

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Bishop Burton College

**September
1994**

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

THE FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are satisfactory arrangements to assess the quality of provision in the further education sector in England. It discharges the duty in part through its inspectorate, which inspects and reports on each college in the sector every four years. The Council's inspectorate also assesses and reports on a national basis on specific curriculum areas and advises the Council's quality assessment committee.

College inspections involve both full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have specialist knowledge and experience in the areas they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member from outside the world of education and a nominated member of staff from the college being inspected.

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are described in the Council Circular 93/28. In the course of inspecting colleges, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also summarise their judgements on the balance between strengths and weaknesses using a five-point scale. The descriptors for the grades are:

- grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 71/94

BISHOP BURTON COLLEGE, HUMBERSIDE

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION

Inspected April - May 1994

Summary

Bishop Burton College is the main provider of further education for agriculture and land-based industries in Humberside. The college also recruits students nationally and internationally. Its wide and developing range of courses is responsive to the needs of the local community and land-based industries. It has strong links with local schools, industry and the rural community. Senior management and the governing body have a clear sense of direction which is shared by all staff through a consultative strategic planning process. There is a well-documented quality assurance policy which covers all aspects of college provision. Teaching is effective and, using the college's specialist facilities, delivered in a commercial context. Teachers are well qualified and display a thorough understanding of their subject and up-to-date knowledge of the industry. A very high proportion of students complete their studies and obtain their qualifications. Students receive high-quality support, guidance and counselling throughout all stages of their studies. Specialist facilities, equipment and residential accommodation are provided to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Access to courses is hindered through the lack of crèche facilities and there is a need for the more systematic planning and evaluation of staff development in relation to the college strategic plan.

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

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Agriculture	2	Floristry	1
Animal care	1	Food & creative studies	1
Countryside & environment	2	Horticulture	1
Equine studies	1		
Engineering	2	Business & leisure	1

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INTRODUCTION

1 Bishop Burton College's specialist provision was inspected during April 1994. This involved 38 inspector days. In addition, a total of 36 inspector days were used to inspect aspects of cross-college provision during the week beginning 1 May 1994. Inspectors visited 76 classes and examined examples of students' written and practical work. They held discussions with governors, staff, students, headteachers, local employers, and representatives from the Humberside Training and Education Council (TEC).

2 The report is based on inspections carried out according to the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. The framework describes a four-year inspection cycle. When this cycle becomes fully established, colleges will have the opportunity to respond to the findings of earlier inspection visits before their quadrennial inspection and the subsequent published report. As the inspection of Bishop Burton occurred early in the cycle, the opportunity for such a response has not been available.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3 Bishop Burton College in Humberside was established in 1954 to serve the education and training needs of the local farming industry. The main site is located at Bishop Burton in North Humberside, close to the market town of Beverley. The college has four other centres at Driffield, Bubwith, Preston and Broughton. The college estate, including a farm, comprises 345 hectares and is a key resource in the provision of education and training. In 1987, Bishop Burton Pigs Ltd was established as a subsidiary to provide a commercial pig production unit which also incorporated education and training facilities. The public viewing provision on the unit has since attracted in excess of 25,000 visitors. Teaching areas for practical skills include agricultural and horticultural engineering workshops, carpentry and farm buildings workshops, a centre for food and creative studies, and an equestrian complex which includes stables, indoor riding school, outdoor menage and a cross-country course. There are also kennels, a cattery and a petshop. The Croft, a specialist rural centre, provides education and training for those with moderate to severe learning difficulties.

4 The college has modern residential accommodation for 300 students who are recruited regionally, nationally and internationally. This accommodation includes a student village constructed in 1993 which is also used for the holiday and conference trade during vacations.

5 Bishop Burton is the only college of rural economy and land-based industries in Humberside. Its nearest competitors are Askham Bryan College of Agriculture and Horticulture, 25 miles to the north and Lincolnshire College of Agriculture and Horticulture, 50 miles to the south. The college is also in direct competition nationally with the remaining 33 specialist agricultural and horticultural colleges. Fifty per cent of the

current full-time students come from outside the county. Recruitment has been affected by the difficulties some students have encountered in obtaining discretionary awards from their respective local education authorities; 74 students were unable to enrol this year due to grant related problems. The college is a significant provider for the Humberside TEC and there are over 250 trainees on youth and adult programmes.

6 The college has developed international links. The first formal links were established with Lesotho in 1975 and more recently have included Nigeria, Latvia, Hungary and Italy. A training centre for overseas rural development was established in 1987.

7 At the time of the inspection, 4,922 students were enrolled at the college. Of these 539 were on full-time courses, 1,445 on part-time vocational courses and 224 on full-time higher education courses. A further 1,046 students were enrolled on part-time non-vocational courses and 1,668 had attended full-cost short courses. Percentage enrolments by age are shown in figure 1 and enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area in figure 2. There is a full-time equivalent staff of 90 teachers and 122 technicians and other support staff. The staff profile expressed as full-time equivalents is shown in figure 3.

8 The college is organised into seven departments: business management; animal production; engineering and crop production; equine studies; horticulture; countryside and environment; and food and creative studies. The college has widened its portfolio of courses over the last five years to include engineering, animal care, environment, interior design, and leisure and tourism.

