Bradford and Ilkley Community College

April 1996

***THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL***

The Further Education Funding Council has a legal duty to make sure further education in England is properly assessed. The FEFC's inspectorate inspects and reports on each college of further education every four years. The inspectorate also assesses and reports nationally on the curriculum and gives advice to FEFC's quality assessment committee.

College inspections are carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. They involve full-time inspectors and registered part-time inspectors who have knowledge and experience in the work they inspect. Inspection teams normally include at least one member who does not work in education and a member of staff from the college being inspected.

CONTENTS

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are set out in the Council Circular 93/28. During their inspection, inspectors assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out in the reports. They also use a five-point grading scale to summarise the balance between strengths and weaknesses.

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.*

By June 1995, some 208 college inspections had been completed. The grade profiles for aspects of cross-college provision and programme areas for the 208 colleges are shown in the following table.

College grade profiles 1993-95

	Inspection grades				
Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Programme area	9%	60%	28%	3%	<1%
Cross-college provision	13%	51%	31%	5%	<1%
Overall	11%	56%	29%	4%	<1%

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 55/96

BRADFORD AND ILKLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION
Inspected September 1995-February 1996

Summary

Bradford and Ilkley Community College is one of the largest further and higher education providers in the country. It offers a wide range of programmes from foundation to postgraduate level, including many adult education courses which are delivered in local community centres. Practices relating to equal opportunities issues are effective. Members of the corporation are experienced and play a positive role in college activities. Managerial structures and practices are well established through an extensive network of committees. The planning and monitoring of student numbers is stringent. A wide range of services provides effective support for students. Standards of teaching are generally high. Students who complete their courses achieve sound results, particularly on higher level programmes. The college has systematic procedures to monitor course quality. Levels of learning resources are good in some curriculum areas. A well-considered accommodation strategy aims to use space effectively and improve the quality of the estate. The college should improve co-ordination between schools and departments, produce an annual operating statement to implement strategic intentions and achieve greater consistency in school development planning. The college should also: evaluate aspects of students' guidance and support; increase the retention rates of some programmes; ensure there is consistency in the review processes used at course, departmental and cross-college levels; increase the number of staff with a teaching qualification; and improve levels of basic equipment in some classrooms.

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	2
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	2
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	2
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science	2	Hair and beauty	2
Mathematics and computing	2	Health and community care	3
Construction	3	Art and design	1
Engineering	2	Humanities	2
Business	2	Adult education	2
Hospitality and leisure	2	SLDD provision	2

INTRODUCTION

1   Bradford and Ilkley Community College was inspected between September 1995 and February 1996. Construction provision was inspected separately in January 1995. During September 1995, enrolment and induction procedures were inspected. In October and November, 22 inspectors spent a total of 79 days inspecting programme areas. Inspectors visited 308 classes, held meetings with college staff and inspected a range of students' work and a variety of documentation relating to the college and its courses. In the week beginning 29 January 1996, seven inspectors spent a further 35 inspector days examining aspects of cross-college provision. During this period, they held meetings with governors, the vice-chancellor and the pro-vice chancellor (academic) of Bradford University, representatives from the Bradford and District Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) and Careers Bradford Limited, headteachers, local employers, parents, other members of the wider community, students, college managers, teaching and support staff.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2   Bradford and Ilkley Community College was established in 1982 as a result of the reorganisation of further and higher education in the Bradford area. It was formed from the merger of the separate Bradford and Ilkley Colleges. The college primarily serves the Bradford community, but it also has a regional and national role as a provider of advanced further and higher education. The college is situated on three main sites in Bradford and a fourth at Ilkley, 15 miles away, which mainly provides higher education. Over 50 buildings are occupied by the college and use is made of a substantial number of adult and community education centres distributed throughout the city and surrounding areas.

3   At the time of the inspection, 27,352 students were enrolled at the college. Of these, 21,109 students were aged 19 or over and 5,807 were full-time students. Approximately a third of the full-time equivalent students were following higher education courses. Enrolments by age, by level of study and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The college employs 558 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 672 full-time equivalent support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

4   The Bradford Metropolitan District has a population of over 400,000 and the West Yorkshire conurbation which surrounds it has a population of over 1.5 million. The city has a significant proportion of minority ethnic groups, amounting to 16 per cent of the population in 1994. Twenty-seven per cent of the college's students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Unemployment in Bradford, at 9.8 per cent, is higher than the national average. Youth unemployment currently stands at over 16 per cent.

5   In recent years there has been a shift from the traditional industries of wool, textiles and engineering towards the financial and service sectors. The proportions of the workforce engaged in the manufacturing, financial

and service sectors are 28 per cent, 10 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively. Three major building societies have their headquarters in the Bradford area and two others are situated in neighbouring districts. Several major engineering companies have closed during the last 10 years and 94 per cent of local companies now employ fewer than 50 employees. Bradford is rapidly developing as a centre for tourism and the arts.

6   The college operates in a competitive environment. Within the Bradford Metropolitan District there are two other further education colleges, 28 schools with sixth forms, a City Technology College and over 70 private and voluntary sector education and training providers.

7   The college directorate comprises the principal and four directors who are responsible for academic programmes, finance, administration, and human resources respectively. The curriculum is organised into 18 departments which are grouped into five schools: adult and general education; art, design and textiles; business and professional studies; science and technology; and teaching and community studies. Whilst maintaining the overall character and ethos of the college, the management and direction of each school is the responsibility of an assistant principal (head of school), assisted by heads of department who, together with senior support staff, form the school management team.

8   The mission of the college is 'to promote and underpin the local and national economy and the social fabric of Bradford by providing comprehensive education and training of recognised quality'. Key strategic intentions include the provision of linked, progressive education programmes for the widest range of students; high standards of customer care; efficient and effective communication and management systems; a key local contribution to the delivery of national targets for education and training; and provision of staff planning and development linked to the college mission.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

9   The college is responsive to the education and training needs of the local community and employers. Thirty-eight subjects are offered at General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and there are 39 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) subjects. Substantial vocational provision is offered in all programme areas of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) with the exception of agriculture. The strong commitment to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) is reflected in the 10 different programme areas offered. There is a growing range of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 to 4. During the last two years more than 52 major new courses have been launched successfully. There are some gaps in provision. For example, there is no part-time NVQ provision for mature students in the caring field and there are few enrichment opportunities for students on GCE A level programmes.

10   The college recruits successfully from groups which have not normally entered further education. The college promotes an extensive programme of adult and community education which is provided at 32 local centres across the city and surrounding areas. Well-organised area teams of staff liaise with local communities and provide opportunities for students, many of whom are unemployed, to return to learning. Six different programmes prepare adults for entry into higher education, providing places for 431 students at the main campus and five other centres. There is a good range of opportunities, including community-based provision, for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to participate in both separate specialist and mainstream programmes. The college is also a regional assessment centre for visually-impaired students. A large number of places at foundation level is provided, amounting to 38 per cent of the total FEFC-funded enrolments, but there is insufficient progression of students from this level to more advanced programmes.

11   Extensive learning opportunities in mathematics, communications and information technology tailored to suit individual needs are provided by the college's well-established learning workshops and through the English language centre which offers internationally-recognised qualifications.   Some departments have developed flexible study arrangements; for example, the varied patterns of attendance which the use of workshops allows has doubled recruitment to administration and secretarial courses. The mathematics open workshop supports many students each week, including Bradford University and Open University students and local school pupils. There is also flexible timetabling of some mainstream classes and a developing framework for credit accumulation and transfer which enables students to study in several departments and at different levels. There are successful examples of open and distance learning but, in general, the considerable skill and experience of using learning materials developed by the college is focused on students attending college premises. The college provides very few courses at weekends or during the summer months.

12   The college is the largest provider of higher education in the further education sector with a total of 3,700 enrolments at that level. Provision includes five masters programmes, 12 degree courses, 11 higher national diploma courses, a diploma in social work and five postgraduate certificates in education. The college is an associate college of the University of Bradford and has benefited from long-established and productive links with the university. These links are facilitated by the proximity of the main sites of the two institutions. Teaching on some programmes is shared between the college and the university. The two institutions collaborate on a range of projects and research topics. A university and college joint-planning group meets three times a year. The college also has links with the Universities of Huddersfield and Durham.

