Daventry Tertiary College

THE FURTHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL

The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) has a statutory duty to ensure that there are satisfactory arrangements to assess the quality of provision in the further education sector. 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 37/94

DAVENTRY TERTIARY COLLEGE
EAST MIDLANDS REGION
Inspected January 1994 - March 1994

Summary

Daventry Tertiary College is the major provider of post-16 education in Daventry and the surrounding area. It has developed effective links with Northamptonshire Training and Enterprise Council and a number of other organisations involved in training. The well-established and useful links with local schools and the high-quality early guidance service offered by the college helps pupils to make an informed choice of courses. The system for monitoring and reporting student progress is well developed. Students benefit from the high quality of much of the teaching. Examination results are above average for the further education sector. Many students progress to higher education or employment. The success of students from the access course is particularly noteworthy. Short course provision for local industry and commerce is well regarded but its extent is limited; further development is required to meet the needs of employers more fully. There is a restricted range of attendance modes for part-time study. Other areas requiring attention are support for students in the development of basic skills, vocational careers guidance and the learning resource centre.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	3
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	3
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science	2	Art & design	4
Mathematics	2	English & communications	2
Computing 2		Modern languages	2
Design technology	3	Students with learning	
Business & management	3	difficulties	3
Social & health studies	2		

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1   Daventry Tertiary College, Northamptonshire was inspected between January and March 1994. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 25 days in the college between 28 February and 4 March 1994. A further 24 inspector days were used for the inspection of specialist subject areas. Inspectors visited 109 classes, examined samples of students' written work and held discussions with governors, staff, students, local employers, representatives of the Daventry District Council and a representative of Northamptonshire Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

2   The inspection was 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 Daventry Tertiary College occurred early in the cycle, the opportunity for such a response was not available.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3   The college was established in September 1989 following a major reorganisation of post-16 education in Daventry. It occupies a single site, originally one of the 11-18 school sites, some 10 minutes walk from the town centre. A leisure centre on the site came under college management in April 1993.

4   At the time of the inspection, there were 783 full-time and 3,133 part-time enrolments representing 1,147 full-time equivalent students. Seventy-five per cent of these enrolments were students aged 19 years or over. Enrolments by age and full-time enrolments by level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2, respectively. The college employed 82 full-time equivalent teaching staff and 34 full-time equivalent support staff (figure 3).

5   The college is organised into eight learning programme teams which are responsible for curriculum and course delivery and a further five administrative and support teams. The learning programmes are: business technology; computing technology; core studies; creative arts; language and communications; management and enterprise; science and mathematics and social and health studies. The administrative support teams are: finance; estates and premises; student administration and data management; information and recruitment. Middle management comprises four managers for learner support, learning development, learning environment and quality and six cost centre managers. There is a cost centre manager for all the learning programmes and one for each of the five administrative and support teams.

6   The college's main catchment area is the 15 mile radius around the town of Daventry. About 71 per cent of the 16-19 age group from the town continue in some form of full-time education. Seventy-five per cent of the college's full-time students are recruited from schools. Of these, 50 per

cent come from two Daventry 11-16 schools and a further 25 per cent from other maintained 11-18 schools in Northamptonshire. Six per cent come from the independent sector. The majority of part-time students are from the college's main catchment area. The development of centres in Towcester and Brackley is increasing the part-time adult participation from the south west of the county.

7   Daventry's location has encouraged distribution and warehousing firms to come to the town. The development of industrial estates has attracted a wide range of small businesses including chemicals, light engineering and high technology manufacturing and assembly work. In the rural areas there has been a move into leisure and tourism. The majority of firms have less than 25 employees. In 1993, the registered unemployment figure for the Daventry travel-to-work area was 8 per cent, the same as for Northamptonshire as a whole.

8   The college is committed in its mission statement to 'develop and extend the opportunities for education, training and employment in Daventry and the surrounding area by providing learning experiences to meet the specific needs of individuals and to work in partnerships to provide for the interests of industry, commerce and the wider community'.

RESPONSIVENESS AND THE RANGE OF PROVISION

9   The college provides a wide range of full-time programmes and services, and a significant and growing range of part-time provision. Enrolments, expressed as full-time equivalents, by curriculum area and mode of attendance are shown in figure 4. Students' aspirations are generally met by the current range of courses. The enrolment target for 1993-94 is 8 per cent growth on the previous year's numbers; the college anticipates that this will be achieved by the end of the year through the continued recruitment of part-time students. The participation of students traditionally under represented in further education is being encouraged through an access to humanities and social sciences course. Further access options and an accredited pre-access course are planned to start in September 1994. The college is working to extend the limited range of opportunities in the surrounding area through initiatives such as daytime information technology courses for adults in local villages and the continued development of the centres at Towcester and Brackley.