9 The mission of the college is to provide extensive, high-quality education and training primarily for rural and land-based industries. The aims of the college over the next three years include expanding recruitment and widening student access in response to identified needs, the maintenance of a sound financial base, the further development of student support services and quality assurance procedures.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

10 Staff are well informed of the major developments in further education, the national targets for education and training, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs). The college is responding to national education and training priorities by extending and diversifying its range of provision.

11 The college offers approximately 40 full-time courses and 500 part-time courses in a range of vocational areas related primarily to land-based and rural industries. The major vocational areas include agriculture, horticulture, equine studies, animal care, countryside management, floristry, interior design, engineering and tourism. There is a good balance of courses at the foundation, intermediate and advanced levels. Twenty-five Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses are offered and 17 NVQ programmes, including a level 5 NVQ in

management. Approximately 16 per cent of the college's provision is at the higher education level and includes two degree courses, three higher national diplomas and four higher national certificate courses. Percentage enrolments by level of study are shown in figure 4.

12 The college has achieved its growth target for 1993-94. Enrolments have increased by about 50 per cent during the past three years. Student enrolments on to full-time courses have doubled during this period. The major areas of growth have been in animal care, countryside management and equine management. Though there has been a decline nationally, enrolments on agriculture courses at the college during the last three years have remained stable. The main areas of decline have been in floristry and youth training programmes.

13 There is a wide range of full-cost courses which meet the needs of local industry and commerce. Some of this work is of national significance. For example, the college has successfully directed a collaborative project, involving four major national pig companies, in the development of relevant NVQ competency standards. The companies are now in the process of incorporating the NVQs into their national training programmes under the guidance of the college. The college also administers and supports the assessment and verification processes.

14 The college is responsive to and supportive of the needs of local schools. There are strong links with local secondary and primary schools in the area. The college franchises BTEC courses to a secondary school and four colleges of further education. Visits to the college farm and estate by schools and youth organisations are actively supported and encouraged. The college farm attracted over 8,000 visitors last year. The college also provides camping facilities for an inner city school in Hull. These visiting students have the opportunity to learn in a significantly different environment. All of the headteachers interviewed spoke highly of the support they had received from college staff. Opportunities to widen access to some adults are not fully exploited. For example, there are limited child care facilities and no crèche facilities.

15 In 1993, the college was a recipient of one of the six major European Curriculum Awards. These are awarded for the successful development of the European dimension in the curriculum. The college also provides consultancy work and training facilities to agencies working overseas for example, in Nigeria, Namibia and India.

16 The college has a strong commitment to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A wide range of facilities are made available for such students and the college is developing ways of using the farm and the outside environment to provide relevant learning activities.

17 Both parents and employers were unanimously appreciative of the support provided by the college staff. There are good relationships and strong links with the TEC. In addition to the large youth training programme, the funding from the TEC has helped the college to develop

several research projects and management development programmes and enabled implementation of NVQs in local companies.

18 There is a well-developed marketing plan which is linked to the strategic plan. The marketing plan is based on the college's comprehensive needs analysis which assesses the national and local market for agriculture, horticulture and related land-based industries. There is a comprehensive range of information about courses. Publicity materials are interesting, informative and distributed widely. There is wide coverage of course developments and activities in the local media. Some of the college's publicity material is sponsored by local companies.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

19 The Bishop Burton College Corporation has 20 members including 11 members experienced in business areas directly relevant to the college's activities, a representative from the TEC, the principal, two members of the college staff, a representative of the student body and four members representing community interests. It is acknowledged that women members are under-represented on the corporation board and that there is a need to recruit governors to reflect the wider diversity of courses.

20 Governors have a clear understanding of their statutory duties. They are aware of the distinction and relationship between governance and management. The strategic planning process is well-defined and consultative involving governors, college management and teaching and non-teaching staff. The committee structure makes full use of individual governors' background and expertise. Corporation meetings are held at least once a term and are well attended. Governors receive appropriate documentation relating to finance, the curriculum and students. The governors readily participate in the activities of the college and actively promote the interests of the college in industry. Governors have attended seminars and received a range of presentations from the senior management team on other issues, for example, the recurrent funding methodology, estate management and financial management.

21 The senior management team comprises the principal, vice-principal, two assistant principals, college administrative manager, finance manager, staff development officer and the director of marketing. Seven heads of department have responsibility for the college's academic programme. The roles and responsibilities of the management team are understood by staff and there is effective line management. There are clear lines of communication through regular staff meetings and open forum meetings with the principal. A weekly cross-college meeting time, with a published calendar of meetings, facilitates course team management and curriculum planning. Attendance by staff on a regular basis is sometimes hindered by their teaching commitments on the full-cost activities and their membership of several course teams. The senior management team has set few performance indicators for managers, other than staff- student ratios and course enrolment targets.

22 The college's unit of funding for 1993-94 is recorded in the FEFC report *Funding Allocations 1993-94* as £3,558 per weighted full-time equivalent student. The median for agricultural and horticultural colleges was £3,585. The college has a 16-month budget of £8,531,159 of which 43 per cent is funded by the FEFC. Twenty-one per cent of the college's income comes from the local TEC. A summary of the college's income and expenditure is shown in figures 5 and 6, respectively.

23 A system of delegated financial management to heads of department has been introduced. The college's computerised management information system is linked to a database and an accounts package. Functional areas supported by the system include finance, student applications, offers and acceptances, timetables, student residential accommodation, absences and withdrawals. The reports are informative, readily available and are distributed to governors, senior management and course managers on a regular basis. The college has established a methodology to calculate unit costs by course and student, using data derived from the information system. Managers make effective use of the information in monitoring, for example, course delivery costs and methods.