13   Although the main focus of liaison work is on the schools within Bradford, a schools liaison team co-ordinates promotional activities across

the college's catchment area, which includes more than 200 secondary schools. There is a well-designed brochure to inform the choice of 16 to 18 year olds and opportunities are provided for pupils and parents to visit the college on open days. Successful collaboration with schools includes the franchising of GNVQ courses and the provision of some adult and basic education courses on school premises. The college is responsive to the needs of a number of individual students who may study for a GCE A level at college whilst following the remainder of their programme at school. Some marketing activities lack effective co-ordination; for example, multiple contacts are made separately with schools by staff in different departments acting independently. The college is a member of the Bradford 14 to 19 planning group and has maintained productive links with the local education authority since incorporation.

14   The college has good relationships with a wide range of employers and with the local TEC. There are nine advisory committees covering the major curriculum areas of the college which provide opportunities for employers to contribute to curriculum developments. Links are particularly effective in science and textiles; those in adult education and health and care are less well established. The college, through its training credits unit, is one of the largest providers of TEC-funded training in the area and is involved in a number of TEC-funded projects. For example, it is the lead partner with Keighley and Shipley Colleges in using competitiveness fund monies to develop an information technology network that will deliver support and training to small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. Many full-time students undertake work experience placements with local employers. This is not centrally co-ordinated but organised by schools and departments acting independently.

15   The college is successful in gaining external funding and has met its target for earning 10 per cent of total income in this way. The enterprise support unit efficiently co-ordinates and facilitates these activities. Last year, about £400,000 was earned from tailored courses for industry and commerce, many delivered on company premises. Successful bids for European Union and Single Regeneration Budget funds amounted to £1.5 million. There is at present no short course brochure, although one is planned.

16   The policy of developing strong schools within the college, with their own portfolios of courses, has resulted in provision of great range and diversity. There are examples of fruitful co-operation and co-ordination between schools. However, closer working in some areas would enable the college to optimise its responsiveness. For example, it would allow some students access to a fuller range of provision across departments; the creation of effective links between various administrative databases; stronger co-ordination of market research and promotion; and measures to identify and spread good practice between schools and departments.

17   A publicity and marketing committee co-ordinates the production of high-quality publicity materials. These are distributed widely at times when prospective students are taking decisions about further education. In a minority of cases, schools and departments within the college produce their own course leaflets which are supplied in differing styles and are of variable quality. There is good use of a wide range of media, including community radio and some imaginative promotional ideas. Most market research is undertaken at school and department level and is valuable in informing decisions about additions and modifications to existing programmes.

18   European and international links are strong. The international centre supports departments in marketing, in recruitment, in creating links and in bidding for and managing projects based on a range of funding sources. Some students are sponsored by overseas companies and government departments. Work is undertaken with several central and East European countries on projects to support their transition to market economies. This year 450 students from 44 countries are enrolled at the college. Many are on further education courses. For example, a new foundation course in international studies runs under the auspices of the English language centre and combines English language teaching with vocational GNVQ modules. Other students attend higher education courses, for example the degree in European textiles. The college participates in a range of international fairs and there is a substantial programme of overseas visits and exchanges by staff and students.

19   There is a comprehensive set of policies relating to equality of opportunity including gender, multicultural education, students with disabilities and pregnant students. College co-ordinators for race, gender and disability work with representatives in each school to promote, implement and monitor equality of opportunity. Some of the policies have been in place since 1983. Practice is monitored rigorously by the co-ordinators who are supported in this activity by departmental heads. For example, the college has a personal harassment code of practice, including a well-publicised list of staff who can provide advice and support and clear procedures for action.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

20   The college has an experienced and well-informed corporation board. There are 18 members, of whom nine represent different employment sectors in the Bradford area. In addition, there are student, teaching and support staff representatives and co-opted members from different local communities. Four members of the corporation are women including one of Asian origin. The corporation meets seven times a year. Agendas, minutes and supporting documentation are of good quality. The governors play a key role in the work of the college by chairing the school advisory committees. The committees report to the corporation, supplying advice on the industrial relevance of curriculum provision. Following a review of

its operations, the corporation now invites heads of school to make formal presentations which inform members of the range of school activities. The corporation has an appropriate range of standing committees. There are committees for audit, equal opportunities, remuneration, policy and resources, employment and joint student affairs. In addition, there are management committees for health and safety, the trust fund and childcare. The principal produces regular written reports for the corporation.

21 The current management structure is well established and is understood by staff. Because of its large size, the college has devolved a considerable degree of managerial responsibility to the schools. Heads of school do not have any major responsibility for cross-college functions. The policies, procedures and practices related to the management and administration of the college are comprehensive and well documented. Regular communication is facilitated by an extensive cycle of meetings at course, department, school and directorate levels. These include a six-weekly cycle of meetings between the directorate and each assistant principal to review the progress of schools. This process is supported by boards of studies in each department and school which report to the academic board. The monitoring and development of the curriculum are exercised through college and school academic committees. These report to the academic board whose responsibilities are to exercise oversight of the academic work of the institution. The board is chaired by the principal and meets termly. There are emerging cross-college links, through, for example, forums for support staff, GNVQ co-ordinators, and internal verifiers. Senior managers are perceived as readily accessible by college employees.

22 School and departmental mission statements and objectives, effectively reflect the college mission statement. The current strategic plan contains most of the elements recommended in the FEFC framework but there is no summary of overall provision. Although the college states that it consults widely in relation to its needs analysis, there is no supporting commentary or evaluation of demographic, labour market or school leaver trends. In addition, there is no overall, annual operating statement to support the strategic plan which might identify broad targets and success criteria to measure achievements. Each head of school is required to produce a development plan and to deliver the agreed plan at a level of performance determined by the directorate. The plans differ widely in format and detail, and, in the case of one school, no plan is currently produced. The targets in a number of the school plans are too general to allow performance to be easily measured. In contrast, development plans at departmental level, for example those produced in administrative services and hospitality and leisure, are often detailed and include measurable outcomes. Some, for example, engineering, consider the impact of employment trends on future provision.

23   Given the range of students and programmes, requirements for management information are complex. A clearly-defined plan has been developed to upgrade computer systems and achieve an integrated network, including the installation of fibre optic cable to local centres. User requirements are assessed through regular meetings between the computer manager, senior managers and administrative officers. A wide range of reports can be generated on demand, as well as frequent updates of standard information relating to student enrolments and retention. Class lists are produced from enrolment data, and the college aims to produce accurate register information within three to four days of enrolment. There are over 150 computers on the management information network and regular training in the use of information technology is given to managerial and administrative staff. A network user group meets on a regular basis. The college has purchased an optical scanner to analyse student-perception surveys, although there is currently no central collation of this information. The centralised employer database is primarily used for invoicing purposes and does not provide comprehensive data relating to the range of employer contacts. The central student database has recently been updated to hold records of student achievement in order to support more accurate individual tracking across complex areas of curriculum provision.

24   The college's average level of funding for 1995-96 is £21.15 per unit. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges is £17.84. The college's estimated income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1996 are shown in figures 5 and 6. The policy and resources committee of the corporation endorses overall financial targets and receives detailed monthly management accounts together with a commentary. The director of finance provides overall strategic control, manages cash flow, capital and reserves, and assembles the budget. There is major delegation to assistant principals who are budget holders for their schools, within which each department is established as a cost centre. Virement between cost centres is sometimes undertaken to secure continuity of core provision. Monthly statements of variance are produced. A range of additional financial information is available on request. Financial training is provided for managerial and administrative staff and there is a comprehensive financial systems manual. Teaching staff are generally aware of the principles underpinning recurrent funding. All income is credited to budget holders and a financial allocation is negotiated from each school as a contribution towards central services. As a consequence, a wide range of entrepreneurial activities is generated by schools.

25   There is a stringent annual review of student numbers, starting at departmental level. Discussions between school management teams, the principal and directorate help to establish an accurate three-year rolling cycle of projected enrolments. The college has achieved or exceeded its forecast of units in previous years and expects to achieve its 1995-96 target. The college intends to achieve a 2 per cent increase in retention

during this current academic year. Course completion is currently monitored within departments and schools. Course teams and departments have their own systems of collecting information about student destinations. However, there is no overall college report and information about destinations is not made available to inform future students' choices.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

26   Support and guidance services for students are provided both centrally and at school or department level. The two main guidance services, the access unit and central student services, were merged in 1995 to form the access and guidance centre. The centre offers advice on college provision, advice on progression into careers and further and higher education, and guidance on financial matters. It also refers people to personal counselling and other support in the college and elsewhere. The service is valued highly by students who make extensive use of its facilities. Each school has named contacts who provide effective support for students on particular issues; their work is co-ordinated through a college-wide network. A framework of statements and policies assists the development and delivery of services. Systems for reviewing some aspects of practice are underdeveloped.