10   Some short courses and other services are provided for local industry and commerce. Information technology office skills, languages and other courses of high quality are provided for the Ford Motor Company and there is a growing link with the Volvo training centre to provide modern language training. Northamptonshire Social Services Department and Daventry District Council use the college for a range of courses. There are also limited opportunities for accreditation of prior learning in business studies. Industrial and commercial clients find the college generally responsive to their requests for training support. However, there is scope for the college to become more pro-active in offering bespoke courses for

industry.

11   Staff are aware of the government's aims and policies for education and the college is contributing to the National Targets for Education and Training. There is productive liaison between the college and the TEC. The college has responded positively to TEC initiatives such as the 'learning for work' scheme. The college is represented on the new local advisory board, is a member of the training and enterprise network and a founder member of the Daventry and District Training Federation. These strong links enable the college to contribute effectively to the development of training opportunities in the area. The college provides a range of General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses.

12   The college is involved in other aspects of local community life. It is represented on Daventry District Council's twinning liaison group which co-ordinates links with Daventry's twin town, Westerburg in Germany, and has assisted in organising useful exchange study visits for both staff and students. The college's sound relationship with the local police force has been strengthened by work with the district council's crime reduction group.

13   There are effective links with the two secondary schools in Daventry. A steering group organises joint activities and initiatives such as the provision of tasters at the college for school pupils during school half-term holidays and a programme of events for pupils in the last two years of schooling. Other activities include presentations to school staff on curriculum and course developments at the college. There are also opportunities for newly-qualified school teachers to spend some time in the college as a part of their induction. These activities enable the education and training opportunities offered in the area to be seen as a coherent progression from school to college. The steering group, in collaboration with primary heads, is also producing a brochure for parents to explain routes for progression in education and training from the age of four to 19. A local education business partnership links the schools, college and the local industrial community and organises a range of industry-focused events.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

14   The governing body has 15 members including the principal, two college staff and one student. Seven of the governors have senior posts in commerce, industry and the public sector, three are co-opted members who have local government, community and professional experience, and there is a representative from the local TEC.

15   The governors support the aims of the college and are active in providing strategic guidance. The respective functions and responsibilities of governors and senior managers are satisfactorily defined. The committees of the governing body assist the college in its planning. Subcommittees have responsibilities for developing and monitoring

specific aspects of policy such as conditions of service, equal opportunities and health and safety. The roles of the subcommittees are still evolving and a consensus has yet to be reached amongst governors over the direction of these developments. Governor training events have provided useful background information on incorporation although variable levels of attendance have limited their effectiveness.

16 Governing body meetings are well attended and effectively managed. Agenda items relate to the strategic planning of the college. In general, governors are given the information they require though there have been occasions when additional information would have assisted in the decision-making process and other instances when the presentation of information in an alternative format would have been more helpful. Governors regularly receive information on finance, examination results, retention rates and student destinations. The governing body has yet to decide formally how to monitor its own performance. Governors are fully involved in formal college occasions such as student presentations but some governors would welcome greater involvement at a less formal level as a means of more fully understanding how the various aspects of the college operate.

17 The current organisational structure of the college has been in place since September 1993. Operationally, it has yet to complete a full cycle. The new structure was created to facilitate team work and a consultative style of operational management. The senior management team comprises the principal and five assistant principals who have responsibilities for finance, resources, curriculum, personnel and marketing. The roles of the senior staff are clearly defined. They include responsibilities for implementing and monitoring college policies. Senior managers have a formal weekly meeting to discuss both strategic and operational matters. They also attend team meetings at all levels within the college to disseminate and collect information on aspects of the college's work. This keeps them well informed and provides staff with opportunities to make their views known to the senior management.

18 Posts have been created to support specific aspects of the college's mission. There is a development manager to implement the Investors in People standard and to gain accreditation for the institution. Another manager has specific curriculum responsibility for ensuring the successful introduction of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) programmes.

19 Middle managers are responsible to the senior management team for identifying annual budgetary requirements, monitoring expenditure and managing the services provided. The finance manager issues regular financial reports and these are beginning to provide appropriate management information. Development plans are costed by middle managers, but programme leaders, who are responsible for curriculum development, are not involved in costing their development plans or in setting student number targets for courses or programmes of study. The

lack of involvement reduces programme leaders' awareness of the costs involved in developing courses and the implications of student enrolment targets. They do, however, have responsibility for monitoring the expenditure of their allocated consumables budgets.

20   Staff are familiar with the roles and responsibilities of those with whom they interact regularly within the new structure. However, the terms of reference of some recently-reconstituted academic committees are not clear to all the members serving on them and this affects members' ability to contribute effectively to discussion. A working group is currently responsible for information developments in the college. The informal nature of this group limits its effectiveness in cross-college co-ordination.

