

# Thurrock College

**REPORT FROM  
THE INSPECTORATE  
1997-98**

**THE  
FURTHER  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
COUNCIL**

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL***

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

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# Contents

Paragraph

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## Summary

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## Context

The college and its mission	1
The inspection	7

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## Curriculum areas

Engineering	10
Business and management	15
Hotel and catering	20
Health and community care	25
Art and design	29
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education	35

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## Cross-college provision

Support for students	41
General resources	48
Quality assurance	54
Governance	61
Management	68
Conclusions	76

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## 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

## Thurrock College

### *Eastern Region*

#### **Inspected February 1998**

Thurrock College is a medium-sized general further education college located on the outskirts of Grays. The college attracts students from Thurrock, Basildon, south Essex and some from east London. The college's first self-assessment report was produced in 1997. The report is concise and is underpinned by self-assessment reports from teaching teams and support services. The report was produced after extensive consultation with staff and governors. Inspectors agreed with the overall judgements in the college's self-assessment report but sometimes identified different strengths and weaknesses.

The college provides courses in all 10 of the FEFC's programme areas. Six of these areas were assessed by inspectors. A distinctive feature of the college is the well-established arrangement for joint curriculum planning with the neighbouring Palmer's College. Thurrock College is particularly effective in meeting local needs for vocational education. Co-operative and productive links operate with other education providers and local industry and commerce. The college is strongly committed to

widening participation and learning support is integral to courses. The college is successful in preparing students for entry to further education, higher education and employment. The comprehensive range of services and support for students is outstanding. Teaching is generally good and courses are well managed. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of accommodation and learning resources since the last inspection. Governance and management of the college is outstanding. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to the work of the corporation and regularly review their effectiveness. Managers consult extensively with staff and involve them in decision-making. The strategic planning process is comprehensive and effective. The arrangements for quality assurance are thorough and extensive. The college should address: the poor attendance and pass rates on some courses; students' attendance at learning support sessions; the use of management information; the implementation of some quality procedures; and the integration of learning resources.

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

<b>Curriculum area</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Cross-college provision</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Engineering	2	Support for students	1
Business and management	2	General resources	2
Hotel and catering	3	Quality assurance	2
Health and community care	2	Governance	1
Art and design	2	Management	1
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education	2		

## The College and its Mission

1 Thurrock College is a medium-sized general further education college located on the outskirts of Grays, in the borough of Thurrock. The college attracts students from Thurrock, Basildon, south Essex and some from east London. In 1996, the percentage of 16-year-old pupils gaining five or more general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) at grades A to C was 30 per cent and 24 per cent in Thurrock and Basildon, respectively, well below the Essex average of 43 per cent. The participation rate of students in education after the age of 16 in Thurrock is 64 per cent, below the average of 68 per cent for Essex. Unemployment in south Essex is 6.8 per cent.

2 Economically, the area is one of considerable contrasts and change. There are some large employers based by the River Thames, particularly in process manufacturing. The decline of the dock labour force has left Tilbury, two miles from the college, in need of regeneration. The M25 has produced expansion in transport and distribution services. The college has established an Essex Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) funded national vocational qualification (NVQ) training centre at Thurrock Lakeside, a retail centre which employs about 7,000 mainly female part-time staff. Thurrock has few major administrative, financial or commercial employers outside the public sector. Most employment is in light engineering, transport or retail services rather than those based on modern technologies. There is a substantial cohort of younger workers who commute to London.

3 Other further education colleges in the area are Palmer's College, Basildon College, South East Essex College of Arts and Technology and Seevic College in Benfleet. A distinctive feature of the college is the well-established arrangement for joint curriculum planning with the neighbouring Palmer's College. The colleges have agreed to avoid duplication of provision,

with Palmer's College providing mainly general education courses whilst Thurrock concentrates on vocational programmes. Both principals are co-opted members of each other's board of governors. The college works closely with the 10 local secondary comprehensive schools and three special schools through its membership in the Thurrock Association of Schools and Colleges. The college provides courses in all 10 of the Further Education Funding Council's (FEFC's) programme areas. The college is expanding its part-time higher education programmes and is a member of the regional partnership of Anglia Polytechnic University. Higher education courses are also offered through the college's links with the University of East London and the University of Kent. The college has productive links with local industry and commerce through its membership of Thurrock District Association of Industries and the Thurrock Enterprise Partnership.

4 The college has revised its mission statement since the last inspection after consultation with staff and governors. The college aims to help individuals and businesses succeed by providing quality education and training. This is emphasised in the college logo which has been amended to include 'helping you succeed'.

5 In November 1997, the college had 4,678 students of whom 35 per cent were full time. Sixty-two per cent of students are 19 years or over. Twenty-two per cent are studying at foundation level, 31 per cent at intermediate level, and 29 per cent at advanced level; 6 per cent are enrolled on higher education courses. A wide range of courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is offered. The college employs 261 full-time equivalent staff, of whom 83 full-time equivalents are support staff. The college has been awarded the Positive about Disability symbol by the Department for Education and Employment.

6 The college senior management team comprises the principal and two deputy

# Context

principals. The work of the college is divided into seven teaching schools: art and design; business and information studies; catering and community studies; engineering; hairdressing and beauty therapy; management and professional studies; and motor vehicle studies.

## The Inspection

7 The college was inspected during the week beginning 23 February 1998. The inspection team had previously evaluated the college's self-assessment report and drawn on information about the college held by other divisions of the FEFC. The college submitted data on students' achievements for the three years 1995 to 1997 which were checked by inspectors against primary sources such as class registers and pass lists issued by examining bodies.

8 The college was notified approximately two months before the inspection of the sample of its provision that was to be assessed. The inspection was carried out by 11 inspectors, working for a total of 42 days, and an auditor working for five days. They observed 72

lessons, including tutorials, and examined students' work and college documents. Meetings were held with governors, managers, college staff, students and representatives from groups associated with the college. Inspectors evaluated the contacts the college has with employers and Essex TEC.

