Hendon College

June 1994

THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL

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

GRADE DESCRIPTORS

The procedures for assessing quality are given in FEFC Circular 93/28. In the course of inspecting colleges, inspectors are expected to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each aspect of provision they inspect. Their assessments are set out clearly in their reports. Inspectors also summarise their judgements on the balance between strengths and weaknesses using a five-point scale. Each grade on the scale has the following descriptor:

- *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 33/94

HENDON COLLEGE
LONDON REGION
Inspected September 1993-February 1994

Summary

Hendon college offers a range of vocational and general education courses to students of all ages. It has effective links with the local community, higher education and employers. The college has a strong commitment to provide education and training for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those for whom English is not their first language. There is a comprehensive system of language and learner support, although there is not yet a policy to guide the development of this service. The quality of the provision is good in the courses offering access to higher education, the foundation and intermediate GNVQ programmes, vocational business subjects, health and social care, hotel and catering and computing. Improvements are required in hairdressing and beauty therapy and in much of the GCSE and GCE A level provision. The achievements of students vary but are generally satisfactory. There are poor examination results in many GCE and GCSE subjects. The college is still developing its systems for quality assurance. It has established appraisal and staff development arrangements which are linked to its strategic objectives. The college should ensure that the terms of reference and reporting arrangements for its committees are clear and explicit. Despite the financial constraints which the college has experienced, the specialist equipment and facilities are good in some areas; for example hotel and catering. In other areas, they should be improved. The development of learning resource centres is a positive feature, but the library book stock is inadequate in several areas and there are insufficient study spaces for students.

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

Aspects of cross-college provision	Grade
Responsiveness and range of provision	2
Governance and management	3
Students' recruitment, guidance and support	2
Quality assurance	3
Resources: staffing	3
equipment/learning resources	4
accommodation	3

Subject area	Grade	Subject area	Grade
GCE/GCSE science & maths	4	Health & social care	2
Computing	2	Hairdressing & beauty	4
Construction	3	GCE/GCSE humanities	4
		English as a foreign language	3
Engineering	3	ESOL & basic education	3
		Access to higher education	2
Business, travel & tourism	2	Students with learning	
GCE/GCSE business studies	3	difficulties	3
Hotel & catering	2	GNVQ	2

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INTRODUCTION

1   Hendon College was inspected during January and February 1994 following an initial inspection of the enrolment and induction processes at the beginning of the autumn term 1993. The inspection team comprised six full-time inspectors and 15 registered part-time inspectors. A total of 48 days was spent on specialist subject inspections and 26 days on aspects of cross-college provision. Inspectors visited 239 classes, attended by approximately 2,250 students, and examined a broad sample of students' work. They scrutinised documentation relating to the college and its provision and held meetings with governors, college managers, teaching and support staff, students, representatives of the community and the local training and enterprise council (TEC). Inspectors also attended college meetings which were taking place at the time of the inspection.

2   The inspection was carried out in accordance with the framework and guidelines described in Council Circular 93/28. The framework describes a four-year inspection cycle. When this cycle becomes established, colleges will have the opportunity to respond to the findings of earlier inspection visits before their quadrennial inspection and the subsequent published report. As the inspection of Hendon College occurred early in the cycle, the opportunity for such a response was not available.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3   Hendon College is a general further education college situated in the London borough of Barnet. It occupies four sites within a two-mile radius: Grahame Park at Colindale, Abbots Road at Burnt Oak, Montagu Road in central Hendon and Flower Lane at Mill Hill. The college is one of three institutions in the borough funded by the FEFC. Other post-16 providers include most of the schools in the borough and five colleges in the neighbouring boroughs of Brent and Harrow. The college lies in the area covered by the North London Training and Enterprise Council (TEC), but close to the borders of Brent and Harrow which make up the North West London TEC.

4   Barnet is the second largest London borough with a population of 298,000. Public sector employment accounts for the largest share of the jobs. Other employment is largely in small businesses and service industries. A substantial proportion of the workforce is employed outside the borough. The unemployment rate is 9.6 per cent, compared with 8.2 per cent in the borough of Harrow and 17.8 per cent in the borough of Brent. The proportion of residents from ethnic minority backgrounds is 18 per cent in Barnet, 45 per cent in Brent and 26 per cent in Harrow.

5   At the time of the inspection, there were 302 full-time equivalent staff of whom 184 were teachers and 118 support staff (figure 1). On 1 November 1993, the college had 8,333 enrolments amounting to approximately 3,000 full-time equivalents. Students are recruited to courses throughout the year and the college expects to meet its target of 8 per cent growth by the end of the academic year. An analysis of the

enrolments for 1993-94 shows that some 70 per cent of the students are from the borough of Barnet and the remainder from surrounding boroughs. About 60 per cent of the students are female and 93 per cent are 19 years of age or over. Enrolments by age and level of study are shown in figures 2 and 3, respectively. The student body is ethnically diverse, English is not the first language for many of the students.

6   The college is organised into three faculties; business and professional studies; general education, science and technology; and continuing education, hairdressing and catering. The faculties provide a broad range of vocational, non-vocational and adult recreational courses. There is substantial provision of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and extensive provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college offers access courses to prepare students for entry to higher education and short courses for industry. Full-time equivalent enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figure 4.

7   The college was created in 1973 when the former Hendon College of Technology became part of Middlesex Polytechnic, now Middlesex University. There have been a number of significant reorganisations and developments in recent years. In addition to the changes brought about by incorporation, these have included a major shift of site location, the introduction of new work programme areas, a rapid growth in the number of students, changes in the management structure and re-allocation of management roles.

8   Hendon College's mission is short and succinct. It is to identify and satisfy the diverse educational, training and recreational needs of its community and to offer a high quality service which is open to everyone. This statement is prominently displayed in the college.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

9   There has been a deliberate decision to offer a diverse range of courses which are accessible to all. The college is committed to serving the local community and to providing education and training for groups traditionally under-represented in further education. These include women returners, students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, speakers of other languages and students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. As many as 80 per cent of the students have in the past been recruited from within the borough of Barnet, and especially from the districts immediately surrounding the college sites. At the Grahame Park Centre, 48 per cent of the students live within a two mile radius of the site.

10   The aim to offer diverse provision has led to the development of courses in curriculum areas new to the college, such as health and social care, travel and tourism, beauty therapy, hotel and catering, and media studies.   Longer-established vocational courses include those in hairdressing, computing, construction and engineering. There is a good

range of courses in computing. The range of courses in health and social care is expanding in response to demand but child care is limited to full-time provision only. The range is also restricted in other curriculum areas, including hairdressing and beauty therapy, hotel and catering, engineering, and construction. As a result, some students have limited avenues for progression.

11   English as a foreign language and the extensive provision in ESOL are both linked to vocational courses. The recently-developed General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) modular programme offers students a variety of options within a well-defined framework. At present, the programme covers three areas at foundation and intermediate levels. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) can be achieved in five areas. The college offers 18 subjects at General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) and 16 subjects for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). The college has no GCE advanced supplementary (AS) provision. There is an access programme in a number of disciplines designed to prepare adult students for entry to higher education. In response to employers' needs, short income-generating courses are provided for industry and other organisations though the college's business training and advisory service.