24 Programme managers and heads of department are involved with the senior management team in setting course enrolment targets. The college has achieved its enrolment target for 1993-94. Data on student retention and absences are monitored on a fortnightly basis at course, department and senior management level. Student destinations and progression are monitored carefully with the assistance of Humberside careers and guidance service. Students and staff expressed satisfaction with the college's equal opportunities policies and their implementation.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

25 Students are provided with helpful information on college provision. Promotional activities are extensive, open days attract a large number of visitors and there is a good range of taster experiences. All full-time students are interviewed. Most students have well-defined vocational aims and receive good advice and guidance on specific courses. Appropriate arrangements are made to advise adult returners, and those who are undecided, about the direction of their studies. The college has responded to an increasing demand for financial advice, but there is a need to provide more realistic advice on book and equipment requirements prior to entry.

26 The induction programme is well structured. Course handbooks provide comprehensive guidance on course requirements and students are well informed about college facilities and support services. Students valued the induction activities which encouraged social integration and they found the induction experience both helpful and enjoyable.

27 The college has developed procedures for assessing and accrediting students' previous learning and experience. Procedures have been introduced to identify learning support needs; basic literacy and numeracy skills are assessed on entry. Arrangements exist to facilitate transfer between programmes.

28 Staff-student relationships are excellent; students are enthusiastic and committed and have a strong sense of community. The student association supports a broad range of activities and there is a high level of student participation. The student residential experience makes a significant contribution to students' personal development. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively supported and feel themselves to be part of the college community. Recent efforts to integrate such students into mainstream provision have been successful and these opportunities are being extended.

29 The tutorial system is well organised and effective. All full-time students have timetabled tutorials and appropriate support is provided for part-time students. Individual student action plans are drawn up during induction and targets are regularly reviewed. Students value the support provided by tutors and the reports they receive on their progress. Students' achievements are systematically recorded using the national record of achievement as a summative record. Attendance is regularly and closely monitored by tutors and action promptly taken whenever it is needed. In addition to the support provided by tutors, access to personal counselling and guidance is readily available from the college counselling team and from the residential wardens.

30 The college has excellent links with the Humberside Careers and Guidance Service. Careers officers provide advice and guidance at college open days and offer support to tutors. They contribute to group tutorials, offer individual guidance interviews and provide an employment vacancy service. While the quality of careers education is generally sound there is some variation across courses; for example, there were instances where students received little help with higher education applications. Learning support is well co-ordinated; staffing has recently been improved and arrangements are made to meet a range of individual needs. Open-access facilities are at an early stage of development and, as yet, few resource materials are available for use by tutors. There are plans to develop these aspects of learning support.

31 Excellent student information booklets are prepared for full-time and part-time students. Students are well informed in course handbooks of their rights and responsibilities and are required to sign a detailed student agreement during their course induction.

32 Student opinions are valued, the college is responsive to student needs and action is taken as a result of students' views. For example, adjustments to course hours have been made to accommodate adult students and improvements have been made to library opening times.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

33 Of the 76 sessions inspected, 72 per cent had strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses of the work were evenly balanced in a further 22 per cent of the sessions. The following table shows the grades awarded as a result of the inspection:

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GNVQ		7	4	0	0	0	11
Other		18	26	17	2	2	65
Total		25	30	17	2	2	76

34 Most teaching was effectively planned. Teachers displayed a thorough understanding of their subject and up-to-date knowledge of the industry. Students experienced a wide and varied range of teaching and learning experiences: lectures, practical work, assignments, case studies and tutorials. Teachers made good use of their industrial experience during lectures and there was frequent reference to current commercial practice. Effective use was made of the college's specialist facilities, such as the farm, horticultural areas and estate. In all programme areas, students demonstrated an appropriate level of knowledge, skill and practical application relevant to the stage of their studies. Practical work had a strong motivating effect on the students. They worked industriously and with a sense of commitment and enjoyment. Staff and students enjoy good working relationships and mutual respect. Students were appreciative of the teachers' up-to-date knowledge of the industry and their practical expertise. Teachers had high expectations of students. In the majority of curriculum areas, information technology was well integrated into the subject teaching. In a few classes, teaching took insufficient account of the diverse backgrounds and educational needs of individual students.

35 In vehicle and mechanical engineering students were engaged in both theoretical and practical activities which included talks by visiting speakers, a range of visits to industry, work placement and study tours. Students have the opportunity, in addition to their main course of study, to train for qualifications in fork-lift truck driving, spraying and chain sawing. A wide range of assessment methods was used, including individual and group assignments and end tests. Appropriate attention was paid to the development and assessment of core skills. For example, in a BTEC national diploma class in engineering, the students gave short talks on the maintenance of a piece of agricultural machinery. They had prepared their contributions carefully and made effective use of the over-head projector and other visual aids. The session developed students' confidence and skills of communication as well as their ability to summarise information drawn from trade and technical literature. At times, student

progress was hindered by a shortage of laboratory equipment for practical work in engineering science and workshop practice.

