

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Franklin Sixth Form College

March 1996

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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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.

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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

Activity	Inspection grades				
	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 37/96

FRANKLIN SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGION
Inspected November-December 1995

Summary

Franklin Sixth Form College is a flourishing college which has undergone a period of rapid expansion since it was established in 1990. Strong links have been developed with local schools and the community. A wide range of programmes meets the needs of 16 to 19 year old students and a growing number of adult students. The governors are supportive of the college and actively involved in promoting its interests. There is a well-defined college planning cycle and curriculum areas are managed effectively. Staff are committed to the welfare of students and have developed positive working relationships with them. Pre-enrolment and induction activities are effective and well organised. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and students achieve well in external examinations in many curriculum areas. Staff are highly qualified and enthusiastic about their work. Accommodation within the college is attractive and comfortable. Learning resources are of high quality. The range of marketing strategies is limited in its scope, and links with businesses and industry are underdeveloped. Few staff have recent industrial or commercial experience. Some management roles lack clarity and the various levels of management are over-complex. Although some of the work undertaken within tutorials is of a high standard, opportunities within the tutorial system are not exploited fully. The quality assurance system is underdeveloped and there are inconsistencies in the quality of curriculum area annual reviews.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Mathematics	1	History, geography	2
Science	2	Social sciences	2
Business	2	Languages	2
Performing arts, media studies, design	2	English and communications	2

INTRODUCTION

1 Franklin Sixth Form College was inspected in two stages during November and December 1995. A team of six inspectors spent a total of 30 days between 11 and 15 December 1995 inspecting aspects of cross-college provision. Prior to this, 25 days were used for the inspection of specialist subject areas. In all, inspectors visited 103 classes, examined samples of students' written work and held discussions with college governors, senior managers, staff and students, parents, employers, a representative of Humberside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), head teachers of local secondary schools and representatives of the wider community.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Franklin Sixth Form College was established in 1990 as part of the reorganisation of secondary education in Grimsby. It was founded in order to provide full-time General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and pre-vocational courses for 16 to 19 year old students. Although this remains its primary focus, the college has used the opportunities provided by incorporation to expand its courses and to serve a wider range of clients. It introduced General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) in 1993 and now offers part-time day and evening classes for adults.

3 The college draws its students from all of the schools in Grimsby and Cleethorpes, from schools in Lincolnshire and from the independent sector. Grimsby has a system of 11-16 comprehensive schools. Cleethorpes has four schools with sixth forms, three of which are within two-and-a-half miles of the college. Grimsby College, a large general further education college situated close by, provides a full range of GCSE and GCE A level courses alongside its vocational provision. Franklin Sixth Form College is one of the four members of the Humberside Sixth Form Colleges' Consortium.

4 Grimsby and Cleethorpes have a combined population of 162,000. The major industries are food processing, fish sales, and car imports and exports. The commercial port of Immingham is nearby and there is significant industry on the Humber bank, comprising mainly chemical and petrochemical plants. Developing industries include leisure, travel and tourism, caring and health provision, retail, transport and distribution. The current unemployment rate in the area is 10.2 per cent, compared with an average of 9.5 per cent for the Yorkshire and Humberside region as a whole.

5 The college opened with 620 students and has grown significantly in five years. At the time of the inspection, there were 1,337 students, 911 of whom were full-time and 426 of whom were part-time students. Of the full-time students, 90 per cent were following GCE A level or GCSE courses. The remainder were studying GNVQ 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. Only 2 per cent of the college's students come from minority ethnic groups: this mirrors the population profile in the area served by the college.

6 There are 68 full-time equivalent teaching staff at the college and 20 full-time equivalent support staff. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4. The senior management team comprises the principal, two vice-principals responsible for curriculum and student support, respectively, and four assistant principals with responsibilities for finance, human resources, students' programmes, and the careers and tutorial programme. Four senior tutors are each responsible for a team of personal tutors. The curriculum is organised into five faculties; science, mathematics and business, languages and communications, art and design, and humanities. Each faculty is led by a faculty director. It is common for staff to teach in more than one faculty.

7 The primary aim of the college, as stated in its mission statement, is to provide 'education and training of quality and purpose'. The college seeks to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students irrespective of age, ability or attainment. It bases its provision on the principles of 'open access, individuality, progression, breadth, participation, challenge and excellence'. A key aim is to work with other providers and agencies to support a comprehensive, coherent and integrated system for education and training in the area, and by so doing to improve local access to higher education and training. It seeks to participate with and contribute to the local community, businesses and industry, and actively develop links with Europe.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

8 The college has made a positive response to the revised national targets for education and training, and is developing strategies for achieving these in conjunction with the other colleges in the Humberside Consortium. A commitment has been made to support the achievement of lifetime learning targets in the local community in partnership with the University of Hull and the Humberside adult education service. There is a good level of awareness amongst staff of the government's policies for further education.

9 The college offers a wide range of over 100 courses. In 1995-96, 36 GCE A level subjects, 12 GCE advanced supplementary (AS) subjects and 22 GCSE subjects were offered. The range of vocational and skills-based courses is increasing. For example, within computing there are a number of courses validated by the RSA Examinations Board (RSA), including computer literacy and information technology, keyboarding/text processing, wordprocessing and computerised accounts. Courses leading to externally-validated qualifications are also available in physical education, sports studies, leisure and tourism and first aid.

10 GNVQ programmes are currently offered at foundation, intermediate and advanced level in business and leisure, and health and social care. GNVQ engineering was offered at intermediate level but there were no enrolments. GNVQ art at intermediate level has been withdrawn. The college has set up a foundation and intermediate level GNVQ project to explore ways of widening the scope and appeal of GNVQ provision across the college.

11 All courses within the college are open to adult learners, some of whom study alongside students aged 16 to 19. There is also a programme of evening classes which is offered specifically for adults. Modular GCE A level programmes are offered and the adult programme includes fast-track GCE A levels, which enable students to complete courses in a single year. The college provides courses for young mothers in association with the local authority's learning support service. Currently, nine students attend the Grimsby Young Mothers' Unit for three days per week to study mathematics, English and childcare at GCSE level and RSA computer literacy and information technology. In addition, the college plans to open a 'Saturday college' in March 1996 offering a programme of workshops and short courses such as parenting skills, counselling, sports coaching and information technology.

12 A good range of publicity material has been produced, including an attractive prospectus, course leaflets and a promotional video. Teachers and members of the guidance team promote courses by attending schools' open days, giving talks and hosting visits by pupils to the college. Students on GNVQ programmes have given presentations to local schools and businesses. Advertising in the local press has included 'A Focus on Franklin' supplement in the Grimsby Evening Telegraph which was produced by GCE A level students studying media studies and communication studies. The college also participated in adult learners' week in association with Grimsby College and Humberside County Council's leisure services department, providing college open days and exhibitions in Grimsby central library.

