid to safety, a feature noted as a strength in the self-assessment report. Written work is of an appropriate standard. Whilst pass rates are satisfactory on some craft courses, on others, such as the advanced technician courses, they are poor. Students' attendance in the classes observed was satisfactory. However, college records show that attendance on courses is generally poor and this is acknowledged in the self-assessment report. Retention of full-time students is also poor. In the current academic year, only 65 per cent of the students

Curriculum Areas

who started courses in September were still attending at the time of the inspection. Information on students' destinations is not collected routinely, which the curriculum area recognises in its self-assessment.

18 Equipment is adequate to meet the needs of most courses. However, a lack of appropriate machines means that there is insufficient practical work on some mechanical engineering courses. Mechanical engineering laboratories have equipment approaching the end of its useful life or which is poorly maintained. Computer-assisted design facilities are of good quality. Recent donations from industry have enhanced the quality of the college's electronics equipment. The library recently purchased additional books for engineering but the overall stock is limited in its range. Although teachers are appropriately qualified, few hold relevant assessor or verifier qualifications. Technician staff generally support teachers well. Occasionally, however, their poor deployment results in inadequate servicing of important equipment. Classrooms have adequate teaching aids but few rooms are equipped with window blinds and, in some instances, sunlight restricts the use of video, slides, or overhead projector transparencies.

Examples of students' achievements in engineering, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced vocational (GNVQ, national certificate)	Retention (%)	*	*	62
	Pass rate (%)	45	42	47
Intermediate vocational (GNVQ, first certificate and diploma)	Retention (%)	84	100	83
	Pass rate (%)	43	74	67
Intermediate vocational (C&G)	Retention (%)	*	*	65
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	76

Source: college data

*accurate data not available

Curriculum Areas

Business Administration

Grade 2

19 The inspection covered all aspects of administration, reception, secretarial and business IT provision. Eleven lessons were observed. Inspectors agreed with most of the findings of the college's self-assessment report. However, the report failed to take full account of some weaknesses in students' achievements and in aspects of teaching and learning.

Key strengths

- teaching that takes good account of students' different needs and abilities
- good arrangements for adults to study at convenient times
- regular feedback to students about their progress on courses
- students' high levels of skill in using IT
- the high standard of work produced by some part-time students

Weaknesses

- lack of current business practice in secretarial lessons
- some unimaginative teaching
- limited opportunities for students to undertake research

20 The college offers a comprehensive range of specially-designed part-time courses in administration and business IT. The range of full-time courses is less extensive. Enrolments on full-time programmes have declined over the past three years. Inspectors agreed with the college's claim, in its self-assessment report, that learning is well organised and well planned. Course team meetings contribute to effective curriculum planning and to the monitoring of teaching and of students' progress. Course reviews, completed at the end of each academic

year, vary in style and rigour. Often, they contain too much description and too little evaluation, and key performance indicators such as enrolment, retention and pass rates are not analysed on a sufficiently consistent basis. Few of the reviews report on students' levels of satisfaction with the provision or their destinations when leaving a course.

21 Teaching is thoroughly planned. Good use is made of specially-designed learning materials to meet individual students' needs. These materials, for example, provide clear guidance on how to develop effective skills in using software applications. Students' written work is marked fairly and returned promptly. Teaching is sometimes unimaginative. Few students are encouraged to contribute to discussion in lessons. There are few opportunities for students to carry out research on their own or in groups. Some lesson activities do not reflect current commercial business practice. For example, some of the teaching material, intended to guide students, refers to the use of spirit copiers. Teachers keep detailed records of students' progress and provide good personal support. As the self-assessment report identifies, work placements are well organised. Opportunities for full-time students to practise their skills in simulated office or reception environments within the college are underdeveloped.

22 Most students are adults and choose to attend the college at times to suit their personal circumstances, especially when joining courses in the college's IT workshops. Students demonstrate considerable confidence and aptitude in using computers and software applications. The standard of work achieved by those following administration national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 3 and RSA Examinations Board (RSA) higher diploma courses is very high; portfolios of research are well presented and work-related evidence is comprehensive. These strengths did not feature in the self-assessment report. Retention and

Curriculum Areas

pass rates are satisfactory on most courses. However, they are poor on the health service reception certificate course where only six out of 17 students who started on the course achieved the award in 1997. Pass rates for courses in business administration and office technology, offered through collaborative provision, were poor in 1996.