36 In the animal care course, teaching and learning was well planned. It was commercially and professionally relevant and practically focused. Students had access to a wide range of practical facilities, centred on the well-managed college farm. Students demonstrated a high standard of knowledge, understanding and competence in the principles and practices underpinning the management of pigs, small animals and the countryside. The teaching of countryside and environment courses involved students in outdoor practical activities on the college estate. These activities were well planned; students received detailed project briefs and the work was rigorous and enjoyable for the students. In some of the classroom sessions, the imparting of information dominated the teaching and there was insufficient interaction with the students.

37 Teaching in agriculture was well organised. Schemes of work were well co-ordinated to lesson plans. Students experienced a wide range of teaching and learning experiences. Frequent and effective reference was made to current commercial practice, and, in particular, to the performance of the college farm. Students demonstrated good practical skills. In a few classes, insufficient account was taken of the backgrounds and range of abilities of the students, and there were instances of too heavy a reliance on the dictation of notes.

38 In equine studies the teaching was well prepared. Teachers had high expectations of their students, and they set high, but attainable, standards. The teaching employed a wide variety of learning activities, and students were engaged in a considerable amount of practical work. Although they were well briefed and closely supervised, students were required to take a good deal of responsibility for their own learning. They responded with confidence and high motivation. In some of the theory classes, students were often moved into adjacent specialist facilities for the teacher to demonstrate particular techniques and reinforce theoretical principles. Teachers provided supportive supervision of student riding practice and accurately identified areas for improvement. Extensive and effective use was made of assignments to follow up both theoretical and practical sessions.

39 Students in business and leisure courses were well motivated and enjoyed their studies. Teachers took into account the ability range of the students and drew on the backgrounds of individual students. Activities were relevant and purposeful. For example, students in a GNVQ advanced leisure and tourism class interviewed the college marketing officer as part of a group assignment involving the planning of an event for the college's forthcoming Town and Country day. The students were well prepared for the interview and demonstrated background knowledge and good organisational skills. In most of the classes teachers displayed an up-to-date knowledge of the industry and effectively used relevant industrial examples to illustrate theory. In some classes the teaching relied too heavily on dictating notes.

40 Teaching in horticulture and floristry was characterised by good staff-student interaction. Lesson planning was thorough and consistent with course schemes of work. Students worked together well in groups and demonstrated the ability to transfer skills and knowledge to new contexts. For example, in a BTEC diploma class in horticulture, the students had been set a group task to design and cost a large shrubbery border. The designs were judged by a panel and a winning design chosen. Students then cleared and prepared a plot and planted the shrubbery to the winning design, over a period of several classes. The students adopted a weekly rota for each of them to act as 'foreman', giving each the opportunity to gain some management experience.

41 In food and creative studies students were engaged in a wide range of activities which involved them in realistic commercial and professional practice. The quality of work achieved by students in soft furnishings, embroidery and food production was of a consistently high quality. There was excellent rapport between staff and students which encouraged maximum student achievement.

42 There is a firm commitment within the college to accept students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties. In 1985 it established The Croft, a small farm within a farm, as a specialist rural centre providing for students with moderate to severe learning difficulties. The college has built up an extensive school links programme with special schools and units throughout the Humberside region.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

43 Students showed considerable commitment to their studies. In discussion they were capable and confident, and were able to express themselves clearly. They worked together effectively in groups and adjusted well to the demands of working in different contexts, selecting appropriate methods and organising effectively the resources required. Students of equine and agricultural studies showed considerable depth of understanding, and a good grasp of current commercial issues. Students of animal care and countryside management possessed a good knowledge of basic sciences and they were able to apply this knowledge to their vocational studies. Some of the students on the BTEC first diploma course in vehicle engineering did not possess the necessary scientific and mathematical knowledge to enable them to benefit fully from the course.

44 The level of practical competence among the students was high. Students made good use of information technology. For example, students on the first diploma course in animal care were able to use a variety of computer techniques for an assignment on the management of small animals. Their work showed high standards of presentation, content and understanding.

45 Most students complete their studies successfully. Over the last four years, on average, only 6 per cent of full-time and 1 per cent of part-time

students have failed to complete their course. The high retention rate for part-time students is a particularly strong feature of the college. In 1992-93, the retention rate for 13 of the 38 full-time courses was 100 per cent.

46 A high proportion of students achieve their qualifications, and results in almost all courses, both full-time and part-time, exceed national norms. In 1993, 100 per cent pass rates were obtained by full-time students taking the national examination board in agriculture, horticulture and allied industries national certificates in farm management and management of horses, and the advanced national certificate in machinery and mechanisation. There were poor results, however, in the first diploma course in animal care, in comparison with national norms. On almost half the part-time examinations, 100 per cent pass rates were obtained.

47 In 1993, most students leaving the college went either to relevant employment or more advanced education programmes. Of those full-time students leaving the college in 1993, 43 per cent went on to employment, 21 per cent to further education, 4 per cent to higher education, 4 per cent to training programmes, and 16 per cent to other situations. Only 13 per cent had not yet found employment or other relevant activity by December 1993.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

48 The staff demonstrated a strong commitment to the assurance of quality in all aspects of provision. The college strategic plan includes a commitment to monitor all activity with quality control procedures. The quality assurance operational plan for the period 1994-96 schedules developments which will work towards this objective.

49 The terms of reference and responsibilities of the various committees and managers charged with quality assurance functions are well documented and comprehensive. The assistant principal (academic) takes overall responsibility for academic issues and the director of marketing and quality assurance is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and improving all aspects of customer care. The academic board devolves responsibility for reviewing and monitoring courses and for receiving validation and course review reports to the academic standards committee. A quality procedures manual helps to ensure consistency of practice and creates a standard against which the quality of provision can be evaluated.