9 Of the lessons inspected, 69 per cent were good or outstanding and only 3 per cent were less than satisfactory. This profile is better than the average for all colleges inspected in 1996-97, of 61 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, according to *Quality and Standards in Further Education in England 1996-97: Chief inspector's annual report*. The average level of attendance during the inspection was 74 per cent in comparison with the average for the sector of 77 per cent, according to the same report. The highest average level of attendance was in business (85 per cent), whilst the lowest was in engineering (65 per cent). 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	
GNVQ	1	9	7	1	0	18
NVQ	1	4	4	0	0	9
Other vocational	4	12	8	0	0	24
Basic education	5	4	1	1	0	11
Other (including higher education)	4	6	0	0	0	10
Total	15	35	20	2	0	72

# Curriculum Areas

## Engineering

### Grade 2

**10 The inspection covered all aspects of the college's provision in engineering and motor vehicle studies. Ten lessons were observed. The findings of the inspection were similar to those in the college's self-assessment report, except in some aspects of the quality of teaching and the updating of staff.**

#### Key strengths

- an appropriate variety of teaching methods
- good retention and pass rates on some courses
- the high standard of practical work
- the integrated key skills programme on motor vehicle courses
- the outstanding range and standard of the motor vehicle facilities and equipment
- recent industrial updating of some motor vehicle staff

#### Weaknesses

- poor attendance on many courses
- insufficient involvement of some students in classroom activities
- lack of recent industrial experience or updating of engineering staff

11 There is comprehensive provision for motor vehicle, mechanical/manufacturing and electrical/electronic students at craft and technician levels. Courses meet the needs of a wide range of students, including students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The area is approved by the Engineering and Marine Training Agency for practical craft training. Economically-viable class sizes are maintained by combining full-time and part-time students in engineering workshops. Effective employer

liaison groups work closely with the college on planning the content of courses. Standardised course files comply with college policy and include course team meeting reports, retention, achievement and destination data. Appropriate action plans are included as part of the course review and evaluation process.

12 Most teaching is sound and there are good schemes of work and lesson plans. In the better lessons, teachers use an appropriate variety of teaching methods and regularly check the level of students' achievements. The majority of students' work was marked with enough comment from teachers to enable students to follow their progress and improve their performance. Practical work in mechanical and motor vehicle workshops is of a high standard and carried out safely. In a few lessons, teachers failed to motivate students to take a full part in the activities, and did not check their learning. Motor vehicle students follow a key skills programme which integrates and applies their knowledge and interest in vehicles. The self-assessment report underestimates the significance of this development in helping students to complete their portfolios successfully.

13 A considerable investment has been made since the last inspection in the motor vehicle facilities. Motor vehicle facilities are now outstanding and include two car workshops, a heavy goods vehicle workshop, a 'Kwik-fit' style workshop, an engine laboratory and motor cycle repair, vehicle body repair and vehicle paint finishing workshops. Inspectors agreed with the college that there is a need to update and refurbish engineering workshops and classrooms to provide a more stimulating teaching and learning environment. Most full-time motor vehicle staff have recently undertaken relevant industrial updating with a major motor manufacturer. This good practice has not been carried out by engineering staff; a point not acknowledged in the self-assessment report.



# Curriculum Areas

14 There is no consistent pattern of retention and pass rates across the courses. On the majority of courses there are good pass rates for students completing their studies. Retention and pass rates on the national certificate in engineering are above the national average. Retention rates are poor on NVQ motor vehicle courses but most students who complete their course gain the full award. For the lessons observed, average attendance was low at 65 per cent. The college acknowledges that retention on full-time courses is an area for improvement and appropriate action is being taken. This includes closer monitoring of attendance and better communication with parents and employers.

## Examples of students' achievements in engineering, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Higher national certificate	Retention (%)	+	+	77
	Pass rate (%)	+	+	75
Vocational programmes (two year)	Retention (%)	*	31	64
	Pass rate (%)	*	40	90
Vocational programmes (one year)	Retention (%)	74	76	79
	Pass rate (%)	33	93	54

Source: college data

+course not running

\*college unable to provide data

# Curriculum Areas

## Business and Management

### Grade 2

**15 The inspection focused on a sample of business and management courses within two schools at the college. Twelve lessons were observed. Inspectors broadly agreed with the strengths identified in the self-assessment report. However, they identified a key weakness relating to teaching which had not been identified by the college.**

#### Key strengths

- the range of courses and progression opportunities
- well-designed management courses and high standards of teaching
- valuable work experience programmes
- well-devised student assignments
- good pass rates
- productive links with employers
- access to good-quality specialist resources

#### Weaknesses

- inappropriate teaching methods on some business courses
- the general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) assessment arrangements
- retention on a few courses
- aspects of specialist accommodation

16 There is a broad range of courses with good progression opportunities from intermediate level through to higher education. Courses meet the needs of school-leavers, adults and employers. Management courses are well designed. These include part-time and short courses, and assessment for NVQ management qualifications on employers' premises. Inspection confirmed that there are productive links with employers and an effective advisory

group. All full-time students undertake a work experience programme. This is valued by students, of whom about 10 per cent obtain job offers from work placement providers.

17 On management courses, the standards of teaching are often outstanding. Lessons and learning materials are well prepared and relevant to employment. The quality of teaching on business courses is more variable. Some teachers are not using the most appropriate teaching methods. Teachers failed to provide work which challenged the students enough and did not use individual questioning to check students' learning. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Key skills are integrated with other aspects of the curriculum. In one GNVQ intermediate numeracy lesson, an additional teacher was used to provide a better level of individual support. Assignments are well devised and appropriate and many incorporate the assessment of key skills. Imaginative case studies and projects are used on management courses. Some assessment arrangements for GNVQ courses are poorly managed. The development of students' understanding and skill acquisition through portfolio preparation is being restricted by the late and inappropriate compilation of their portfolios. An associated weakness, recognised by the college, concerns the lack of opportunities for students to achieve higher grades because of the way in which work is assessed.

