

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

Haywards Heath College

September 1995

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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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.

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.*

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FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 116/95

HAYWARDS HEATH COLLEGE
SOUTH EAST REGION
Inspected March and May 1995

Summary

Haywards Heath College provides mainly GCE A level courses for 16-19 year olds. It has recently begun to expand its range with the gradual introduction of GNVQs, an access to higher education course and increasing collaboration with local adult education centres. There is a strong commitment to develop further provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college is highly regarded locally and has well-established links with partner schools. Students receive consistently good teaching and strong pastoral support from well-qualified staff. They also benefit from participating in an extensive enrichment programme. Examination results are just above average for sixth form colleges. An effective corporation board takes a strong interest in the curriculum. The college should: clarify some of its decision-making processes, in particular the management of the curriculum; further develop its quality assurance system; implement its scheme for staff appraisal; improve its strategy for accommodation; and develop its resources for information technology.

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	4
Resources: staffing	2
equipment/learning resources	3
accommodation	3

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Science	2	Sociology, psychology and religious studies	2
Mathematics and computing	2	English and theatre studies	2
Business studies/economics and wordprocessing	2	History and politics	1
Art and media studies	2	Geography, geology and leisure and tourism	2
		Languages and classics	2

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INTRODUCTION

1 Haywards Heath College in West Sussex was inspected during the period September 1994 to May 1995. The college's enrolment and induction procedures were inspected at the beginning of the autumn term 1994, curriculum subjects and aspects of cross-college provision in March and May 1995, respectively. In all, 11 inspectors spent a total of 56 days in the college. They visited 142 classes and examined many samples of students' work. They held discussions with staff, students, parents and governors and with representatives of local schools, the community, the town council, employers, higher education and the Sussex Chamber of Commerce Training and Enterprise Council (TEC).

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

2 Haywards Heath College was established in 1980 having previously been a co-educational grammar school. During the 1980s the college grew to become one of the largest sixth form colleges in the region and its main focus is still full-time education for 16-19 year olds. The college attracts students from four local 11-16 schools and from 11-18 schools throughout the mid-Sussex area. It has a large intake from independent schools. Since incorporation, the college has attracted a small but increasing number of adult students and is now expanding its programme of adult education (daytime and evening) by the successful implementation of access to higher education courses and close co-operation with local adult education centres.

3 Haywards Heath is a commuter town in the south east with a population of 23,400. There are 8,000 residents in the adjoining villages of Cuckfield and Lindfield and 26,600 in nearby Burgess Hill. The area is noted chiefly for its service industries rather than manufacturing. Haywards Heath has become the headquarters of national banking and insurance companies.

4 The college campus is surrounded on all sides by private housing which makes physical expansion difficult. Its former local education authority (LEA), West Sussex County Council, undertook only one limited building programme in the 1970s to expand the original grammar school. The college subsequently relied on the provision of hatted accommodation that is still in use. The expansion of facilities for music, completed just before incorporation, involved the addition of a further wooden unit. Conversion work to adapt the original buildings for use as a sixth form college has been funded by the college itself. In recent years, priority has been given to providing up-to-date learning technology and creating facilities for the individual counselling and guidance that enables the college to fulfil its mission.

5 Student numbers, in an area where well over 70 per cent stay on beyond the school-leaving age, are high, and the college functions at near capacity level within its normal teaching day of some seven hours. In the past two years, enrolment targets have been achieved almost exactly with

increases of 2.8 per cent in 1993-94 and of 2.4 per cent in 1994-95. In 1993-94 there were 967 full-time and five part-time students. In 1994-95 the enrolments were 982 and 50, respectively. The college expects that the numbers of part-time students will continue to increase steadily. Enrolments by age and level of study are shown in figures 1 and 2 and by mode of attendance and curriculum area in figure 3.

6 Although expenditure on buildings and accommodation was relatively low prior to incorporation, the college's investment in staffing was well above the national average for the further education sector. The college faces the task of reducing its staffing expenditure. Some progress has been achieved in the past two years without resorting to compulsory redundancies. The college is determined to manage these reductions whilst still preserving its varied curriculum, the levels of achievement and the high standards of student care. At the time of the inspection, the college had 109 full-time equivalent staff. A staff profile, with staff shown as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

7 There is awareness throughout the college of the government's aims and policies for further education, the national targets for education and training and the requirements of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). The college's positive response to them is enshrined in its mission statement. The college aims to be a centre of excellence for post-16 education in mid-Sussex by meeting a wide range of learning needs, by supporting and encouraging individuals towards the fulfilment of their academic and personal potential and by fostering a spirit of involvement within the college and co-operation with the wider community. The mission statement and the timescale for its accomplishment are widely, although not universally, supported by governors and staff. Growth targets approved by the corporation have nevertheless been achieved in both 1993-94 and 1994-95.

8 The college has designated a liaison tutor for each of four 11-16 schools which contribute the majority of the full-time 16-19 year old students. The principal acts as liaison tutor for a number of other schools. Liaison tutors meet both as a college team and regularly with representatives from the schools in order to plan the activities that take place. Schools speak positively of their links with the college, which they regard as sound and responsive. The college takes care to complete cycles of communication with schools by informing them of the examination results and destinations of their former pupils. The principal is in contact with schools at a formal level through attendance at meetings of the West Sussex Secondary Headteachers' Association, the mid-Sussex and central Sussex headteachers' groups and through membership of the Headmasters' Conference.

9 The college has maintained close links with its LEA which provides, under contract, a package of curriculum and professional support services

delivered by the advisory and inspection service. The contract with the LEA also allows access to the county's in-service training programme. A further annual contract with the county council provides the college with a full payroll service, access to the county's personnel service, and advice on health and safety, supplies and equipment and waste disposal.

10 There are good links with higher education. Members of the careers department and other staff concerned with guidance regularly visit higher education institutions and report back on their visits to interested parties. The college is collaborating with the Sussex University Centre for Continuing Education in the provision of opportunities for adults and has recently established links with the Open University. Links with other sixth form colleges in the Sussex area are also good. A number of initiatives have emerged, including a staff-development consortium and a joint bid for funding of work towards the Investors in People award.