13 While most courses have recruited successfully, others have failed to attract the students for whom they were intended, or have not recruited at all. Some courses, for example, non-GCE A level and one-year courses, need more effective publicity material. Insufficient attention has been given to the promotion of courses for adults amongst key groups in the local community.

14 A full-time member of the teaching staff combines his teaching duties with the role of marketing support manager. He is responsible for managing and developing the marketing strategy and co-ordinating marketing activities. As yet, the scope of this work is limited and is focused mainly on press relations and the production of publicity materials. The marketing manager advises the senior management team on all matters relating to the marketing of the college and chairs a marketing support group.

15 The college has strong links with other institutions in the further and higher education sectors, for example, through its membership of Humberside Sixth Form Colleges' Consortium and as an associate college of the University of Hull. The university's local centre has been based at the college since September 1995 and a joint project has been initiated to facilitate students' access to higher education programmes. The college also has formal working links with Grimsby College and with York, de Montfort, Nottingham Trent and Humberside Universities, and is the local centre for programmes offered by the Open University.

16 The college has established links with other external agencies and community groups. For example, the college has a close and productive working relationship with Humberside Adult Education Service and the local education authority (LEA), and is playing an active role in the Grimsby area consortium which was established to replace the technical and vocational education initiative. A number of initiatives have been established with Humberside TEC, for example, a project to look at employers' training needs. There are well-established community links, for example, with Humberside Dance Agency, and the Grimsby and Cleethorpes District Youth Orchestra is based at the college.

17 The college works closely with the local careers service which provides an annual list of over 200 local companies willing to take students on work placement. All students undertake work experience. Other links with the local business community are not as well developed. For example, there are no formal advisory boards at curriculum level and the college does not have a database of employers. Informal links at course team level are variable. A group has been set up to investigate opportunities to provide courses which are funded by employers, but none are offered currently.

18 A programme of optional activities designed to enhance students' experience at the college offers support in mathematics, information technology skills, spreadsheets and desktop publishing as well as the young enterprise scheme. A foreign languages at work programme provides an opportunity to study French, German, Spanish and Russian, although only French and German are running this year. Other enhancement activities include the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, music and the performing arts and a range of sports and leisure activities. The range of study tours and foreign exchange visits, including opportunities for students to undertake work experience placements abroad, is extensive. However, there is no cross-college European awareness policy or co-ordination, and no strategy for incorporating European themes into the curriculum.

19 The college has published an equal opportunities statement which commits the college to equality of opportunity for all students and staff. There is no formal equal opportunities policy or equal opportunities committee. The monitoring and evaluation of departmental and college responses to equal opportunities issues is not yet formalised.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

20 The governing body has 20 members including the principal, two staff governors drawn from the teaching and non-teaching staff, two parents, one student and a TEC nominee. Ten are business members and one is the head of a Grimsby 11-16 school. Two governors are co-opted from the Grimsby Borough Council. Six of the members are female. There are three observers, comprising two students and a senior education officer of the Humberside LEA. At the time of the inspection, there were two vacancies. Governors possess a breadth of experience which the college uses to good effect. This includes knowledge of business, the law, education, personnel and accounting. There are four committees, for personnel, finance, audit and remuneration. Those committees have agreed terms of reference, meet regularly and are generally well attended. A further committee for quality assurance is currently being established. Governors have agreed a code of conduct and established a register of interests.

21 Governors are supportive of the college and its aims and promote its interests in the local community. They work well with college managers in monitoring the implementation of policies and are prepared to challenge and question them if necessary. College managers provide corporation members with a good range of reports in order to keep them informed of the work of the college. These include monthly financial reports with a detailed commentary. The chair of governors appraises the principal as part of the college's appraisal scheme. Individual governors are linked to curriculum areas and college committees. This works well in some areas: for example, a member of the governors' finance committee regularly attends meetings of the curriculum management team as an observer. Other governor links are in need of renewal and strengthening. There is currently no formal induction process for new governors. Governors recognise the need for further training to enable them to fulfil their role more effectively. They are currently identifying their training and information needs. Governors do not formally evaluate their own performance.

22 The two vice-principals, assistant principal (student programmes) and assistant principal (careers) form the college management team, which concerns itself with the operational management of the college. The principal, two vice-principals, assistant principal (finance) and assistant principal (human resources) form the college strategic planning team. Both these teams meet weekly. The whole of the senior management team meets at least twice a term and receives reports from the other two teams. The college is considering ways of streamlining the management process to avoid unnecessary overlap.

23 Teachers within curriculum areas work closely together. Their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and well understood. Their work is led by curriculum area co-ordinators who report to directors of faculty.

The five faculty directors meet regularly as members of the curriculum management team. This is chaired by the vice-principal (curriculum) and involves assistant principals and the director of information systems and director of resource-based learning as necessary. All the teachers within each faculty meet together monthly. These meetings provide a useful means of communication between curriculum areas and senior managers, and allow teachers from related subject areas to share ideas and good practice. The faculty groupings enable curriculum development and staff deployment to be managed effectively.

24 The management structure is a complex one for the size of college and suffers from some lack of clarity. For example, the job description for faculty directors specifies a level of responsibility which is not reflected in practice and which they currently lack the time to fulfil. The various levels of management sometimes make the decision-making process seem cumbersome to staff who find ways of by-passing the formal structures to expedite decisions.

25 Ten cross-college teams enable teaching and support staff from different areas of the college to work together and contribute to college developments. These teams concern themselves with, for example, catering, learning resources, productions and visits. A welfare, health and safety team is currently considering staff health and welfare and encouraging collaboration between curriculum areas to promote health education events for students. Approximately half the full-time staff below faculty director level take part in one or more teams.

26 Each curriculum area is required to produce an annual development plan structured according to the seven areas of Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Teachers receive training and clear guidance in drawing up these plans, using information technology to produce their plans to a common format. The development plans list the objectives of the curriculum area, but do not include timescales, responsibilities or measurable targets for the implementation of the objectives. The curriculum area plans are used in drawing up the college's strategic plan. The strategic planning cycle is clearly defined in the college's operational plan, which comprises a detailed week-by-week schedule of activities, aligned to the college meetings' structure. The operational plan is not presented in a way which enables teachers to make clear links with the objectives in the strategic plan. It does not form an effective framework for the development of curriculum areas and cross-college functions.

27 Structures for communication are well developed. Twice a week time is allowed for college meetings and this enables an appropriate balance of whole staff, faculty and team meetings to take place. Senior managers use the meetings structure to consult staff about strategic and operational matters. For example, the annual report to governors, the strategic plan, and the college's self-assessment report were submitted to staff for comment. All teaching and non-teaching staff have copies of the strategic

plan and receive a comprehensive staff handbook with detailed policies and procedures. Staff are kept well informed through a weekly staff bulletin. They have easy access to minutes of meetings and other key information in the staffroom. As a result, staff share a common understanding of the college's aims and the issues currently facing it.