18 Students have easy access to a range of industrial-standard computers and software in various locations. The learning centre provides a reasonable range of book and non-book material. Inspectors agreed with the college that there are some weaknesses in the specialist accommodation. The rooms used for business courses are too small for the number of students using them and poorly ventilated. There is no access to the rooms above ground level for wheelchair users. Management rooms are of a good size but the decor, furniture and fittings

# Curriculum Areas

are unsuitable and noise interference between rooms is a problem. There is a lack of seminar rooms and no computing facilities in management teaching rooms.

However, there are shortcomings in the presentation of some assignments, in the use of English and in the standard of spelling on full-time business courses.

19 Inspectors agreed that pass rates on the majority of courses in business and management are good. This was acknowledged as a strength in the self-assessment report. For those students who complete full-time business courses, pass rates are well above the national average. Retention is an issue on some courses. This has been recognised by the college and an action plan to improve retention has met with some success. The majority of students make valuable contributions to class activities. Part-time and some full-time students relate their studies to their work situations well. National diploma students undertaking a business enterprise demonstrate a mature approach to the setting-up and operation of a small business venture. There are examples of some extremely well-presented assignments, projects and portfolios at different levels.

## Examples of students' achievements in business and management, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Higher education (higher national certificate business and finance)	Retention (%)	+	75	50
	Pass rate (%)	+	95	77
National certificate in business and finance	Retention (%)	42	47	25
	Pass rate (%)	100	100	75
Certificate in management studies	Retention (%)	93	94	85
	Pass rate (%)	92	50	91
GNVQ national diploma business	Retention (%)	67	56	95
	Pass rate (%)	100	93	100
GNVQ intermediate business	Retention (%)	75	81	62
	Pass rate (%)	63	69	94

Source: college data  
+course not running

# Curriculum Areas

## Hotel and Catering

### Grade 3

**20 Ten lessons covering theory and practical activities were observed in hotel and catering.**

**Inspectors did not agree totally with the college's assessment of hotel and catering provision. They concluded that the college underestimated the significance of some of the weaknesses.**

#### Key strengths

- the standard of practical work
- the development of appropriate technical and social skills
- the realistic working environments
- the planned programme of work experience for full-time students
- productive links with the industry

#### Weaknesses

- the pass rates on some courses
- the ageing kitchen equipment
- the low level of bookstock and periodicals
- the lack of computers and specialist software for hotel and catering

21 Inspectors agreed with the college that teaching schemes are well planned and provide a range of learning opportunities. In most cases, teaching is sound and students' interest is maintained. Teachers set interesting assignments and students' written work is good. Students' portfolios of work are generally well organised and presented. Some students lack appropriate study skills and this inhibits their progress. Students develop a good standard of technical skills and are able to practise them in realistic work environments. Students demonstrate good teamwork and social skills in restaurants and kitchens which prepares them well for employment. Key skills have been given

greater prominence on NVQ courses with the recent appointment of a hotel and catering key skills co-ordinator. All first-year students are timetabled for an information technology (IT) lesson.

22 Inspectors agreed with the college's claim that links with industry are strong. A supportive industry advisory group meets regularly. Work experience for full-time students is well structured and carefully monitored. Students are able to claim accreditation towards their awards for their time spent working in industry. Students enrich their college studies by working at prestigious catering events and functions. There is effective liaison with local schools. Teachers and chefs from industry jointly visit schools to promote careers in the hospitality industry. Students are encouraged to enter competitions.

23 Many staff have recent experience of the catering industry. There is a good level of technician support for staff and students. Some of the specialist accommodation is in poor condition. The self-assessment report did not identify that there is some ageing kitchen equipment. At the time of the inspection, kitchen extraction and ventilation systems were being replaced to improve environmental conditions. There is a low level of up-to-date bookstock and insufficient periodicals specifically for hotel and catering. Students have good access to computers in learning centres but there is a lack of computers in the curriculum area. There is no appropriate software of industrial standard for use. These shortcomings in specialist resources are not specifically referred to in the self-assessment report.

24 In 1997, the retention and pass rates on the GNVQ advanced level course showed a marked improvement with results above the national average. The pass rate on the GNVQ intermediate course is poor; only two students have achieved a full award since 1994 when the

# Curriculum Areas

course was introduced. Retention rates on most NVQ courses are good. On the one-year NVQ level 2 full-time course pass rates are good and have risen steadily over the last three years. Pass rates on the same part-time one-year course are poor; the majority of students do not achieve their qualification. Students who enrol on the two-year part-time course are more successful. Of the students who have enrolled for the NVQ level 3, none have yet achieved a full award. Students' progression to employment in the catering industry at around 90 per cent is good. The significance of the poor pass rates is underestimated in the self-assessment report.

## Examples of students' achievements in hotel and catering, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ advanced hospitality and catering (two year full time)	Retention (%)	+	54	87
	Pass rate (%)	+	43	69
NVQ level 2 food preparation and cookery (one year full time)	Retention (%)	81	75	67
	Pass rate (%)	59	67	78
NVQ level 2 food preparation and cookery (one year part time)	Retention (%)	74	70	81
	Pass rate (%)	32	27	33
NVQ level 1 food preparation and cookery (one year full time)	Retention (%)	+	+	85
	Pass rate (%)	+	+	52

*Source: college data  
+course not running*

# Curriculum Areas

## Health and Community Care

### Grade 2

**25 Inspectors observed 13 lessons in childcare, nursery nursing and health and social care. The inspection generally agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- effective teaching
- relevant and appropriate assessments
- helpful written feedback on assignments including guidance for improvement
- planned and integrated work experience
- enhanced student experiences through links with the community
- good students' retention and pass rates on part-time courses
- good progression to higher education and employment

#### Weaknesses

- students' retention and pass rates on some full-time courses
- students' attendance
- some aspects of classroom management

26 Courses are planned carefully to meet the needs of students and the standards set by the awarding bodies. There is effective teaching and an appropriate range of learning activities. Inspection confirmed these strengths. Lesson observation grades awarded by inspectors closely matched the profile of grades given by the college in its internal lesson observations. The best lessons had clear aims and objectives, some good practical exercises, a variety of activities and some outstanding presentations by students. The college did not identify some aspects of unsatisfactory classroom management. These included the failure of teachers to give clear instructions and some

poor timing of activities. Assignments are appropriate. Teachers' written feedback on assignments is designed to help students to improve their work. On some courses, the organisation and timetabling of assignments did not make the most effective use of students' time.