23 Accommodation and specialist resources are generally good. Classrooms are spacious and well furnished. Computer facilities are modern and there is an appropriate range of software. Workshops are effectively designed and well used, with good layouts for student access to computer workstations and for group work. The layout and facilities offered in the office workshop do not reflect modern practice in business administration.

Examples of students' achievements in business administration, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced vocational group awards	Retention (%)	*	73	68
	Pass rate (%)	*	84	70
Intermediate vocational group awards	Retention (%)	*	79	68
	Pass rate (%)	*	51	71
Single subject and specially-designed short courses	Retention (%)	*	*	55
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	83
Collaborative provision courses in business, administration and office technology	Retention (%)	81	82	89
	Pass rate (%)	91	29	69

Source: college data

*accurate data not available

Curriculum Areas

Management and Professional Studies

Grade 3

24 Inspectors observed 10 lessons on courses leading to GNVQs at advanced level, national certificates in business and finance, GCE A level business, qualifications awarded by the Association of Accounting Technicians, diploma in management, and the certificate in personnel practice, and on other programmes linked to a range of awarding bodies. Inspectors agreed with most of the findings in the self-assessment report.

Key strengths

- generally well-managed courses
- teaching and learning activities that build on the individual experience of students
- good retention rates
- students' well-presented research portfolios
- a well-designed range of assessment opportunities for students

Weaknesses

- poor attendance rates on some programmes
- low pass rates on several courses
- team action plans which lack rigour
- inadequate collection and evaluation of employers' views of provision
- staff who lack appropriate assessor and verifier qualifications

25 The college offers a broad range of business and management courses. The programme area team is investigating new areas of provision and new modes of teaching for existing courses as a means of overcoming declining enrolments. Some teaching groups

have been amalgamated to ensure that courses continue to operate. Courses are effectively managed and staff have well-defined roles and responsibilities. Course teams meet regularly to plan and monitor the quality of provision. The minutes of meetings and actions agreed at these meetings are carefully monitored. However, action plans arising from course team reviews lack rigour, a weakness not identified in the self-assessment report. Employers' views of provision are not routinely collected or evaluated.

26 Teachers use an appropriate variety of teaching methods to encourage learning. In one lesson, part-time students worked enthusiastically in small groups on a realistic case study relating to management issues. Students discussed the problem well and were able to combine knowledge gained during the course with their experience in the workplace. In another lesson, however, students were required to spend too long listening to the teacher reading from a textbook. Schemes of work and lesson plans are organised differently and contain varying levels of detail. Assessment is well planned. Students' work is marked thoroughly and returned promptly; students receive detailed written and verbal feedback. GNVQ students have good opportunities to acquire and develop their key skills. Those following a GCE A level in business studies can gain an additional award in key skills.

27 Students on courses leading to the GNVQ advanced in business and the certificate in management qualifications generally produce good written work. Well-designed assignments incorporating key skills are used to provide a wide range of assessment opportunities. Students on management programmes undertake assignments which draw on their work experience. GNVQ students undertake realistic work-related research to compensate for the lack of work placement opportunities. The self-assessment report recognises poor attendance as a weakness and this was

Curriculum Areas

confirmed by inspection findings. Retention rates are good on the majority of programmes. Examination pass rates on intermediate and advanced level courses are poor, which the self-assessment report recognises.

28 Teachers are academically well qualified. However, some are acting as assessors or internal verifiers without the appropriate qualifications. Whilst the programme area team does not have a planned approach to updating the industrial experience of staff, a number of staff have undertaken industrial placements and more plan to do so before the end of the teaching year. Classrooms are generally well furnished and pleasantly decorated. Students enjoy good access to a range of networked computers and to appropriate software, multimedia facilities and the internet.

Examples of students' achievements in management and professional studies, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Other vocational NVQ levels 4 and 5	Retention (%)	93	100	94
	Pass rate (%)	2	63	53
Advanced level programmes (GNVQ, GCE A level, NVQ level 3)	Retention (%)	87	87	83
	Pass rate (%)	21	29	34
Intermediate level programmes (GNVQ, GCSE, NVQ level 2)	Retention (%)	95	95	65
	Pass rate (%)	15	29	31

Source: college data

Curriculum Areas

Health and Social Care

Grade 2

29 Inspectors observed 18 lessons in health and social care, and hairdressing and beauty provision. They agreed with most of the judgements identified in the self-assessment report but found some additional strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- an increasing range of provision
- detailed schemes of work and well-prepared lessons
- high levels of students' achievements on beauty programmes
- good retention rates on most courses

Weaknesses

- little identification of lesson aims and objectives
- students' poor levels of punctuality and attendance
- the variable quality of information on courses

30 The college offers a wide range of study programmes. Some are provided at community centres through well-managed partnerships. Such courses offer good examples of the college widening participation by recruiting adults who would not normally enter further education, a strength recognised in the self-assessment report. Courses are reviewed effectively three times a year. The information about courses provided at the vocational training and assessment centre is not comprehensive and is of variable quality. It does match college standards.