11 The college places an important value on its relations with parents. There are regular parents' evenings and parents are also encouraged to make contact with the college at any time if they have matters which they wish to discuss. An evening for the parents of prospective students takes place early in the autumn term and, in January, the principal holds a pre-admission consultation evening designed to keep parents informed. The college's efforts are much appreciated by parents, although some feel that the corporation might do more to communicate with them about its affairs.

12 The college has not had close ties with the Sussex Chamber of Commerce TEC although it has successfully bid for funding, for example to support development work for General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs). Both parties are now working hard to establish dialogue and a number of initiatives are in train or envisaged, for example, for staff from the college to take up placements in industry and commerce in order to gain relevant experience. The college corporation now has on its board a TEC nominee, who is keen to strengthen links between the two organisations.

13 Links with employers have been forged mainly in connection with work experience placements and with the need to seek assistance with students' project work. The college does no work directly for employers. However, it collaborates with a local theatre, to which the college's drama and music students make frequent contributions. The college is also an enthusiastic contributor to the Haywards Heath town festival. The college's students regularly work as voluntary helpers in local primary and special schools and are active in fundraising for charity. Last year, students raised some £1,500 towards the building of a new YMCA hostel in Burgess Hill. They are currently working to raise money for the 'Children in Crisis' charity. Overall, the college has a positive image in the locality and it is noted for its good communications and for the speed of its response to requests and enquiries.

14 The strategic plan's analysis of the socio-economic character of its catchment area and of local training needs draws usefully on the labour market data supplied by the TEC as well as on other data supplied by mid-Sussex council and the careers office. The college has used these data to select local businesses for which it might offer training. So far, it has not been successful in gaining any contracts for training.

15 The choice of programmes which the college offers is planned first and foremost to meet the needs of the 16-19 year old full-time students who make up 95 per cent of enrolments. There are 37 General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level), seven GCE advanced supplementary (AS) and 21 General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses. Alternative GCE A level syllabuses are available in biology, chemistry, history, business studies and mathematics. The college offers certificated courses in information technology, numeracy and wordprocessing. Advanced level GNVQ programmes in art and design, business, and health and social care and intermediate level programmes in business, and leisure and tourism have been available since September 1994. New courses are added when the college identifies a need and those which are no longer in demand are discontinued. Next year, the college plans to launch GNVQ programmes at advanced level in leisure and tourism and at intermediate level in information technology and science. It will also offer four additional GCE A levels, adding significantly to the options available in English, and one further GCE AS subject, whilst dropping GCSE French and making available an RSA Examination Board (RSA) certificate of business competence in French.

16 The college aims to provide its students with a programme of education that has balance, breadth and variety. It therefore requires all full-time first-year students to take part in the extension studies programme. Students on two-year courses may choose to follow the programme in the second year of their course and about 25 per cent of them do this. The extension programme comprises more than 80 courses. These include aerobic dance, first-aid, using information technology to write for pleasure and profit, and yoga for beginners. There are also team sports, drama and music, study skills, social work and primary school teaching experience. A wide choice of outdoor pursuits includes canoeing, climbing, sailing, skiing and walking. About 75 students have taken part in outdoor pursuits in the current academic year.

17 The college has recently submitted its extension studies programme for accreditation by the Sussex Open College Network. This is part of an initiative which also involves accrediting the learning activities and experiences which students undertake within the tutorial system. The overall programme of accredited courses will become known as the 'Open College Programme'. A successful submission will enable students to gain an external qualification for learning activities undertaken within the extension studies and tutorial programmes. This, it is hoped, will raise

the status of the programme and increase students' motivation. The Open College activities will also be available to part-time adult students.

18 There are daily opportunities for collective worship which attract on average between 15 and 20 students. On Mondays and Fridays the student Christian union arranges lunchtime talks by visiting speakers, which are attended by up to 40 students, as well as other opportunities for worship. In addition to GCE A level religious studies, the college offers more general religious courses, such as multi-faith studies and contemporary moral issues, through its extension studies programme. These courses attract only small numbers of students. The college meets the requirements of sections 44 and 45 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.

19 The college aims to meet the needs of adults in the local community through collaboration with nearby adult education centres. For September 1994, the college advertised a total of 16 classes, of which only three enrolled sufficient students. The college has attracted some mature students onto its existing daytime courses. An access to higher education course is running for the first time this year and has enrolled its target figure of 18 students, 17 of whom are female. A total of 44 mature students are now benefiting from studying at the college. This is a modest start, but represents an important development for a college which has, until recently, catered almost exclusively for 16-19 year olds. The college plans to run two access to higher education courses in September 1995 and the first is already full. It will also be offering 26 other classes targeted at adults in the coming year, including five that will be run in conjunction with the Sussex University Centre for Continuing Education. The college understands the need to provide appropriate services to mature students. It has made available a common room for mature students and has designated a personal tutor to serve their needs.

20 The college has a co-ordinator of its provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there is widespread support amongst the staff for the college's intention to increase its provision for these students. As present there are 30 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and they speak highly of the support they receive. Students from a local special school are able to participate in the work of the college and students from the college work with them in their school. Some of the few hearing or visually impaired students who attend the college have the use of personal audio or visual aids provided by the Prince of Wales Trust Fund.

21 The college is in the process of developing a marketing policy and strategy. Good work has been done in the past by teachers who have been allocated a small amount of administrative time to carry out promotional activities. In diversifying from its specialised curriculum base, the college has recognised the need for expertise in the marketing field and has recently appointed a part-time marketing and business manager. Work has already been completed to ensure that the college projects a consistent

image on all its printed material, including advertising and other promotional literature. The college prospectus won an award in a national competition for further education marketing. Attention is now focused on the generation of additional income and on a draft marketing policy which is supported by the senior management team but which has yet to be formally approved by the corporation.

22 The college has made strong efforts to attract students who would not normally have enrolled on its courses. The introduction of GNVQ programmes has provided an opportunity for students for whom GCE A levels are not appropriate. Ninety-four students have enrolled on such courses this year, 49 of whom stated in response to a survey that they would not have come to the college if GNVQs had not been available. The access to higher education course is providing a route back into education especially for women. However, the college does not provide day-nursery facilities.