27 Students benefit from strong links with the local community. For example, GNVQ advanced health and social care students joined students from Basildon College to create a shadow community health council. The students researched local health issues that affect young people. The first research project looked at stress in young people. The report was presented to the local community health council in January 1998 and it was approved by the council for publication. The local health authority has invited the shadow council to respond to a consultative document on child and adolescent mental health services. This work contributes useful evidence for student portfolios and support for key skills in communication at level 4. The significance of this strength was understated by the college. Work placements are fully integrated with full-time courses. Many of the supervisors are students on the care management courses. Their experience is used to assess assignments undertaken by GNVQ students. The college recognises the strength of its work placement arrangements. This assessment was supported by inspection findings.

28 There is a record of good progression to higher education and employment from all courses. From the last two years of the GNVQ advanced health and social care course, five students have commenced degree courses and three students diplomas in higher education, 11 have moved into nursing through Project 2000 and seven have become care workers. Five other students obtained employment in a range of jobs from attachment to Camp America to work in computing. The main part-time courses, certificates in counselling, advanced

# Curriculum Areas

and foundation management for care and Pre-school Learning Alliance courses show good pass rates and retention. On some full-time courses, Council for Awards in Children's Care and Education (CACHE) diploma in nursery nursing and BTEC national diploma in childhood studies there are good pass rates and retention is satisfactory. GNVQ courses in health and social care at all levels and the CACHE certificate in childcare and education have falling pass rates and retention. The college identified its concerns in the self-assessment report and is taking action to improve pass rates and retention.

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

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
GNVQ advanced	Retention (%)	+	80	64
	Pass rate (%)	+	88	36
GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	86	75	67
	Pass rate (%)	32	44	29
GNVQ foundation	Retention (%)	+	67	50
	Pass rate (%)	+	40	20
CACHE diploma in nursery nursing, CACHE certificate in childcare and education, BTEC national diploma in childhood studies (full time)	Retention (%)	90	77	71
	Pass rate (%)	84	81	78
Certificates in counselling, advanced and foundation management for care and Pre-school Learning Alliance courses (part time)	Retention (%)	97	86	92
	Pass rate (%)	95	88	80

*Source: college data  
+course not running*

# Curriculum Areas

## Art and Design

### Grade 2

**29** Inspectors observed 16 lessons, covering the GNVQ intermediate and six specialist BTEC national diploma courses, City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) signwork, and photography courses and design skills programmes. Inspectors generally agreed with the judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of provision made by the college in its self-assessment report.

#### Key strengths

- high standards of teaching
- strong emphasis on vocational relevance
- the improved retention on the GNVQ intermediate course
- good internal progression from the GNVQ intermediate course
- above average pass rates on all full-time courses
- the development of higher education courses
- the extensive range of skills and vocational experience of the staff
- the art and design computing facility

#### Weaknesses

- inconsistencies in tutorial support
- falls in retention on BTEC national diploma and foundation courses
- lack of rigour in using management information

**30** There is an extensive range of full-time and part-time courses suitable for school-leavers and mature students. A part-time higher national certificate in fashion with textiles and marketing began in September 1997. Two other higher education courses, in fine art and in graphic design, are planned to start in September 1998.

Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that these developments provide valuable opportunities to widen participation for local students.

**31** There is a good record of continuation for students from the GNVQ intermediate course to the advanced level general and specialist courses. The national diplomas provide good progression opportunities to employment and to higher education. The part-time foundation course provides effective internal and external progression routes, particularly for adult students. Staff have developed expertise in providing guidance for students wishing to enter employment or move on to higher education. The school has yet to implement and monitor fully its recently developed tutorial policy. The frequency with which tutorials should be held, the content they should cover and the recording of what goes on in tutorials is not yet fully implemented by all tutors. An action plan has been implemented to improve retention which was recognised as an issue by the college.

**32** The self-assessment report acknowledges the high standards of teaching and learning. The art and design profile of graded lesson observations is close to that awarded by inspectors. Teachers manage students' learning effectively and use varied methods of teaching and assessment. The specialist design courses are vocationally oriented. Some provide students with work placement or opportunities to work on real project assignments through links with external agencies or industry. Students achieve high standards in their studio work and there is a strong emphasis on drawing. Following their diagnostic programme, students from the one-year foundation course are brought together with second-year students from the full-time general courses to share contextual studies and workshop assignments in fine art and design studies. This recent innovation is proving to be an effective way of deploying staff skills and providing students with appropriate study



# Curriculum Areas

experience. Specialist art and design staff work directly with students who require learning support. These students negotiate individual learning plans, closely related to their studio practice and assignments which enable them to make effective progress.

33 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment of the specialist resources available. The collective skills and vocational experience of all staff in the school are a distinctive strength which is made particularly effective through the introduction of workshop-based teaching. Technician support is good though insufficient in the area of IT. The accommodation is purpose built and there is a good range of industrial-standard equipment. The flexibility offered by the open plan organisation of the accommodation is countered by the intrusion of noise between dedicated studio spaces and workshops. IT is integral to all courses and the recently-updated specialist computing facility and software is a key resource. Library support is good and the range of books and periodicals reflects the breadth of the course provision.

34 Pass rates for most of the full-time courses are above the national average. Retention has significantly improved on the GNVQ intermediate course and the pass rate has been consistently above the national average. Pass rates on some non-advanced vocational courses, for example, desktop publishing and C&G creative studies, are low. There is a lack of rigour in the use of management information statistics at course team level. Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that the understanding of quality assurance systems is still being developed.