27   Procedures for recruiting students are generally effective. They are mainly conducted at department level, although there is central co-ordination of schools liaison activities. The college offers a number of open days and open evenings. These include a well-established open day for women and successful 'speak from experience' evenings, targeted at the parents of year 9 pupils, which offer opportunities for hands-on experience in a range of vocational areas. There is no coherent programme across the college to allow prospective students to sample provision, although some departments make their own arrangements.

28   Before enrolling, applicants to the college are offered interviews at course level by specialist staff within departments. If, as a result of this process, there are still uncertainties about the choice or level of courses, a referral is made to the access and guidance centre. Part-time students, including those at outreach centres, also have opportunities to obtain advice and guidance at pre-enrolment sessions or open days. At these events they can also reserve places on courses. Interviews for full-time GCE A level students involve consideration of both their overall programme and individual subjects. This is not always the case for part-time GCE A level students and a number consider their pre-enrolment guidance to have been unsatisfactory. At enrolment, teaching staff are available to provide advice and discuss with students their initial learning agreements while admissions staff handle registration procedures. The number of postal enrolments is increasing; last year, it accounted for 5 per cent of full-time and 9 per cent of part-time enrolments. Although enrolment arrangements are revised each year, some students in this current cycle

experienced long queues and some overcrowding, particularly those undertaking GCE A level and GCSE courses.

29   Induction to courses varies considerably in length, emphasis and effectiveness. Some part-time students had no identifiable induction at all. Activities include consideration of students' rights and responsibilities linked to consideration of the college charter and a learning contract which students sign. Some induction provides students with the specific certification they may need for a course, such as a competent users certificate for access to information technology facilities. Most course tutors carry out an informal check on the information acquired by students during induction but there is considerable variation in the topics covered. Part-time students in outreach centres are often unaware of the services available to them on the main site. There is no systematic, separate evaluation of induction.

30   Students report that teachers and tutors are readily accessible to provide support and guidance. Formal tutorial support varies in frequency and effectiveness. Although all students have a named personal tutor, few part-time students have regular timetabled meetings. Full-time students are more positive about their tutorials, particularly where these are integral to the course. In most instances, tutorials involve one-to-one sessions, focusing on academic support through regular progress reviews and action planning. Students also have occasional group tutorials, mainly working on course-related topics. Tutorials observed during the inspection varied considerably in quality and in the extent and pattern of students' attendance. The college does not offer a pastoral curriculum, although some groups have received inputs on specific topics such as HIV awareness. In a move to achieve greater uniformity, the access and guidance centre has recently produced a personal tutors' handbook. It provides advice largely distilled from existing good practice. So far, no work has been undertaken to assess its impact. There is no formal mechanism for ensuring a more consistent student experience across the college.

31   Students wishing to change their course receive appropriate support from tutors. On a number of foundation courses the choice of options or vocational areas is delayed until students have had the chance to sample them. The college has a policy on recording achievement, but its implementation is not monitored and few students leave with a completed national record of achievement. Attendance is monitored on all courses. Practice to follow up absences varies; some staff prefer to make telephone contact, rather than use official letters.

32   All full-time and some part-time students take screening tests in literacy and numeracy skills. Those needing help are referred to specialist staff for further diagnostic testing through the mathematics and communications learning workshops. Last year, about 35 per cent of referred students were identified as requiring additional support for numeracy and 27 per cent for literacy. At the time of inspection, only about half those requiring support were receiving it. In some instances,

students and teachers lack sufficient commitment to ensure that support is effective. Support arrangements are still in the process of being finalised for a significant number of students. Support was most effective when workshop staff operated alongside vocational staff in designated core skills sessions.

33   Students benefit from a wide range of services. The childcare facilities are extensive and of high quality; they provide about 500 places in all, over 100 in nurseries and the remainder in sessional creches run in community outreach centres. Although there is some shortfall in places, the college is now increasingly successful in meeting students' needs, especially in its dispersed provision. Financial help is available to parents through access funds for full-time students, and for part-time students through the college's childcare allowance funds which meet up to half of childcare costs. The college has two health centres, one on each main campus, offering mainly emergency and treatment services. The chaplaincy, shared with the university, has one part-time and two full-time chaplains. There are a number of active support groups, including Islamic and young Quaker groups.

34   The counselling service is shared with the university. It is staffed by two full-time and two part-time professionally-qualified counsellors, supplemented by a network of volunteers. The number of college students using the service has dropped significantly this year, in part due to a relocation which has made the service less accessible. The careers service, housed in the access and guidance centre, has one full-time and one part-time officer. Further guidance is provided through a service agreement with Careers Bradford Limited. Because the college careers service focuses on progression to higher education, some students find the external Careers Bradford service facilities more relevant to their needs. The resourcing of the college careers service is small for the size of the college.

35   A positive feature of the college's work is its well-established and extensive support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The range of students supported is wide; last year, the learning support service helped over 200 students, including two who were autistic. Each student's needs are assessed and enrolment only takes place when the college's learning support service is confident that it can provide the support needed. For example, a blind student who applied this year for a course in electronics will be enrolled next year, allowing time for Brailled circuit boards and other support materials to be prepared. Support for students with English as a second or foreign language is provided by the college's English language centre and adult education department.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

36   Strengths clearly outweighed weaknesses in 62 per cent of the sessions inspected. Weaknesses clearly outweighed strengths in 8 per cent of sessions. The following table summarises the grades given to the teaching sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level	1	13	8	4	0	26
GCSE	2	5	4	3	0	14
GNVQ	11	16	15	4	1	47
NVQ	5	23	12	2	0	42
Other vocational	16	22	27	3	0	68
Basic education	8	6	8	3	1	26
Access to higher education	2	4	0	0	0	6
Higher education	2	3	4	1	0	10
Other	13	40	14	2	0	69
Total	**60**	**132**	**92**	**22**	**2**	**308**

37   During some days of the programme area inspections, industrial action took place. Attendance levels on these days have been excluded from overall totals. On non-strike days, attendance varied from over 80 per cent in construction, science, hospitality and leisure to below 60 per cent in adult education and hair and beauty. The average rate of attendance was 67 per cent.

38   Most teaching sessions were effectively planned and well structured. The content and level were generally appropriate to the needs of the students. Teachers displayed up-to-date knowledge of their subjects, and set assignments which were often challenging. They monitored students' progress carefully and gave them constructive feedback. Staff and students enjoyed good working relationships.

39   Practical teaching in sciences was of a high standard. In a GCSE chemistry class, for example, students were asked to carry out an acid/base titration. The teacher clearly explained and demonstrated the method to be used, paying particular attention to safe practice. A detailed risk assessment had been carried out before the start of the session and the results were available to the students, who demonstrated good laboratory skills in carrying out the task. Schemes of work ensured good coverage of the syllabuses and specified competencies for students to acquire. However, they did not always cover the differentiated content and methods required for teaching mixed ability groups. In the better theory lessons, teachers used a variety of teaching methods to encourage student participation. Students' work was set regularly and marked appropriately. Teachers maintained detailed records of students' progress to inform a review of individual learning targets.

40   Most teaching of mathematics took place in the mathematics workshop where students could study at a time and pace appropriate to

their needs, using learning materials of high quality. Students undertook initial assessments which were used to match them to a suitable course and they were allocated their own mathematics counsellor. They could also call upon the services of experienced staff on duty in the workshop. They were able to attend separate classroom sessions to consolidate their learning of specific topics. The teaching of GCE A level mathematics in the workshop had not been sufficiently modernised to integrate the use of information technology and provide opportunities for students to develop problem solving skills. Mathematics teaching in classrooms often lacked the challenging and effective techniques adopted in the workshop.

41   Work in computing was generally well planned. Students could choose GNVQ courses which focused either on business or engineering. There was appropriate emphasis on the use of structured methods of software design and this aspect was well taught. Students were involved in group work, presentations and case studies. Practical sessions on the business course had clear learning objectives. One effective session had been preceded by a demonstration of software. Students were then required to compare and contrast two different approaches taken by competing software packages. Some practical sessions on the engineering course lacked a clear focus; students worked on a variety of assignments rather than those directly relevant to the particular topic. Teachers are developing a set of guides to support portfolio building and assessment for GNVQ students.