21   Some newly-appointed leaders of learning programmes require support to develop their management skills. Some team meetings do not make effective use of the time available and in others, agendas are too long for the allocated meeting time.

22   A computerised management information system handles student records, examinations, personnel and finance. The system is accessible to senior and middle managers at all times for financial and student information and to cost centre managers on a more limited basis. It has yet to be fully utilised to provide learning programme leaders with appropriate student data for monitoring quality. Few managers use the system interactively. A data manager has been in post since incorporation. His responsibilities include assisting college managers to use the system more effectively and meeting specific requests for information within the constraints which the system imposes. Greater use could be made of graphical presentation of data, particularly in the monitoring of trends.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

23   The college's information and recruitment team effectively carries out its responsibilities. These include the receipt and processing of all enquiries and the tracking of potential students through the applications and interview procedures. The computer-based management information system supports the work of the team and provides regular reports on enquiries, applications and enrolments.

24   The information and recruitment team effectively co-ordinates marketing events aimed at the feeder schools from which large numbers of students are recruited. Members of the team attend a wide range of other promotional events, careers conventions and advice and information sessions for teachers and careers officers. A useful recent addition to the promotional material is a results booklet showing the success and progress of students during the last academic year. The team is currently investigating the potential of various value-added measures as a means of illustrating the success of students at the college. Information and guidance services are provided during the summer period, including the time when GCE and GCSE results are published. Students found that the service helped them to make informed choices about further study.

25   There are some pilot developments in the assessment and accreditation of prior learning. An initial interview to assess prior learning, followed by a detailed assessment with a subject specialist lecturer, should be available to students from September 1994. However, unless a staff development programme is introduced quickly there is unlikely to be sufficient expertise among staff to achieve this.

26   An initial induction programme for all full-time students is supported by a comprehensive and useful student handbook. A student charter is being developed which will form an integral part of the student handbook and include a section on rights and responsibilities. Procedures are in place to facilitate the smooth transfer of students between courses, particularly during the first weeks. Initial induction to the college is followed by an extended programme during the first few weeks of the term. Staff in the curriculum areas modify the induction programme to meet the particular requirements of their own students. This has led to some good practice but also to considerable variations in the quality of the programmes offered.

27   The college has recently changed its procedures for tutorial support. Eight curriculum-based learner support leaders have responsibility for co-ordinating the guidance and support for students within programme areas and the learner support manager is responsible for overall co-ordination. All staff are involved in pastoral support. Course tutors make referrals, as appropriate, to the learner support leader. There have been mixed reactions from those students and staff who have experienced both systems. Many second-year students, particularly GCE A level students, preferred the regularity of a weekly tutorial which also provided updated information on college activities. The new system for guidance and support relies heavily on informal communication between staff and there are still some developmental problems and variations in practice. These issues are recognised and are beginning to be addressed.

28   Personal tutor support continues to be available to students. There is no full-time counsellor or welfare officer but two members of the learner support team are qualified in counselling. There is also a programme of staff development for counselling skills. Students who require specialist counselling are referred to various agencies in the area. In addition to the Department for Education (DFE) access fund, the college has contributed to a welfare fund to assist more of the students who are experiencing financial hardship.

29   The quality of guidance and support for students intending to progress to higher education, is of a high standard. References and students' personal statements are the subject of strict quality control procedures. The quality of vocational careers advice is variable. Student attendance at careers sessions is often poor and the specific careers guidance needs of individual students are not always met. The perceived advantages of having the careers service based at the college have not been fully realised.

30　There is no systematic assessment of the learning support needs of all students. Heavy reliance is placed on traditional entry qualifications and reports from previous establishments or from tutors during the early stages of the student's course. The effectiveness of the system varies. Some tutors are reluctant to refer students for extra support and practice. Once a referral is made the system works well. A programme of support is negotiated with the student, an individual action plan is drawn up, progress is recorded on the action plan by subject lecturers and the system is monitored by the student's learner support leader.

31　The college has a creche which provides sessional day care for up to 18 children and is registered with Northamptonshire Social Services Department. It is operated on a flexible and supportive basis. However, registration requirements mean that students must take care of their children during the lunch period and the area set aside for this purpose is inadequate.