## Examples of students' achievements in art and design, 1995 to 1997

Course grouping		1995	1996	1997
Advanced vocational (national diploma)	Retention (%)	*	83	80
	Pass rate (%)	*	95	89
GNVQ intermediate	Retention (%)	57	80	87
	Pass rate (%)	80	84	78
BTEC national diploma in foundation studies	Retention (%)	90	96	80
	Pass rate (%)	93	94	92
Non-advanced vocational course (part time)	Retention (%)	87	73	70
	Pass rate (%)	23	33	37

Source: college data

\*reliable data unavailable

# Curriculum Areas

## Provision for Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities and Adult Basic Education

### Grade 2

**35 The inspection focused on courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adult basic education.**

**Eleven lessons were observed. Inspectors broadly agreed with the college's self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- effectively-planned teaching and learning
- negotiated learning plans to meet the individual needs of students
- appropriate assessments and monitoring of students' progress
- the supportive and encouraging learning environment
- the extensive student guidance and support
- the effective community links

#### Weaknesses

- the timetabling of some lessons
- the progression from pre-vocational to vocational courses
- the integration of IT

36 The college makes provision for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are specialist programmes for students with literacy and numeracy needs. Inspectors agreed with the college that effective links have been established with external agencies, social services and schools. Regular meetings are held to review and amend the curriculum to provide students with appropriate

programmes and the specialist support they need to learn.

37 Most teaching is well planned and effective. Teachers set clear lesson objectives which relate well to the needs of individual students. Careful consideration is given to providing an encouraging environment in which students can learn and practise skills. For example, students with severe learning difficulties were working in one of the college's training restaurants developing food service and personal skills. They carried out their duties competently with the support of a teacher, a classroom assistant and NVQ catering students. In other lessons, teachers successfully linked classroom activities to students' experience in their work and personal lives. The timetabling of some lessons does not meet the needs of individual students and leads to disruption of the learning process. As a result of transport difficulties, some students arrive late and others need to leave early. This issue was not identified in the self-assessment report.

38 There are co-operative links with parents, guardians or key individuals such as community workers. Students' progress is carefully monitored and documented through an effective tutorial system. Tutorials help students to identify their learning needs and plan ways of achieving them. One course has established a positive behaviour management policy which enables students to learn social skills, such as working with others, through a structured programme. Teaching takes account of the needs of students. Classroom support assistants improve the learning opportunities in some lessons, but their role was not always clearly defined. Support for students and their learning was most effective when classroom support assistants were programmed with groups of students over a period of time. The college acknowledges that there are low levels of progression from separate specialist courses for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to mainstream courses within the

# Curriculum Areas

college. Programmes for students with severe learning difficulties lead mostly to continued learning within the same area of study so as to build and maintain the skills of students.

39 There are regular and appropriate assessments on all courses. Students maintain portfolios of work and most of these record steady progress and good levels of achievement. Students use a range of methods to show their achievements, for example, the use of photographs and tapes. Teachers give constructive oral and written feedback which helps students improve their performance. Students' records identify progress made and are used in action-planning for learning and the setting of new targets for students to work towards. The college acknowledges in its self-assessment report that many adults on basic skills courses do not seek accredited awards.

40 On adult basic education courses, students have access to well-equipped and pleasant rooms. The management of accommodation does not enable specialist equipment, for example video, lighting and performance areas to be set up on a permanent basis. The college recognises that there is insufficient integration of IT with the curriculum.

# Cross-college Provision

## Support for Students

### Grade 1

**41 Inspection findings confirmed the strengths and weaknesses identified by the college in its self-assessment report for this area.**

#### Key strengths

- comprehensive and effective range of student services
- the co-operative partnerships with external professional services
- effective use of vocationally specific initial assessments
- the quality of pre-entry information and guidance
- well-resourced levels of additional learning support

#### Weaknesses

- erratic student attendance at learning support sessions

42 There is an effective college-wide framework for student support, co-ordinated by a senior manager. Most aspects of student services have clear and well-documented policies. The student services unit manages the college's reception area, examinations, student enquiries, information, admissions and advice on accommodation and finance. Productive links exist between the unit and a range of other college services for childcare, learning support, and recreation. There are also professional links with services funded by outside agencies for youth work, counselling, careers and health advice. All of the above strengths are identified by the college in its self-assessment report. There are thorough procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the range of student services. Feedback from questionnaires and reviews is carefully analysed and used to help staff identify areas where improvements are needed.

43 Inspectors agreed with the college's assessment that there are effective partnerships with a number of external agencies to ensure that students receive support on personal issues. At the time of the inspection, the college's counsellor had offered interviews to over 600 students since September 1997. The counsellor promotes the availability of the service and works closely with a nurse who offers health advice. Students have good access to professional careers guidance. A youth worker, funded by Essex County Council, supports a dynamic student council. Co-operative working between staff is exemplary and is of benefit to students. Well-equipped childcare facilities are available for 25 children with priority given to the children of students and staff.

44 Prospective students are well informed about the college and its courses. Publicity material is attractive and well designed. Considerable attention is paid to ensuring that the language used is easily understood. Individual students' successes are celebrated in publicity materials. Students have produced 'welcome' videos about the college. Curriculum areas publish their own newsletters for specific groups, for example, the art and design newsletter for school-leavers, and the motor vehicle letter for employers. College representatives are involved in school open days and careers conventions. Many events, including 'taster' days, are held for schools. All prospective full-time and many part-time students are offered an interview. A good level of careers guidance is provided for students who are uncertain about which courses to take. Course teams find innovative ways of encouraging students; for example, prospective students can shadow an existing student for a day. The college's self-assessment report understates these strengths.

45 Students receive a general induction to the college and its facilities. Each year, senior managers focus on a particular theme, for example 'anti-bullying' or 'the meaning of

# Cross-college Provision

success'. In addition, courses have devised their own specific inductions. Travel and tourism students visit Brighton and evaluate the success of its tourist industry. All full-time students on business and finance courses share a common three-week induction period. Course tutors offer effective support to those students who want to transfer to another course.