28 The system for curriculum areas to bid for funds is clear and well understood. Bids are considered by the curriculum management committee. Allocations are based on the needs identified in curriculum area development plans and adjusted to reflect changes in student numbers. Financial allocation to curriculum areas does not involve calculation of unit costs or use a weighting formula to take account of the relative costs of different subject areas.

29 The college aims to increase its efficiency through growth in student numbers with only a marginal increase in staff costs. The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1995 are shown in figures 5 and 6. Its average level of funding per unit in 1994-95 was £23.26. In 1995-96 its average level of funding is £22.04 per unit. The median for sixth form colleges in 1995-96 is £19.37 per unit. Over the same period the college states that the ratio of staff to students has risen from 1:11.3 to 1:13.0. The college exceeded its growth targets for 1995-96. In September 1995, in order to cater for the expansion and to maximise the use of the premises, the college introduced a new timetable which entailed lengthening the college day and removing the common college lunch hour. This has not been well received by some staff and students because of its impact on the length and timing of teaching sessions and the reduction of opportunities for staff meetings and lunchtime activities. The timetable is currently under review.

30 The college's management information system provides an extensive range of reports. It can respond quickly to the demands of managers and teachers. A computerised database provides accurate and reliable information on matters such as room allocation, timetabling, class sizes, student details, course changes, retention and the destinations of leavers. The needs for management information are established and reviewed through frequent informal contact between the director of management information systems and users: there is no formal management information policy or user group. Data concerning applications, students' attendance and staffing have not yet been computerised.

31 The college fulfils its statutory obligation, under *The Further and Higher Education Act 1992*, to provide collective worship and religious education for all those who wish it. In September 1995, all new students were given a statement about their entitlement and how they could receive it. The student diary and weekly bulletins also advertise the opportunities for collective worship.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

32 Recruitment procedures are well managed. A wide range of strategies has been developed to inform students about the programmes available in the college. Publicity materials directed at school leavers are attractive and provide comprehensive information about programmes. Prospective students are able to attend open evenings and a range of other events, such as art exhibitions, drama productions and workshops, is available to help them understand the opportunities offered by the college. There are strong links with partner schools. Staff from the college make frequent visits to the schools and some teach sample lessons to pupils. Students can have guidance interviews either in school or at college. Prospective students have the opportunity to spend a week in the college at the end of June during which they are able to sample a range of lessons. This opportunity is valued highly by students for the help it gives them in making more informed choices about their careers and programmes of study.

33 The college is careful to maintain the interest of prospective students prior to enrolment. Close contact is kept with students through letters and additional opportunities to visit the college for guidance in August. Enrolment procedures and the induction programme which take place over two weeks in September are well organised. Tutors are provided with information packs to support them in this work. During induction, tutors administer a screening process to identify students' learning support needs. Tutors also give guidance to those students who wish to transfer to different programmes. The main emphasis of this phase of the induction process is on ensuring that students are enrolled on suitable courses. Induction of students to college services and facilities such as the library is less thorough.

34 Pre-course information and guidance for the increasing number of adult students is well organised. For example, good use is made of an adult learners' week to provide guidance for mature students. The college has recently appointed an adult guidance tutor to co-ordinate and support this activity. Students appreciate the support they receive. They are particularly positive about the willingness of staff to create programmes of study that meet their individual needs. Adult students are successfully integrated with 16 to 19 year old students on daytime courses. There is no college policy for the formal accreditation of students' prior learning and experience.

35 A positive start has been made to the development of systems and procedures to deliver learning support as a cross-college service. As yet, the implementation of this service is not well developed. Roles and responsibilities of staff involved in learning support lack clarity. Although good-quality additional support is provided in some curriculum areas, there is poor co-ordination between subject-based learning support and the cross-college service. There is no specialist learning support for the

small number of students who have specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

36 A strength of the college is the commitment of staff to individual students and their welfare. Most tutors know their students well. Many students, parents and staff from partner schools speak positively about the support given by staff. Staff and students see the reputation that the college has for providing a supportive environment as a key factor in attracting increasing numbers of students to the college.

37 Students' attendance is rigorously monitored and absences are followed up promptly. Effective systems enable subject tutors to inform personal tutors of students' absences. Students are aware of the need to provide explanations for their absences. The daily tutorial provides a registration opportunity and enables tutors to keep close contact with students. The average level of attendance in the classes inspected was 80 per cent.

38 Monitoring of students' progress is regular and rigorous. Course tutors, personal tutors, students and parents are all involved in reviews. The process is well managed by the guidance management team and is co-ordinated effectively by personal tutors. As part of this process, students review their progress with their tutors and set targets for improvement. The target setting and the statements which report progress are of variable quality. Some are insufficiently specific or detailed. Review reports are scheduled at key stages in the student's learning programme and are followed up by consultation evenings for parents. A similar review system is in place for adult students, including those who attend only in the evenings. Although students are encouraged to bring their records of achievement to their initial guidance interviews, there is little systematic updating of them during the time the student is in college. Where this does happen, it is mainly at the request of the students. Some tutors and students have negative views about the value of records of achievement.

39 Students are aware of their rights and responsibilities. These are clearly stated in a student handbook and in a formal college/student agreement which all students are required to sign.

40 Effective liaison with Humberside Careers Service includes detailed planning of the support the service will provide. Careers advice is an integral part of the tutorial system. The careers library is well resourced. There is a wide range of relevant computer software which can be accessed at various locations throughout the college. Careers guidance and support for students applying to higher education are comprehensive and thorough. Students' views are sought as part of the evaluation of the service.

41 Opportunities within the tutorial system are not exploited fully. There is insufficient focus within tutorials on students' personal and social development. They are perceived by some students and some members of staff as registration and information giving sessions. Much of the work undertaken in tutorials is designed to help students to prepare for entrance

to university. Consequently, some students who do not wish to go on to higher education feel that there is little within the tutorials which is of relevance to them. Tutor groups are made up of students from different courses and from different years. This strategy is designed to reflect the ethos of the college by encouraging social cohesion but, in practice, students are often split into subgroups which are seen separately by tutors. Although some of the work undertaken within tutorials is of a high standard, there is some unproductive and inefficient use of time by both staff and students.

42 A confidential counselling service is provided for students and staff by the college chaplain who works part time within the college. This work is supplemented by tutors, a small number of whom have qualifications in counselling, and through an independent counselling organisation. Where necessary, students are referred for specialist help to external organisations.

43 The students' union is a potential channel of communication between students and the college management. Students are consulted through the union about issues within the college but members do not always consider that their views are valued. Few students are actively involved in the union.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

44 Of the 103 teaching sessions inspected, 75 per cent were judged to have strengths which outweighed weaknesses. Eight per cent of the sessions were judged to have weaknesses which outweighed strengths. The following table summarises the grades allocated to the sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		23	38	14	4	0	79
GCSE		3	8	2	3	0	16
GNVQ		0	2	0	1	0	3
Other		2	1	2	0	0	5
Total		28	49	18	8	0	103

45 Overall the standard of teaching and learning is good. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. Positive working relationships have been established between staff and students and these help students to learn. Lessons are generally well prepared although, in some cases, lack of detailed planning results in less effective sessions.