23 The college formally adopted an equal opportunities policy at the meeting of the corporation in November 1993. The policy is a detailed one which covers both students and staff and it enjoys widespread support in the college. A co-ordinator is responsible for promoting the policy and the first annual progress report was published in June 1994. A recent paper proposing further action on equal opportunities has received the support of the senior management team. Students' attitudes to equal opportunities have been monitored through an item in the leavers' questionnaire. Eighty-three per cent believe the college is doing enough to promote the issue of equal opportunities. Only 2 per cent claim to have been in some way disadvantaged or discriminated against during their time in college. There is, however, some evidence to suggest that not all students fully understand the range of equal opportunities issues. It is a priority for the college to do more to raise their awareness.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

24 The corporation board has 19 members. Nine are independent members. The six elected members include two parents, two college staff, a student and a representative of the local TEC. There are three co-opted members. One place is held vacant to allow for the speedy addition of expertise which may be needed from time to time. The principal has exercised his right not to be a member. The board has relevant expertise in community, commercial, health service, financial, legal and personnel management areas. It operates effectively and its members are committed to the college's curricular and pastoral goals.

25 The board has agreed terms of reference for its six subcommittees: audit, curriculum, finance, personnel, premises and remuneration. The full board and the subcommittees are well briefed about the life and work of the college by the principal and his secretary who is also clerk to the corporation. Each governor is allotted a group of departments to keep in

touch with and this arrangement is enabling the board to develop an independent view of the academic programme. The partnership is underpinned by good relationships between the board and the college's senior management. Staff attend some board subcommittees as observers.

26 The board was involved in the development of the college's strategic plan and it is now monitoring the implementation of its objectives through written reports and information derived from governors' links with departments. The development of the college's mission statement and strategic plan involved consultation with all members of staff and this has helped consolidate staff support for the college's aims. The full plan has been in place for less than a year and modifications continue. Links between departmental policies and the strategic plan are yet to be formalised.

27 The college's senior management team has seven members including the principal. The six senior staff, responsible to the principal, co-ordinate curriculum and resources, finance and information systems, personnel, premises, student support and quality assurance, respectively. The structure is still evolving owing to recent changes in the roles of senior staff and the loss of two senior posts. It provides effective oversight but the detailed management of the curriculum requires a more representative structure. Senior managers are aware of this and new arrangements are to be implemented in September 1995.

28 Most subject departments are well managed. They plan their work efficiently, but not all relate their aims to the college's strategic plan. Most departmental meetings are conscientiously conducted and well minuted, but in some cases, where action is required, there is no record of who is responsible or of what the deadlines are for its completion. Heads of departments meet regularly but the large numbers make their meetings unwieldy.

29 Consultation procedures are described in the staff handbook. The college's management and committee structures are intended to foster consensus, an approach which is appreciated by staff and students and which contributes to good working relationships. However, since incorporation, there has been a proliferation of committees and working groups and there is some confusion among staff about their functions. Staff complain that attendance at meetings is excessively time consuming. There is also some duplication of agendas and this leads to prolonged and circuitous discussion. The location of decision making is not always clear to staff.

30 Overall, communications within the college are good. The principal meets regularly with the corporation, senior managers and committee co-ordinators. Staff are kept informed by internal mailing, a weekly news bulletin, briefing sessions and notices in the staffroom corridor.

31 There is a good computerised information system which holds comprehensive financial, staff and student data. Printouts are provided to

staff on request and the corporation receives regular information. Training in the use of the system is patchy and some departments do not act upon the information they receive on issues directly relevant to their work, such as student retention and destinations. The management of financial information is generally good. Each cost centre receives a monthly summary of expenditure and the remaining balance. The corporation receives audit reports and projections are considered regularly. Recent external audits have been satisfied with both accounts and procedures. The college receives 98 per cent of its funding from the FEFC. The average level of funding for 1994-95 is £22.47 per unit. The median for sixth form colleges is £19.81. The college's income and expenditure for the 16 months to July 1994 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

32 The college has a close and co-operative working relationship with its partner schools. It initiates contact with pupils the year before they leave school. Liaison teams of tutors give talks, provide information about the college and conduct interviews for prospective students in their own schools. Students from other schools are interviewed in the college in an equally effective way. The process is strengthened by high-quality promotional material. Staff are carefully briefed to manage this important aspect of recruitment. A series of information events in the college includes taster days where there is contact with specialist tutors and with former pupils of the partner schools who are now students in the college. Students receive impartial advice in making their choice of subject, course or institution.

33 Enrolment procedures are well managed. Students confirm that the courses or subjects they have chosen are appropriate to their needs. They benefit from a well-integrated induction programme which provides them with essential information about the college and the opportunities it offers. A students' handbook contains the charter and details of college rules and regulations, as well as a calendar of college events and social activities. Students who subsequently find it necessary to change course, or even to alter their long-term goals, receive constructive guidance and support. Transfers are organised and systematically recorded in students' progress files.

34 Tutorial support and guidance are provided by personal tutors who meet their groups on a daily basis for registration and for dissemination of information about college activities and events. Attendance is strictly monitored and recurring absence investigated. The tutorial system is supervised by a group of senior tutors who also act as liaison tutors with partner schools. Senior tutors meet regularly with their teams of personal tutors and co-ordinate the work effectively. Student records, including records of achievement, are comprehensive and routinely updated with the participation of students.

35 Careers education and guidance are provided by the careers team through a structured programme for all students and by referral for individual careers interviews either by tutors or by students themselves. Students have access to a compact but well-resourced careers unit and to county careers officers who visit the college on a regular basis.

36 The colleges' welfare arrangements provide a broad-ranging, caring and supportive service to all students. This includes contacts with the extensive range of specialist counselling and advisory services, which are listed in the student handbook to help students make their own arrangements if this is preferred. Personal tutors normally provide a first point of contact for counselling support. There are no qualified counsellors on the staff. For courses where validation is dependent on ready availability of a counselling service, external support is arranged. There is a growing need for this specialist support as the college attracts a wider range of students.