50 There is a comprehensive policy for the quality control of courses. The course quality manual details clearly the procedures and documentation to be used. Course teams meet regularly. The minutes of these meetings indicate that detailed attention is given to course administration and student progress. Issues identified during the meetings and action to be taken are clearly stated and monitored. This attention to action planning and the monitoring of its implementation is a notable feature throughout the college.

51 An annual review of each full-time and part-time course is produced. Detailed guidance is given concerning the issues to be addressed and, in order to introduce even greater consistency, a common structure to the reports has been introduced this year together with a supporting statistics sheet. Most reports give a clear picture of the operation and achievements of the course and a separate report details the corrective action to be taken including timescales and the staff responsible for implementation. The comments from moderators and employers also contribute to the evaluation process.

52 The views of students are collected; questionnaires seek students' views on all aspects of provision including the teaching of individual subjects. The results are portrayed graphically and give course leaders information which is directly relevant to their courses. Staff-student liaison meetings, which include senior management representation, are held regularly for each course. The students devise the agenda and the meetings are minuted. The students comment that their views are carefully considered and that action is taken where possible. For example, improved canteen and telephone facilities, improved riding areas, better teaching, increased outside visiting, and improved induction and tutorial processes have all resulted from consultation with students.

53 Students are members of several college committees. The student support services committee has effected improvements in access to the library and in information technology facilities. 'Improver groups' are established to review specific aspects of provision and timetabling, staff induction, registration processes and the internal post system have all been recently reviewed and improved. An internal quality audit group of four teaching and non-teaching staff has been trained in audit processes and will shortly begin auditing provision. The quality initiatives are communicated effectively to staff through an informative 'quality matters' newsletter.

54 The college has responded well to the requirements of the recent national charter for further education. Many of these requirements are already standard practice. A comprehensive draft charter has been written, and further consultation is planned before final production.

55 Staff induction and appraisal processes are carefully planned. Staff speak well of these processes. Staff development for all staff is based upon induction, appraisal and course review processes. Recent priorities in staff training have included secondments to industry, funded by the TEC, management training, technical updating and assessor training. The college allocates funding equivalent to about 1 per cent of the staffing budget to training. Individual training events are thoroughly evaluated through forms and through debriefing meetings with line managers. However, the staff development programme as a whole is not systematically planned and evaluated against the college's strategic objectives.

RESOURCES

Staffing

56 Teaching staff are well qualified and have up-to-date knowledge of industrial and commercial aspects of the curriculum. Part-time staff are used effectively to support specialist teaching, for example in equine studies, art and design, and countryside management. The staff demonstrate a sense of pride in their work, and they are highly motivated and committed to the college mission. The number of technicians and support staff is adequate with the exception of information technology, where there is insufficient technical staff to service the open access provision and to provide adequate support to students. Non-teaching staff provide good support to teachers and students.

57 Staff are well informed of college policies, for example on health and safety, through a comprehensive staff handbook. A human resources plan has been developed and integrated with the college strategic plan to implement curriculum delivery and development.

Equipment/learning resources

58 The college estate is a key resource in the provision of education and training. The farming system is formulated on the basis of educational demand and economic viability. The farming enterprise includes milk and beef production, pig and sheep units and arable cropping. There is a good range of farm equipment, complemented where necessary with loan or hire agreements from other farms and local contractors. The current level of horticultural equipment, however, is not sufficient for planned curriculum developments. There is also insufficient general workshop equipment such as lathes and surface grinders. There is a well-managed fleet of vehicles which provides a transport service into the college and transport for student visits.

59 The library is well resourced and there is a budget for 1993 of £68,000. There are separate areas for quiet private study. Students have ready access to a range of audio-visual resources and information technology equipment including CD-ROM and search facilities. Three computers in the library are designated for use by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

60 There is an appropriate range of information technology equipment. Over 100 computers, most with printers, are located in five rooms. An open access facility for students is available seven days per week until 22.00 hours. Other information technology rooms are made available at times of peak demand. A networked system with common software facilities is being introduced alongside a policy of replacement and enhancement. Although information technology is integrated into the curriculum there is still a need to develop vocationally relevant self-study materials for student use.

Accommodation

61 The main college campus is located at Bishop Burton with additional centres at Driffield, Bubwith, Preston and Broughton. On the main site a range of purpose designed or adapted buildings provides a good standard of teaching accommodation. The college provides modern residential accommodation for over 300 students including a student village which was completed in 1993. The village includes provision for students with physical disabilities. There is a building programme to improve catering and recreational facilities and students' common rooms. An accommodation strategy has been developed to make more effective use of the available accommodation.

62 The college has a planned maintenance programme based on a condition survey. Cleaning services keep the accommodation in an immaculate condition. General teaching rooms are well furnished, equipped with appropriate teaching aids and provide a pleasant working environment. However, several temporary buildings are showing external signs of deterioration and there is poor provision for some programme areas, for example, design and animal care. No crèche facilities are available on any of the sites.