42   In construction, the standard of teaching varied considerably. Teaching in the better technician classes was well organised and teachers made good use of a range of learning materials. In other classes, teachers did not encourage students' participation or check their understanding of the topics being covered. In some groups, students had received little feedback on their progress. In craft skills, practical exercises were well planned.   Comprehensive support material ensured that students developed a knowledge and understanding of the subject. Students were interested and involved in their work and the teaching was well organised. Teachers supervised students effectively, checked their understanding through regular questioning and kept thorough records of students' progress. They demonstrated sound subject knowledge and created an effective learning environment, encouraging students to enter readily into discussions.

43   The standard of teaching in engineering was generally high. Teachers were able to link theoretical concepts to current industrial practice. In the better classes a variety of teaching methods was employed, supported by an extensive range of learning materials. For example, students on a women-only motor vehicle course were able to use materials appropriate to their particular needs on an individual basis. This maintained their enthusiasm and enabled them to produce work of a high standard. Teaching of some electronics subjects was well structured and there were detailed schemes of work. An electronics workshop had been established

for students to use on a flexible basis. However, its effectiveness was limited by a lack of learning support materials. Much of the craft training was well planned and documented. Clear instructions enabled students to work at a pace suited to their own needs and abilities. Progress was clearly recorded. On some courses, monitoring of students' progress was poor and teachers provided inadequate feedback to students on some assessed work.

44   Teaching on business programmes was well organised and focused towards assessment. Staff showed good levels of professional knowledge and were enthusiastic. In the better sessions they set the topics in context, made constructive use of students' work experience and monitored students' progress. Flexible learning materials were extensively and appropriately used. On full-time GNVQ programmes, formal teaching sessions were followed by workshop sessions where students were able to receive effective individual support. In some lessons, teaching was less imaginative and relied too much on the routine completion of work sheets or simulated assignments. In others, teachers dictated an excessive amount of notes to students and gave students insufficient opportunities to check and clarify issues or to participate in group activity.

45   Realistic and effective schemes of work supported the teaching of catering and leisure. In the better classes teachers engaged the students in a variety of challenging activities. Students responded positively, displaying enthusiasm for their work and achieving high standards. In one class, the outline scheme of work was complemented by a detailed lesson plan and task book prepared by the teacher. Students worked independently on the tasks, recording evidence gained from the previous session and using reference material available in the classroom. The teacher gave them advice and guidance as required. Practical classes were structured so that students could undertake activities in a realistic working environment. In contrast, in some inadequately planned and poorly-managed classes, the pace of work was too slow and did not allow students to achieve their full potential.

46   In hairdressing and beauty therapy, teachers employed a variety of learning strategies. They made effective use of audio-visual aids and regularly emphasised the links between theory and practice. Students clearly understood the skills required for successful achievement. Students in health and social care were positive about their studies. Tutors used research material effectively to support theoretical lessons. They monitored students' progress by regularly setting assignments, marking and returning them promptly and making constructive comments. Classroom management was sometimes poor. Schemes of work and lesson plans did not allow for mixed ability groups or different levels of understanding and experience. Sessions tended to be dominated by the tutor and opportunities for students to share their own experiences were missed.

47   On GNVQ courses in art and design, teachers adopted a positive approach which acknowledged the cultural diversity of the students. They produced imaginative project briefs, customised to the needs of the individual. The good relationships between staff and students helped to create a positive learning environment. Students negotiated individual work plans with their teachers who monitored and guided them well. In a small number of teaching sessions the work did not challenge the students sufficiently. In media, performing arts and music technology, students were encouraged to develop creative and professional skills by well-qualified and enthusiastic staff. Projects and other work set were carefully designed to develop students' skills and knowledge. For a music technology group which was working on keyboard skills the tutor had devised an assignment with three different levels of outcomes to meet the differing abilities of students. Theory sessions were lively and demanding and students received constructive feedback on their progress.

48   Classroom teaching in English and modern languages was well supported by open-access facilities. The communications workshop was well staffed with teachers of English who helped students to develop speaking and social skills as well as more formal aspects of the language. The better modern language sessions were conducted primarily in the language being studied. For example, in a beginners' Dutch class, the teacher conducted a session on the geography of Holland exclusively in the language, making successful use of mime, gesture and visual aids. In several sessions, however, the more reluctant students were not encouraged to participate.

49   Teachers of humanities subjects were sensitive to the circumstances of individual students, particularly those with language difficulties. They maintained up-to-date assessment records. In many cases, work was carefully marked and teachers provided comments which were supportive and helpful. In the best classes, a stimulating range of resources guided learning. Schemes of work varied in their effectiveness; in some cases they were little more than a syllabus. In the weaker classes, teachers did not encourage students to participate or make use of students' prior experiences. They gave insufficient attention to the development of core skills. The quality of much teaching in the social sciences was high. Enthusiastic staff had planned their lessons well. In most sessions teachers presented the topic through discussion and encouraged contributions from students. They provided high-quality handout materials as supplementary information. In some classes, the low number of students present reduced the effectiveness of group activity.

50   Adult education students enjoyed their studies and formed productive working relationships with teachers. Well-designed programmes ensured that the needs of individual students were accommodated. Demonstrations in practical subjects were clear. Students' progress was regularly checked and they were sensitively encouraged to develop new skills and techniques.

Staff teaching basic education programmes were committed and hard working. Most students had individual learning plans. The better classes were effectively organised to meet the needs of both learners and accreditation schemes. In the weaker classes, supporting materials were not directly related to the needs and experience of the learners. For example, in one session students were considering map reading techniques but using material from Central London rather than Bradford.

51   The British sign language classes involved the use of a variety of techniques including question and answer sessions, practical demonstration and paired activities. The pace of the work and methods of teaching fully met the needs of the students. Schemes of work for courses in English for speakers of other languages challenged and extended students' skills.

52   The college has a policy of encouraging students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to study on mainstream college courses and supporting them appropriately wherever possible. Initial assessment of need has led to individual programmes of learning. In many of the sessions observed, staff had produced lesson plans from carefully-devised schemes of work which catered for a wide range of abilities. Teachers generally had high expectations of students, encouraging them to respond positively to the challenges set. Students were able to discuss their progress with their tutor on an individual basis. Access to information technology resources enhanced learning. In the weaker classes, teachers did not fully appreciate the specific learning difficulties experienced by individual students.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

53   Students are generally disciplined, well motivated and enjoy their studies. They were able to speak positively about the support they received from teachers. There were examples of effective group work in art and design, business, and some humanities subjects; it was less prominent in other courses, such as hairdressing. Practical work was undertaken competently and safely using a variety of machines, tools and other technical or electronic equipment. Standards in practical work were at least satisfactory; they were good in art and design. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were achieving well in the areas of personal development and effectiveness.

54   Core skills were appropriately featured and assessed on GNVQ programmes. Additional opportunities to develop core skills were available in the communications, mathematics and information technology learning workshops. Levels of participation and achievement in the support workshops for mathematics were sometimes poor and there was little collaborative involvement by staff in vocational areas. The use of information technology was sometimes underdeveloped, for example, in some engineering and many of the humanities courses. On English

language courses, there was little evidence that wordprocessing skills were being practised. By contrast, most courses allowed ample opportunities for students to develop oral communication skills; mature students, in particular, were confident and well spoken. Note-taking skills were less consistently developed; students were occasionally unsure of what and how to record.

55   A significant number of students' assignments were well researched and displayed a high standard of content and presentation. Students were able to show their understanding of the links between theory and practice. In most programme areas, students' responses to internal assessments were at an appropriate standard. In some cases, there was evidence of an over-reliance on secondary rather than primary sources of information. Students sometimes found difficulty in structuring their written assignments logically.

56   Seventy-seven per cent of 16 to 18 year old students in their final year of study on vocational courses included in the 1995 performance tables produced by the Department for Education and Employment were successful. This places the college among the middle third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure. Students aged 16 to 18 who entered for at least one GCE A/AS examination in 1994-95 scored on average 2.6 points per entry (where A=10, E=2). This places the college amongst the bottom third of colleges on this performance measure, although the number of students entered in this age group was small.

57   Pass rates in vocational programmes in science in 1995 were generally sound. One hundred per cent pass rates were obtained in the national and higher national certificate programmes. Pass rates at GCE A level were disappointing, varying from 50 per cent in physics and chemistry to 67 per cent in biology. In mathematics, examination results were good. The GCSE pass rate at grades A to C in 1995 was 69 per cent and in 1994, 56 per cent. These figures are significantly above sector averages. At GCE A level, although numbers completing in 1995 were modest, the pass rate for full-time and part-time students averaged over 95 per cent.