12   A particular strength of the college is the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including young people with significant mental health problems and adults with severe learning difficulties. There is a positive relationship with the local authority's social services. An educational programme is provided for those who attend local day centres. A sensitive response to the educational needs of young people with moderate learning difficulties has been the introduction of support to enable these students to enter the GNVQ programme. However, for those students whose needs will not be met by the GNVQ courses, the college has yet to address the issue of progression from the link courses, which it runs with local schools, to other full-time courses at the college.

13   Links with the local community are excellent, especially with residents of the Grahame Park estate, where the presence of the college has contributed to improved amenities for residents. The recreational facilities, including the swimming pool, are used by the community in the evenings and at weekends. Some young people attending courses at the college use the learning resource centre for independent study as well as the sports facilities and the youth club. An extensive leisure and recreation programme is offered free to staff and students and a leisure manager has been appointed recently. Staff and students at Grahame Park benefit from the provision. Staff and students at the other sites are less well served.

14   The extensive adult recreational programme is another way in which links with the local community are maintained. Approximately 2,000 are enrolled. The programme is partly funded by the local education authority, although its contribution has decreased considerably since incorporation, and partly by fees which are charged to cover teaching costs.

15   The proportion of adult students in the college is high, particularly on part-time courses where typically 95 per cent of the students are over 19. Even on the full-time courses, some 45 per cent of the students are over 19 years of age. A well-equipped and effectively-run nursery is intended to attract to the college students who have very young children. However, it offers only 20 places, 13 of which are reserved for students. The remaining places are available to staff and the community whose payments help to subsidise the provision. Priority is given to full-time students and demand for places far exceeds the provision. At the time of the inspection there was already a waiting list of 63 children for the following September.

16   There is a good relationship with the North London TEC and the principal is on the board of directors. In addition to provision financed through work-related further education, the TEC purchases from the college a total of 6,850 trainee weeks of 'training for work' provision in business administration, catering, construction, retail, management and retail linked to ESOL. The TEC also uses courses organised by the college's business training and advisory service.

17   Development funding through the Professional Industrial Commercial Updating initiative (PICKUP) is being used to set up an assessment centre under the control of the business training and advisory service which will provide NVQ assessor training for North London TEC, for the North London Care Consortium, of which the college is a member, for staff from the college and for teachers from the local schools. Other training provided by the business training and advisory service includes food hygiene, health and safety, management and supervisory training to NVQ level 4. External trainers are used to staff these courses. College staff are employed to provide courses in hairdressing, construction and business administration, but there is scope to increase the involvement of more college staff in such activities. The college is still subsidising the business training and advisory service unit but it is expected to exceed its income target for the current year and to break even by 1995-96. The college has been successful in obtaining financial support for its programmes through the European Social Fund and with a project funded through section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966.

18   There are effective links with employers through the industrial liaison panels operating in travel and tourism, business, health and social care, engineering, hotel and catering, and accounting. Relationships are also built up as a result of the provision of work placements for students. The work placements are currently organised independently by faculties. It is expected that the co-ordination of this area of activity will be improved when the proposed central college database is established.

19   The college has been an active member of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), and its extension, since 1985 and uses it to provide an enrichment programme for local schools in catering and hairdressing. It is involved in a number of collaborative projects,

including seminars and staff training and has participated in the establishment of a vocational education group and a Middlesex University liaison group. There are very good relationships with special schools, but links with other schools, especially those with their own provision for students in the 16-18 age range, remain limited.

20   As an associate college of Middlesex University, the college has begun to provide franchised courses. It offers Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) higher national diplomas in business studies, and hotel and catering. There are also good links with the university in art and design. A foundation course in computing is linked to the South Bank University.

21   A marketing unit established 15 months ago is proving to be effective and responsive to the needs of faculties. Its main functions are to promote the college, which it does through a well-publicised calendar of events, to monitor cross-college activities such as the handling of enquiries and enrolments, and to conduct market research. The unit collects information on local employment trends and on the provision offered by competitors and responds to requests for research from the faculties. The director is responsible for providing labour market information for the strategic plan, and is closely involved in strategic planning as a member of the senior management team and as a member of the curriculum planning group. She has good links with local employers through membership of the chamber of commerce.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

22   The corporation has 17 members including the principal, 10 independent members, one representative of the North London TEC, two co-opted members, two elected staff members and one elected student. The independent and co-opted members have a broad range of interests and experience which includes links with the local community, adult education, learning difficulties and/or disabilities, engineering, construction, management, health care, higher education, financial management, the media and estates management. Several members of the corporation had served the college as governors before incorporation and have since helped to provide continuity and stability.

23   The governors carry out much of their business through the finance and general purposes committee and the personnel committee. Over the last year, governors' attention and time have been spent mainly on matters relating to incorporation. The most recent in a series of conferences for members of the corporation included a consideration of major curriculum issues designed to increase their understanding of the work of the college. Meetings, conferences and training sessions are well attended. The principal presents progress reports on a variety of issues to the corporation on a regular basis and members receive a full financial report once a term. However, they have not received a detailed report on the overall

performance of the college, including examination results, since incorporation.

24   The academic board has not met since incorporation. After some delay, due to the lack of candidates, elections have been held and the first meeting of the board is planned to take place shortly. The board has a wide membership. The elected members outnumber the ex-officio members. It is intended that the board will provide a useful forum for the participation of staff in academic planning and quality assurance.

25   The senior management team has 11 members. It comprises the principal, the vice-principal, three faculty directors, the director of academic planning, the director of marketing, the accountant, the personnel manager, the director of quality and the director of resources. There is some duplication of function in the areas of quality assurance, finance, personnel and estates. The college has 11 committees and working groups in addition to the faculty management groups and course teams. One of these is the curriculum planning group which has established further working groups. Some of the committees and groups have written terms of reference, others do not. Although informal channels of communication within the faculties are often effective, the college lacks an explicit committee structure which would ensure clear lines of reporting.

26   The three faculties are of different sizes. Their academic organisation is clear although the location of similar programmes, such as the advanced GNVQ and the foundation/intermediate level GNVQ in business subjects, in different faculties creates difficulties. Eighteen section heads are responsible for course management within the faculties. In the absence of college guidelines and policies, practice varies at section and course team levels in a number of activities such as the reporting of student absences and development planning. Course teams vary in their effectiveness and in the frequency and formality of their meetings. The course team model is inappropriate for the access and GVNQ modular programmes because of the large size and diversity of the teams.

27   The senior managers recognise that communication with staff across an organisation based on a number of sites is complex and they are trying to improve it. The principal and vice-principal have held a series of briefing meetings with small groups of staff on all sites to inform them about issues concerned with incorporation and to invite comment and discussion. A communications working group has been established on the recommendation of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service. The group has a remit to identify problems and propose solutions on how best to keep staff fully informed. It has yet to meet on a regular basis or reach any conclusions. A weekly newsletter is circulated to all staff, although this is not routinely used by the management as a means of communication. It is expected that the academic board, because of the wide representation of its members, will offer an important channel of communication on curriculum matters.