46 In mathematics, the standard of teaching and learning was consistently good. Sessions had clear objectives and an interactive teaching style encouraged students to contribute their ideas and to ask questions. There were instances of imaginative teaching. For example, students

studying foundation level numeracy were able to enjoy the topic of geometric angles because it was tackled, not in an abstract way which they would have found difficult, but by working in pairs, first to estimate angles by eye and then to check each other's estimates by measuring. This allowed the introduction of mathematical ideas to determine which angles students were able to estimate most accurately. In a GCE A level mechanics session, students carried out a simple but effective demonstration of the effects of forces by pulling strings attached to a flat piece of card. In another GCE A level group, different methods of integration were compared, including an imaginative use of practical calculators. The teaching schemes for GCE A level and GCSE were of good quality, but some opportunities were missed by staff to extend the schemes with their own ideas and to link the mathematics to real-life examples. In some instances the schemes were followed too closely and this resulted in less imaginative work. The use of information technology as an aid to classroom work was not well developed.

47 Science teaching was generally of high quality. Classes were carefully planned. Schemes of work were effective and, in the best practice, these were shared with students. There was good use of practical demonstrations with practical follow-up work for students, both of which contributed to diverse and lively teaching sessions. For example, a well-designed practical demonstration in chemistry was set up safely in a fume cupboard and was carried out convincingly. Students were able to make deductions and to explain what was happening. They made their own notes, some of which were of a high standard. The work was summarised well by the teacher who was particularly careful to build students' confidence. Homework was set and marked regularly. Effective use was made of learning aids such as handouts, workbooks, problem sheets, practical schedules and models. In many sessions, staff made time to give additional support to students who were having difficulties with their work.

48 Business studies teachers generally used a variety of teaching and learning strategies which maintained students' interest. Learning materials were well matched to the needs of the students. Effective reference to students' backgrounds and their work experience enhanced the learning of the group. In the majority of classes, good use was made by teachers of question and answer techniques to achieve lesson objectives. Teachers were careful to check students' understanding at regular intervals throughout a lesson. Students spoke positively about the prompt return of assessed work, but on occasions, insufficient guidance was given to students as to how they could improve their grades. There was little use of visiting speakers or visits to provide a context for the study of business theory. Opportunities to make references to the European Union were missed. For example, a GCSE class on wages made no reference to the social chapter and its impact on minimum wages.

49 In humanities the quality of teaching was generally good and, in some classes, the level of teacher input and student response was excellent. Teachers used a variety of teaching strategies and paid particular attention to developing students' essay writing skills and examination techniques. In some lessons, more thorough planning was needed to ensure that students could benefit fully from the activities. In history, geography and geology, staff encouraged students to use computers. In the history baseroom a computer linked to the college network enabled students to gain access to material on a compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) database to support their individual research projects. In geography, staff had developed a bank of research materials catalogued on a computer database which students can use for their personal studies. In geology, the teaching was supported by the use of computer packages which students used individually to assess their knowledge as part of the review process. In some classes, teachers failed to ensure that quieter students were able to contribute to the lesson. Although, in the past, additional workshops have been organised for students experiencing difficulties in history, over the period of the inspection insufficient additional support was available across the range of humanities subjects.

50 In the social sciences, schemes of work were designed to challenge and extend students' skills, knowledge and personal development. Within many lessons, staff took considerable care to ensure that students understood key concepts. In a psychology class for adults, the teacher had organised an additional session before the start of the class to enable students to receive individual attention to support their assignments and set reading. An innovative scheme had been designed to teach first-year psychology students the skills they needed to use a commercial spreadsheet programme for data analysis. Marking schemes ensured that assessments were at an appropriate standard and that the assessment process provided constructive feedback to students. The quality of teaching in general studies was of a high standard. In one session, entitled 'What is Art', students watched a short video of a popular artist at work and were then asked to use one word to describe their views about his work. Handouts had been prepared to illustrate comments made about his work in the press. The students responded well to this stimulating session and were able to argue their points of view clearly and thoughtfully. Classes in sociology were well organised. A good range of stimulating learning materials and teaching strategies were used and students responded well to the challenges set for them.

51 Students within performing arts, media studies and design were encouraged to develop their skills in a professional and creative way through a series of well-structured tasks and projects. For example, the aim of a textiles project was to provide a starting point which would require research and individual responses to a design task. The project started with photographs of people and artefacts from other cultures. Each student selected a culture and wrote a substantial paper on it. Using all the

information available, the students experimented with a variety of media including pencil, crayon, pen, collage, batik and appliqué. The experimental two-dimensional work progressed into design sheets which explored a range of ideas for a bag. The final task was to make the bag itself. A small number of lessons were not planned in sufficient detail and tasks were set which were too difficult for the students. In all practical sessions students were well briefed on working safely and teachers made good use of the sessions to undertake assessments of individual students' work and to provide guidance.

52 In English, students' learning is enhanced by visits to theatres, workshops with partner schools, and by staging their own productions. Teachers generally displayed an in-depth knowledge of the text being studied. They had high expectations of students and maintained their interest in classes through the use of humour and by posing challenging questions. Students were encouraged to analyse and to evaluate rather than simply to describe. During the third week of a project on *Hamlet*, first-year GCE A level students working in small groups were set the task of preparing a short presentation which was to be followed by a question and answer session. The objectives were to understand the scene, to think about the learning process and to value other students' opinions. Lessons had clear aims and objectives and great care was taken over the marking and prompt return of students' work. Teachers had developed master sheets to facilitate the tracking of students' progress. A course handbook included strategies to enable students to identify their own weaknesses. In some classes the teachers' presentation lacked vigour and students were passive and inclined to respond only when questioned rather than spontaneously. There was little use of the overhead projector or audio-visual material.

53 Classes in foreign languages were well prepared and structured. Most contained a variety of activities to maintain students' interest. The foreign language was used, in most cases, as the main means of communication in the classroom. Other positive features included regular testing, good use of the language laboratory, oral work in pairs, clear explanations and ample practice and consolidation of learning. Students benefited from weekly sessions with the foreign language assistants, either individually or in small groups. Teachers readily gave students extra help, both in the scheduled language clinics and at other times. Language students received solid and thorough teaching from experienced teachers and were well prepared for their examinations.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

54 In most cases students enjoyed their studies, spoke positively about their experiences and showed a willingness to learn. In sciences, students applied themselves purposefully to the tasks set. In mathematics, the students enjoyed working on their own, using individualised learning schemes. In business, they demonstrated a genuine enthusiasm for the

subject, helping each other in groups. In art and design, the good relationships between staff and students promoted a creative working environment. The commitment of the geography students was uniformly high, their interest strengthened by recent participation in a residential field course. In some humanities subjects, such as politics and history, a real sense of excitement was generated by the discussion between teachers and students. Over the past two years, students from Franklin Sixth Form College were selected for an adult learner of the year award.