37 Currently there is no testing for basic skills on entry. Students who receive support are either statemented or receive such support because they or their tutors have requested it. Study skills are the responsibility of the specialist departments but not all students receive appropriate support. The college recognises the need for a college-wide system to assess the learning support needs of all students and appropriate action is planned for the new academic year.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

38 A consistently high standard of teaching was observed in all curriculum areas. Of the 142 sessions inspected, 76 per cent had strengths which clearly outweighed weaknesses. Only four sessions (less than 3 per cent) had weaknesses which outweighed strengths. The table below summarises the grades given to the sessions inspected. The average attendance for all sessions inspected was just under 84 per cent. However, attendance in English sessions was well below the college average at about 75 per cent.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		30	55	20	3	0	108
GCSE		3	13	6	1	0	23
Other		2	5	4	0	0	11
Total		35	73	30	4	0	142

39 With very few exceptions, lessons were well planned and teachers ensured that new material was set in the context of earlier work. Teachers demonstrated a sound knowledge of their subject and, in many cases, succeeded in communicating their enthusiasm to their students. The importance the college attaches to the quality of teaching and high expectation of student achievement set the context for the good relations

between staff and students. In almost all curriculum areas teachers used an appropriate variety of methods of teaching and learning. In biology better lesson planning should include teaching strategies more appropriate to the needs of weaker students.

40 Teachers constantly questioned students to encourage them to think for themselves and to ensure that their understanding was being advanced. An excellent example involved a teacher posing a series of questions to prompt a mathematics student to resolve a procedural difficulty for himself, so enhancing his confidence. In languages, questioning was carried out in the foreign language and teachers' occasional injection of humour enabled students to become less self-conscious about using the language themselves.

41 In English lessons, debate was encouraged and frequently resulted in lively and effective sessions. For example, a discussion on the use of the mock heroic in Pope's 'Rape of the Lock' involved students in composition of heroic couplets on 'Goldilocks and the three bears', as a means of developing their understanding of poetic form. In history and politics, contentious issues are presented in such a way as to promote balanced discussion. In one class on Nazi social policy, students participated in well-informed consideration of how different historical judgements can best be stated and supported. In other lessons there was too much input from teachers and in a few social science sessions, teachers made no attempt to check that learning had taken place.

42 In many curriculum areas, there were examples of students working effectively in pairs or in small groups. In a psychology session groups of three or four students were asked to prepare five-minute presentations. They enjoyed the opportunity to take leading roles in the lesson and learned a good deal from it. In GNVQ leisure and tourism, teams of students researched and produced a supplement on local tourist attractions for a local newspaper. It was well received and attracted advertising and additional promotions to that edition.

43 The college fosters initiatives to enhance students' learning experience. For example, the visit of a black Glaswegian poet during poetry week provided the opportunity to discuss race and gender issues in an English class. In politics there is a well-planned programme of visits to parliament. In geography, residential field trips enable students to apply theory, develop research skills and to work in teams with staff and fellow students. Science students make a series of visits to industry and take part in national competitions such as the Chemical Olympiad. For foreign language students there is a regular French exchange, and for students of ancient history annual visits to important archaeological sites in Greece and Italy.

44 Almost all departments have schemes of work which ensure comprehensive coverage of syllabus requirements. Most of these include clear statements of aims and objectives and well-defined strategies for

teaching. Departments routinely share schemes of work with their students. In business studies, there are induction plans for each course, but in geography, progression from GCSE to GCE A level should be made easier by closer liaison with feeder schools. In social sciences, course handbooks include additional work for the more able and interested students. In history and politics, there are recommendations for additional reading and library loan records show that students follow the advice they are given. In English, schemes of work are little more than lists of syllabus topics.

45 Much teaching is complemented by the use of carefully-produced handouts and audio-visual aids. Art and design staff produce course materials of high quality. Business studies staff provide students with good handbooks on research methods. In history and politics, the course booklets contain a balanced selection of extracts from archive sources. Language students benefit from being able to use a well-equipped language laboratory. In media studies, however, the lack of essential equipment prevents staff from illustrating theoretical work effectively.

46 In all subjects, work is set regularly and at an appropriate level. Most departments have clear assessment schemes related to syllabus requirements, and staff record students' progress and achievement systematically. Students are told of assignment schedules and deadlines. It is a college commitment that routine work should be marked and returned to students within one week. There were many examples of good marking practice in which accurate grading was accompanied by constructive written comments from teachers. Frequently, teachers spoke to students about where and how they could improve their work. In art and design, history and politics self-assessment and peer assessment are carefully managed by staff to ensure accuracy and consistency.

47 The use of information technology across the curriculum is inconsistent. For example, it is well used in the GNVQ in business studies, but hardly at all in GCE A level business studies and economics. In art and design, there is very little computing equipment and in media studies the department provides no opportunities for students to develop basic skills in information technology, even though they are essential for employment in the media industries. Information technology is integrated with other aspects of work in physics and chemistry but not in biology.

48 In many sessions, teachers organised the work flexibly to take account of student's abilities. For example, in wordprocessing classes where new students have differing experience and levels of skill, a range of learning materials and good staff support allowed everyone to make good use of their time. In some of the weaker sessions in science, English and foreign languages, teachers' failure to acknowledge the range of ability in the class left the more able idle and the less able uncertain of what was expected of them. While appropriate provision is made for the few statemented students or those who have dyslexia or hearing impairment, there is little

evidence that there is systematic assessment of the learning support students require. Study skills such as comprehension, precis and essay writing are the responsibility of departments and are not taught consistently.

49 Most practical sessions were conducted with due regard for health and safety. In art and design facilities to deal with plaster dust do not meet current regulations. Health and safety guidelines for art and design should be issued at induction.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

50 The majority of students at the college enjoy their studies and are developing appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding. Most are well motivated and respond constructively to the demands made by their teachers. Students on repeat programmes are less well motivated.

51 In 1993 there were 1,099 GCE A level entries in 31 different subjects and the average pass rate was 86 per cent. Forty-nine entries in 17 GCE AS subjects, produced a pass rate of 86 per cent. At GCSE, there were 509 entries and the average pass rate was 55 per cent.