58   Pass rates in construction for students who completed their courses were variable in 1994. On some courses, such as the higher level and professional programmes, 83 per cent achieved the target qualification. Students on the Construction Industry and Training Board courses also achieved good pass rates; all the students on carpentry and joinery courses achieved their qualifications. However, only 43 per cent of foundation students, 38 per cent of intermediate students and 58 per cent of advanced students achieved their main qualification in 1994. Overall on full-time programmes, 68 per cent of those students who completed their courses were successful.

59   There are good levels of achievement on a number of engineering and advanced programmes, notably the higher national certificate and many NVQ intermediate and advanced craft courses, where full awards

have averaged over 80 per cent during the last two years. Pass rates on national certificate programmes at 75 per cent over the last two years were also satisfactory. However, pass rates on national diploma courses were poor, averaging only 38 per cent over the same period. Although the modular nature of the intermediate fabrication and welding programme allows students to extend their studies beyond the academic year, overall pass rates are a concern, averaging only 18 per cent in the 1993-95 period.

60   In the business programme area, half of the students entered for single subject examinations in wordprocessing and audio typing achieved distinctions in 1994-95. Results in higher national certificate programmes have been above 96 per cent for the last two years. Significant numbers of students achieved NVQ accounting qualifications at intermediate and advanced levels during 1995. Achievements on GNVQ programmes at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels were sound. Results in GCE A level business studies, economics and accounts were unsatisfactory in 1995, with pass rates varying between 20 and 39 per cent. Results were significantly better for GCSE subjects.

61   Examination results in hospitality and leisure during 1995 were good at basic or introductory levels and the pass rate on the college diploma for professional chefs was 100 per cent. NVQ awards at intermediate level in catering were also satisfactory averaging nearly 70 per cent. Although no student achieved the full NVQ award in bakery, most achieved the units specified by employers as representing primary learning targets. On the GNVQ intermediate course in leisure there was a pass rate of 56 per cent.

62   For those students completing their course, pass rates on advanced health and social care programmes in 1995 were often good. For example, in the BTEC national diploma in childhood studies the figure was 97 per cent and in the BTEC science (health studies) it was 93 per cent. Completion of full NVQ awards in hairdressing at intermediate and advanced levels was sound; there was a 100 per cent pass rate on the part-time intermediate programme. The pass rate on the national diploma beauty course was 81 per cent in 1995, a rate above the national average figure.

63   In the art and design programme area, textile technology results were of a particularly high standard in 1995, with 100 per cent pass rates recorded at higher and national certificate levels. Similar results were recorded on the national diploma in interior design and display technician certificates. On the foundation studies diploma, 98 per cent of those students completing the course, achieved the award. Similarly on the national diploma in music technology, 90 per cent of students completing gained the award.

64   In humanities, there was a large entry of 203 students for GCSE English in 1995, of whom 76 per cent achieved a pass at grades A to C. Ninety-four per cent of GCSE Urdu candidates passed at grades A to C in 1995. At GCE A level, pass rates in English courses averaged nearly 80 per cent. Through the English language centre, of the 538 students

attending, 83 per cent were successfully entered for various examinations. Results in other humanities subjects in 1995 were mixed. Good pass rates were achieved at GCE A level in general studies, politics, media studies, music and communications. Results in history, geography, and psychology were poor in relation to further education college national figures. On programmes preparing adults for entry into higher education, all 137 students who completed the course in 1995 were successful.

65   Some good examination results were recorded in adult education programmes, notably practical subjects such as photography, first aid and typewriting. There were lower levels of achievement in GCSE subjects such as accounting, law and English language. In basic education programmes, there is no policy for assessment or accreditation and some students have attended the same classes in the same centres for more than three years. Although students have the opportunity to gain nationally-recognised qualifications, many were completing programmes of individual modules rather than the full award. As a consequence, fewer than 10 per cent of students achieved a complete qualification during 1993-94 and 1994-95. There were moderate rates of success on the British sign language courses at levels 1 and 2; at level 3, the pass rate was 100 per cent. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on separate specialist programmes, have access to a developing range of nationally accredited qualifications. For example, a number gained units in GNVQ foundation programmes during 1995. Practices in recording achievement, however, lack consistency.

66   Course retention rates are good on higher national certificate programmes. In engineering for example, 89 per cent of students completed the five courses offered at this level in 1995. In art and design, course retention on the higher national certificate in textile technology was over 90 per cent during the last two years. Retention rates were more variable at other levels. In GCE A level mathematics the retention rate for the part-time students was 32 per cent. Retention was also disappointing for GCE A level computing, GCSE information systems and the new intermediate GNVQ in information technology. In construction, the retention rate for part-time students was satisfactory at 70 per cent, but only 46 per cent for full-time students. Retention in GNVQ business courses averaged 73 per cent. In art and design the retention rate on a number of the national diploma programmes fell to 60 per cent. Retention is a particular concern on some health and social care courses. For example, on the GNVQ intermediate health and social care programme in 1995, only 37 per cent of students completed the course and on the current advanced programme there are only 17 students left out of the 52 who started. In humanities, completion rates were acceptable in social sciences but poor for GCE A level courses in geography, history and English language.

67   Most of the students on advanced programmes progress to higher education courses, significant numbers staying at the college or going to

the nearby university. In many instances, however, there is no systematic tracking of students' destinations when they leave college. Adult education students are not always actively encouraged to progress to courses on the main campus and there is insufficient liaison with mainstream programmes and staff. Internal progression routes are, however, generally well mapped. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are supported on mainstream courses have clear progression routes; this is not always the case for those on separate specialist programmes.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

68   The college charter clearly details the commitments the college makes to students, parents, employers and the community and the responsibilities required of students. The charter has been modified in the light of student and staff comments. A review group is now considering further changes to make service standards more rigorous and how progress towards charter conformance can be assessed. Staff have a clear understanding of charter issues and students receive an introduction to the charter during their induction.

69   Key college documents give appropriate attention to quality and its assurance. The strategic intentions of the college include a commitment to creating an ethos focused on quality and to requiring the highest standards of customer care. The quality assurance manual includes a policy which commits the college to assuring the quality of all aspects of its work. The manual provides guidance on college procedures. It gives prominence to the need for the proper planning of provision and to the establishment of performance indicators and procedures to review and improve provision.

70   There is an extensive committee structure to support quality assurance procedures and the roles and responsibilities of these committees are clearly stated in the quality manual. The school academic committees are charged with receiving, considering and reporting on the processes and outcomes of course monitoring, review and evaluation. They report to the college academic planning committee which is chaired by the vice-principal. The committees meet regularly; their minutes indicate that appropriate attention is given to quality matters. Staff have a clear understanding of the structures and procedures.

71   An academic standards unit ensures that courses are appropriate to the college's mission and meet national standards. There are rigorous procedures for the development and periodic review of courses. Courses which are designed by the college undergo formal peer group appraisal. Panels include teachers and external personnel, including employers. Courses which are designed by external bodies are subjected to a process which concentrates on the need for the course and the ability of the college to resource and teach it properly. Similar procedures govern the five-yearly review of courses where course teams are required to justify the continuance of the programme.

72　The college attaches considerable importance to external verifiers' reports. These reports are received by the principal and issues raised are followed through carefully. Summaries of these reports are aggregated at department level and presented to the college academic planning committee. The college's quality assurance procedures meet the needs of external examining and validating bodies. Procedures for the internal verification of courses are developing well. There is a network of teachers involved in internal verification which meets monthly and useful guidance notes and models of good practice have been developed. Internal verification reports are clear and comprehensive.

73　The views of students are considered in a variety of ways. Course committees and school boards have student members and course teams are required to consider the views of students when writing their annual course reports. A good feature is the role the students' union plays in the training of students' representatives. Half-day training events are organised and there is extensive documentation to support their work. The lack of uniformity in recording the results of students' perception questionnaires, however, makes it difficult to aggregate students' views at department and school level.

74　There is a cycle of reporting on provision at course, department and school level, which is clearly documented and understood. Course teams meet regularly and meetings are minuted. Minutes indicate that actions previously identified are monitored until they are completed. Teams are required to produce annual reports on their course provision and these reports are considered by the head of department and departmental and school boards. Targets are set at course level for enrolment and there are triggers for action related to student retention and achievement. Many course reports are rigorous in the way they review provision. They include detailed statistical front sheets which record enrolment, retention, course and unit data and action plans which clearly address issues identified in the report. Some reports are less thorough, failing, for example, to consider students' views and producing action plans which do not address all the issues raised in the reports. The structure of the course reporting procedure is not well suited to some courses, such as courses in adult education where staff have limited awareness of the processes and where targets are not used.