31 Teaching is effective. Inspection findings supported the self-assessment report's claim that lessons are well prepared and supported by clear schemes of work. Teachers frequently

relate their lessons to work situations. The good relationships between students and teachers and the support provided by teachers contribute to students' progress in lessons. However, the aims and objectives of lessons are not routinely shared with the students and opportunities are missed to consolidate what has been learnt. Insufficient attention is paid to what students have previously learned. Teachers at the vocational training and assessment centre, a private training organisation, make good use of a realistic work environment for hairdressing and beauty therapy. In health and social care programmes, most students benefit from work experience provided by employers.

32 Students enjoy their studies and, in most lessons, apply themselves diligently to the tasks which they are set. They work safely and competently to recognised vocational standards and understand the process and purpose of assessment, a strength not identified in the self-assessment report. The assessment of their work is fair and related to appropriate standards. Students' levels of achievement on beauty NVQ level 3 and national diploma programmes are good. Many students arrive late for classes and do not attend regularly, a weakness not included in the self-assessment report. In 1997, the pass rate for students on the hairdressing NVQ level 2 course was very low, at 30 per cent.

33 Specialist accommodation at the vocational training and assessment centre is of high quality. It includes a commercial hairdressing and beauty salon. There is a continuing programme of staff development, with priority given to gaining assessor and verifier awards. Staff in health and social care are developing their computing skills and aim to improve styles of teaching through a project run in conjunction with the Further Education Development Agency.

Curriculum Areas

Examples of students' achievements in health and social care, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ advanced health and social care	Retention (%)	94	87	76
	Pass rate (%)	18	54	58
NVQ level 3 and national diploma beauty	Retention (%)	80	87	88
	Pass rate (%)	95	68	71
GNVQ intermediate health and social care	Retention (%)	80	100	76
	Pass rate (%)	59	44	76
NVQ level 2 hairdressing	Retention (%)	*	*	80
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	30
NVQ level 2 beauty short course	Retention (%)	80	70	83
	Pass rate (%)	83	59	43
Foundation vocational health and social care (certificate in playcare work)	Retention (%)	80	74	93
	Pass rate (%)	40	74	79

Source: college data

**course not running*

Curriculum Areas

English, Communication and Education

Grade 3

34 The inspection covered provision in English, communication and teacher education. Fifteen lessons were observed, including one tutorial. Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report but found additional weaknesses.

Key strengths

- teachers' effective support for students
- good levels of achievement on the teacher education programme
- the development and recognition of GCE A level students' key skills
- provision that attracts students who would not normally enter the college

Weaknesses

- unimaginative teaching on GCE A level and GCSE courses
- low examination pass rates
- small group sizes that hinder teaching and learning

35 Teachers are developing new courses to broaden provision and widen students' choices. Enrolments are increasing on GCSE English courses. The new City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) skillpower programme is proving effective in attracting students who would not normally study at the college. Some of these students progress to higher levels of study. There is effective development and recognition of GCE A level students' key skills. The self-assessment report states that course files are well kept and meet college standards. Inspection confirmed this. Retention rates are poor, a weakness identified in the self-assessment report.

36 Teachers have a good relationship with their students and this, together with the support students receive, encourages learning. Teachers spend a great deal of time working with individual students. As a result students work hard and made good progress. Lesson plans are not sufficiently detailed, particularly in respect of the skills students need to acquire. Lessons in GCE A level and GCSE subjects are generally unimaginative; some teachers do not respond adequately to students' questions or they fail to awaken any enthusiasm in their students. Small classes restrict the effectiveness of group work.

37 Half of the students on teacher-education programmes achieve the full award within a year and the remainder achieve units towards the full award. Examination results in GCE A level English literature courses are showing consistent year-on-year improvement. However, the pass rates on English courses are generally below the national average for sector colleges. Students' pass rates for the evening GCSE English course are slightly above the national average and improving, whereas pass rates on the daytime GCSE English class are declining. The proportion of students achieving grade C or above in these examinations fell from 58 per cent in 1995 to 20 per cent in 1997. Retention rates on some courses are low. Less than half of the students of GCSE English literature completed their course. These weaknesses were not identified in the self-assessment report.