46 The initial assessment of students' learning support needs is particularly effective and has been identified by the college in its self-assessment report as a strength. The college has developed a wealth of initial screening materials which are relevant for specific vocational courses. Materials are appropriately adapted for part-time and mature students. All tutors have guidelines on the application of initial assessment procedures and are required to adhere to strict targets in completing them. The college's well-resourced study skills centre provides additional support for students who require help with literacy, numeracy or study skills. Specialist learning support tutors and vocational tutors work closely together. Tuition is available for students on an individual basis, and in small or larger groups. Trained diagnostic teachers assess the needs of students with specific learning difficulties. Communicators offer support to hearing impaired and deaf students during their courses. The college employs 20 learning support assistants. Of the 480 first-year students identified as needing additional learning support in September 1997, over 90 per cent have received it. However, the college acknowledges that some students' attendance has been erratic and that the monitoring of students' progress has not been sufficiently rigorous.

47 Full-time course timetables include opportunities for personal tutors to meet their students either as a group or individually. Tutorials are used to review progress and to offer personal support. On motor vehicle maintenance courses, record sheets are used to monitor students' attendance, punctuality and

the progress of their coursework. There are standard college guidelines for the conduct of tutorials but not all tutors implement them fully. A code of practice to review the effectiveness of tutorials has been drafted and will be implemented in September 1998.

## General Resources

### *Grade 2*

**48 Inspectors broadly agreed with the college's judgement in its self-assessment report that the college's general resources are an area of strength, although they identified different weaknesses.**

#### **Key strengths**

- significant improvement in accommodation since the last inspection
- the effective planned maintenance programme
- the comprehensive range of learning resources
- the social and recreational facilities for students

#### **Weaknesses**

- the poor-quality accommodation of the temporary huts
- the lack of integration of learning resources

49 The college occupies a single site of 18 hectares situated on the outskirts of Grays. The oldest buildings were constructed in the 1950s and subsequent additions were made in the period up to 1995. There is a mixture of one, two and three storey buildings most of which have flat roofs. The areas between buildings are pleasantly landscaped. A detailed and fully costed five-year planned maintenance programme has been prepared by external consultants. Buildings are well maintained, clean and tidy. Areas for refurbishment are

# Cross-college Provision

prioritised carefully. The college's accommodation strategy acknowledges that some temporary huts are of poor quality, although this is not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report.

50 Inspectors agreed with the college's judgement that significant improvement and rationalisation in accommodation has occurred since the last inspection. A range of building additions and modifications have taken place, including a well-resourced study skills centre, two high-quality specialist motor vehicle workshops and an additional hairdressing salon. Considerable attention has been paid to the refurbishment of existing accommodation and most of this is of a high standard. Several corridors and classrooms have interesting and informative noticeboards and displays of students' work. There is a welcoming foyer and reception area which includes a well-resourced and attractive travel office, a careers advice centre and a college shop. However, the college lacks a clearly-identified entrance. The arrangement of displays in curriculum areas provides stimulating vocational learning environments in most areas of the college with the exceptions of business and management and hairdressing and beauty therapy. The accommodation strategy contains clear options for the future development of accommodation. The college recognises that it has sufficient space to accommodate the planned curriculum provision but that room utilisation is inefficient.

51 Inspectors agreed with the college that the learning centre, study skills centre and 'drop-in' IT suite provide a comprehensive range of services and facilities. The learning centre has 172 study spaces, a large seminar room and three small rooms which can be used to hold tutorials and to view videos. There is no silent study area. There is appropriate provision of books and periodicals for most curriculum areas. A computerised catalogue of library bookstock is in place. Students make effective use of a growing number of CD-ROMs and 10

networked computers, one of which has internet access. The physical separation of the learning centre from the 'drop-in' IT suite and the study skills centre leads to some unnecessary duplication and underuse of resources. This shortcoming is recognised by the college and plans are in hand to address it.

52 About 270 high-specification computers with up-to-date software are available for student's use; a ratio of computers to full-time equivalent students of 1:9. The 'drop-in' IT suite has facilities for laser and colour printing, scanning, and digital photography. There is appropriate specialist IT hardware and software to support the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including keyboard configuration software, ergonomic keyboards, and an adjustable-height work table. The learning centre has a large-screen monitor for visually impaired users.

53 Social and recreational facilities are well resourced. Lunchtime activities are organised in the gymnasium and include table tennis, badminton, circuit training and a multi-gym. The attractively-decorated student communal block helps to create a lively and relaxing environment which is situated away from the main classroom areas. The block has a coffee bar, vending machines, pool tables and a squash court. Students have a choice of attractive catering facilities. There is ample parking for 600 vehicles and spaces reserved for people with disabilities. A closed-circuit television surveillance system has been installed to improve external security.

# Cross-college Provision

## Quality Assurance

### Grade 2

**54 The findings in the college's self-assessment report were largely confirmed by inspection. The report was supported by reference to sources of evidence but did not usually identify specific evidence. Some weaknesses were not clearly identified.**

#### Key strengths

- comprehensive arrangements for the assessment of quality
- effective course review and evaluation
- arrangements to monitor and improve quality assurance procedures
- clearly-defined procedures for monitoring standards of assessment
- staff development effectively linked to appraisal and strategic aims

#### Weaknesses

- ineffective operation of quality procedures by some course teams
- quality characteristics and criteria not identified for some support areas
- insufficient use of quantitative data in monitoring performance
- underdeveloped analysis and use of survey information

55 The college commitment to continuous improvement forms one of its strategic aims. The arrangements for quality assurance have been strengthened since the last inspection by the introduction of comprehensive self-assessment. The development of quality assurance procedures is supported by an effective committee structure. An academic standards committee monitors the effectiveness of quality procedures and reports to the academic board. The college did not identify the strength of the role of the academic standards committee.

56 Course teams evaluate the success of their courses annually. Information is gathered from questionnaires to students, parents and employers and account is taken of comments of internal and external verifiers. The academic standards committee and heads of school monitor the progress of actions to bring about improvements. Each course tutor maintains a comprehensive course review file that includes the course self-assessment and action plan. Inspectors identified that some files had not been adequately monitored by heads of school. Some course records were incomplete with minutes of teams' meetings not filed. Some course team minutes and annual evaluation reports from course and schools do not identify actions clearly. Inspectors agreed with the college that there are comprehensive arrangements for verifying the standard of assessments and responding to external verifiers' reports.