28   The strategic plan covers all aspects of the college's development and sets objectives against a time-scale for achievement. The plan was discussed by the senior management team, the academic board and the corporation but because of the short time scale not all staff were fully involved in its development. The curriculum planning group has drawn in many more teaching and support staff through the formation of working groups which consider developments in specific curriculum areas and in cross-college services. It is intended that the plans produced by these groups will form the basis of the next strategic plan.

29   The processes for allocating resources are clear. Managers understand them. Financial training has been an important part of the college's management training programme. Budgets are agreed by the vice-principal through a system of negotiation and bidding within limits set by the senior management team. Staffing resources are allocated using stringent requirements for staff utilisation. The budget for consumable items is based largely on historic figures and capital allocations are made in line with the strategic objectives. The colleges unit of funding for 1992-93, set by the local education authority, is recorded in the FEFC report, *Funding Allocations 1993-94*, as £1,883 per weighted full-time equivalent student. This is considerably lower than the median of £2,436 for general further education colleges and tertiary colleges. There was no capital allocation from the local authority in the two years prior to incorporation. Summaries of the college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1994 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

30   The college's management information section produces regular reports for managers. Management information is created partly manually and partly through a computerised system. Following incorporation, the college invested in a new, computerised management information system which was brought into use in September 1993. A personnel record and a financial package are already in use and a resource record is planned for next session. There have been delays in the production of some information, including assessment and examination results. A number of managers use the system well, but its use for planning and analysis is not yet widespread. The new system will produce detailed information on students and their achievements but, as yet, there has been little demand from course leaders. Further training is needed to educate staff in the uses to which the information might be put and also to reinforce the importance of accurate source data. Statistics on examination successes, retention rates and students' destinations are collected routinely. Although there is some good practice in target setting and the use of performance indicators, this is not yet consistent.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

31   There is a well-planned and efficiently-managed enquiry, admissions and enrolment system. A student services team provides a centralised admissions service, for which eight support staff were given special training

in 1993. The course information service received nearly 6,000 enquiries from March to August 1993. Pre-entry guidance was made available by student services staff on a pilot basis in 1992 and 1993. In 1993, 40 interviews were carried out by student services staff. It is intended to offer this service to a larger group of clients in the future. Staff trained in adult educational guidance assisted prospective adult students in deciding on suitable courses.

32   The enrolment process runs smoothly. It focuses on students' needs. During enrolment week, prospective students receive careful advice from subject specialists in a friendly atmosphere. Students enrolling at other times may not be dealt with by a specialist and this can lead to some students being enrolled on inappropriate courses.

33   There are college guidelines for the design of induction programmes. There are good-quality handbooks for most full-time courses which are used effectively during induction. Students can change to another course although there is no formal procedure for counselling to ensure that such changes are well considered. There is some accreditation of prior learning. On GNVQ programmes, credit can be awarded for prior achievement in core skills. Accreditation of prior learning is used to enable some students to progress to the next level of the GNVQ in business. Generally, however, accreditation systems are not well developed. There is no formal recognition of prior learning in areas such as hairdressing and beauty therapy where it could be of value to mature students who wish to achieve an NVQ.

34   Staff are issued with guidelines on the college's pastoral tutorial policy and how to apply it. It is the tutor's responsibility to provide a programme which includes topics on health education, vocational and higher education guidance, personal development and study skills. The tutorial programme is well supported by the student services team which provides staff development for tutors together with a range of valuable learning resources. Training provided for tutors has included work on how to plan a tutorial programme and ideas on how to handle health and drugs education. The student services team draws on its links with many outside organisations such as the local Aids Education Unit and Barnet Health Agency to ensure that students are made aware of problems concerned with their health.

35   All full-time students are assigned to a personal tutor and most are involved in a one-hour group tutorial each week. Students on the GNVQ programme have three hours each week to accommodate the updating of students' profiles and the drawing up of action plans which involve students in setting their own objectives and measuring the progress they make towards achieving them. Tutor groups vary in size across the college from about 14 students to more than 20. Tutorial programmes also include opportunities for students to discuss their individual progress with tutors. Recently, records of achievement have been introduced for all full-time

students. These have proved to be of value, although their use is more established in some areas than others.

36   Tutorial support is particularly effective on the GNVQ programme, and on access courses, where a considerable amount of pastoral support is offered. There is good use of the tutorial system on the ESOL foundation programme, and construction staff also provide good pastoral support and guidance to their students. In the general education, science and technology faculty, where students study individual GCE and GCSE subjects rather than follow a course, some students may be assigned to tutors who do not teach them and this makes it more difficult to create effective relationships within the tutor group. There is no tutorial support for most part-time students.

37   Student absences and poor punctuality are a problem, particularly on GCSE and GCE courses. The college does not have an effective system for monitoring attendance and lateness. The disciplinary code sets out a series of steps for dealing with these problems but they are not being operated systematically. The college does not generally contact the parents of young students when problems arise.

38   A well-publicised personal advice, guidance and counselling service is available to all students. There are drop-in advice services at Grahame Park, Abbots Road and Montagu Road. During the autumn term of 1993, the services at Grahame Park and Abbots Road dealt with a total of 1,804 enquiries, one-fifth of them concerning personal or financial matters. The student services team provides a professional counselling service operated by staff who are trained counsellors. There is also an advice and guidance worker for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities whose job it is to ensure that the needs of these students are met. There is a valuable link with the London Borough of Barnet careers service. A careers officer provides drop-in careers advice and vocational guidance interviews at both Grahame Park and Abbots Road. This service is further integrated into the life of the college through links with college staff and sessions for groups of students intending to progress to higher education.

39   The college has a strong commitment to provide all students with the support they require to get the best from their studies. An extensive programme of general learning and language support is provided, mostly through drop-in workshops. A small-scale survey carried out within the faculty of general education, science and technology found that 58 per cent of full-time students on GCSE English courses were speakers of languages other than English, and that 27 per cent had not attended school within the United Kingdom. Diagnostic testing in literacy and numeracy is carried out after enrolment. However, students enrolling late may miss this opportunity, and no evening class students are tested. As a result, the needs of some students whose mother tongues are not English are not identified and they may be enrolled on programmes where they are likely to experience language difficulties. The International English Language Teaching System award, which is recognised as an alternative to GCSE

English for entry to higher education, and which is better suited to some of these students, will be introduced from September 1994.

40   A range of workshops to support students in their studies is provided at Abbots Road. The best-attended groups, for example in GCSE mathematics and GCE A level history, have an average attendance of between four and six students. Attendance at other learning and language support workshops is variable, but is often very low indeed. Teachers provide careful, patient tuition based on individual need but the overall impact of the workshops is limited because of the small numbers who take advantage of the service.