75　Most of the departmental and school overview reports represent examples of good practice. They review course achievements, consider students' and external verifiers' views, review the implementation of actions set the previous year and collate action plans derived from course reports. Some reports are less rigorous and fail to reach clear judgements on quality. The reporting cycle takes a considerable time to complete. School reports on one academic year's work are not presented to the college's academic planning committee until March of the following year.

76　The extent to which the quality of cross-college provision is assured is variable. Whilst some services such as students' services and the library

complete detailed reviews of their provision, some reports do not match their performance against targets. Some processes, such as the induction of students, are not reported on at college level. Some cross-college provision such as mathematics service teaching is poorly reported. The college does not subscribe to any national, value-added initiatives to inform the review of GCE A level teaching.

77   A quality assessment report was written by the college to support the inspection process. It was written to the inspection headings outlined in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement.* It is based on evidence and clearly lists strengths and weaknesses. The judgements in the report substantially match the inspection findings.

78   The college is committed to achieving Investor in People status by December 1996. In support of this, new staff receive induction which introduces them to the college and their section. Procedures for the interviewing of individual staff by line managers to review performance and establish objectives are in place and are well regarded by staff. They have a positive effect on performance and many result in staff-development opportunities to enable individuals to meet their objectives. The college recognises the need to include part-time staff in the process.

79   There is a good volume of appropriate staff-development activity. Two per cent of the staffing costs of the college are earmarked for staff development and significant activity is centred on college priorities for curriculum and personal development, including helping staff to achieve assessor qualifications. There are weaknesses in the management of staff development. For example, priorities identified in some schools are not specific enough, there is no documented overall programme for internally-held staff development and there is little evaluation of how the actual activity matches the plan.

RESOURCES

Staffing

80   The college employs the equivalent of 1,230 full-time staff. The overall profile of staff is appropriate to the college's needs. Forty-five per cent are teachers and 55 per cent support staff. Forty-seven per cent of the staff are male and 53 per cent female. Although this represents an even gender balance amongst the staff as a whole, women are under represented in the senior management of the college. Eight per cent of the staff are from minority ethnic groups. There is a good mix of full-time and part-time teachers in most curriculum areas and 75 per cent of the teaching over the college as a whole is undertaken by full-time members of staff. However, there are some areas in humanities and adult basic education where too much reliance is placed on part-time teachers. The teaching staff represent a good range of age and experience, and turnover is low.

81   In general, teachers are well qualified academically. Eighty-seven per cent of the full-time teachers have a first degree or its equivalent, and

many, particularly those working in higher education, also have a higher degree. For example, 66 per cent of full-time teachers have a higher degree in the school of teaching and community studies. In a number of departments, further education students benefit from being taught by staff who also contribute to higher education programmes. A good proportion of teachers hold, or are working towards, relevant assessor qualifications. Seventy-two per cent of full-time teachers have a teaching qualification. Curriculum areas in which a third or more of the teachers lack a teaching qualification include science and technology, business studies, health and construction. Many of those without a teaching qualification are those who teach primarily on higher education programmes. Some of the staff with management responsibility for the teaching of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities lack relevant specialist qualifications. Few adult basic education teachers have specialist qualifications in teaching basic skills.

82   The college is well served by central support staff who provide services such as cleaning, catering, security and premises management. Technician and administrative staff attached to schools provide a good standard of support to teachers. They are integrated with course teams and are given good opportunities for gaining and upgrading their qualifications. Fifty-five staff are paid as first aiders. Senior support staff have appropriate professional and technical qualifications in areas such as finance, personnel, librarianship, counselling, management administration and information technology. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support from staff who are suitably experienced and qualified. However, in some areas the lack of technician support in providing and setting up equipment reduced the range of teaching methods which teachers were able to adopt. There is no consistent practice on the role of information technology technicians in supporting students' learning.

83   The college's specialist personnel department offers support and information to managers. The department manages the appointment and redundancy processes on their behalf and has a range of personnel policies and procedures which are published in the staff handbook. For example, there is a system whereby newly-appointed teaching and support staff complete a probationary period with an interim review every three months. The department carries out thorough monitoring of recruitment and selection in relation to age, gender, ethnic origin, and the sickness and absence levels of staff. This acts as a source of management information to schools and ensures that the college's equal opportunities policies are being carried out. Other useful and detailed information is collected, but the college does not use it to undertake a regular audit of staffing at college level.

84   The college's staffing budget currently represents about 70 per cent of its total expenditure. It is committed to reducing this figure and to diverting funds to equipment and learning resources. Its policy is to undertake this through redeployment and voluntary redundancy.

Equipment/learning resources

85   The college has libraries on its three main sites, each of which is well resourced. The Grove library, on the main campus, has group and project areas, silent study areas, and a women's study area. The three libraries between them possess approximately 240,000 volumes, subscribe to 939 periodicals, have 650 study spaces, and spend £28 per full-time equivalent student a year on books. They have an extensive non-book collection including slides, video tapes and networked compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) databases, and on-line access to over 500 databases worldwide. The catalogues of the three libraries are computerised and available across all three sites. The further education students benefit from having access to books and materials provided primarily for higher education students. The level of resources reflects this dual use.

86   The library service is well managed, and measures its performance thoroughly against performance indicators and service standards. There are 44 library staff including 14 professional librarians. Subject librarians liaise effectively with curriculum areas. They serve on department boards and course committees and assist with the allocation of funding for library provision within the schools. The college's academic support services committee brings together staff from libraries, learning resource centres, media services, student services, learning support, and representatives from schools.

87   The college has five attractive computer centres with largely modern computing facilities. Each is managed by a different school and the hardware and software reflect the specialist nature of the schools they serve. They have a combination of open-access areas and classrooms which can be booked. Their popularity with students results in some overcrowding at peak times. Curriculum areas are also equipped with appropriate computer facilities; they are particularly strong in health, languages, textiles and sciences. An information technology van visits community centres regularly. The college has a ratio of one computer for every 10 full-time equivalent students. This is sufficient provision to meet its current needs.

88   Materials and facilities for resource-based learning in the college as a whole are of good quality. The mathematics and communications workshops have good specialist facilities and an extensive range of learning materials tailored to suit the courses offered. Students of modern foreign languages use an open-access languages area with good provision of CD-ROMs and relevant software. GNVQ workshops provide good resources to help students build up portfolios. Some aspects of learning resources are weaker. For example, learning materials in the electronics workshop are underdeveloped. Students sometimes cannot gain access to workshops because they are fully booked for class use. Some curriculum areas, such as humanities, have made little progress in developing learning materials for wider study and independent learning. Students in all areas have to

buy their own core textbooks; this can involve them in considerable expense or result in them not acquiring their own copy.

89   The college's learning support service provides a good level of specialist equipment for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include hearing aids for deaf students, automated dictionaries, text enlargement, a machine which creates Braille, voice recognition systems and portable induction loops. Because of the high standard of its equipment, the college has been selected as a local assessment centre for the visually impaired.

90   The standard of specialist equipment in most vocational areas is good. There are particular strengths in media studies, where students have access to the college's media resource centre, in art and design, performing arts, textiles and languages. Equipment in some other vocational areas such as construction, catering and engineering is not fully representative of modern practice. Basic equipment levels in some classrooms are poor. This applies in particular to general purpose classrooms which are not dedicated to a particular subject and to classrooms on the dispersed sites used for adult education. Many of these lack overhead projectors, blinds and carpets and the standard of furnishing is poor. In some cases, teachers lack easy access to equipment and materials for class use. Teachers in community centres often have to bring in their own materials. On the main campus, some teachers have to collect classroom equipment such as overhead projectors and video players from central media services. The difficulties of transportation reduce the use of this equipment and limit the range of teaching activities, particularly in business and humanities.

91   The college's central media services unit provides effective management of the college's audio-visual equipment. The inventory of equipment is updated annually and a system of bar-coding is being introduced to monitor its location and use. The unit provides a loan service of video and audio equipment to all staff and students, and advises staff on the purchase of equipment. Teachers are also well served by a centralised printing and photocopying service which produces printed materials of a high quality.