63 The main college campus is well provided with specialist accommodation. The large modern pig unit has both national and international recognition and has resulted in the college becoming the national centre for training for the pig industry. The college grounds, gardens and nursery unit provide a wide range of good horticulture resources. The equestrian department's facilities include a full stable yard, which can accommodate more than 70 horses, a large tack room, forage barns, indoor arena, and outdoor floodlit menage. Animal care courses are well provided for in terms of licensed kennels, a cattery and pet shop.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

64 The college has made significant progress towards achieving its mission to provide an extensive, high-quality portfolio of education and training courses for rural industry and related activities. Particular strengths of the provision are:

- effective governance and management with strong support from the governing body
- excellent links with local schools, industry and the rural community
- good-quality specialist provision delivered in a commercial context and centred on the college estate
- excellent staff-student relationships with students respecting the teachers' up-to-date knowledge and practical experience of land-based industries
- the specialist rural centre providing for students with moderate to severe learning difficulties

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- an effective quality assurance system
 - high-quality provision for students' recruitment, guidance and support
 - the high levels of student retention and achievement
 - established international links which enhance the curriculum for staff and students.

65 If the college is to maintain and improve the quality of its provision it should address the following issues:

- more detailed information and advice to potential students on book and equipment costs
- the introduction of crèche facilities in order to widen access to mature students
- greater consistency in the level of tutorial support given to students wishing to progress to higher education
- the systematic planning and evaluation of staff development against the college's strategic plan.

FIGURES

-
- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (at April 1994)

 - 2 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area
(at April 1994)

 - 3 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (at April 1994)

 - 4 Percentage enrolments by level of study (at April 1994)

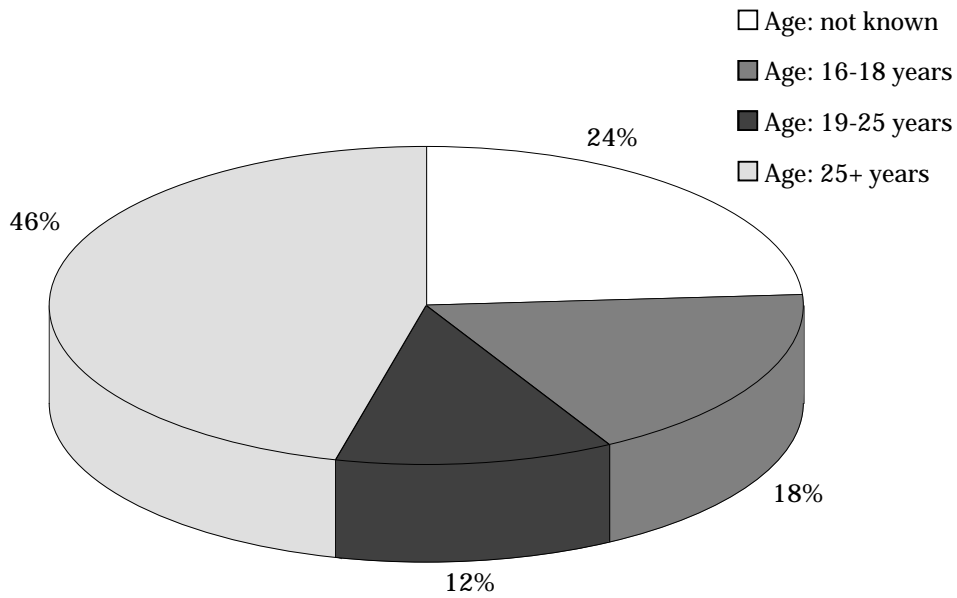
 - 5 Recurrent income (16 months to July 1994)

 - 6 Estimated expenditure (16 months to July 1994)

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

Figure 1

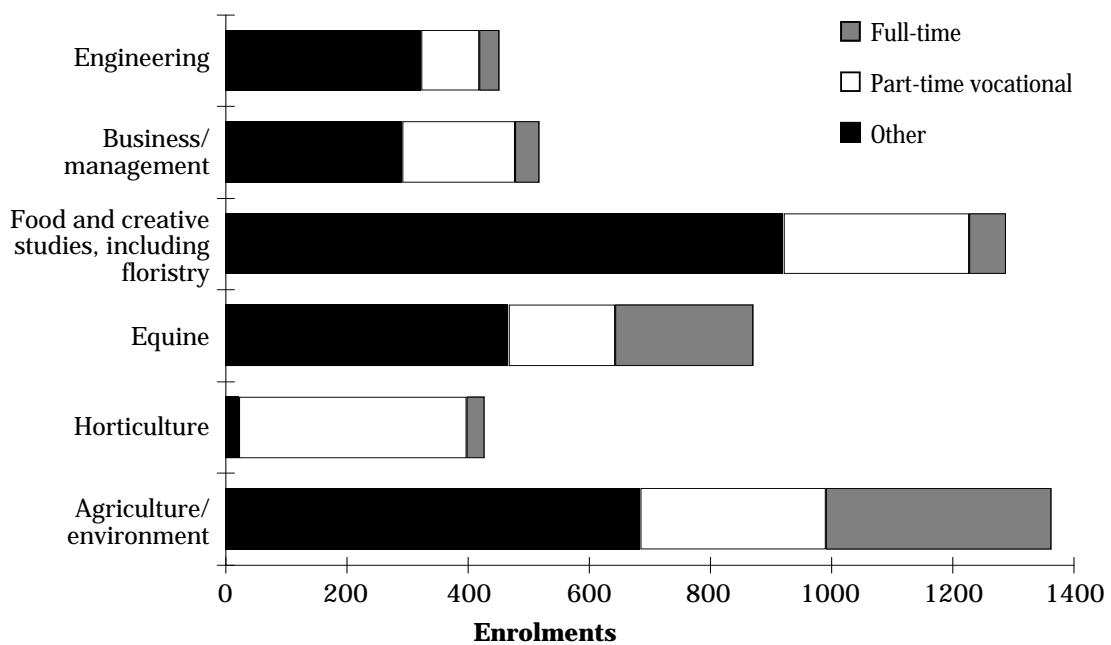
Bishop Burton College: percentage enrolments by age (at April 1994)