41   Learning support, to enhance basic skills, is aimed at specific vocational groups. Full-time students in engineering, intensive bakery and catering, and GNVQ foundation, intermediate and advanced level programmes were screened using literacy and numeracy tests published by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) during induction in the autumn term 1993. In literacy, 75 per cent were found to be at ALBSU level 1 or below, which is the equivalent of national curriculum attainment levels 4-5 or below. As a result of this exercise, vocationally-based learning and language support has been introduced within the vocational courses. The main method of delivery is team teaching although there are also drop-in sessions and special timetabled lessons. Some one-to-one support has been made available to GNVQ students. Support provided within specialist sessions, and through team-teaching, has been more effective in meeting students' requirements than the drop-in sessions.

42   Support for students with physical disabilities, sensory impairments or learning difficulties involved 127 students during the 1993-94 session. Specialist support is also available for students with specific learning difficulties, particularly dyslexia. A trained member of staff offers a two-hour drop-in workshop for dyslexic students and has provided teaching staff with useful information on the signs which indicate that a student may be dyslexic. For students with learning difficulties on GNVQ programmes, additional learning support is clearly built into the structure of the work. It is generally effective, though in a few of the GNVQ classes which were inspected, the level of support for these students was not adequate.

43   Library staff also provide learning support through their everyday dealings with students. Curriculum changes, for example the introduction of GNVQ programmes, have led to an increase in the demands made upon library staff in terms of the assistance given to students with projects and assignments. The level to which teaching staff involve the librarians in the development of courses and materials varies, and library staffing levels preclude greater involvement.

44   The college has made a significant investment in language and learner support, but the service now provided has been developed in a piecemeal fashion. It should be reviewed and evaluated and its organisation and

management rationalised so that the resources committed to it are used to best effect.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

45   The strengths of the teaching and learning clearly outweighed the weaknesses in just over half the sessions inspected.   Staff are knowledgeable about their subjects, and relationships between staff and students are positive and friendly.

46   The following table summarises the grades given to the teaching sessions inspected.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE A/AS level		5	12	12	8	2	39
GCSE		2	4	7	4	0	17
GNVQ		3	11	10	7	0	31
NVQ		5	8	13	4	1	31
Other: vocational		9	36	14	0	0	59
Other: ESOL, EFL, SLDD & Access		10	22	22	8	0	62
Total		34	93	78	31	3	239

47   There was effective teaching and learning in most subject areas.   In business courses, the focus of the sessions was clearly understood by the students; there was a pronounced emphasis on problem solving and on the need to analyse business situations in a rigorous way.   In travel and tourism, students' workbooks and study guides provided excellent guidance.   In computing, lessons had clear objectives and clear structures. Activities were well planned, and students were thoroughly involved in their work.   In health and social care, there were coherent programmes with clear aims and objectives which were shared with the students. Assessments, which were regularly scheduled, were helpfully marked and returned promptly.   On access and GNVQ courses, there were constructive relationships between staff and students and the teaching was of a high standard.   In catering subjects, teaching was of an equally high standard and work was realistic and supportive.

48   Good practice in course planning included an impressive, newly-developed scheme of work for the GCSE English syllabus, mapped against the attainment targets of key stage 4 of the National Curriculum. In engineering, there are well-prepared schemes of work, practical assignments of a suitable standard with clear assessment criteria and a well-organised work experience scheme.   However, schemes of work are not always used as effectively as they might be. Planning in GCE humanities

subjects was sometimes cursory, and in business and professional studies and business administration the schemes of work were limited. Schemes of work for English as a foreign language were thin. In areas in which programmes are taught by more than one member of staff, for example hairdressing, staff should ensure that schemes of work are sufficiently detailed to provide the necessary support for individual teachers. In the provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the planning of work lacks the vocational context which students require.

49   There were a number of examples of well-planned and well-managed classes. Good lesson planning was observed in ESOL foundation courses, English as a foreign language, GCSE/GCE business studies and the GNVQ programme. The effective organisation of material and the confident delivery of information was a feature of many of the lessons in health and social care.

50   Teachers of English as a foreign language demonstrated good presentational skills and enthusiastic delivery and employed a variety of activities and materials. In business and GCSE English lessons, activities were varied and the pace of work was lively. Successful use of group work was observed in sociology and history and on the GNVQ programmes. Good use was made of class discussion in GCSE communication lessons and in engineering. In French classes, teachers spoke French most of the time, setting a good model for students. Adult students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefited from creatively-planned individual learning programmes. There was some very good work in customer care with students with learning difficulties on the GNVQ leisure and tourism programme. On some courses, including access courses and construction courses, teachers took good account of students' differing abilities.

51   In some instances, activities were too teacher-focused. For example, in some health and social care sessions students were given insufficient opportunity to participate in class work. In computing, some students were over-dependent on the teacher for support and in engineering too much time was spent in copying notes. In hairdressing and beauty therapy, the teaching methods lacked sufficient variation. The college recognises the shortcomings of the provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy and has brought in external consultants to help in the design of action plans to raise standards. The teaching and learning strategies used in GCE/GCSE mathematics and science were often unsuited to the language capabilities of many students. Students on the GNVQ advanced course and the national diploma in business studies required more help in developing their oral skills. In some GNVQ foundation sessions, which included students with learning difficulties, there was an over-reliance on group collaboration. Not all students were achieving the competence in skills or understanding of concepts which might have been expected.   In many of the sessions for students with severe learning difficulties teachers failed to insist on normal standards of adult behaviour, and strategies for modifying inappropriate behaviour were neglected.

52   In many subjects, assessments were carried out at the appropriate level and were well managed and recorded. There were good examples of suitable internal moderation in some subjects, for example, the access to higher education courses in media studies, and in health and social care courses. In engineering, clear assessment criteria were employed. In business and professional studies, particularly business administration and access to higher education courses in media studies there were good procedures to record assessments and progression. There were examples of careful marking in English and vocational business courses. In English as a foreign language, there was some excellent practice in reviewing with students their marked work.

53   In GCE humanities subjects, there was no system for ensuring consistency of marking standards where the same group was taught by different teachers. Record-keeping in French was not sufficiently rigorous. There was insufficient assessed classwork and homework set in GCE/GCSE mathematics and science. Assessment strategies in English as a foreign language and ESOL were not always clear. The comments on students' written assignments sometimes offered them insufficient guidance. This was the case in catering, the access programme, and foundation and intermediate GNVQ. In hairdressing and beauty therapy the internal verification system for monitoring assessment against NVQ standards, was not fully in place, which affected the standardisation of marking. There was little assessment in salons while the students were on their work experience for one day each week. On the access programme, students did not always receive clear information about assessment and grading criteria, and there was insufficient feedback on performance.