Accommodation

92   The college's two Bradford sites are situated near the city centre and within easy walking distance of each other. They effectively act as one campus. In addition, the college uses a variety of buildings which are dispersed over a wide area of the city and provide a good distribution of locations for community-based work. Their age varies between 130 and 20 years old. They include converted mills and other former industrial premises which have been adapted for college use but which, in many cases, are unsuitable for modern approaches to teaching and learning. The condition of some of the buildings is poor.

93   The college has recognised that it needs to enhance the quality of much of its accommodation and also reduce its total area which, currently, is greater than required. It has drawn up a well-considered accommodation strategy. As part of the strategy it plans to bring together related curriculum areas, some of which are currently dispersed, in order to promote a greater sense of identity within each school. Teaching and support staff have been fully involved in planning the accommodation strategy for their own curriculum areas.

94   Wheelchair users have full access to only six of the buildings. Sixteen buildings lack any access at all and a further 29 are only partially accessible. The college has a clear procedure for the evacuation of students with mobility difficulties, including refuge points and staff with specific responsibilities for assisting students. An 'access and adaptations' working party advises the college directorate on how access to college facilities might be improved. Improved access is also being addressed as part of the accommodation strategy.

95   Some of the accommodation has considerable strengths. Much of it has been remodelled by the college's own in-house workforce, working in close collaboration with teaching staff to produce an effective teaching and learning environment. Such areas include the information technology centres, mathematics and communications workshops and libraries. The art and design section has a good balance of workshops, studios and study space. Business studies and catering areas provide realistic, simulated work environments. Performing arts students benefit from spacious and flexible accommodation.   Other curriculum areas with some good accommodation include construction, communication and media studies.

96   The poor quality of a significant amount of the accommodation, however, has an adverse effect on teaching and learning. For example, the Old Building, which is the site of the original technical college, includes some poor laboratories and a number of general purpose classrooms which are inadequately decorated, have bare wooden floors and lack visual display. Some of the accommodation in the outreach centres lacks practical facilities and storage, has poor furniture and signposting, and is often too small for the size of classes. The hairdressing salons are old and no longer reflect current commercial practice.

97   Approximately 200 further education students live in the college's residential accommodation. They are well provided with warden and security services. The college has three refectories, a fast food dining room and five snack bars. Students use these eating areas as social areas because there is no common room provision other than the students' union bar. Catering facilities are limited in the evenings. The sports facilities are small but adequate. The main campus is adjacent to Bradford University, and all full-time students are entitled to use the university's sporting facilities at reduced rates. Car parking is restricted, due to the college's city centre location.

98   The premises are cleaned and maintained to a high standard. Walls are free of graffiti and there is good signposting on the main campus. An in-house works unit of 40 staff operates a same-day service for response maintenance and a planned preventative maintenance programme. A computerised energy management system enables the college to use energy efficiently and has resulted in considerable savings.

99   The college pays considerable attention to the security of staff, students and property. Twenty-five security staff operate a 24-hour service, including night patrols. Each of the 51 buildings is visited five times a day. Video surveillance and alarm systems operate over a substantial area of the campus.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

100 The college has made significant progress towards achieving its mission to provide education and training of recognised quality. Its strengths are:

*   the range and breadth of curriculum provision

*   the strong links developed with employers and the local community

*   effective policies and practices relating to equal opportunities

*   the positive involvement of governors particularly through their chairing of the school advisory committees

*   well-established managerial structures and practices

*   stringent planning and monitoring of student numbers

*   the wide range of student services

*   well-established systems for delivering learning support

*   generally high standards of teaching

*   sound student achievements on higher level courses

*   the clearly-understood procedures relating to course and departmental quality assurance

*   an appropriate overall staffing profile

*   good levels of learning resources

*   a well-considered accommodation strategy.

101 If the college is to build on these strengths, it should:

*   improve co-ordination between schools and departments in order to optimise responsiveness to clients

*   produce an annual operating statement in order to set targets and measure the achievement of strategic intentions

*   achieve greater consistency in school development planning

*   monitor and evaluate aspects of students' guidance and support

- raise retention rates on a number of intermediate and advanced programmes

- ensure there is a consistency of detail and rigour in the course and departmental review process

- increase the proportion of staff with a teaching qualification in some curriculum areas

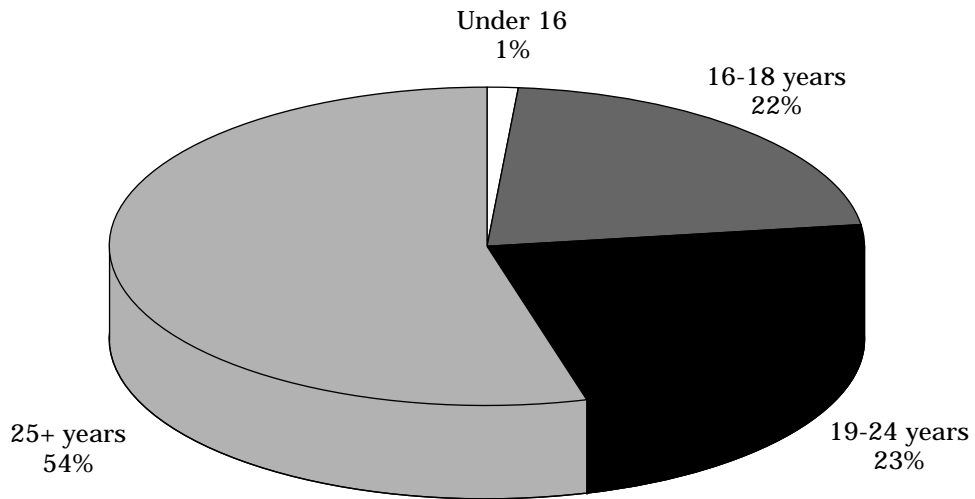- improve levels of basic equipment in some classrooms.

FIGURES

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

Figure 1

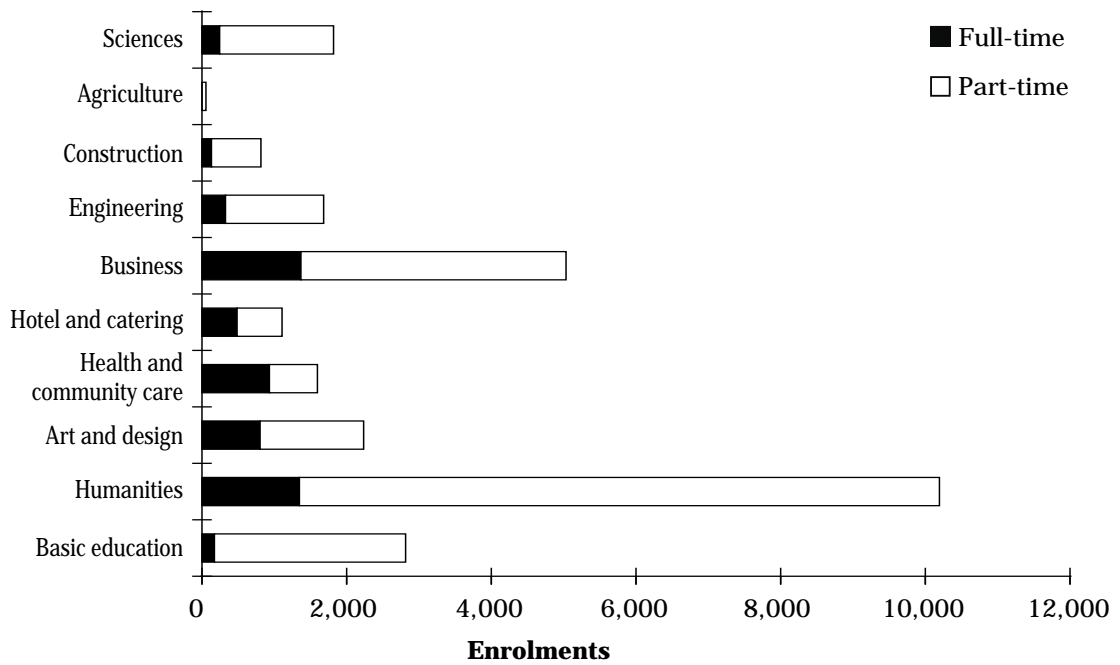**Bradford and Ilkley Community College: percentage enrolments by age (1995-96)**

Under 16
1%

16-18 years
22%

19-24 years
23%

25+ years
54%

Enrolments: 27,352

Figure 2

Bradford and Ilkley Community College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1995-96)