32　The college has a well-established system for monitoring student progress. Records are detailed and comprehensive. They include student profiles, student reviews, development and action plans, a record of achievement and other summative evidence. The overall system is efficient in providing staff, students, and parents with a reliable record of progress and achievement. Information is passed to parents at a parents' evening in the autumn term and at regular progress evenings throughout a student's course. A system is in place to monitor and follow up student absence from college. If necessary, a contract is drawn up to reinforce the counselling process. There are variations in the rigour of these procedures and, on some courses, levels of absence from classes remain high.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

33　Fifty-three per cent of the teaching sessions inspected had strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses and in a further 39 per cent the strengths balanced the weaknesses. The number of teaching sessions inspected and the grades awarded are summarised below.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE A/AS level		4	21	16	0	0	41
GCSE		0	6	6	0	0	12
NVQ		0	1	2	0	0	3
GNVQ		0	1	2	4	2	9
Other		4	21	17	2	0	44
Total		8	50	43	6	2	109

34　In mathematics, modern languages, computing, science, social care, communication studies and access courses, the classroom practice had

strengths which clearly outweighed the weaknesses. In contrast, aspects of GNVQ art and design programmes had significant weaknesses: the work which students undertook in class and their individual assignments did not provide them with enough opportunity to gain knowledge and practise skills at the required level.

35   On most courses, schemes of work were used effectively in the planning of teaching and learning. In mathematics, the schemes of work and lecturer's notes were comprehensive. Consequently, classes worked to clear objectives. Teaching was well structured and short tasks were often set to reinforce students' learning.

36   Teachers adopted a wide range of teaching styles and students were involved in a variety of clearly-defined tasks to develop their academic and personal skills.   Modern languages classes, for example, were characterised by a clear purpose: to link the consistent use of the foreign language to a variety of relevant tasks, utilising materials which had been carefully graded to meet the linguistic competence of students. Work in social and health studies included exercises, group work, assignments and project work and there was excellent use of questioning techniques which involved all students and helped develop their oral skills. In some subjects, for example GCE A level geography, staff encouraged students to gain information technology skills as a means of enhancing the quality of their work. This practice was not common.

37   Where learning activities were weak, it was frequently the result of a poor choice of teaching strategies. In some classes, the excessive use of dictation or note taking coupled with limited use of handouts failed to develop and maintain students' interest. On occasions, there was a lack of differentiation in the tasks selected for the students and in these cases the work was not sufficiently challenging for all students.

38   The college has created English and mathematics learning centres to support academic development in these key subjects. Students appear reluctant to make full use of the facilities in these learning centres. In some instances, their attendance is the result of staff referring them to the centres for extra support. The development of information technology skills is an integral part of vocational programmes and students generally acquire a satisfactory level of competence. There are fewer opportunities for most GCE A level students to develop these skills. Although students can voluntarily follow a modular information technology course, it is not well advertised and the take-up is low.

39   Support for students with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities is provided by the core studies learning programme team. A member of the team has training in dyslexia assessment, guidance and support. Currently no member of the team has a specialist qualification in the teaching of students with disabilities. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from the same pastoral support system as any other student in college. Additional personal and social development is

provided through the learner support team. There is limited specialist support available for students with physical or sensory disabilities. The college works in partnership with the local education authority to provide specialist additional services for sensory impairments and educational psychology advice.

40 Staff check regularly on students' achievement and most keep detailed records of progress. Written assignments are effectively related to course aims. In GCE A level courses, a regular schedule of work is set, marked and returned at an agreed time. In most cases, work is accurately assessed, and written comments help students to improve the accuracy and quality of their work. Often, assessment criteria are shared with students. In Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses, students' work is continuously monitored and assessed during individual and group practical activities as well as through written assignments. In social and health studies and NVQ business administration, students are increasingly involved in assessing their own work. In some courses, staff spend insufficient time developing assessment grids and cross-marking assignments to ensure the maintenance of common standards. There is little attempt to involve employers in the assessment of students' work or in course evaluation.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

41 Most students are enjoying their studies in the college and are clear about their objectives for success. Their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are studying is of sufficient depth for them to have the expectation of success.

42 Students' literacy and numeracy development is generally supported through their programmes of study. In some business courses, the standard of English and spelling is of variable quality; some students demonstrated a level of work far above that required while others struggled to achieve the required level of competence. A number of students studying on the BTEC first and national diploma in information technology and its applications had a level of mathematical competence below that required for their studies.

43 The college produces an annual publication showing students' examination achievements and their subsequent progression. In 1993, 56.3 per cent of students entered for GCSE examinations achieved grades A-C, compared with a national average for the sector of 50 per cent. Results were not significantly below the published national averages in any subject.

44 In GCE A level examinations, 1993, the overall college success rate for grades A-E was 83.3 per cent compared with the national average of 77 per cent for all students and 66 per cent for students in the further education sector other than those from sixth form colleges. Students achieved significantly better results in art and design, communications and theatre studies, geography and German with pass rates far exceeding the national average for all students. The 146 students, age 16-18, who

entered for two or more GCE A levels in 1993 achieved an average points score of 12.9 (where A=10; E=2) which places the college in the top third of institutions within the sector. The college is currently working on a project funded through the technical and vocational education initiative (TVEI) to investigate students' educational development. Initial results indicate that in most subjects, students are achieving at or above national expectations.