54   Problems related to lateness and absence affected the quality of learning. High levels of absence were observed in a number of subjects. Teaching sessions were often long, in many cases lasting up to three hours. This affected the pace of the work and the effectiveness of the teaching, as in science and mathematics. The range of teaching and learning activities which are being used in some subjects is not sufficiently varied to retain students' interest. In engineering, the block timetable produced some very long sessions on single topics. Lecturers often combat fatigue in their students by allowing breaks of variable length which reduce the total time available for teaching. The college should consider whether three-hour blocks are suitable periods for effective study.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

55   The achievements of students on the modular access programme, as measured by the proportion securing places on higher education courses, are excellent. Students achieve good results in social, health and child care, travel and tourism, catering, vocational business studies, and GCE A level and GCSE computing. Achievements in construction, hairdressing and beauty, engineering and English for speakers of other languages and English as a foreign language are more variable but satisfactory. The

attainments of students in many GCE A level and GCSE subjects are poor. Although students with learning difficulties produce standards of work which are satisfactory in relation to their capabilities, there is little which is formally accredited. The provision of a foundation-level GNVQ programme is an important initiative designed to address this deficiency.

56   Most students were well motivated, enjoyed their studies and worked hard. They acquired knowledge at a satisfactory pace and demonstrated a sound ability in applying this knowledge to the analysis of issues and the solving of problems. However, in some GCE and GCSE sessions a general lack of enthusiasm prevailed and some students found it difficult to make constructive use of concepts and information which had been presented to them.

57   Generally, communication skills are being developed effectively. In particular, many students taking English as a foreign language and ESOL courses display growing confidence and fluency in spoken and written English. Some GCE A level students are not as accustomed to discussing and debating topics as they should be. Working on tasks in small groups is a feature of many courses, notably the newly-developed GNVQ programmes. As well as helping students to develop the skills necessary for effective teamwork, the group work allowed them to offer each other valuable guidance and support. Most students acquire organisational and note-taking skills which allow them to study productively. In particular, students on the access programme are successfully developing the ability to study independently, in preparation for the demands of higher education.

58   Overall, the standard of students' written work is satisfactory. The quality of its presentation is variable and is poor in a few subject areas. Relatively little of the work is word processed. Students on most courses make limited use of information technology. Some full-time students, for example the access to higher education students following media studies, have access to information technology as part of their courses. However, information technology is not fully developed or integrated into some aspects of catering, construction or hairdressing and beauty therapy. Students taking GCE and GCSE subjects have access to computers but no formal information technology tuition.

59   Most students complete their studies. Over the past three years, approximately 87 per cent of full-time students stayed to the end of their courses. In many cases, the proportion of students completing part-time programmes lasting one year or less is also high. For example, the retention rate for the course leading to the diploma of the Chartered Institute of Marketing was 80 per cent in 1993 whilst a rate of 100 per cent is commonplace on English as a foreign language and ESOL programmes. The retention rates for part-time GCE A level and GCSE courses are considerably lower, often between 50 per cent and 65 per cent. On some two-year part-time courses, the proportion of students who

progress from the first to the second year is low. For example, of the 46 students who completed the first year of the BTEC national certificate in computer studies in 1992, only 22 enrolled for the second year.

60   In general, the pass rates amongst students on vocational courses are satisfactory. In some cases, they equalled or exceeded those achieved nationally. On many City and Guilds of London Institute (CGLI), BTEC, Royal Society of Arts and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry programmes the percentage of students passing their final assessment has regularly exceeded 75 per cent. However, the 1993 success rates for three of the college's five BTEC first diploma courses were less than 40 per cent. The results in the Association of Accounting Technicians examinations have been particularly poor; only three out of 59 students successfully completed the foundation level programme in 1993. In 1993, 73 per cent of the 63 students, aged 16-18, in their final year of study for BTEC national or GCLI achieved their qualifications. This is lower than the average for the sector, but 16-18 year olds form a relatively small proportion of the college population.

61   The pass rates in many GCE A level subjects and the proportion of GCSE grades A to C are well below those achieved nationally. In 1993, 403 examination entries in GCE A level subjects resulted in only 197 passes at grades A to E. This produces a pass rate of 48.9 per cent compared with 66 per cent for further education colleges excluding sixth form colleges. Only 21 students achieved grades A or B (5.2 per cent of the entry). The performance of students in GCSE subjects is also poor. Of the 428 subject entries in 1993, only 152 achieved passes at grades A-C. This represents 35.5 per cent of the entry compared with 50 per cent for further education institutions nationally.

62   Data on the destinations of students are collected annually but the college has difficulty in producing a full picture because of the paucity of student responses. In 1992-93, only 25 per cent of those who left the college submitted a return. There is more data on students progressing to higher education. For example, over 80 per cent of students on the modular access programme in 1993 progressed to higher education in a variety of subject areas including art, economics, business studies, history, English, nursing and education. Similarly, many of the students who obtain a BTEC national diploma progress to higher education: over 50 per cent of students awarded a national diploma in science in 1993 went on to higher education.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

63   The college is developing its quality assurance systems. The quality management group, chaired by the principal, comprises senior managers of the college. The group can co-opt as necessary. It has a clear remit to implement the college's quality assurance policy and is assisted in this work by a recently-designated manager with specific responsibility for developing quality control. Objectives have been set but, as yet, the methods for achieving these have not been finalised. Although the quality

system operates through the line management system, the committee structure within the college does not identify the reporting lines through which issues relating to quality can be addressed.

64   There is a system of course review and evaluation for all full-time vocational courses and for part-time courses of seven hours or more. Each course tutor is required to complete an annual course review and evaluation form which includes information gathered from assessors' and verifiers' reports. Course teams vary in the rigour with which they carry out course reviews. While many staff consider course reviews to be helpful, some of the consequent action plans are vague and lack specific targets.

65   Some courses, particularly in vocational areas, have developed their own systems of course review which meet the requirements of external bodies. These reviews are thorough and serve as exemplars. Adult education and the business training and advisory service also conduct their own course evaluations. The college does not yet have a system through which the quality of all its courses can be monitored.

66   Some service units have devised their own systems of quality assurance. For example, the marketing unit has weekly review meetings and evaluates all its promotional events. The nursery has canvassed the views of its parents by detailed questionnaire. These examples of good practice should be linked to an overall policy to ensure effective college wide quality management.

67   Performance indicators presently collected by the college include course demand, completion, success and progression rates but the use made of this information is not uniform. The college has developed a comprehensive questionnaire which seeks students' views on the quality of teaching and learning, accommodation and courses. Course teams are encouraged to analyse and evaluate the responses, but there is, at present, a reluctance amongst some staff to process the returns in advance of the possible introduction of a computerised system. Because collation and evaluation of students' responses have not been carried out consistently the college has no clear view of many of the issues raised by students.

68   A staff appraisal system was introduced in 1992. About 75 per cent of the staff have been appraised. The college expects that all staff will have been through the system by July 1994. Procedures for appraisal and for subsequent appeals are well defined and clearly documented in the staff handbook. Individual teachers have indicated that the appraisal process has been constructive and has resulted in appropriate staff development although the college has yet to undertake a formal evaluation of the systems.