52 In 1994 there were 1,023 GCE A level entries in 35 different subjects, and the average pass rate was 85 per cent. This is 2 per cent higher than the national average for sixth form colleges. In accounting, Latin, music, photography, physical education and religious education all who were entered for the examination gained a pass grade, although student numbers were small in some of these subjects. There were 41 entries in 14 GCE AS subjects, although in six subjects only one student entered. Students aged 16-18 achieved a pass rate at grades A-E of 94 per cent whilst those over 19 achieved a pass rate of 50 per cent. There were 389 entries in 21 GCSE subjects. Students aged 16-18 achieved a pass rate at grades A-C of 53 per cent; older students achieved a pass rate of 61 per cent.

53 Students aged 16-18 entered for GCE AS/A level examinations in 1994 scored, on average, 4.9 points per entry (where A=10, E=2). This places the college among the top third of colleges in the further education sector on this performance measure, based on the data published by the Department for Education. However, the average points score per candidate attempting two or more GCE A level, or the AS equivalent based on 362 student entries was 13.5 points compared with a national average of 15.3. This places the college 66th in the country among the 114 sixth form colleges. The apparent contradiction between high average points score for each subject entry, and the college's indifferent ranking in the table of sixth form college students taking two or more GCE A levels, reflects the lower than average number of subjects taken by Haywards Heath College students.

54 Students' GCE A level pass rates as a percentage of enrolments have declined over the past three years from 82 per cent to 77 per cent and in

the same period GCSE pass rates at grades A-C as a percentage of enrolments have fallen from 53 per cent to 45 per cent. Retention rates for GCE A level have declined from 89 per cent in 1992 to 84 per cent in 1994 whilst in the same period the GCSE retention rates have also declined from 91 per cent to 84 per cent. Nevertheless, they are above average for the sector. Transfers between subjects are high. A quarter of all first-year students change subjects.

55 The college has subscribed to the national Advanced Level Information System for the past two years. This measures the contribution of colleges to improving students' GCE A level results above a prediction based on GCSE results. The college also maintains its subscription to the West Sussex Advisory Service which makes its own analysis of student performance. The college has decided to await a third set of results before making firm judgements. However, initial results from the Advanced Level Information System suggest that in 1993 students did better than was predicted in computing, physics and sociology whilst those in 18 other subjects performed to expectations. In 1994, computing and history students performed better than predicted, but those in biology, mathematics and English fell below the level of achievement predicted.

56 The college records the destinations of full-time students who leave the college and publishes these details with its examination results. Of the 512 students who left the college in 1993, 12 per cent went into employment, 43 per cent went on to higher education, 12 per cent continued in further education, 5 per cent entered temporary employment or undertook voluntary work during a year out before entering higher education, 2 per cent were unemployed and the destinations of 26 per cent were unknown. Of the 436 students who left in 1994, 18 per cent found employment, 48 per cent went on to higher education, 14 per cent continued in further education, 1 per cent went on to other activities and the destinations of 19 per cent were unknown.

57 Students gain college accreditation for each of the units of the extension programme which they complete successfully. Two accredited units are undertaken by all first-year students and those on two-year programmes are encouraged to take further units. Each course is assessed and the outcome is entered into the individual student file. Students have an opportunity to work with local institutions and companies, and some students were able to confirm their career choice through this first-hand experience. Some students gain awards in first aid and life-saving. Many students participate regularly in a wide range of sporting activities. Local feeder schools have a long tradition in girls' netball and this has helped the college to win the Sussex Knock-out Cup on a regular basis. In 1993, the college was also successful in the south-east area championships. Students play at county and international level in rugby, cross-country, cricket, judo, swimming and hockey.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

58 The college has developed a quality assurance policy and is at an early stage of implementing it. One member of the senior management team has been nominated director of quality assurance, and all other members of the team have the task of initiating and co-ordinating quality monitoring procedures in their respective areas of responsibility. Staff briefing sessions have been held to explain the purposes of quality assurance. The college policy is based on the notion of supported self-assessment whereby all managers review practice in their own departments. Whilst this encourages staff ownership of the process, it does not ensure common understanding of what quality assurance means for the college as a whole. Consequently, in some areas there is a narrow interpretation of what needs to be monitored and reviewed. Although routes exist within the management structure for resolving difficulties, there is no cross-college summary of key issues arising from self-assessment activities nor a forum for discussing them. There are no clear links between quality assurance activities and the strategic planning cycle.

59 The review process for curriculum areas has been based largely on existing practice by which each department produces action points or targets for the forthcoming year. However, there is no common format and the balance between description and evaluation in departmental reports varies considerably. Current arrangements do not satisfy the internal verification requirements of awarding bodies for the recently-introduced GNVQ programmes. Cross-college groups have systems for monitoring their area of responsibility. For example, the senior tutors' group monitors the effectiveness of tutorial support through regular meetings with tutors and the use of common procedures and records. There are no parallel quality assurance procedures for college support services.

60 The college has not yet tackled the development of performance indicators or service standards. Departments produce statistical reports on students' course changes, retention rates and progression. However, the level of detail and analysis of this information varies across departments. College-wide targets are not set and data are not analysed centrally to identify trends.

61 Students are consulted through questionnaires but there is no overview of the type or number of questionnaires individual students may be asked to complete. Students are not always informed of the outcomes of these surveys nor of action taken as a result of their comments. There is little opportunity for external agencies, other than awarding and examining bodies, to comment on the quality of provision. Some feedback from partner schools is obtained through a liaison group.

62 The college has an established staff-development policy. Activities are managed by one of the vice-principals. One per cent of the college's

budget is devoted to staff development. Records for the past two years show that support staff are increasingly involved in professional development programmes. In-service training events involving all staff are held regularly and their effectiveness is monitored by a staff-development group. However, there is no systematic evaluation of individual staff-development activities.