45   The 70 students, aged 16-18, in their final year of study for BTEC national or City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI) national diploma achieved an 81 per cent pass rate, a performance which puts the college in the top half of all institutions within the sector.

46   Many of the students on the access course progressed successfully to higher education. Of the 44 access students completing their course in 1993, 75 per cent progressed to higher education, 10 per cent entered employment and 10 per cent returned to the college for further study.

47   Students studying on the general foundation programme have opportunities to work towards various RSA and CGLI numeracy, numberpower and wordpower examinations. The success rates for these courses varies between 67 and 100 per cent. At present, there is no overall accreditation for the foundation programme or the part-time adult programme. A GNVQ foundation programme is being introduced in September 1994.

48   A college survey of destinations for all students completing courses in 1993 indicated that 44 per cent entered higher education, 30 per cent enrolled on new courses in further education, 14 per cent found employment and 10 per cent were seeking employment.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

49   Senior managers are committed to implementing a revised quality system building on the college's experience with quality assurance over the last three years. Since September 1993, corporation members have been considering a report setting out a revised quality system. The newly-established quality subcommittee of the academic board held its first meeting in late January 1994. It will be some time before the system is fully operational. New procedures for quality assurance, monitoring and control will be introduced over a three-year period. A new post of learning quality manager has been established.

50   The college makes effective use of questionnaires to survey staff and students' views of the services it offers. There is no systematic investigation of employers' views. Information from all questionnaires is collated and the resulting action plans passed to middle managers. The plans are of variable quality and there is scope for significant improvement.

51   Course and subject logs are key documents in the new system. They are intended to contain comprehensive information on curricula, course administration, examiners' and moderators' reports and quality

monitoring and evaluation data. At present they contain limited quantitative information on student enrolment, retention, examination results and destinations. Quality reports and action plans are frequently difficult to find amongst all the other information recorded in the logs. Key quality characteristics for each course have yet to be established.

52   The quality system is at present focused on the learning programmes. Support service staff are not formally involved. Support staff appreciate the importance of customer care and have a clear understanding of who are their internal and external customers.

53   The college has a staff training and development policy and a staff development plan. The college has made a commitment to achieve Investors in People status and is working towards approval later this year. Staff development is centrally co-ordinated and the system is generally well developed and effective. However, the college is not able to monitor staff-development expenditure against identified priority areas in order to inform management decisions.

54   Annual staff appraisal is being implemented. The systems and procedures are well considered. Associated staff development has been carried out off-site and has involved all but a few staff. Staff participating in the appraisal system include all full-time employees and those part-time academic staff who have substantial teaching loads.

RESOURCES

55   The college's unit of funding for 1992-93 was £2,194 per weighted full-time equivalent student. The median for general further education and tertiary colleges was £2,444. Financial constraints have made it necessary to carry forward resourcing plans, such as the provision of information technology equipment to improve students' learning experience. The college has had no capital funding for some years but was allocated £76,000 by the Council this year. The college inherited a shortfall in capital equipment at incorporation and as a result has had to carry forward some planned developments into the next financial period. Decisions on the use of the capital funding have been made by the senior management team and the cost centre managers. There is a replacement strategy for information technology equipment but not for other capital equipment. Approximately 80 per cent of the college's income comes from the Further Education Funding Council and less than 4 per cent from short courses. The broad patterns of financial income and expenditure provided by the college are shown in figures 5 and 6.

Staffing

56   There are sufficient lecturers to teach the courses offered by the college. They are well qualified and appropriately deployed. A human resources policy is being developed which aims to harmonise the terms and conditions of employment of all college employees. Part-time staff are, as far as possible, integrated into curriculum teams but some have difficulty in keeping up to date with developments.

57   The role of support staff in the curriculum areas has been enhanced by their integration into teaching teams. There are only seven technicians in the whole college and only one of these is dedicated to supporting information technology. Support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is limited to a single member of staff which is insufficient.

Equipment/learning resources

58   There is sufficient specialist equipment in most areas of work and it is generally of satisfactory quality. The main weaknesses are in the resources for vocational art and design, modern digital electronics and information technology. There are few personal computers outside the dedicated information technology rooms and arrangements for access to these machines outside timetabled classes are poor. There are sufficient quantities of micro-computers to meet current demands but almost half of these are incapable of running modern software packages. The range of software packages available for student use is satisfactory but not accessible from all workstations. A good feature of the information technology provision is the availability of portable computers for use in the college's outreach centres. The level of information technology and audio-visual equipment in the learning centres is generally low.