57 Self-assessment has involved staff from all college areas. Self-assessment reports have been produced by course teams and support services using a common approach. Each curriculum and cross-college area is graded using the quality characteristics from Council Circular 97/12, *Validating Self-assessment*. Quality criteria and characteristics have not been identified for all support areas of the college and the basis of grading in these areas is more subjective. Some of the self-assessment reports lack detailed analysis and some action plans are not specific. The report draws upon a wide range of sources of evidence but does not always clearly identify the nature of this evidence as well as the source. To support self-assessment, more formalised observation of teaching was introduced. Lesson observations were not all completed in time to contribute to the assessment of teaching and learning in the college's self-assessment report. They were subsequently completed in time for the inspection. Plans to address weaknesses identified by self-assessment are being

# Cross-college Provision

implemented and their effectiveness is regularly reviewed.

58 The college recognises the need to use more quantitative data to enable performance to be measured. Targets for improving retention and achievement are stated in the strategic plan. Schools monitor student withdrawals closely. However, senior managers give insufficient attention to monitoring students' attendance to provide an early indicator of possible student withdrawals. Monitoring of some areas of performance within schools makes insufficient use of quantitative data. For example, course reviews do not analyse students' progression and the overall completion of courses.

Questionnaires are not used effectively to highlight specific areas for assessment or to assess the success of actions taken. Targets are not established for students' satisfaction. There has not been any comparative analysis by schools or against college norms. These weaknesses were not explicitly stated in the self-assessment report.

59 The college charter contains clear statements of what students and employers can expect from the college and its courses. The charter includes information on how students and others can make their views known or make a complaint. However, it does not state clearly the arrangements for appealing against assessment decisions. Complaints are investigated and dealt with efficiently. Direct assessment is not made of students' awareness of the charter or the extent to which its commitments are fulfilled. The charter is reviewed annually taking account of the views of students, employers and other external organisations. The college recognises that there should be more statements in the charter which identify the standard of service students should expect.

60 The planning of training and development for college staff is well managed. There is a well-defined training and development policy. Clear procedures are in place to identify training

needs, plan development, implement training and evaluate the benefits. The plan is developed from school and support unit proposals. The training enables staff to meet strategic objectives and improve areas identified as weak or unsatisfactory by the quality review processes. Appraisal interviews conducted by line managers identify individual training needs. Nearly all staff have been appraised at least once. The aims and objectives for each training activity are discussed between the line manager and individuals and evaluated after the event. During the inspection the college was awarded Investor in People status.

## Governance

### *Grade 1*

**61 Inspectors agreed with most of the judgements in the self-assessment report on governance. However, they concluded that the self-assessment report underplayed the contribution governors make to the college's development.**

#### **Key strengths**

- a well-established corporation with a broad range of skills and expertise
- effective conduct of corporation business
- the sound record of strategic development
- the well-established annual own performance review

#### **Weaknesses**

- failure to distribute management accounts to all governors
- delays in presenting data on students' achievements to the corporation

62 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its assessment, the governance of the college is good. The



# Cross-college Provision

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. The corporation is advised on financial aspects of the college's performance by the finance and general purposes committee, which receives monthly management accounts. Although the corporation receives and approves forecasts and financial statements, it does not receive copies of the management accounts. This weakness is not recognised in the self-assessment report.

63 The composition of the corporation reflects a wide range of skills and expertise appropriate to the college's needs; a strength not acknowledged in the self-assessment report. The corporation has 18 members, two of whom are women. Membership comprises nine independent and three co-opted members, a community member, two staff, one student, a TEC nominee, and the principal. Governors, between them, possess appropriate expertise covering education, accountancy, legal, estates, personnel and business skills. At the time of the inspection, there was one vacancy which was held in abeyance pending further outcomes in relation to local authority representation on college corporations. The corporation is reviewing search procedures for new governors.

64 The corporation conducts its business effectively. There is a well-established committee structure with clear reporting lines to the corporation. The terms of reference for each committee are clearly set out in the corporation's detailed code of conduct and practice. Some terms of reference of committees require amendments to reflect their role in practice. Inspection confirmed that most meetings are well attended but the attendance of a minority of members could be improved. The clerk to the corporation clerks all the committees and combines this role with a significant senior management role within the college. The clerk has a job description that

separately identifies this role and governors are clear about the distinction. Agendas, minutes and papers for corporation and committee minutes are clear and appropriately circulated. Corporation minutes are publicly available and the use of confidential items is kept to a minimum. A governors' register of interests is maintained.

65 Inspectors agreed with the college that there are well-established arrangements under which governors review their performance. The review and development committee provides a focus for the consideration of governance practice and of ways of improving performance. These arrangements are informed by 'away days', self-review and evaluation exercises involving all governors, and by an attendance report. There are clearly-prioritised action plans to address identified issues. These activities enabled the governors to contribute effectively to the college's self-assessment report.

66 The corporation has a sound record of strategic development. Dedicated time for proper consideration of the strategic plan is allocated to ensure that corporation members fully contribute to the future development of the college. The termly progress reports are made in the context of the main aims of the strategic plan. However, the college acknowledges there is a need for governors to undertake more detailed monitoring of progress. Mechanisms for more rigorously monitoring the achievement of the strategic objectives by the corporation are currently being developed. Internal audit plans have not been approved by the corporation.

67 The corporation's review of the 1995-96 students' achievements was delayed until the end of the following academic year so that they could be considered in the published form. However, this approach prevented the timely consideration of a central aspect of the college's performance. Whilst college managers undertake an important evaluation process which leads to the grading of achievements by course, the use of explicit benchmarks and

# Cross-college Provision

targets is inadequate. Performance improvement targets have been set within the strategic plan but it is too early to report on their effectiveness.