69   Staff development is well managed by a committed and enthusiastic team. Activities are provided both in house and externally. All activities must be seen to be linked to the college's strategic plan and objectives. Staff development has a budget of £80,000 which represents approximately 1 per cent of the total college budget. Around 50 per cent

of this has been allocated for NVQ assessor training delivered through the college's business training and advisory service. The college has a commitment to Investors in People and is working well with the local TEC to produce its action plan for achieving this designation.

70   The Charter for Further Education has been distributed to all full-time teachers and students may obtain copies from the college libraries. Some students, for instance those studying care and humanities, were still unaware of their rights as expressed in the charter. There is scope for increased promotion of charter information to students through the tutorial system. The college is developing its own charter based on the national model. This project is being managed well by a small team whose preliminary work has focused on an evaluation of existing college services and practices. A draft college charter has been written, but this has yet to be distributed for general consultation amongst staff and students.

RESOURCES

Staffing

71   The turnover of staff is low. Last year it was only 1.5 per cent. The college has responded to changes in the curriculum by employing more staff. Delegated budgets for part-time hours give faculty directors flexibility to organise their part-time staffing, within agreed limits, in order to cover the curriculum. In some areas, part-time staffing is now as high as 70 per cent. The high proportion of part-time staff in some areas has caused problems because of the administration loads full-time staff are required to carry as a consequence.

72   Most academic staff are well qualified for the subjects they teach. In some vocational areas, their commercial and industrial experience is dated. The college is attempting to address this through its industrial placement scheme part of which is provided by the borough of Barnet. There has been a limited response from staff in volunteering for these placements. All academic staff have teaching qualifications or are studying for them. Slightly more than half the teaching staff are female and seven of the 11 senior management team are women. About 18 per cent of the staff are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The personnel section operates a clear recruitment and selection policy and reports to the corporation on the details of the applicants for every post advertised.

73   With the exception of the provision for hotel and catering, the level of technical support is adequate. The numbers of qualified library staff are generally sufficient to support the learning resources on the three sites. However, during the inspection, the library at Abbots Road was occasionally closed at peak times because of the illness of a member of the library staff and the college should seek ways of maintaining its library service in such circumstances. There are insufficient support staff to help with the heavy administrative load of some section heads.

Equipment/learning resources

74   Comprehensive centres are being developed to make the library and learning resources readily available to students. To facilitate this, the funds for these services have been increased.

75   There are learning resources centres at three of the four sites. These offer students a range of study materials and equipment, including audio-visual resources and computers with a variety of good software packages. The centre at Abbots Road has been upgraded recently and now provides valuable support for students. The equipment at Grahame Park is less adequate and, unlike Montagu Road and Abbots Road, this centre is not independently staffed. The centres at Grahame Park and Abbots Road are accessed through the library and this precludes their use outside library opening times.

76   The libraries do not provide adequately for the needs of the students and staff. There are insufficient study spaces, and this is particularly the case at Grahame Park. The extent of the provision of specialist books and journals varies between subjects.   It is good in some of the recently-introduced curriculum areas, but the stock in some established subjects, such as engineering, is small and dated. The library is ill equipped to cater for the needs of students on access courses for entry to higher education. There are separate library catalogues for each of the sites and none of them are computerised. Course leaders are encouraged by the library staff to request the books and other learning resources which their students require, but responses to this vary across the college. Introduction to the library and instruction in the use of equipment are provided by library staff. The college should ensure that all students receive this induction and not leave it to the discretion of individual tutors.

77   There are sufficient audio-visual resources to support learning in most areas. Most teaching rooms are equipped with an overhead projector. The information technology provision across the college is barely adequate with about 180 work stations, many now out of date. There is no overall information technology policy, but there is a replacement programme which is aimed at upgrading existing provision rather than increasing the number of machines or relocating them. The computers in the libraries and learning-resource centres are heavily used but outside peak hours those in specialist rooms are under used.

78   The resources available to support learning in specialist areas are variable. Although there are some good facilities, for example in hotel and catering, carpentry and joinery, brickwork and media studies, there are a number of areas where the facilities are insufficient or out-dated. For example, there are inadequate materials and equipment to support work in the sciences, mathematics and health and social care, and much of the engineering equipment is dated.

Accommodation

79   Many of the problems which the college faces in relation to its accommodation result directly from the limitations imposed by buildings originally designed for different purposes. The college occupies four main sites and rents accommodation in schools for the adult education programme. Grahame Park is a school building dating from the 1970s on a site of about eight acres. Abbots Road and Montagu Road were Victorian schools and the Flower Lane Centre is accommodated in two detached Victorian houses which are linked. A consultant has been commissioned by the corporation to produce an accommodation strategy to support the strategic plan. The options are currently being considered.

80   As a result of the uncertainty concerning the future of some of the buildings, only urgent repairs and maintenance have been carried out. Consequently, much of the accommodation is in a state of disrepair. Priorities have been health and safety issues and the protection of the structural fabric. However, there is now a maintenance programme in place which includes the upgrading of some facilities and a rolling programme for redecoration.

81   Grahame Park is generally well maintained and decorated, and there are some relatively new facilities. At the other centres, there is a poor standard of decoration in the corridors and many of the teaching rooms. Little attempt has been made to brighten the surroundings with posters or displays of students' work. Most of the outbuildings at Abbots Road have reached the end of their useful life.

82   Ramps have been installed where possible, but the access for students with impaired mobility is limited on all sites. The lift, planned to be installed at Grahame Park, will offer access to the first floor. Further modifications to the ground floor are possible at Montagu Road. Unobtrusive security measures, such as keypads on doors, are being introduced in order to combine ease of access with security for the college community.

83   Teaching spaces are generally sufficient to meet present needs but the college is considering the best use of the available space in the light of curriculum changes and its plans for growth. Some of the accommodation is currently under used. A large hall with tiered seating sees only occasional use, for example, for enrolment and examinations. The rooms are of an adequate size, with the exception of a number of those at Abbots Road which are too small for some community classes. Some rooms in the older buildings have poor acoustics making them unsuitable for their present use with language students. The college attracts a significant number of adult returners and, as a consequence, the accommodation is used intensively between 10.00 and 15.00 hours but under used at other times. The timetable arrangements are being reviewed to improve efficiency. Most specialist rooms are used for their designated purpose but some of the rooms allocated for students in hairdressing and beauty therapy, health and social care, computing and business subjects are unsuitable for the work which is undertaken in them.

84   There are good sporting facilities including playing fields, a gymnasium and a swimming pool, all of which are under used by students. Other social facilities are more limited. A common room at Grahame Park was recently vandalised and has been closed while the students' union finalise their plans for refurbishment. Students socialise in the canteens and in the corridors and this often creates a noise problem, particularly at Abbots Road. All staff have a designated working area, either in their own teaching areas or in a staff room but overall the staff rooms are inadequate and especially so at Grahame Park. The space limitations in the libraries mean that there is a shortage of quiet working areas for students.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

85   The college has grown in recent years and has developed new provision in a number of important areas. It is making progress towards achieving its mission. The strengths of the provision inspected are:
*   the growing range of provision and the good links with the community and other external agencies
*   the commitment to providing for students with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities
*   the substantial provision for students for whom English is not their first language
*   the good range of support services for students including language and learner support
*   guidance and recruitment procedures which are well planned and organised
*   teaching which is generally good and sometimes of a high quality
*   staff development and appraisal linked to the college's strategic objectives
*   suitably experienced and qualified staff in most areas.