55 Where students had the opportunity to take part in group work, they did so enthusiastically and developed the skills of working in a group effectively. In a business studies class, students taught each other information technology skills in groups, taking it in turn to be the teacher. The students were highly supportive of each other in any difficulties they encountered. The same willingness to support each other was also evident in the group work in performing arts. Group work was less effective when teachers allowed the more extrovert students to dominate the activity.

56 Students' written work in humanities showed good powers of expression and a high level of understanding and perception. In their sociology and psychology coursework, students were able to relate their learning to practical situations. In English, students' written work demonstrated their acquisition of the skill of critical judgement. The work of science students showed that their knowledge was well developed for the stage of the course. Students in the creative arts were developing a personal response in their work.

57 Students in business studies were able to engage in discussion among themselves, supporting their arguments with examples of recent economic case studies. In an English literature class, where students were exploring how people's character changes through events, the students showed considerable insight. Humanities students' contributions to discussion showed good levels of perception, understanding and factual knowledge. Students in mathematics were reluctant to challenge and debate mathematical topics.

58 In business studies, students were able to apply appropriate mathematical skills to the tasks which involved their use. The numeracy skills of some science students, however, were underdeveloped. Information technology skills were well developed in many subjects. GNVQ business students, for example, received a two-hour session of information technology each week and were required to use information technology to complete their assignments. Students of English were required to submit at least one wordprocessed essay in the first term. Students of creative and performing arts were able to draw on a range of specialist information technology equipment located in the studios and workshops. In some subjects, such as sociology, and modern languages, students had insufficient opportunities to develop their skills in information technology as part of the course.

59 Good levels of practical skill were demonstrated in science, technology, art, music, media studies and performing arts. Students' work was celebrated in displays, exhibitions and performances, and in the college magazine. The displays of students' art work around the college were of a high standard and promoted a pleasant working environment. Students working on design and technology projects in the metal workshop did so capably and with due regard for safety. In science, students generally carried out practical work competently.

60 A wide range of creative, sporting and cultural activities enables students to develop their skills and to achieve success. Students' art work has received gold awards in national competitions and the work of two students has been selected for an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Individual students have won international honours in athletics, trampolining and canoeing, and two students have gained scholarships to American universities because of their sporting ability. Several music students have been awarded scholarships for the prestigious Junior Academy in London. Many students are members of local and county youth choirs and orchestras. The college regularly stages dramatic and musical productions for local schools and community groups and some performances have been broadcast on local television and radio. Some students have performed in arts festivals in Russia and Poland.

61 There are very high levels of achievement in GCE A level examinations. Of the 762 subject entries in 1995, 52 per cent gained grades A to C and the overall grade A to E pass rate was 88 per cent. These results compare favourably with the figures for all sixth form colleges of 50 per cent and 84 per cent respectively. Figures for the last three years show a comparable level of achievement. Of the 34 subjects taught in the college, 14 had pass rates of 100 per cent in 1995. Particularly outstanding results were obtained in mathematics, where all 64 candidates gained a pass and 86 per cent gained grades A to C. A high proportion of A to C passes were obtained by candidates in geology (83 per cent), psychology (80 per cent), music (77 per cent) and chemistry (77 per cent). The combined results of French, German, Spanish and Russian showed a 97 per cent pass rate, with 66 per cent of entries gaining grades A to C. Results in communication studies, computing, design technology, physics, religious studies and environmental and social biology fell significantly below national averages in 1995.

62 Analysis of the college's GCE A level results indicates a very high level of achievement in relation to students' entry qualifications. Value-added analysis of the 1994 and 1995 results shows that, in 19 of the 30 subjects for which comparisons have been drawn, students achieved better results than those predicted on the basis of their achievements at GCSE. Particularly good value-added scores were obtained by candidates in art, chemistry, English, home economics, music and mathematics.

63 Subject entries for GCE AS examinations were relatively small, with a total of 44 entries in 1995. The A to E pass rate of 84 per cent and A to C pass rate of 59 per cent compared well with figures of 73 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively, for sixth form colleges as a whole.

64 The 279 students, aged 16 to 18, who were entered for GCE AS/A level examinations in 1995 scored, on average, 5.2 points per entry (where A=10 and E=2). This places the college among the top 10 per cent of colleges on this performance measure, based on the data in the 1995 performance tables published by the Department for Education and Employment.

65 Of the 566 entries for GCSE subjects in 1995, 67 per cent were graded A to C. This is significantly higher than the average A to C pass rate of 49 per cent for sixth form colleges in 1994. Over 90 per cent of candidates in art, communication studies, electronics, French, photography, Russian, and sociology gained grades A to C. Creditable results were obtained in English, where 69 per cent of those resitting the subject were successful in gaining A to C passes. Results were higher than the latest sixth form college averages in 15 of the 16 subjects for which comparable data are available.

66 The proportion of students enrolled on GNVQ programmes who gained a pass within the expected period in 1995 was 38 per cent at foundation level, 70 per cent at intermediate level and 29 per cent at advanced level. These results are sound at foundation and intermediate level but below national figures at advanced level.

67 The college measures course completion by subject and level. On average, 83 per cent of those starting a GCE A level subject in 1993 sat the examination in that subject in the summer of 1995. However, there were retention problems in some subjects. The two-year completion rate fell below 70 per cent in a third of the GCE A level subjects, including sociology, psychology, art and design, social biology, design technology, media studies and religious studies. In GCE A level music technology, only eight of the 17 students starting the course in 1993 completed in 1995. For GCSE subjects, the average one-year completion rate was 80 per cent, but again it fell below 70 per cent in a third of subjects. For GNVQ courses, the one-year completion rate in 1994-95 averaged 78 per cent. Retention on the health and social care courses was good, at 87 per cent. However, only eight of the 13 intermediate art and design students and nine of the 15 intermediate business students who were enrolled in November 1994 were still on roll in May 1995.

68 The majority of advanced level students go on to higher education on completion of their course. In 1995, 63 per cent entered higher education, 16 per cent went on to further education and training and 8 per cent to employment and the remainder unknown. Of the students completing intermediate programmes, 35 per cent progressed to further courses at Franklin Sixth Form College, 20 per cent went on to further education

elsewhere, 20 per cent to training and 15 per cent to employment. The destinations of the remaining 10 per cent of students have not yet been ascertained.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

69 The college meets the requirements of the charter for further education. Information relevant to the charter is available in the students' diary. The vice-principal responsible for students' support is the co-ordinator for charter performance. The views of staff and governors have contributed to the redrafting of the student charter which was published in November 1995. However, the views of students, parents, partner schools and the wider community were not sought as part of the redrafting process. The charter is clear and concise. It is focused towards the needs of full-time students who are aged between 16 and 19. There are no sections within it which relate to parents or to the standards of service which can be expected by adult students. Many students are unfamiliar with the charter. The college monitors its effectiveness in terms of the number of queries raised by students; no queries have been recorded since it was first introduced last year. The college has not established a process for reviewing the charter and there is no annual report to evaluate its implementation and effectiveness.