59   There is a comprehensive information technology policy which addresses the needs of students and staff. There are plans to upgrade the existing micro-computer facilities but no long-term strategy for the college-wide development of information technology and, in particular, there is no clear decision on a networking strategy to meet the future needs of the curriculum.

60   The college is ready to respond to the needs of sensory impaired students as they arise although current equipment levels are modest. One room has been fitted with a hearing loop for an individual student. There are a small number of tape cassettes for visually-impaired students. However, there are no braille facilities and only a very small number of large-print books.

61   The learning resources centre has a capacity of 48 seats, which is low for the student population. The book stock of 8,000 volumes, and the range of periodicals are inadequate, in quantity and quality, for the numbers of students and the curriculum offered by the college. Independent learning is supported by video and other non-book materials including CD-ROM but the amount of equipment is limited. A tutorial room with facilities for viewing videos is well used but the large quiet study area is under utilised. There is no up-to-date written guide to the centre for new users. Students receive only a brief introduction to the facilities from learning resources centre staff.

Accommodation

62   The buildings are in a satisfactory condition, internally and externally. There is a regular programme of maintenance. Most teaching rooms are

well furnished. There is good access to all parts of the building for wheelchair users and in some cases furniture has been modified to accommodate these students.

63   The college monitors its use of accommodation on a regular basis. The range of general purpose and specialist accommodation does not fully match current needs.   There is an over-provision of laboratory space and the craft workshop is under used. There are costed plans to improve utilisation by modifying some of the accommodation. Some good-quality teaching areas have been created through a planned programme of improvements in the business technology and health studies areas. One of the three information technology rooms is too small to accommodate the number of machines it contains, and the art and design accommodation is generally unsuitable for vocational work.

64   Students have the benefit of good recreation facilities but the refectory is too small to cater for the number of students enrolled. The quality of the environment in the area which is the responsibility of the student union compares unfavourably with that elsewhere in the college. The student union has recently submitted proposals to improve the area.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

65   The college is making satisfactory progress towards achieving its mission of developing and extending opportunities for education, training and employment in Daventry and the surrounding area. Its strengths are:

- the wide range of programmes for full-time students

- the effective and productive liaison with the TEC and other organisations involved in planning and training

- the good links with schools

- the pre-entry guidance, recruitment and early induction of students

- the system for monitoring and reporting students' progress

- the generally high quality of teaching and learning

- the success of access students in progressing to higher education or employment.

66   If the college is to make further progress in realising its mission and continue to raise standards, it should address the following:

- extending work with commercial customers to satisfy more fully their training requirements

- increasing the range of methods of study on part-time courses and study programmes

- continuing to develop the system for the assessment and accreditation of prior learning

- continuing to develop the college-wide system of learning support

- improving the quality of vocational careers guidance

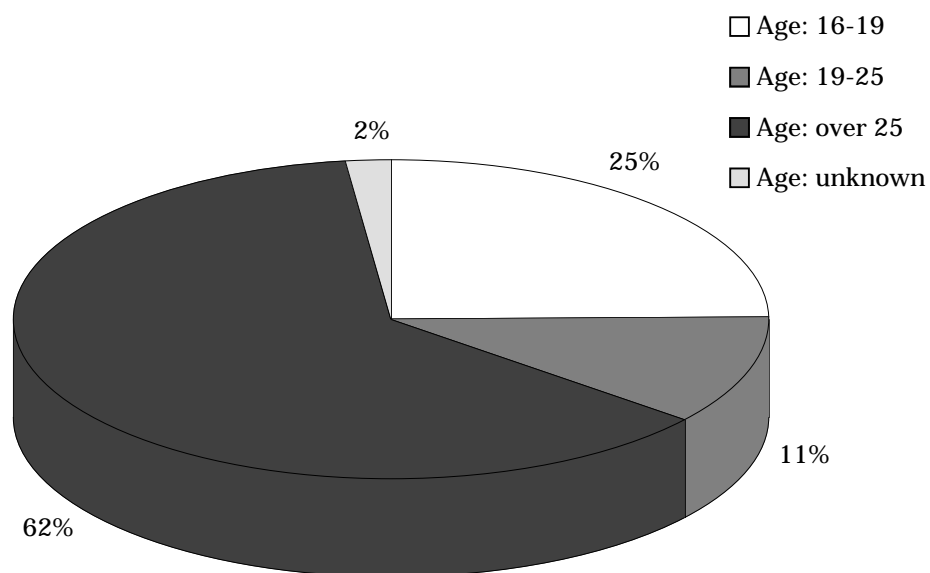- improving the quality of facilities in the learning resources centre.