38 Teachers have developed some useful learning materials, which include interesting and up-to-date information taken from the internet. Students are given useful course handbooks. There are sufficient texts for students to use in class and additional copies of these are placed in the library.

Curriculum Areas

Examples of students' achievements in English, communication and education, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
C&G teacher education	Retention (%)	*	*	76
	Pass rate (%)	*	*	51
GCE A level English literature	Retention (%)	33	100	92
	Pass rate (%)	0	67	71
GCSE English language (students aged 16 to 18)	Retention (%)	86	102	67
	Pass rate (%)	58	28	20
GCSE English language (students aged 19 or over)	Retention (%)	*	100	74
	Pass rate (%)	38	48	55
GCSE English literature	Retention (%)	58	41	32
	Pass rate (%)	0	25	40

Source: college data

*accurate data not available

Cross-college Provision

Support for Students

Grade 2

39 Inspectors agreed with the main findings of the college's comprehensive self-assessment report. They concluded that weaknesses relating to tutorials, however, were not given sufficient emphasis.

Key strengths

- well-organised school liaison work
- centrally-located and well-managed information and guidance centres
- clearly-documented and well-understood induction arrangements
- good specialist support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- a well-structured framework for careers guidance

Weaknesses

- some unclear information on courses
- variability in the effectiveness of tutorial arrangements

40 The college's student support and marketing work is carried out by three main teams: marketing services; student services; and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Each team has a comprehensive brief. Guidance to prospective students is generally good. The inspection confirmed the claim in the self-assessment report that school liaison work is well managed. Liaison is organised following careful analysis of the applications received from local schools. Comparison of recruitment patterns are made on a year-by-year basis. Well-presented documentation is available at the centrally-located and well-managed information and guidance centres on each of the two main college sites. Some students, however, were unaware of the examination fees related to their

chosen programme. A number of students informed inspectors that the descriptions of courses did not match their experience.

41 Arrangements for the induction of students are thorough and well managed. There are separate guidance documents for tutors of full-time and part-time courses. Students who enrol after the main inspection period are given an appropriate induction. Course induction arrangements allow tutors to vary their approach to individual students' needs. Inspectors confirmed the college's judgement that checklists are used effectively to ensure that tutors cover important aspects of the college's work and students' responsibilities. Although the same pattern of induction is used for students on collaborative provision, the checklists are used less satisfactorily. The college charter, introduced to students during induction, is a useful document. Copies are available in Braille, large print, audio tape and minority ethnic languages.

42 Inspectors agreed with the findings of the self-assessment report that the support for students needing extra help with their work is well organised. Full-time students are screened to identify those requiring additional learning support. The Basic Skills Agency tests are supplemented on some courses by other more focused tests. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their own specially-designed diagnostic assessments. These are used to place students on 'Moving On', a full-time course with three different entry levels to suit a range of abilities. A large number of part-time courses include adults with learning difficulties and their progress is monitored carefully. The college successfully runs courses for pupils excluded from secondary schools.

43 All full-time students have a weekly group tutorial lasting one hour and at least another hour is available to tutors to conduct progress reviews with individual students. Schemes of work for group tutorials are available but they are of variable quality. Many part-time students

Cross-college Provision

also have access to designated tutors. Full-time students with a record of good attendance and achievement receive a cash award and a college certificate acknowledging their success. The self-assessment report did not effectively evaluate the quality of tutorial work, although it acknowledged that attendance at tutorials, at an average of 47 per cent, was poor. Inspectors found lower levels of attendance in the tutorials which they observed. There is little individual action-planning on some courses and the system for alerting tutors to students causing concern is only partially effective. The college is considering how it might address these problems.

44 Careers guidance for students forms part of the college's tutorial system. The college and inspectors identified as a strength the college's well-produced and comprehensive guide to the careers education programme. The college employs one full-time equivalent member of staff and has a contract with the local careers service to carry out careers education and guidance work. A working group meets each term to review and evaluate this work. The destinations of students leaving their courses are used as a marketing tool. For example, booklets and posters are sent to schools identifying the destinations of successful students who had previously been pupils at the school.