63 The college participated in the West Sussex pilot appraisal scheme prior to incorporation. A cross-college group has recently drawn up a plan to re-introduce formal staff appraisal in September 1995 after an interval of three years. As a preparatory step, a needs analysis has been completed for every member of staff. The current lack of a formal appraisal system means that the linkages between the management of staff and their professional development are not consistent. The college's recent commitment to achieving Investor in People status will help to support developments in this area.

64 An induction programme exists for all new staff. For teaching staff there is a supportive mentoring system. Mentors have training and support and are increasingly involved in developing appropriate activities for new colleagues. Support staff have a more informal but effective mentoring system.

65 The college has developed its own charter after consultation between the chairman of the corporation, staff and students. It is published in the student handbook which is distributed to all students during their induction programme. However, the majority of students spoken to during the inspection had little or no appreciation of the significance of the charter for them. Staff have access to copies of the charter. The wide distribution of the charter has not been followed by detailed review of its presentation and interpretation. Employer and community representatives who were interviewed had little knowledge of the commitments contained within the document and felt that the charter would merely provide an endorsement of existing good practice.

66 The college's self-assessment report presents a summary of perceived strengths and concerns using the headings in the Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. Some comments are more descriptive than evaluative and in some sections the college overstated its strengths and did not make reference to concerns subsequently identified by inspectors.

RESOURCES

Staffing

67 Of the 86 teaching staff 20 are part time. Staff are well qualified, committed and experienced. Ninety-four per cent possess a first degree, 20 per cent of these have a second degree and 87 per cent have a teaching qualification. There is a good match between qualifications and the subjects taught. In vocational areas, however, few teachers have recent

industrial or commercial experience and those teaching GNVQ courses feel ill-equipped. Many of them lack information technology skills. Some retraining is enabling staff to be deployed more flexibly and an increasing number of part-time staff are being employed to provide a specialist contribution to vocational programmes.

68 The current student to teaching staff ratio is 13.1:1, compared with 10.9:1 in 1992-93. The staffing budget represents 80 per cent of total income and the level of remission for tutorial time and special responsibilities accounts for 20 per cent of total staff time. Staff turnover is low. The average length of service is 12 years.

69 Non-teaching staff are generally well qualified and provide an efficient service to the college. The ratio of non-teaching staff to teaching staff is 1:2.25. This ratio will rise slightly as a result of the recent appointment of a full-time qualified librarian and part-time specialist staff to provide skills in accounting and business development.

70 Equal opportunities issues relating to staffing have been well researched and a comprehensive policy is in place. A designated member of staff has responsibility for this work and is supported by an equal opportunities committee. Half of the academic staff are women. Two members of the senior management group of seven are women and 29 per cent of middle managers are women.

Equipment/learning resources

71 The range and quality of resources are sufficient to support the curriculum in most areas. Students have adequate supplies of books and other learning materials. With the exception of media studies, which has insufficient equipment, specialist equipment is appropriate for most course requirements. The language department is well served by a modern 20-booth language laboratory. The servicing of equipment is efficient.

72 The college library is used intensively. There are 13,500 books most of which are up to date and relevant. A large number of books are held in departmental libraries and small satellite learning areas scattered around the campus, but these are not listed on the central computerised library catalogue system. The resources centre, attached to the library, has televisions, video players, computers and a compact disk read-only memory (CD-ROM) database and area networks. The library contains a large stock of videos appropriate to GCE A level studies together with a wide range of other learning materials.

73 The college has 52 networked computers mainly of up-to-date specification, together with 27 other machines distributed across the departments. The ratio of machines to students is 1:13. These figures include 18 out-of-date machines in the business studies department which are inappropriate for current use. Networked machines are concentrated in the computing, wordprocessing and business studies departments and

are used intensively. Students are allowed to use these computers when they are not required for teaching purposes. Open access to information technology is restricted; there are only four networked machines in the main private study area and six in the resources centre. The development of GNVQ programmes is placing increasing demands on the college's limited information technology and library facilities.

Accommodation

74 The main college building has been adapted from a grammar school which catered for classes of 30 to 35 students. Two classrooms, each providing space for 16 students, have been divided in such a manner that access to one room is through another. Science rooms are too large for the size of the teaching groups which use them. Their structure is such that they are not easily divided. The library is too small for the numbers of students. The college's accommodation strategy includes plans to convert the hall into a library. Rooms are appropriately furnished, decorated and cleaned. Some areas suffer from poorly-fitting windows which leak, and from inadequate light fittings.

75 Twenty-six per cent of classes take place in huts which are of flimsy construction, expensive to maintain and utilitarian in appearance. Huts at the front of the college are inappropriate for their purpose. They suffer from noise, have little storage space and are poorly heated. The huts which have the least economic lifespan are being maintained at a minimal level.

76 Most departments have base rooms in the main block, which are often used as departmental libraries, satellite study areas or space for storage. Departmental teaching areas do exist, but the larger departments often have rooms allocated to them at some distance from their main base area. Demonstration rooms and large practical areas are not used to capacity because of their shape; the average space utilisation in these areas is just under 50 per cent. Small demonstration areas are used more effectively. The college estimates that general teaching areas operate at 58 per cent efficiency though they are heavily used during the seven-hour day. Private study space for students is limited.

77 There is currently wheelchair access to only one-third of ground floor teaching areas and to none of the huts. The college does not have toilet facilities for students with disabilities but these are planned for September 1995, when work will also be undertaken to provide access for wheelchair users to 90 per cent of the ground floor in the main block.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

78 The strengths of the college are:

- good relationships with partner schools
- governors' interest in the curriculum

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- strong pastoral support and guidance
 - the quality of teaching and learning
 - generally good examination results
 - the range of enrichment activities
 - good relationships between staff and students
 - well-qualified and committed staff.