FIGURES

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

Figure 1

Daventry Tertiary College: percentage enrolments by age (at November 1993)

Age: 16-19
Age: 19-25
Age: over 25
Age: unknown

2%
25%
11%
62%

Enrolments: 3,916

Figure 2

Daventry Tertiary College: full-time enrolments by level of study (at November 1993)

Foundation level
3%
Intermediate
level
23%
Advanced level
74%
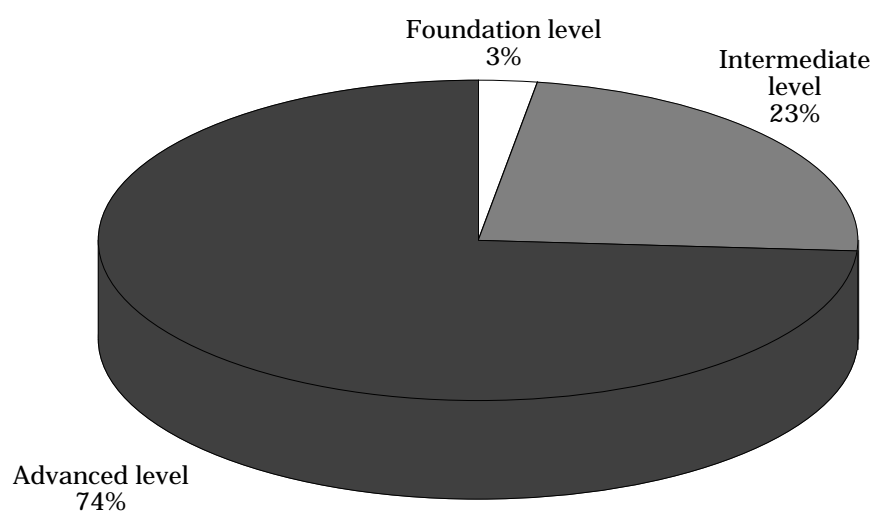
Full-time enrolments: 783

Figure 3

Daventry Tertiary College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (at November 1993)
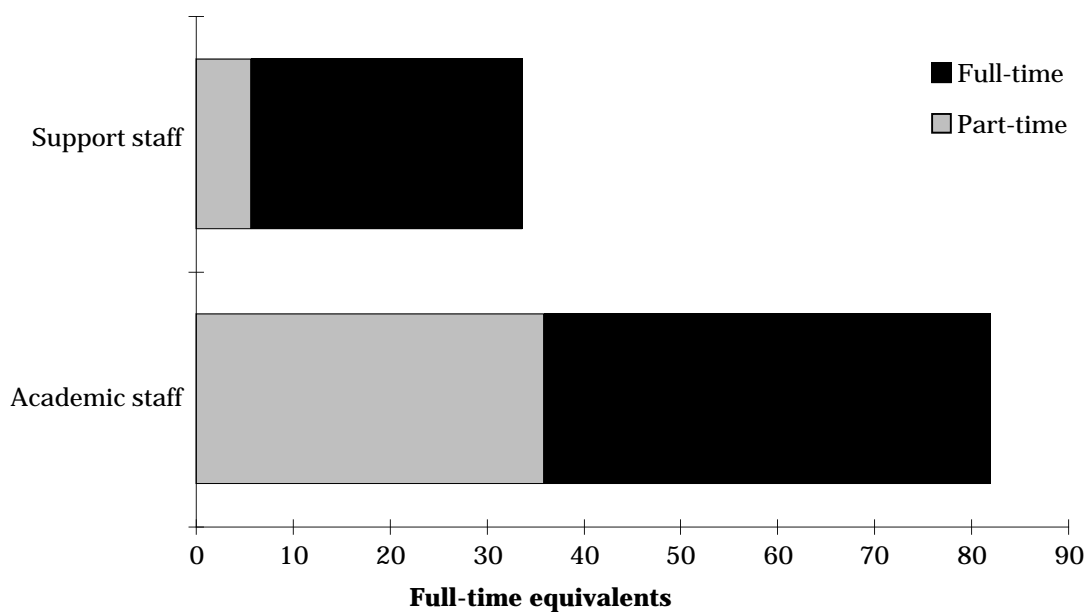