70 Currently the vice-principal (curriculum) has responsibility for quality assurance. The systems for quality assurance are at an early stage of development. The quality assurance policy has recently been reviewed by the senior management team and is currently being circulated to staff and governors for consultation prior to formal approval. The college intends to establish a quality assurance development team involving governors, staff and students. The remit of the group will be to examine, advise and develop college-wide criteria on quality issues.

71 The main elements of the quality assurance system comprise the curriculum area handbooks, reviews and development plans. In addition to the curriculum teams there are a number of cross-college teams, such as learning support, which produce annual development plans. All these documents conform to standard headings which are based on the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. All reviews and development plans are discussed with the relevant line manager, and a summary report is produced that informs the curriculum area development plan, cross-college action plans and the college annual report. Quality targets and timescales are set and reviewed annually in the college operating statement. The quality of the curriculum area annual reviews is inconsistent. Some are detailed and analytical, others are more descriptive, providing little analysis of retention data, attendance figures and students' destinations. There is insufficient reference to the previous year's development plan. The college acknowledges the problem, and is providing training to ensure a more consistent approach. There is no quality manual to provide guidance for course teams and newly-appointed

staff. Not all cross-college areas have developed performance indicators to assure the quality of provision.

72 The annual review process is supplemented by student questionnaires. However, there is no formal requirement for their use and the format and timing of the questionnaires are at the discretion of subject teams. No systematic evaluation is undertaken of the quality and effectiveness of the various questionnaires and the information obtained through them. There is no college-wide questionnaire which is designed to obtain the views of students about a range of issues. In curriculum area reviews, insufficient importance is attached to students' evaluations of their courses. The college does not seek the views of employers as to the quality of its provision.

73 Procedures for quality assurance meet the requirements of the various examining, validating and awarding bodies and the reports of external verifiers receive appropriate attention. For example, following an external verifier's report, the GNVQ advanced level business team reviewed their strategy for assessing students' work. Reports from examining bodies are circulated to staff. The college makes extensive use of external value-added measures as performance indicators. Subject teams are committed to providing students with an educational experience of a high quality. Their success is demonstrated by the improvements in many GCE A level results over the last five years. Teachers in some curriculum areas observe each other's classes and evaluate the quality of the teaching.

74 A link exists between the college's strategic plan and staff development. There are well-established and clear procedures for assessing the training needs of staff to meet the requirements of the curriculum area teams. All staff who attend training courses are required to complete an evaluation form. Expenditure on staff development is approximately 1.5 per cent of the staffing budget. The programme for meeting training needs is well structured and effective. A staff-development team, comprising the assistant principal (human resources), five curriculum area co-ordinators, and a representative of the support staff, meets monthly to discuss policy issues, to monitor expenditure, and to plan and evaluate training events. The team does not produce an annual evaluative report on staff-development activities. Support staff are informed of relevant training events but, on occasions, are unable to attend daytime events owing to lack of staff cover. Staff applying to undertake a staff-development activity are not required to show how it relates to the college's needs as identified in the strategic plan.

75 The Humberside Sixth Form Colleges' Consortium has run joint training events for teaching and support staff. Sessions have included guidance and support, higher education links, and health and safety. The events are evaluated by the staff-development team and the information gained is used when planning future events.

76 There is an induction scheme for new staff. The induction programme is comprehensive and includes mentoring arrangements. Staff receive a comprehensive handbook which sets out their rights and responsibilities. Meetings to help new staff settle quickly into their roles have been organised through the consortium.

77 A staff-appraisal scheme, supported by training for appraisers and appraisees, was introduced in January 1995. The college has made a commitment to gaining the Investors in People award. No date has been agreed for its achievement.

78 The college's self-assessment report is laid out according to the seven major headings of the Further Education Funding Council inspection framework in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It is detailed, analytical and considers each aspect in terms of key strengths and 'priorities to be addressed'. Evidence indicators are used to support each statement. The judgements were, in most cases, consistent with those reached by the inspection team. A questionnaire to evaluate the assessment report was circulated to students, teachers, support staff, and governors.

RESOURCES

Staffing

79 Teaching staff are well qualified and experienced. They carry out their professional duties with energy and enthusiasm. Eighty-five per cent of the full-time staff are graduates and 18 per cent have higher degrees. The majority of full-time staff have teaching qualifications. Many teachers have recent experience with external organisations and examining bodies. In art and design, a number of staff are practising performers and musicians. Overall, few full-time staff have recent and relevant commercial experience. Part-time staff are deployed effectively. They are carefully selected for the specialist expertise they can offer.

80 The support staff are well qualified. They are committed to the college and their contribution is valued by the teaching staff. In some areas the level of support is inadequate. For example, students are not able to borrow books from the library after 16.30 as there are no staff on duty. The level of technical support is low. Technicians have responsibility for a number of areas. For example, the technician for information technology supports both academic and administrative systems.

81 A personnel framework, which includes policies on recruitment and selection, has been established. Staff have been issued with current job descriptions.

Equipment/learning resources

82 There is a wide range of specialist equipment in many of the curriculum areas. For example, in art and design, equipment meets

professional standards and in languages, there are good authentic materials and a language laboratory. Equipment in science is adequate for current needs. Staff in a number of curriculum areas, such as mathematics and science, have developed learning materials which are of a high standard. Personal copies of core textbooks are provided for students. All staff have access to photocopying facilities. Classrooms are equipped with whiteboards and/or chalkboards. Some of these are of poor quality and in need of replacement.

83 The college has a co-ordinated approach to the purchase of computers. Investment over the last three years has resulted in a good range of information technology equipment which is of high quality. There is a ratio of one workstation to every 10 students and a college-wide network for use by both staff and students. The information technology suite, currently under construction, will ease the cramped conditions experienced at peak times and enable students to use facilities independently outside formal classes.

84 An extension to the library has created a total of 160 study spaces. The stock of books is comprehensive and up to date and meets the requirements of most curriculum areas. Other resources include videos, computers, cassettes, newspapers and magazines. The provision of additional materials to support students who are learning foreign languages is poor. Students have access to photocopying facilities within the library, and staff provide a project-binding service. Currently there are no formal links between library staff and teaching staff in the curriculum areas.

Accommodation

85 The college is located one mile from the centre of Grimsby. The site includes extensive playing fields. The building was originally designed and used as a secondary school. It was extensively refurbished and extra rooms were added when it became a sixth form college. During the last three years the college has continued to invest in its accommodation. Projects have included the extension of the library, the modernisation of the kitchens and the building of a new theatre for dramatic arts which has adjoining showers, dressing rooms and space for hanging costumes. At present, major building works are being undertaken to provide a new information technology and management suite.