Enrolments: 4,922

Figure 2

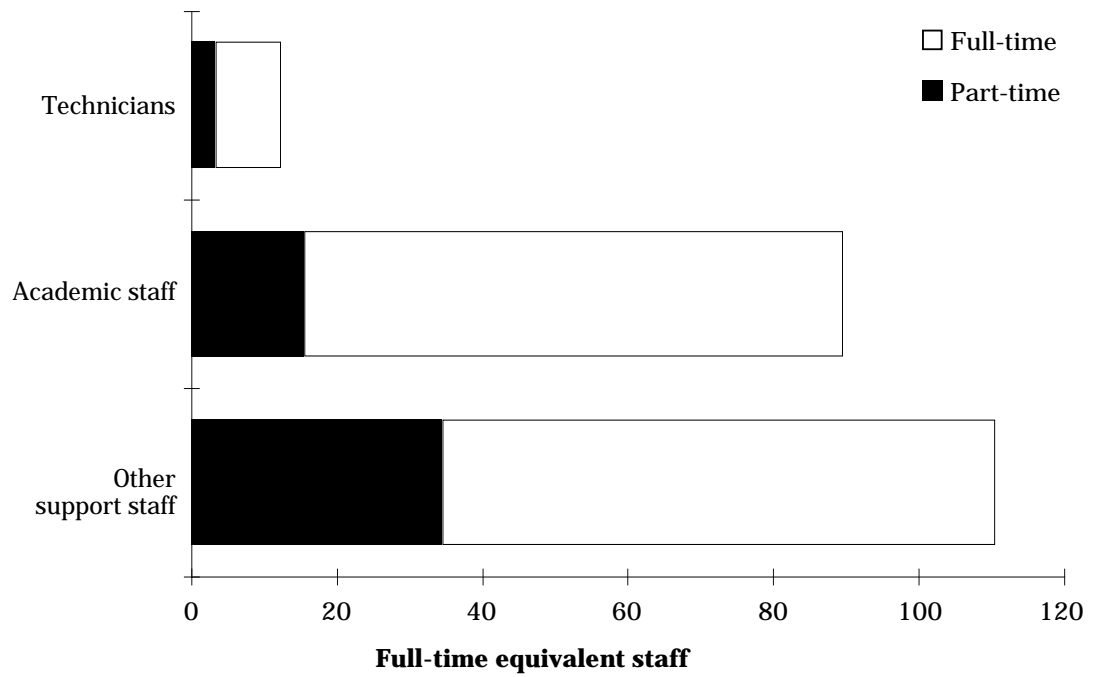
Bishop Burton College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (at April 1994)



Enrolments: 4,922

Figure 3

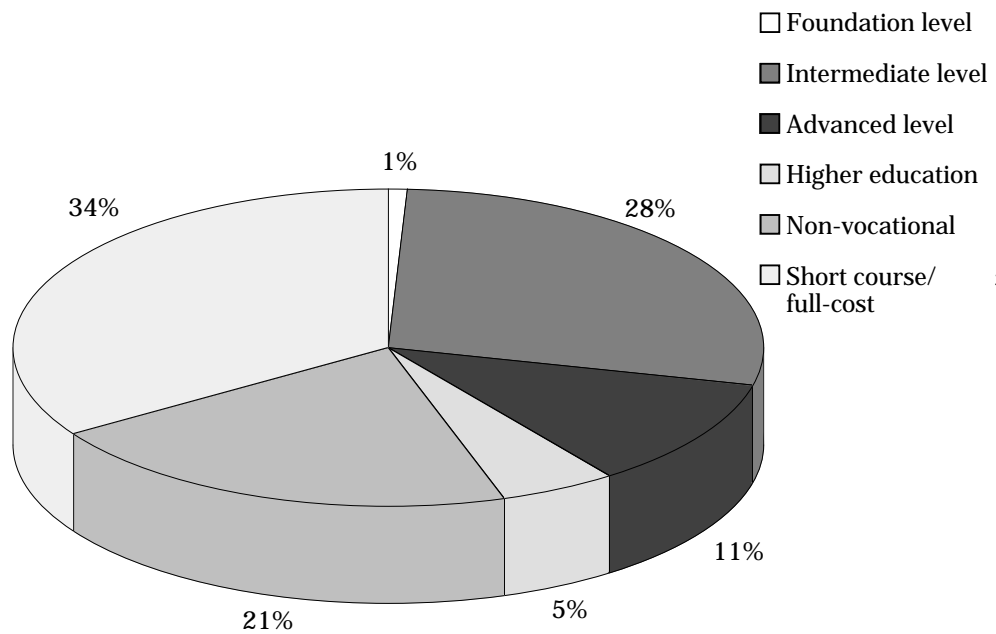
Bishop Burton College: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (at April 1994)