86   If the college is to raise its standards further it should address the following issues:
*   the provision of written terms of reference and clear reporting lines for all committees in the college
*   the absence of a policy on language and learner support
*   further development of quality assurance procedures and their consistent implementation
*   preparation and distribution of information on the college's overall performance to governors and staff
*   improving examination results and retention rates in many GCSE and GCE subjects
*   the continued improvement of the provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy
*   inadequate or outdated equipment and learning resources in some areas
*   the quality of library provision and study facilities.

FIGURES

Note: the information contained in the figures was provided by the college to the inspection team.
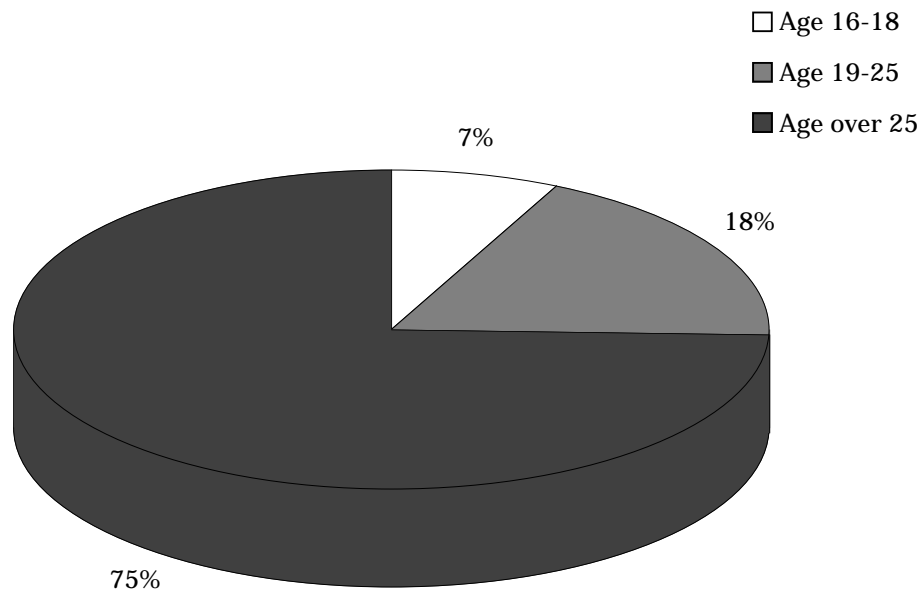
Figure 1

Hendon College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (1993-94)
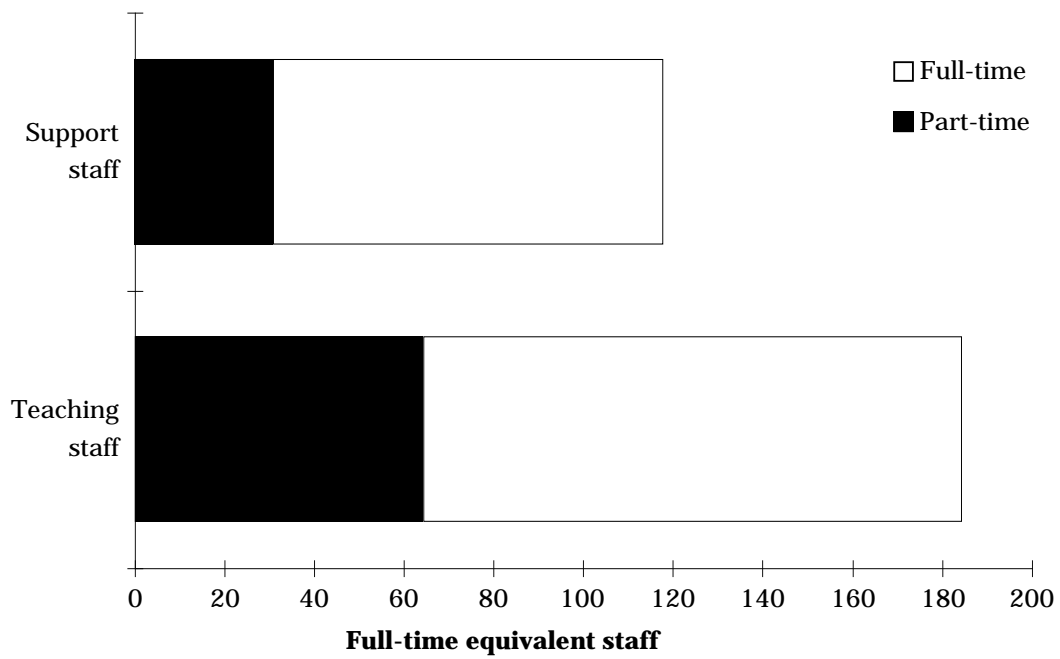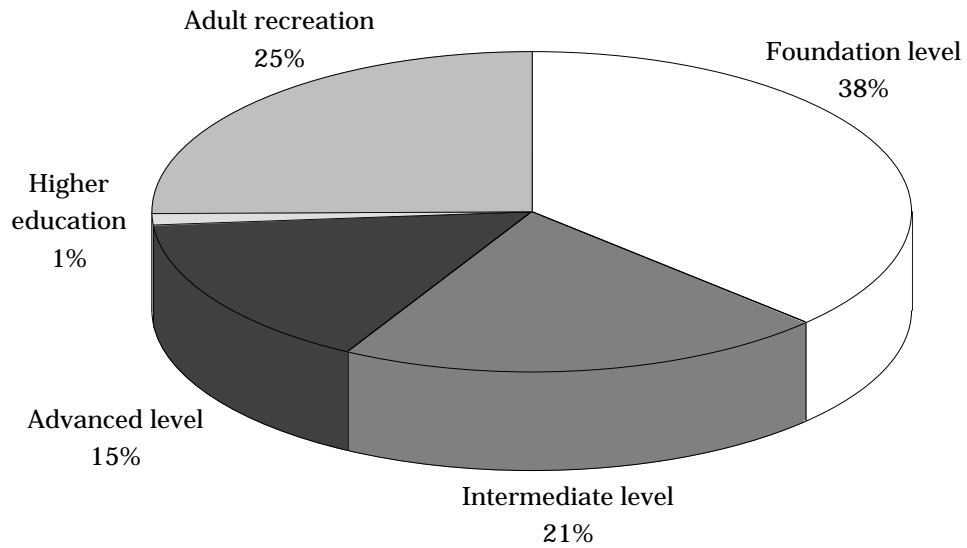