Leisure/recreation
(non-schedule 2)
7%

Higher
education
14%

Foundation
38%

Advanced
28%

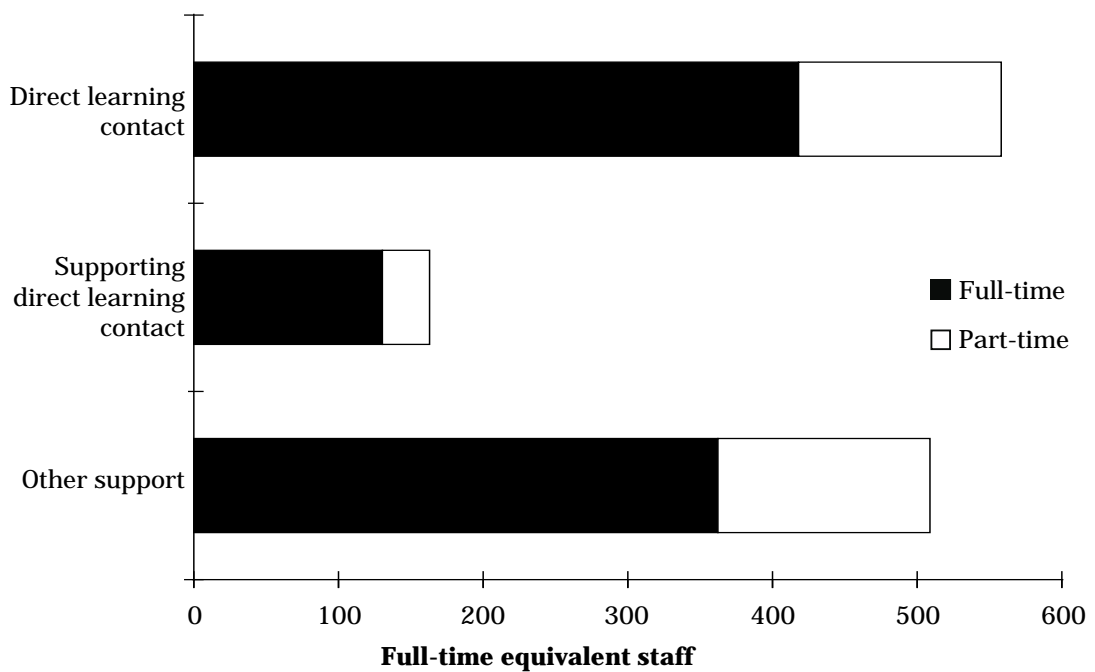Intermediate
13%
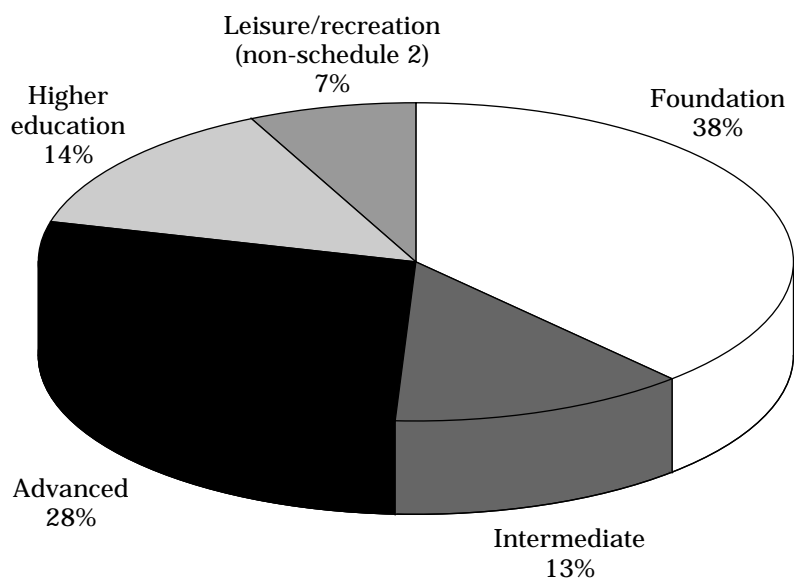
Enrolments: 27,352

Figure 3

Bradford and Ilkley Community College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1995-96)
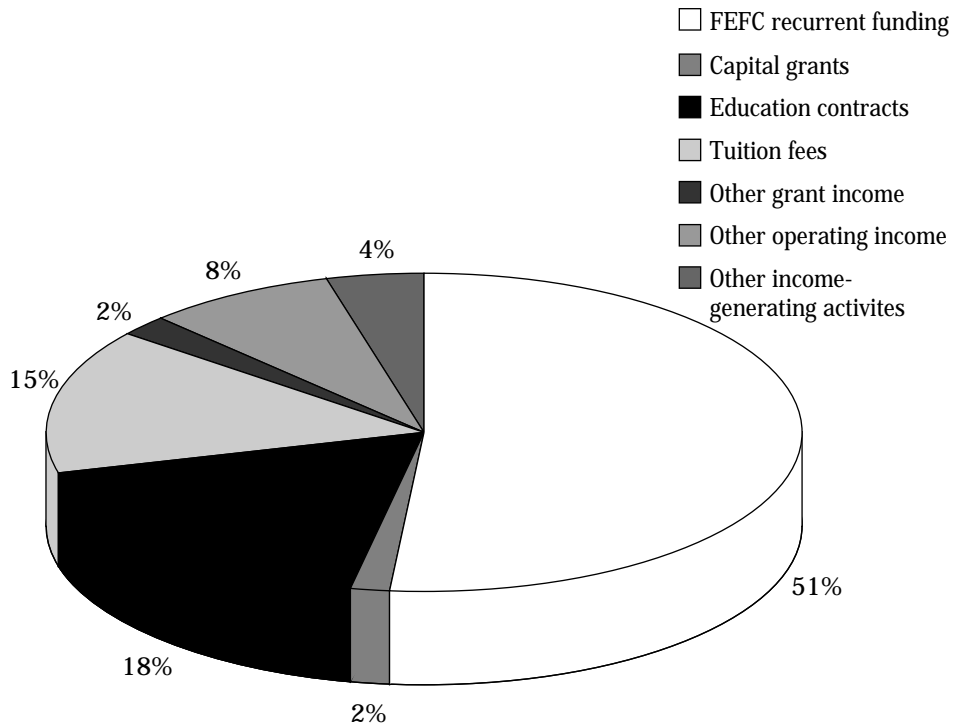

Enrolments: 27,352

Figure 4

Bradford and Ilkley Community College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1995-96)


Full-time equivalent staff: 1,230

Figure 5

Bradford and Ilkley Community College: estimated income (for 12 months to July 1996)

Legend:
- ☐ FEFC recurrent funding
- ▦ Capital grants
- ■ Education contracts
- ▢ Tuition fees
- ▨ Other grant income
- ▨ Other operating income
- ▨ Other income-generating activites

4%
8%
2%
15%
18%
2%
51%

Estimated income: £37,296,000

Figure 6

Bradford and Ilkley Community College: estimated expenditure (for 12 months to July 1996)

Depreciation
4%

Other operating expenses
26%

Staff costs
70%
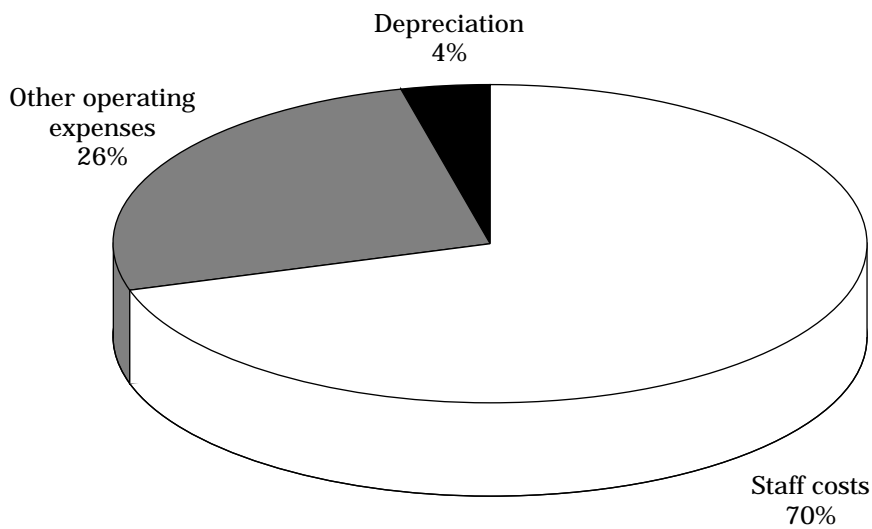
Estimated expenditure: £35,379,000

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