45 Welfare advice for students is provided by experienced part-time staff. Access and hardship funds provide modest help to full-time students experiencing financial difficulties. A number of outside agencies provide additional support for students. As the self-assessment report identified, the advisory service is well promoted in the college through leaflets and by word of mouth. Learner surveys identified that nearly 80 per cent of students are aware of the service. Inspection findings confirmed this. The college tries hard to interest students in extra-curricula activities. For example, there are a large number of different recreational courses and sporting activities on offer on a Wednesday

afternoon. However, the college's learner survey indicates that only 42 per cent of students are aware of this offer. A number of students, for example those on some GCSE and GCE A level courses, have classes at this time and cannot take part in these activities.

General Resources

Grade 3

46 Inspectors agreed with many of the strengths and weaknesses recorded in the self-assessment report but considered that weaknesses were understated.

Key strengths

- clean and well-maintained accommodation
- attractive, well-equipped and welcoming learning centres on both sites
- improved security arrangements
- extensive resources to support sensory-impaired students

Weaknesses

- the high cost of building maintenance and heating
- under-utilisation of accommodation
- poor access to first floors for wheelchair users
- insufficient books in the library

47 For a number of years, the college has been vigorously pursuing its plan to relocate most accommodation in the centre of Stockton. Existing college accommodation, much of it built in the 1960s, is on two sites five miles apart. Because of the dual-site operation many resources are duplicated. The college acknowledges that many rooms are underused. Main entrances are not easily seen from the outside. Although college accommodation is mainly at ground floor level, there are no lifts to the first floors and this restricts access for

Cross-college Provision

people with restricted mobility. An external consultant has confirmed the college's view that the buildings are expensive to maintain and heat. The heating system lacks effective controls, allowing the accommodation to overheat. The extensive car parking facilities provided on both sites are well lit and patrolled at night by security staff. The college provides a crèche for the children of students at the Billingham site. Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that accommodation is clean and well maintained.

48 The 'flexicentre' learning centres recently developed on both sites are well furnished and well equipped, as claimed in the self-assessment report. They provide sufficient modern computers and colour printers, and these are upgraded regularly in line with the college's computer replacement policy. Centres are open on four evenings each week and their use by students is extensively monitored. Students report favourably on the availability and quality of resources and the assistance provided by staff. Students can access a wide range of CD-ROMs. The college computer network at the Stockton site provides students with access to the internet. Similar facilities are soon to be established at Billingham. Computer-aided design facilities are of high quality. At the time of the inspection, the ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students was 1:15. This will soon improve to 1:12 when computers, already purchased, are installed. Reprographic facilities in the college are good.

49 The college is aware that its library provision is modest. The Billingham library is on the first floor and special arrangements are in place to provide resources for wheelchair users in a convenient location. The college has a wide range of specialist equipment to support students who have visual or hearing impairment. It acts as a central resource for other colleges in the area.

50 Classrooms are well maintained and equipped with appropriate teaching aids. In a

few rooms large windows are not effectively screened from the sun. Staff rooms provide adequate accommodation but few of these have computers linked to the college's computer network. Refectories on each site are of a satisfactory standard. Other social areas for student are more limited. Students make little use of the college's sport and recreational facilities.

Quality Assurance

Grade 3

51 The self-assessment report on quality assurance focuses on systems and processes rather than identifying measurable improvements. As a result, it understates important weaknesses.

Key strengths

- college-wide commitment to quality assurance
- accreditation of college provision to ISO 9001
- extensive opportunities for staff development
- the enthusiastic involvement of most staff in the self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- variable operation of the internal verification process
- lack of rigour in course reviews
- no systematic monitoring or analysis of cross-college quality standards
- lack of consistent improvement in college performance

52 There is a college-wide commitment to quality assurance. The college received ISO 9001 accreditation for all its provision in July 1997. The college's services to business unit has been accredited to this standard since 1994. College staff who are trained as internal

Cross-college Provision

auditors effectively monitor the college's compliance to the ISO 9001 standards. The college includes the Investor in People standards in its developing quality assurance framework but it has yet to achieve this status. It also includes the self-assessment process as part of the framework. The quality and standards committee of the academic board oversees the self-assessment process. The committee receives reports on quality from across the college but it has not been operating long enough to demonstrate its effectiveness. The self-assessment report acknowledges that the college's quality assurance system has yet to be fully implemented and inspectors support this judgement. For example, the system has yet to have a discernible impact on low pass rates.

53 Two college charters define the college's commitment to standards of service, one for students and one for employers. The importance and content of the student charter is emphasised to students during their induction to courses. A college charter group meets regularly to monitor and review performance against charter standards. Students receive regular questionnaires on aspects of college provision and their responses have led to improvements. The college recognises its charter provision as a strength and inspectors supported this judgement.