86 The majority of the specialist accommodation is of a high standard. A notable example is the accommodation used for art and design. Wide corridors enable students to move around the college easily. All rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. The corridors and teaching areas are enhanced by displays of students' work. These add interest and create stimulating learning environments for the students. The majority of rooms are carpeted and provide comfortable accommodation for the students. Within many classrooms, seating arrangements enable a variety of teaching and learning strategies to be used. The accommodation available

to students for social and recreational purposes is insufficient. Overall, the facilities offered by the college are appreciated by the students and the adults who use them.

87 A central computerised system for the allocation of rooms has been devised. This assists planning and the allocation of rooms to particular groups. Cleaning rotas have been adapted to ensure that the accommodation is clean for all students, including those who attend twilight and evening classes, and for groups which hire rooms for their own use.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

88 The strengths of the college are:

- the wide range of GCE A level and GCSE programmes and the increasing number of vocational programmes
- effective liaison with parents, schools and establishments of higher education
- the well-structured pre-enrolment and induction programme
- effective management of curriculum areas
- the well-defined college planning cycle
- staff commitment to the welfare of students and their progress
- the high quality of the support for adults
- good standards of teaching and learning
- good examination results in many curriculum areas
- staff who are highly qualified and display enthusiasm for their work
- well-planned accommodation which provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment
- the wide range and the good quality of learning resources.

89 If it is to continue to improve standards, the college should address the following:

- the limited range of marketing strategies
- underdeveloped links with local businesses
- the lack of clarity in some management roles
- inconsistencies in the quality of tutorials
- poor results in some vocational programmes
- the underdeveloped quality assurance system
- inconsistencies in the quality of some curriculum area annual reviews
- the insufficient industrial or commercial experience of staff teaching vocational programmes.

FIGURES

-
- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (1995-96)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (1995-96)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1995-96)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1995-96)

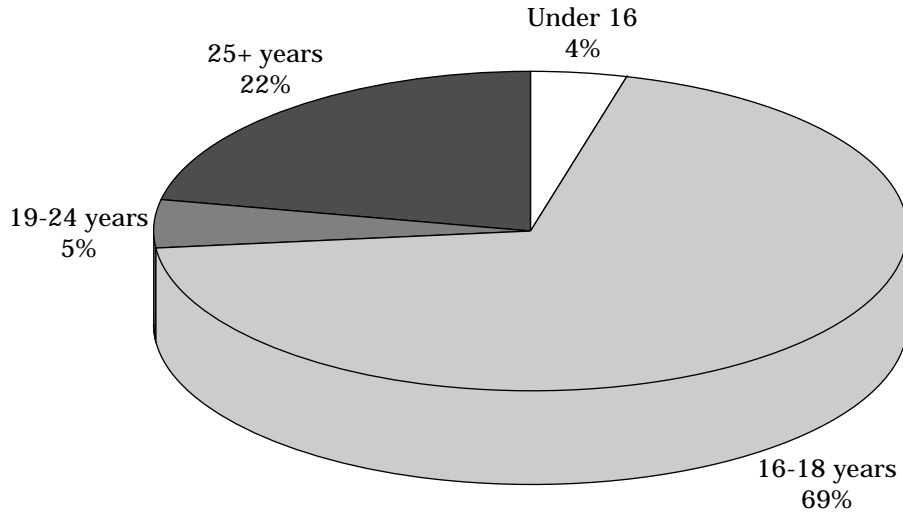
 - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1995)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)

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

Figure 1

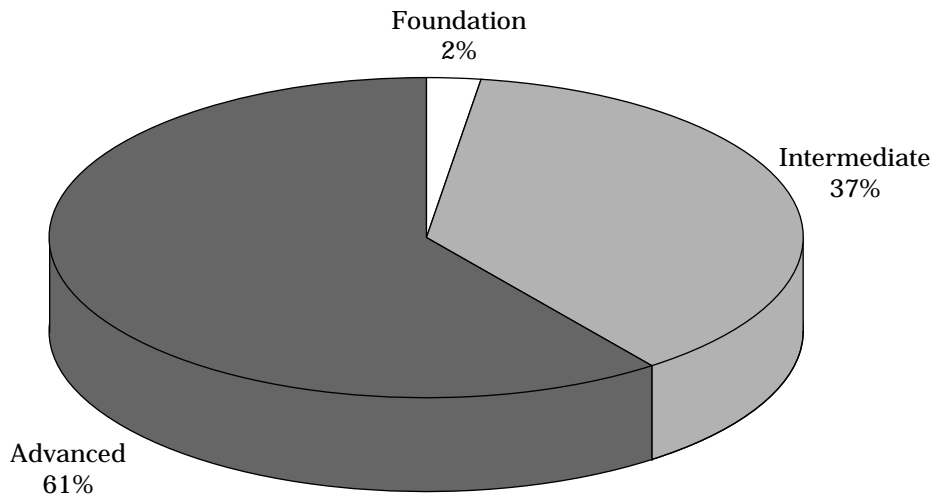
Franklin Sixth Form College: percentage enrolments by age (1995-96)



Enrolments: 1,337

Figure 2

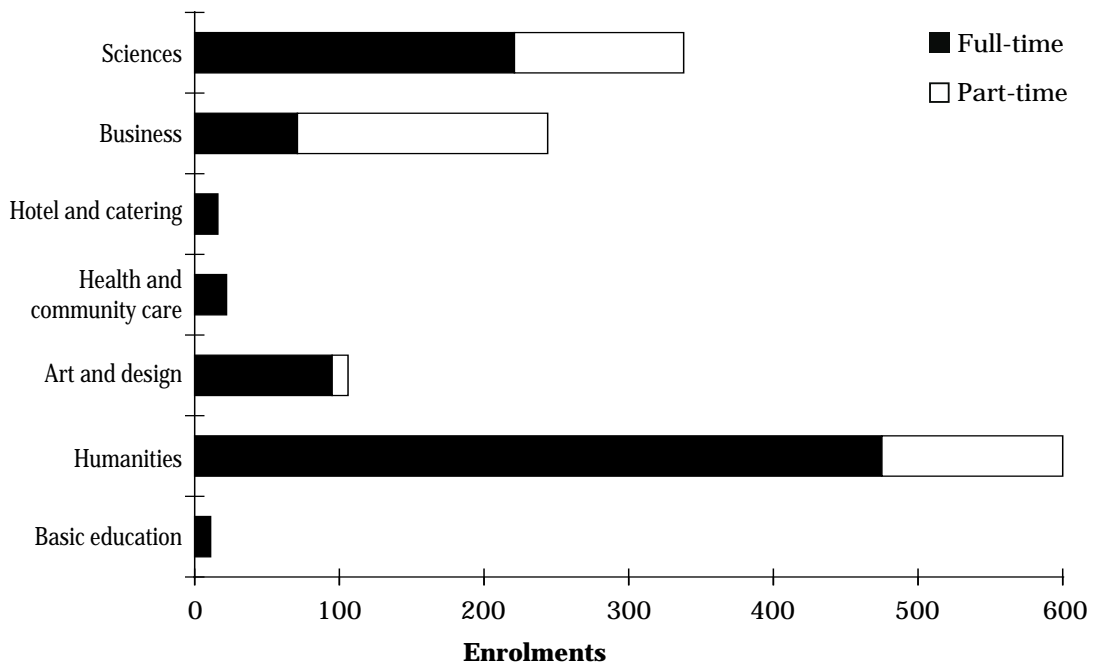
Franklin Sixth Form College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1995-96)