79 If it is to continue to improve its quality of provision and standards of achievement, the college should:

- further diversify its curriculum in order to fulfil its mission
- simplify its procedures for making decisions
- establish a forum for planning and monitoring the curriculum
- develop a consistent quality assurance system
- pursue the introduction of formal staff appraisal
- increase facilities for information technology
- strengthen its accommodation strategy.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)

 - 4 Staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)

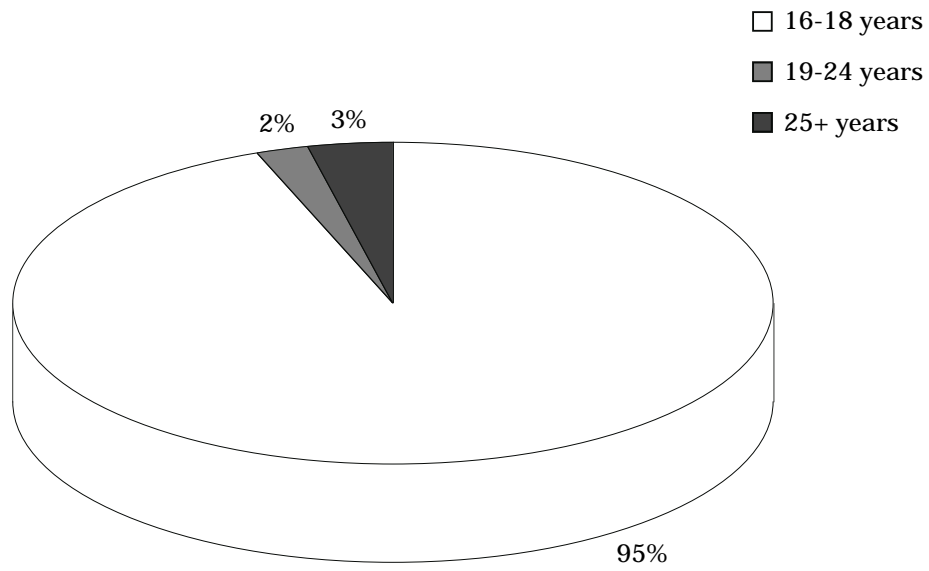
 - 5 Income (for 16 months to July 1994)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)

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

Figure 1

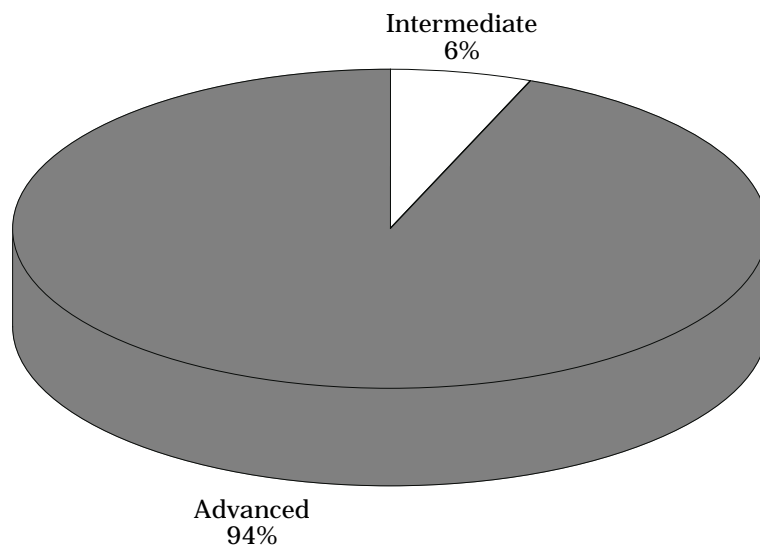
Haywards Heath College: percentage enrolments by age (1994-95)



Enrolments: 1,032

Figure 2

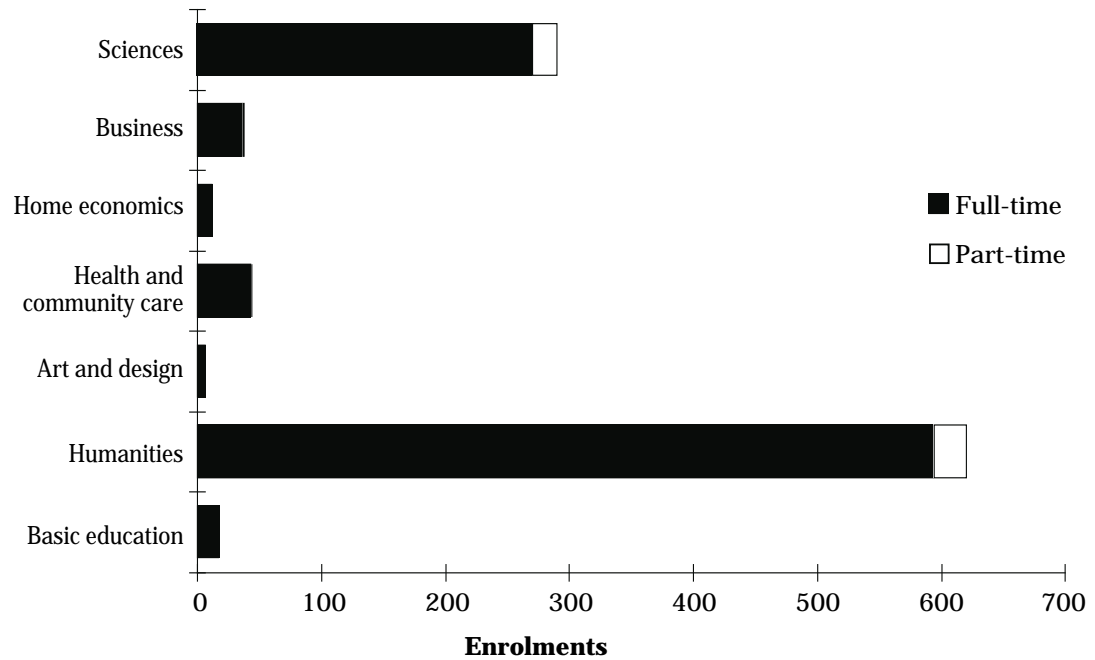
Haywards Heath College: percentage enrolments by level of study (1994-95)