54 Courses are subject to annual and four-yearly reviews. A new approach to review is currently being piloted with a number of courses. Previous reviews generally lack rigour and there is no systematic assessment of performance. This was not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Too few courses make effective use of management information data in their reviews to show, for example, performance trends. The reports from awarding bodies' examiners and verifiers are routinely considered by course teams who record the actions to be taken. The college's internal verification system operates with varying effectiveness across the college. In

some areas, verification is hindered by the low number of staff who have assessor and verifier awards. Although quality standards for support services have been established in many areas of the college, there is no systematic monitoring or analysis of these standards.

55 The quality of collaborative provision is assessed by the commercial manager. The provision was audited by the college to ISO 9001 standards and to take account of Council Circular 97/12, *Validating Self-assessment*. All collaborative providers also comply with quality standards imposed by their accrediting and validating bodies. Inspectors identified that the views of students in collaborative provision are not routinely sought in assessing the quality of provision. Students receive the student charter. In some instances, their learning support needs are identified and monitored. However, the lack of consistent procedures means that some of these needs were not identified at an early enough stage in students' careers.

56 The college's self-assessment report is comprehensive and concise. It results from a thorough self-assessment exercise initiated by course and cross-college teams and shared across the college. Two governors were part of the team that drew the self-assessment report together. Completion of the self-assessment report by cross-college teams has improved staff understanding of the college's quality assurance framework. Evaluation of a substantial number of lessons helped inform the report. There was no evidence in the report of the impact of lesson observations on raising the quality of teaching. Most of the weaknesses identified by inspectors were recognised in the self-assessment report but their significance was often underestimated.

57 The staff development programme is sound and is highly rated by staff. A recently-introduced personal development review helps identify staff development needs that are linked to the college's strategic priorities. The staff development budget is 0.5 per cent of the staffing payroll and this is supplemented by

Cross-college Provision

funds from other budgets. The college intends to increase the budget next year. Opportunities for development and training are available to both academic and support staff. Staff undertake a wide range of college-devised programmes and courses offered outside the college. They also have access to the University of Teesside's staff development programmes. A comprehensive database, designed by the college, records the activities undertaken and there is a rigorous evaluation of staff development activities. A college bursary is available for those staff seeking to improve their academic qualifications.

58 There are effective induction arrangements for new staff. They are allocated a trained mentor to oversee their progress and to support their development. The mentor is not a line manager. The documentation produced for mentor support is clear and well structured. The mentoring system works well and often continues informally after the initial mentoring period is completed. The college did not identify this as a strength in its self-assessment report.

Governance

Grade 3

59 Inspectors broadly agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment report but identified further weaknesses relating to the operation of the audit committee and to the consideration by the corporation of reports on key areas of the college's operations.

Key strengths

- setting the strategic direction of the college
- keen commitment to the future of the college
- energy and speed in responding to previously identified audit recommendations

Weaknesses

- gaps in the work of the audit committee
- limited reporting of committee business to the corporation
- inadequate reporting on key areas of the college's work

60 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.

61 Corporation membership comprises the principal, a member of staff, a student, 10 business members, a TEC nominee, three co-opted members and one community member. Four members are women. Members provide a range of skills and experience to the work of the corporation. Two of three long-standing vacancies have been filled recently. Formal systems to confirm the eligibility of new and existing governors have been prepared but not yet approved. Inspection findings did not accord fully with the claim in the self-assessment report that policies guiding operation of the corporation are clear. Corporation policies are written but the procedures to support them are not yet in place. There is an up-to-date register of interests and a code of conduct for governors and senior staff. A well-written briefing on corporation proceedings is distributed to college libraries and members of staff soon after meetings have taken place.

62 The corporation has delegated aspects of its work to four standing committees: finance and employment; remuneration; audit; and relocation. It has decided to establish a search committee to identify and select new members. The audit committee has met only twice during the last 12 months and there are key tasks

Cross-college Provision

which it has not addressed. For example, internal audit reports and plans had not been considered on a timely basis. The finance and employment committee considers the college's financial performance.

63 Members have a clear understanding of their role and those of college management. They agree the strategic direction of the college at productive workshops with senior managers held each year. They also agree with senior managers the operational plan at a staff development day. The corporation is updated three times a year on progress towards the strategic objectives. The first update took place in February 1998. The corporation is vigorously pursuing plans to relocate the college with the support of many of its staff. Two members of the corporation joined the teams conducting and preparing the college's self-assessment report. Members have attended training sessions to consider governance matters. There is scope for better deployment of members' skills. The corporation met seven times in the last 12 months. Governors have taken action to improve attendance at corporation meetings. Arrangements for the induction of new members are good.