Enrolments: 1,337

Figure 3

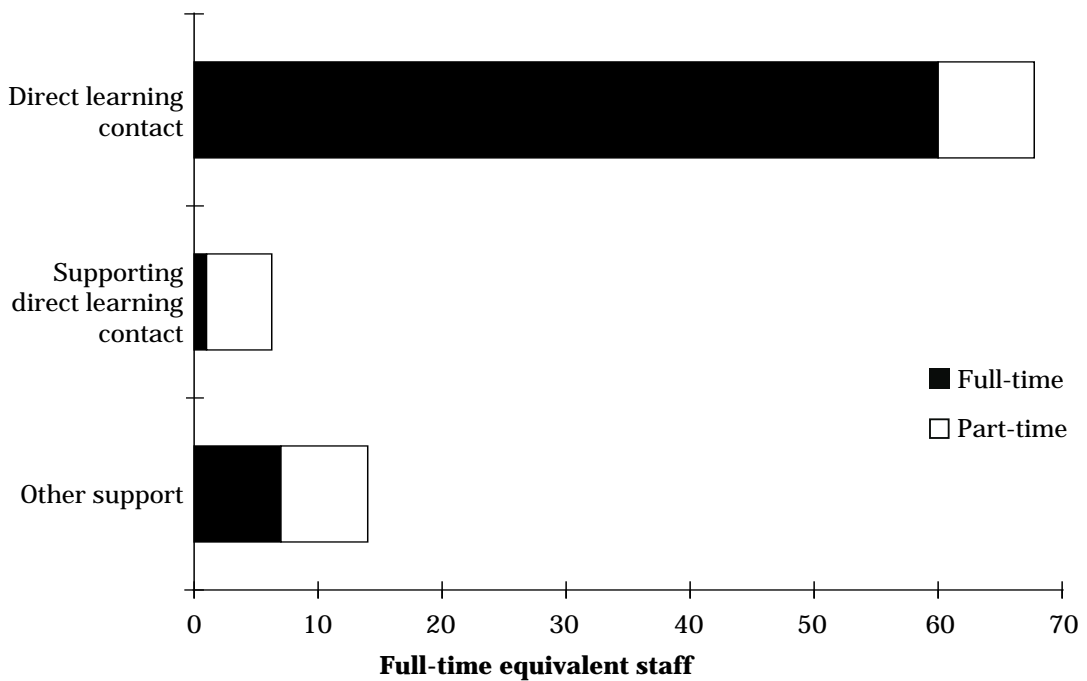
Franklin Sixth Form College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1995-96)



Enrolments: 1,337

Figure 4

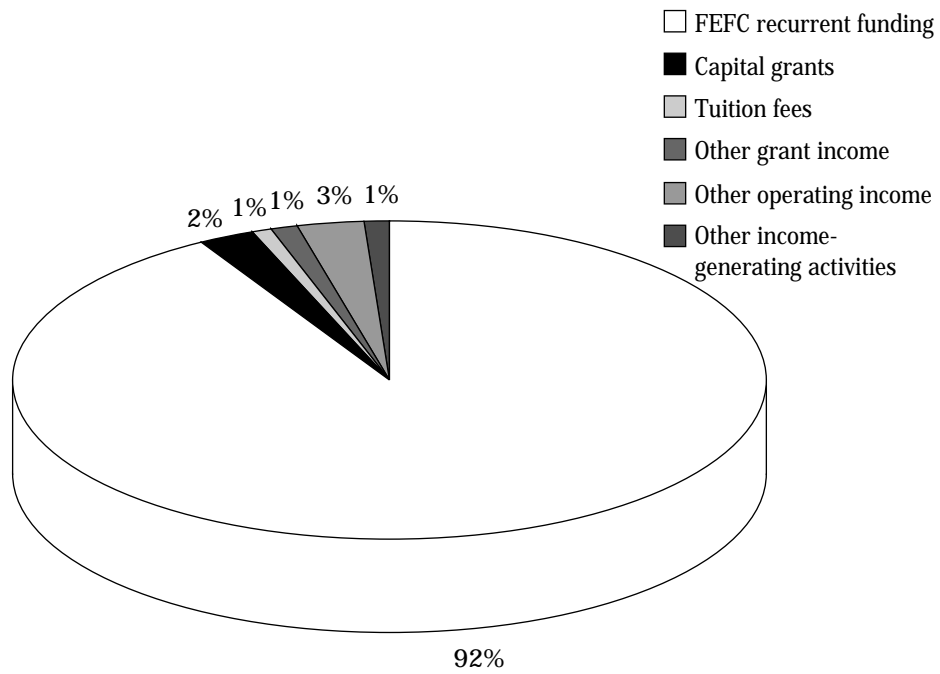
Franklin Sixth Form College: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1995-96)



Full-time equivalent staff: 88

Figure 5

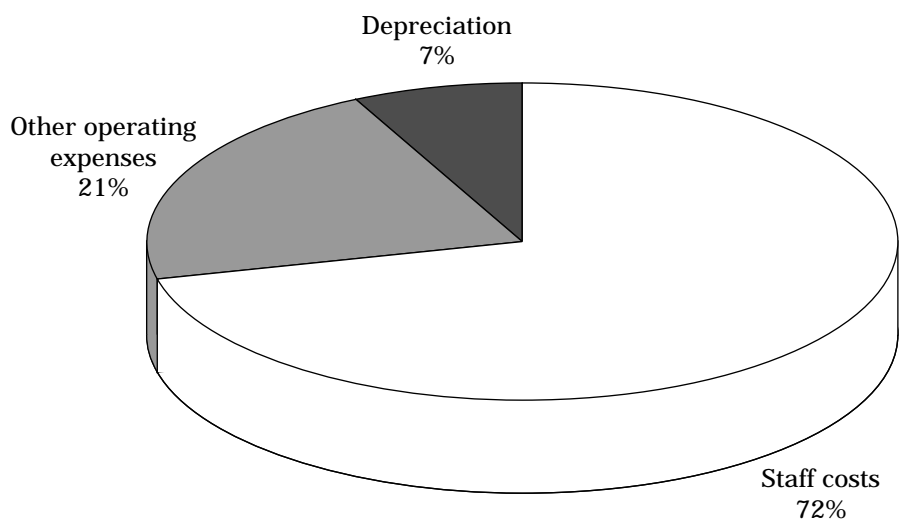
Franklin Sixth Form College: income (for 12 months to July 1995)



Income: £2,979,000

Figure 6

Franklin Sixth Form College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)



Expenditure: £2,931,000

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