Full-time equivalent staff: 302

Figure 2

Hendon College: enrolments by age (at November 1993)
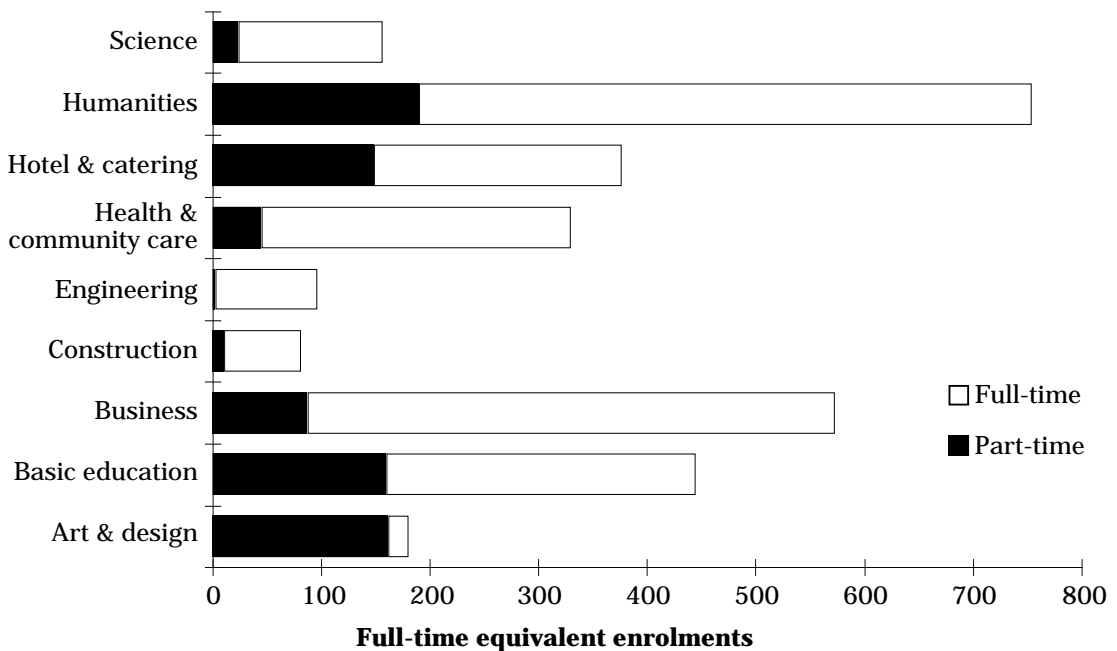

Enrolments: 8,333

Figure 3

Hendon College: enrolments by level of study (1993-94)

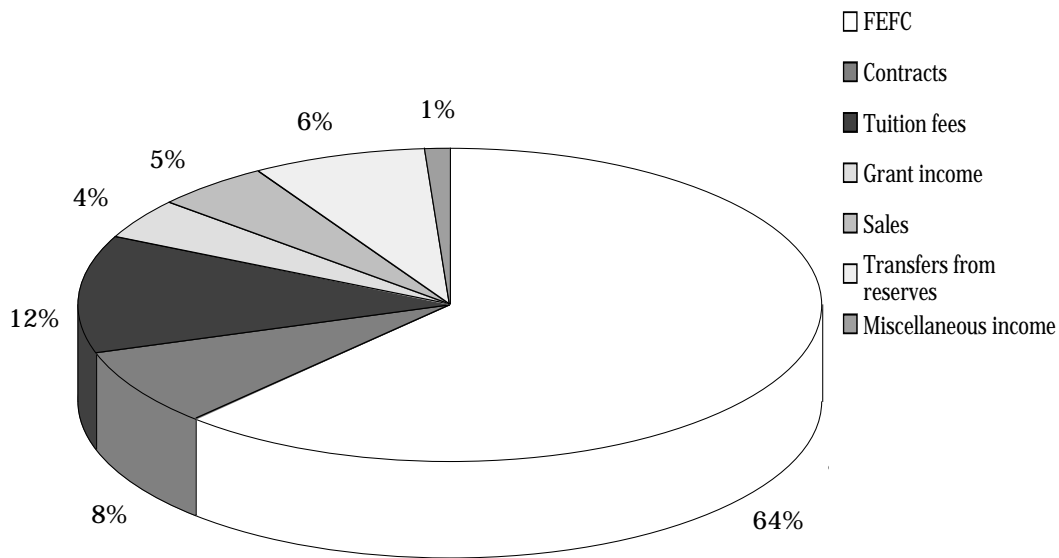Enrolments: 8,333

Figure 4

Hendon College: full-time equivalent enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (1993-94)

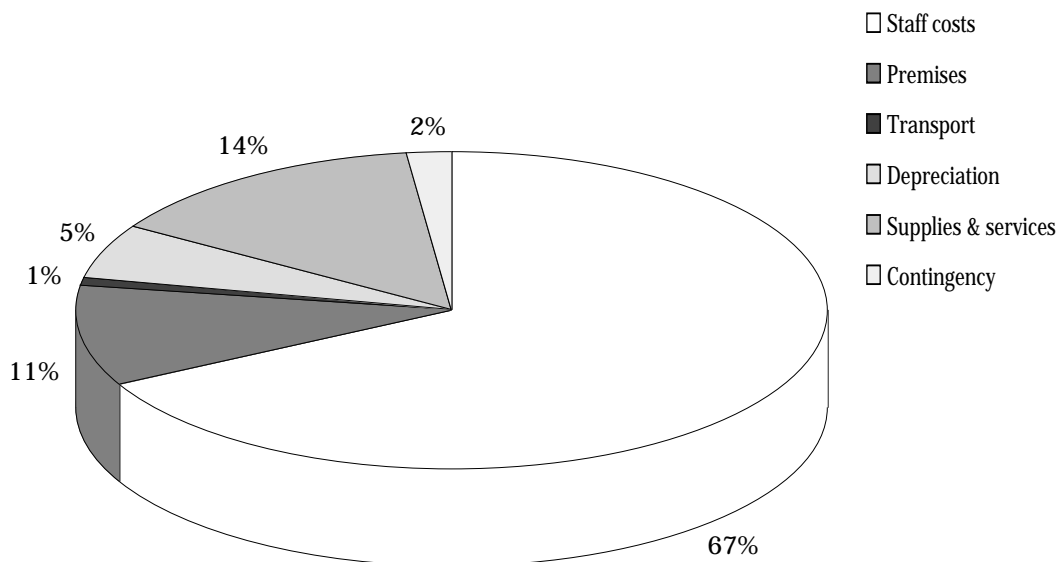Full-time equivalent enrolments: 2,994

Figure 5

Hendon College: estimated income (12 months to July 1994)

Legend:
- ☐ FEFC
- ▨ Contracts
- ■ Tuition fees
- ☐ Grant income
- ▨ Sales
- ☐ Transfers from reserves
- ▨ Miscellaneous income

6% 1%
5%
4%
12%
8%
64%

Estimated income: £8,891,830

Figure 6

Hendon College: estimated expenditure (12 months to July 1994)

Legend:
- ☐ Staff costs
- ▨ Premises
- ■ Transport
- ☐ Depreciation
- ▨ Supplies & services
- ☐ Contingency

14% 2%
5%
1%
11%
67%

Estimated expenditure: £8,891,830

26