64 The executive director of finance acts as the clerk to the corporation and minutes all meetings of the corporation and its committees. This arrangement potentially leads to a conflict of roles in the case of the audit and the finance and employment committees since the clerk has executive authority for the college's finance function. The college recognises the potential conflict in the roles and is in the process of recruiting a new clerk. The corporation receives summarised reports of the various committees' proceedings. The college is making significant progress in implementing the large number of recommendations of the FEFC's audit service, following the service's visit in June 1997.

65 Arrangements for the corporation to receive annual reports on health and safety are

weak. The annual report to governors lacks sufficient detail for them to gain an overall picture of health and safety issues. Inspection confirmed the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report about the lack of reports to governors on marketing, resources and curriculum matters. Examination results are not subject to sufficient analysis and discussion. The corporation has plans to receive regular updates on aspects of the college's work. At the time of the inspection, such reports were limited to a presentation on inclusive learning.

Management

Grade 3

66 Inspectors substantially agreed with the self-assessment report. However, inspectors attached more significance than the college to some of the strengths and weaknesses.

Key strengths

- wide consultation and sound market research that informs strategic planning
- effective communications
- achievement of targets for enrolments and funding units
- positive links with Teesside TEC and others in the community
- a well-planned cycle of meetings that involves increasing numbers of staff
- good business plans for curriculum areas which link well to the strategic plan

Weaknesses

- poor use of management information at some levels
- inadequate monitoring of progress towards implementation of college policies
- unreliable data on students' achievements and attendance

Cross-college Provision

- the college's unhealthy financial position
- inadequate monitoring of equal opportunities issues in the curriculum

67 The college's strategic plan provides a clear direction for the development of the college. Its 13 objectives were developed in consultation with governors following a review of the earlier plan. Inspection confirmed the judgement in the self-assessment report that the college makes good use of a wide variety of market research information to inform its strategic plan. Each strategic objective is supported by an operating plan. Many of the targets in the operating plan were agreed after extensive consultation with staff. However, there is variability in the way that targets are expressed: some targets are too general to allow effective monitoring. The Teesside TEC was consulted on the plan as were other bodies such as Stockton-on-Tees Local Education Authority (LEA) and community groups. A public consultation meeting held to discuss the plan was well attended. The principal reviews progress towards operational targets with the appropriate senior manager at three points in the year. This review process is new and it is not yet possible to judge its effectiveness.

68 The principal manages a senior management team of seven which meets weekly to discuss strategic issues. Management structures have evolved to suit changing needs and the present structure was established two years ago. Senior managers have responsibility, respectively, for: curriculum and quality; strategy, development and resources; finance; students and markets; human resources; information and learning systems; and physical resources. The curriculum is organised into six programme areas each of which is led by a manager who reports to a senior manager. A number of meetings take place bringing together curriculum, cross-college and support staff.

These are effective in ensuring that colleagues are well informed. Minutes of meetings are generally well written and decisions and actions clearly identified. The best include a review of actions taken since the previous meeting. Not all minutes reach this high standard and the college recognises there is room to improve the consistency with which meetings are recorded across the college.

69 The college is establishing a wide range of policies and procedures to guide development of the college. A well-organised file contains over 100 policies. More than half the policies have associated procedures. However, there is no systematic monitoring of progress towards the implementation of most policies. The college actively monitors and reports on the ethnicity, gender and disability of students, using data gathered at enrolment. Students are advised of the college's commitment to eradicate discriminatory practices from teaching and resource materials in a useful equal opportunities leaflet and charter. There is no regular monitoring of achievement against these commitments at course or college level.

70 The college has a clear strategy to guide the use of management information which is overseen by a senior manager. Improvements to the system have taken place over the last two years. However, the interface between the college's computerised information system and course managers is insufficiently developed, with consequent problems for accuracy and usage. Regular reports are produced for managers and budget holders. Senior managers use management information reports to monitor achievement of targets for funding units, enrolment of students and other matters. Electronic access to centrally-held information is limited to senior and middle managers. Other users, such as course leaders, are able to request the information from central information services who generally respond swiftly. Managers and others are not sufficiently involved in checking the accuracy of information

Cross-college Provision

held centrally. For example, some courses are wrongly identified on the central system.