Enrolments: 1,032

Figure 3

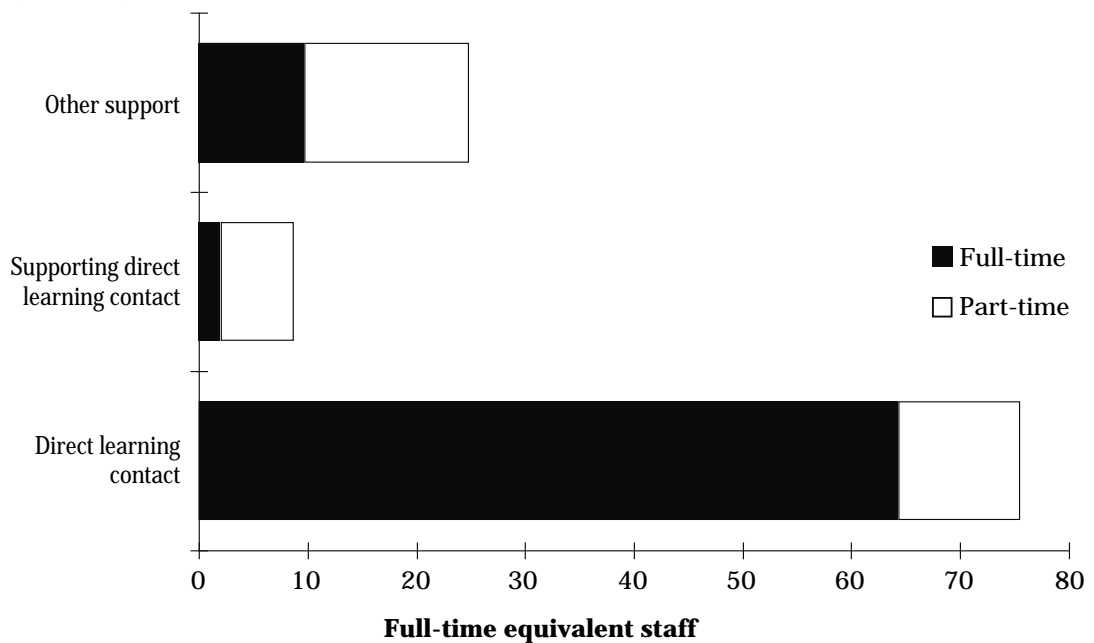
Haywards Heath College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1994-95)



Enrolments: 1,032

Figure 4

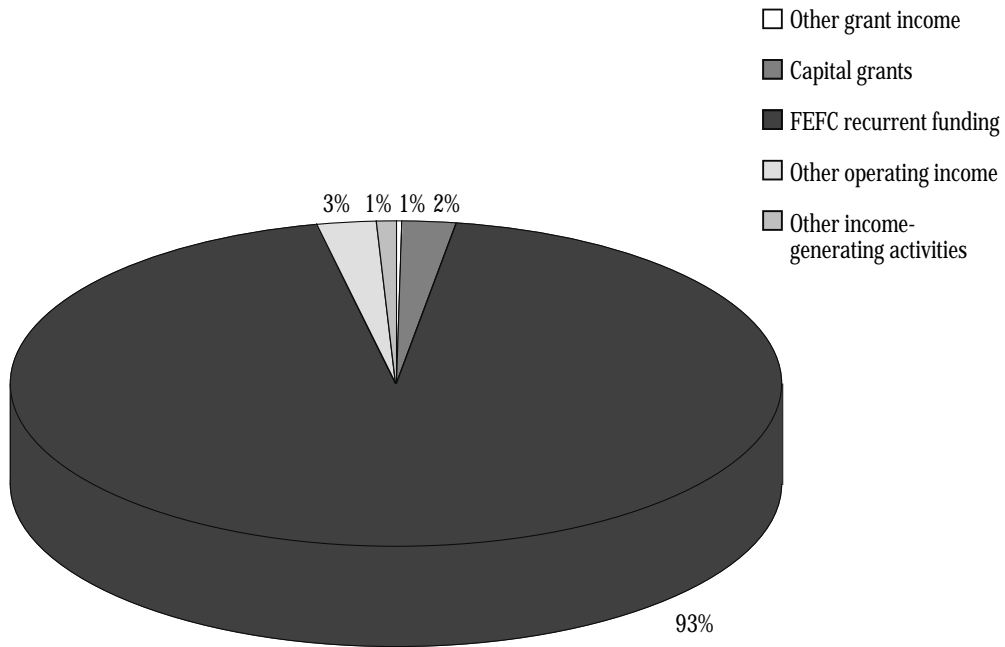
Haywards Heath College: staff profile - staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1994-95)



Full-time equivalent staff: 109

Figure 5

Haywards Heath College: income (for 16 months to July 1994)

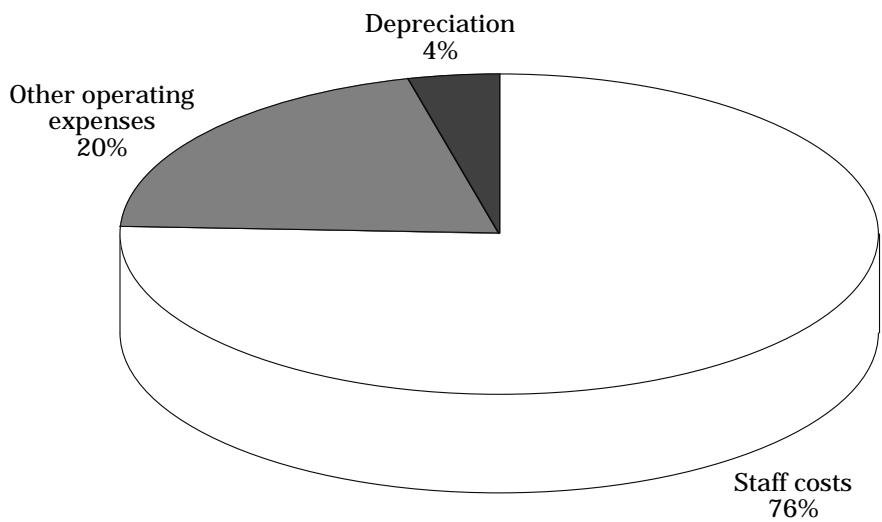


Income: £5,324,000

Note: this chart excludes £1,000 tuition fees.

Figure 6

Haywards Heath College: expenditure (for 16 months to July 1994)



Expenditure: £5,241,000

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