Full-time equivalent staff: 212

Figure 4

Bishop Burton College: percentage enrolments by level of study (at April 1994)



Enrolments: 4,922

Figure 5

Bishop Burton College: recurrent income (16 months to July 1994)

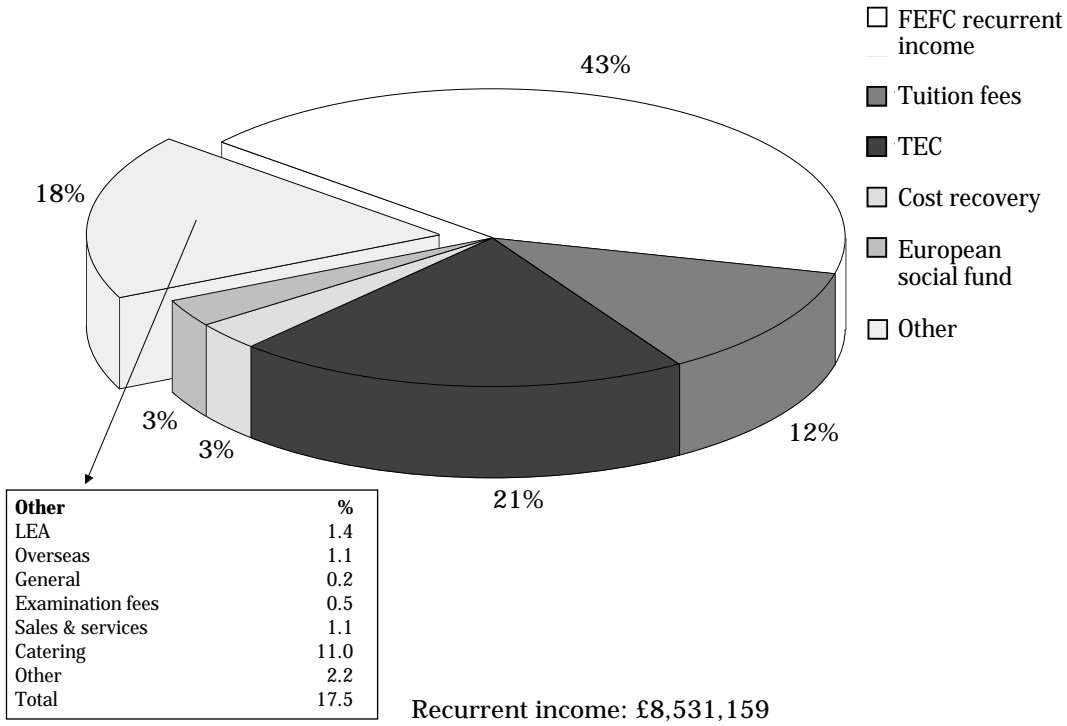
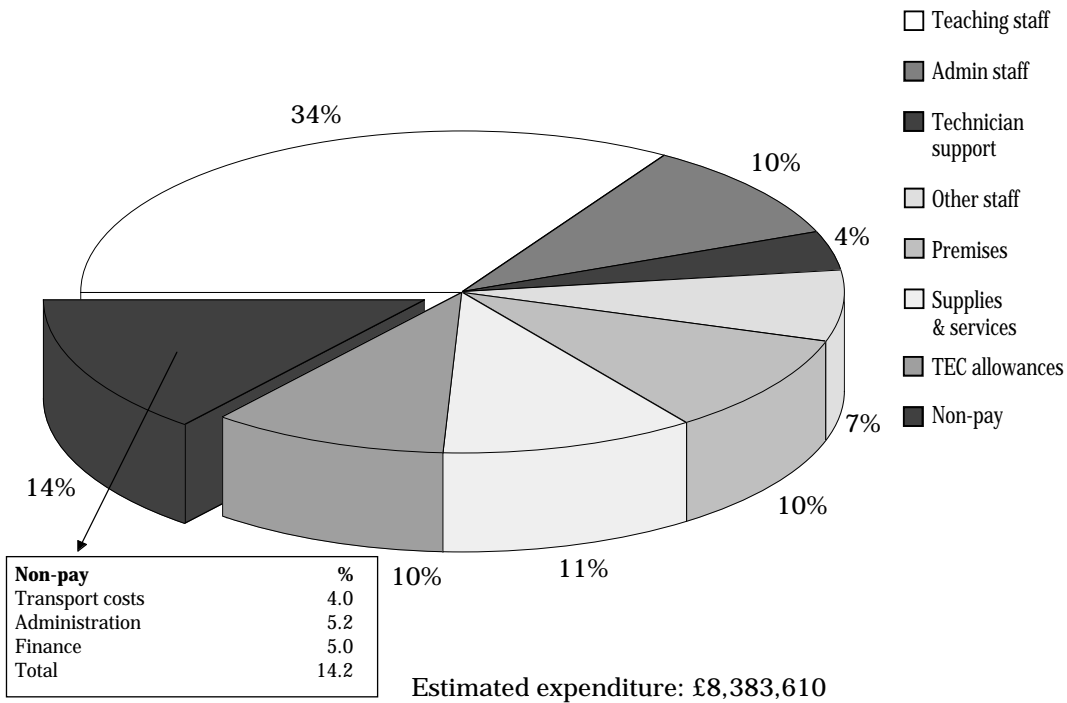


Figure 6

Bishop Burton College: estimated expenditure (16 months to July 1994)



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