71 The college's accommodation strategy is focused on relocating to a single site. The move is taking longer than the college anticipated. The college does not have an adequate alternative accommodation strategy should the move be further delayed.

72 The process of delegating budgets is clear but there is excessive delay in setting the size of the budgets. Budgets for part-time staffing and other resources are devolved to programme team leaders. Staffing needs are identified during the curriculum planning cycle which begins with course teams each January. Staffing matters are generally well managed and college records show an improved efficiency in the use of staff. The percentage of income spent on staffing has reduced from 73 per cent in 1994-95 to 61 per cent in 1996-97. The average level of funding for the college is at the median for general further education colleges. The college has exceeded targets for enrolment and funding units in the last two years.

73 Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the college's self-assessment report that a variety of strategies are used to keep staff well informed on college matters. Notes from corporation and college management group meetings are widely circulated. The principal and senior managers are readily accessible. Staff feel valued and are increasingly involved in the life of the college. An informative and friendly staff newsletter and a weekly calendar are produced regularly.

74 Course and programme teams develop business plans which are generally comprehensive in their analysis of needs. The use of targets is variable: some teams set realistic ones whilst others do not. Few contain targets about improving teaching and learning. The academic board was reconstituted in November 1996 to make recommendations to the principal on improving the quality of

educational provision. It has an annual timetable to receive reports covering a wide range of the college's work. Attendance at recent meetings is poor, and minutes do not record the advice given to the principal. Much of the recent work of the board has been to consider the self-assessment report.

75 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is adequate. The college has an appropriate number of finance staff who are suitably qualified and experienced. The college recognises that its accounting system is not well suited to its needs and is taking action to replace it. The college further recognises that financial information for governors, senior managers and budget holders has not been prepared on a timely basis. The content of the management accounts has been improved, as has the time taken to produce them. They are now sent to all governors each month. Financial returns to the FEFC have generally been late. The college is not currently in a healthy financial position. Operating deficits have occurred in the last two financial years and the college has a negative balance on its reserves. The college's internal auditors have concluded that the college's internal controls are reliable.

Conclusions

76 The college's self-assessment process involved most staff in an open and honest assessment of its provision. However, in many areas it judged the quality of its provision more generously than inspectors. Weaknesses in teaching and poor students' achievements are the main reasons for inspectors deciding on lower grades than those predicted by the college in nearly half the curriculum areas inspected. Inspectors concluded that two cross-college areas were not operating as effectively as the college had indicated in its self-assessment report.

Cross-college Provision

77 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 1997)

Age	%
Under 16	0
16-18 years	15
19-24 years	13
25+ years	70
Not known	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by level of study (November 1997)

Level of study	%
Foundation	42
Intermediate	29
Advanced	23
Higher education	4
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	2
Total	100

Source: college data

Student numbers by mode of attendance and curriculum area (November 1997)

Programme area	Full time	Part time	Total provision %
Science	77	139	3
Agriculture	124	885	14
Construction	74	560	9
Engineering	240	1,034	17
Business	47	124	2
Hotel and catering	65	1,250	18
Health and community care	60	979	14
Art and design	24	0	0
Humanities	0	39	1
Basic education	67	1,517	22
Total	778	6,527	100

Source: college data

Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (July 1997)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	93	32	48	173
Supporting direct learning contact	28	16	0	44
Other support	87	0	0	87
Total	208	48	48	304

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

College Statistics

Three-year Trends

Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£7,268,000	£8,000,000	£8,603,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£14.23	£15.70	£16.71+
Payroll as a proportion of income	73%	76%	*
Achievement of funding target	126%	107%	*
Diversity of income	24%	20%	*
Operating surplus	-£150,000	-£1,090,000	*

Sources: Income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

ALF – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96), Funding Allocations 1996-97 (1996-97)

Payroll – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96)

Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96)

Diversity of income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96)

Operating surplus – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96)

+not yet finalised

*data not available

Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	29	19	23
	Average point score per entry	2.0	2.7	3.5
	Position in tables	bottom 10%	bottom third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	122	40	112
	Percentage achieving qualification	57%	93%	60%
	Position in tables	bottom 10%	top 10%	bottom third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	139	102
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	47%	44%
	Position in tables	*	bottom third	bottom third

Source: DfEE

Note: the majority of the college's students are 19 years of age or older

The achievements of these students are not covered in published DfEE performance tables

*1994-95 intermediate vocational results not available

FEFC Inspection Report 80/98

**Published by the
Further Education Funding Council
September 1998**