## Management

### *Grade 1*

**68 Inspectors' judgements differed from those of the college in relation to the significance given to some strengths and weaknesses in the college's self-assessment report.**

#### Key strengths

- the well-established and effective strategic planning process
- the clear management structure
- the comprehensive range of policies
- the co-operation with other post-16 providers
- the outstanding range of productive links with external bodies
- good internal communications
- the effective deployment of staff

#### Weaknesses

- some less effective use of the management information system
- the reporting and appointment periods of internal audit
- the process of presentation and approval of financial forecasts

69 The comprehensive and effective strategic planning process, reported as a strength at the time of the last inspection, has been further developed. It is now an integral part of both the quality assurance system and the self-assessment process. All staff are encouraged to contribute to the development of the plan through their input at course, school or section level. Each year an implementation plan,

containing a large number of targets, is produced at course, school, section and college level. The college recognised the need to review more regularly the progress made towards achieving targets and is taking action to improve the review process.

70 The college is well managed. The deployment of staff and physical resources is regularly reviewed. The college acknowledges that the successful concentration of activities on a single site resulted in some underachievement in funding units during 1995-96 but that, since then, the targets have again been achieved. The number of management posts was reduced during the 1996 spring term leading to a simplified management structure and an opportunity for further delegation of authority to managers. Job descriptions are updated regularly as part of staff appraisal. Inspectors confirmed the college's assessment that the management structure is clear and understood by staff. Operational management is assisted by an extensive range of clear policies, including one for equal opportunities.

71 Staff value the open and consultative style of their managers. There is evidence of good teamwork throughout the college. The committee structure works well and provides good opportunities for staff to be involved in decision-making. The academic board and its two committees are particularly effective both in terms of the functions they fulfil and in ensuring good opportunities for staff participation. Communications throughout the college are effective.

72 Inspectors confirmed that the extensive range of external links is a strength of the college. An unusual feature is the successful co-operation with the nearby Palmer's College and the local education authority (LEA) in post-16 curriculum planning for Thurrock. A 'memorandum of co-operation' with the sixth form college is designed to encourage complementary courses and minimise wasteful

# Cross-college Provision

duplication. Thurrock College sponsors programmes at the two local adult community colleges. The three principals meet regularly to co-ordinate marketing and to plan a rational local curriculum and to share expertise, wherever possible. Other links have resulted in a database of over 200 schools with whom the college has regular contact, visiting some 50 to 60 annually.

73 Inspectors' correspondence with Essex TEC provided a very positive view of the quality of links with the college. In particular, the TEC gave strong support to the establishment of an NVQ training centre within the nearby Lakeside regional shopping centre. The college has many other successful contacts with the TEC. There are regular, formal links with employers through the nine active employer advisory bodies in addition to the daily contact that exists through work placements. Inspection provided evidence of many other strong links, including that with the newly-formed Thurrock unitary authority.

74 There is significant variation in the extent to which, and confidence with which, managers use the computer-based management information system. The self-assessment action plan acknowledges that there is a need for further training of managers in order to gain the maximum benefit from the system. The college recognises the need for some improvements to management information system software. For example, the system does not have enough data on students' attendance to provide adequate up-to-date reports to managers.

75 The FEFC's audit service concludes that, within the scope of its review, the college's financial management is adequate. The college internal auditors' term of appointment is to the calendar year end. This does not coincide with the external auditors' appointment which is for the reporting period to the financial year end. The internal auditors' last annual report to the college was based upon a seven months appointment period rather than a full year. Assignments planned as part of their 1997 audit

work were in progress at the time of their annual report. Monthly management accounts, which are currently presented using data reformatted from the accounting system, are considered by the senior management team. The format of accounts includes comparison of income and expenditure to date and this is not forecast to the year end. Cashflow is forecast to the year end but not beyond. There is little financial information on collaborative provision. The management reports on funding units and enrolment are not integrated with the management accounts. In 1997, the process of management's presentation and approval to governors of financial forecasts involved some later adjustments to the forecast approved by the corporation.

## Conclusions

76 The college produced its first self-assessment report in 1997. The inspection team found that the self-assessment report was a useful basis for planning and carrying out the inspection. The self-assessment report did not always clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses for the different curriculum areas within the schools. Inspectors agreed with most of the overall findings in the report. Inspectors agreed with all of the grades for the cross-college provision awarded by the college and all but one of the curriculum grades. The profile of college grades for lesson observations was higher than that found by inspectors. The college has started to take corrective action as a result of its self-assessment.

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	37
19-24 years	16
25+ years	46
Not known	1
Total	100

Source: college data

## Student numbers by level of study (November 1997)

Level of study	%
Foundation	22
Intermediate	31
Advanced	29
Higher education	6
Leisure/recreation (non-schedule 2)	12
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	108	242	7
Agriculture	0	13	0
Construction	44	190	5
Engineering	251	531	17
Business	143	454	13
Hotel and catering	177	55	5
Health and community care	431	500	20
Art and design	262	251	11
Humanities	185	595	17
Basic education	52	194	5
Total	1,653	3,025	100

Source: college data

## Staff expressed as full-time equivalents (November 1997)

	Perm- anent	Fixed term	Casual	Total
Direct learning contact	110	0	16	126
Supporting direct learning contact	47	1	4	52
Other support	80	3	0	83
Total	237	4	20	261

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

# College Statistics

## Three-year Trends

### Financial data

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Income	£9,105,000	£8,939,000	£9,085,000
Average level of funding (ALF)			
Out-turn to 1995-96; funded 1996-97	£16.27	£16.49	£16.80
Payroll as a proportion of income	69%	79%	66%
Achievement of funding target	101%	96%	99%
Diversity of income	26%	21%	21%
Operating surplus	-£51,000	-£975,000	£132,000

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), college (1996-97)

Achievement of funding target – Performance Indicators 1995-96 (1994-95 and 1995-96), college (1996-97)

Diversity of income – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

Operating surplus – Council Circulars 96/29 (1994-95), 97/35 (1995-96), college (1996-97)

### Performance data for students aged 16 to 18

Qualifications		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
GCE A level	Number of candidates	24	29	20
	Average point score per entry	1.8	3.4	3.5
	Position in tables	bottom 10%	middle third	middle third
Advanced vocational	Number in final year	173	157	169
	Percentage achieving qualification	59%	78%	66%
	Position in tables	bottom third	middle third	bottom third
Intermediate vocational	Number in final year	*	105	90
	Percentage achieving qualification	*	58%	52%
	Position in tables	*	middle 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

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