Full-time equivalent staff: 116

Figure 4

Daventry Tertiary College: enrolments expressed as full-time equivalents by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at November 1993)
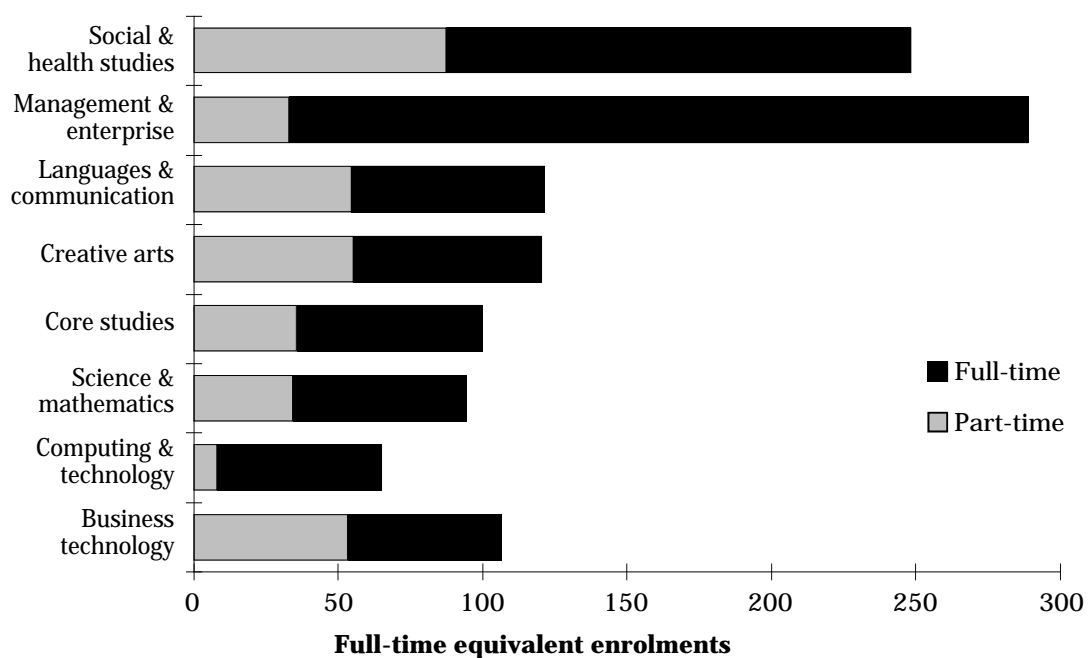

Full-time equivalent enrolments: 1,147

Figure 5

Daventry Tertiary College: recurrent income (16 months to July 1994)

Other
10%

TEC
4%

Fees
4%

Local education authority
2%

FEFC
80%

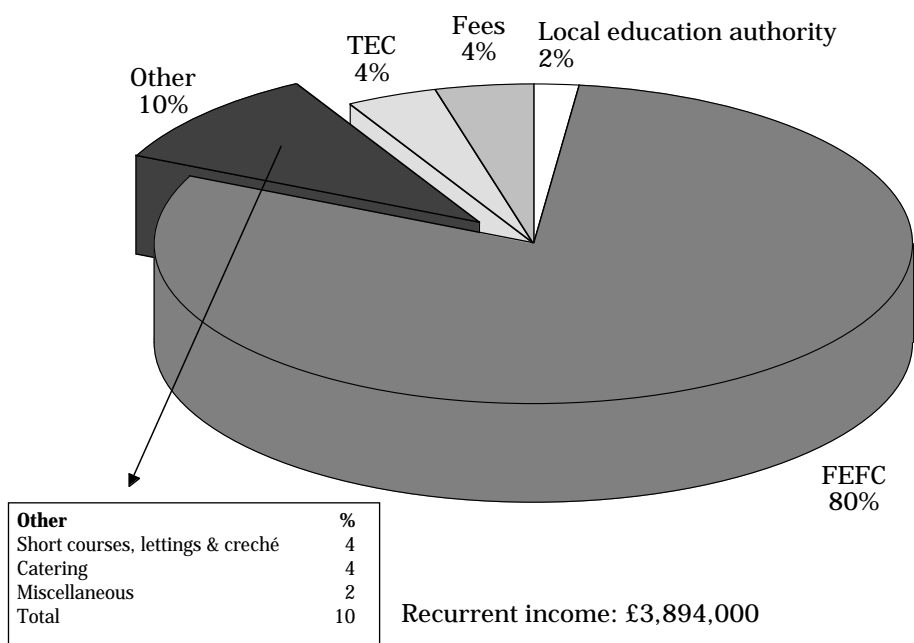| Other	%
Short courses, lettings & creché	4
Catering	4
Miscellaneous	2
Total	10

Recurrent income: £3,894,000

Figure 6

Daventry Tertiary College: estimated expenditure (16 months to July 1994)

Non-pay
23%

Teachers' pay
51%

Other pay
26%

Non-pay	%
Teaching departments	2.5
Support services	0.3
Staff training (LRC)	0.3
Administration & central services	3.8
General education	2.6
Premises	11.0
Catering	2.0
Miscellaneous	0.3
Total	22.8

Estimated expenditure: £3,786,000