

**REPORT
FROM THE
INSPECTORATE**

South East Derbyshire College

March 1996

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

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FUNDING COUNCIL**

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

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

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GRADE DESCRIPTORS

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

The descriptors for the grades are:

- *grade 1 – provision which has many strengths and very few weaknesses*
- *grade 2 – provision in which the strengths clearly outweigh the weaknesses*
- *grade 3 – provision with a balance of strengths and weaknesses*
- *grade 4 – provision in which the weaknesses clearly outweigh the strengths*
- *grade 5 – provision which has many weaknesses and very few strengths.*

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

College grade profiles 1993-95

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

FEFC INSPECTION REPORT 29/96

SOUTH EAST DERBYSHIRE COLLEGE

EAST MIDLANDS REGION

Inspected September-December 1995

Summary

South East Derbyshire College provides a range of further education programmes to a large area along the Amber and Erewash Valleys. The college is developing a new mission in collaboration with local partners and is successfully serving a growing number of adult learners. Students benefit from a well-qualified and committed staff. The college has a deserved reputation for the care it gives to the personal and social well-being of students. Examination pass rates, particularly in vocational areas, are above average. The quality of the access to higher education programme is commendable. The system of review and evaluation is increasing in its effectiveness. The college's annual planning cycle incorporates systematic monitoring. However, urgent consideration needs to be given to longer-term strategic issues, especially finance and accommodation. The new governing body needs to consider how best to fulfil its responsibilities. Improvements in management decision making and the operation of college committees are needed. Quality assurance procedures need to be developed to address the objective of continuous improvement. There is a need for greater coherence in the provision of cross-college learner support. The poor state of decoration and repair of the majority of the accommodation needs to be addressed.

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

Curriculum area	Grade	Curriculum area	Grade
Sciences and mathematics	3	Health and social care	2
Computing	2	Design and performing arts	2
Construction	3	Humanities including English	2
Engineering	3	Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and basic education	3
Administration/office technology	2	Access to higher education	2
Business and management	3		
Sport, leisure and tourism	2		

INTRODUCTION

1 South East Derbyshire College was inspected mainly during the autumn term of 1995. Twenty-two inspectors visited the college for a total of 92 days. Enrolment and induction of students were observed at the beginning of the academic year in September 1995. Specialist inspections took place over several weeks, commencing in September 1995. The inspection was completed in the week beginning 27 November 1995.

2 Inspectors visited 276 classes and examined students' written and practical work. They held discussions with the college's governors, staff and students. Meetings were held with representatives of the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise, The Erewash Partnership, Derbyshire Local Education Authority (LEA), local schools and local industrialists. A range of documentation, including the college's strategic plan and self-assessment report, was examined.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS AIMS

3 South East Derbyshire College is a general further education college on the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire border. It was established in 1974 by the merging of Ilkeston Further Education College, Heanor Technical College and Heanor Grammar School. The college has sites which spread over a distance of 22 miles along the Amber and Erewash Valleys. These sites are located in the towns of Long Eaton, Ilkeston, Heanor and Alfreton. There are four main centres: Ilkeston Road, Heanor for engineering, construction, information technology, access to higher education and other adult programmes; Mundy Street, Heanor for General Certificate of Education advanced level (GCE A level) provision, humanities and science; Field Road, Ilkeston for business studies and administration, motor vehicle, care and learning support; and the Cavendish Centre, Ilkeston for art and design, music, theatre, media, sport and leisure. The training division has premises at Alfreton for training programmes. Nearby at Alfreton Hall, there is outreach provision in business administration, mathematics, English and foreign languages and other programmes for adults. The Parklands Centre, Long Eaton provides similar programmes to those at Alfreton but at the southern end of the extended chain of sites.

4 Eighty per cent of the college's students come from the Amber and Erewash valleys. The population of Amber and Erewash has shown little increase since the Second World War. The age profile is broadly similar to the national pattern except for the 16-24 age range which is lower than the national average and the 25-44 age range which is higher. Data from the 1991 census show that skilled (manual), semi-skilled and un-skilled manual groups are over represented in the local population compared with the national pattern of socio-economic classes. From 1981 to 1991, the importance of mining, engineering and textiles declined dramatically and the proportion of the workforce in Southern Derbyshire employed in manufacturing declined from 42 to 34 per cent during this period. Employment in distribution, health, education and public administration

grew rapidly. Derbyshire County Council statistics show that the unemployment rate of about 7 per cent in 1995 is slightly lower than the average for Derbyshire of 8.5 per cent, although there are wards within the area with rates of more than 10 per cent.

5 Other local providers of post-16 education are the eight schools with sixth forms in the Erewash and Amber Valley. There are five further education sector colleges within eight miles of the college's sites. According to Derbyshire Careers Services, the post-16 participation rate is 63 per cent compared with the national average rate of 70 per cent. The local authority's community education service provides basic education courses, recreational courses and some vocational courses in a range of centres throughout the college's catchment area.

6 During 1994-95, the college enrolled 6,933 students. Of these, 2,256 were over 25 years old and 1,795 were full-time students. This reflects a trend of increasing part-time adult enrolments and falling full-time enrolments which is continuing in 1995-96. Enrolments by age, by level of study and by mode of attendance and curriculum area are shown in figures 1, 2 and 3, respectively. Minority ethnic groups make up approximately 1 per cent of the student population in line with the population of the Erewash and Amber Valley.

7 The college is organised into three curriculum directorates and three business support directorates for planning and finance, facilities and student services. Curriculum staff are grouped into sections led by co-ordinators and business support staff are grouped into teams. There were 322 full-time equivalent staff employed by the college in 1994-95. A staff profile, with staff expressed as full-time equivalents, is shown in figure 4.

8 The corporation adopted a new mission statement in July 1995. This states that the college will respond to the needs of individuals and employers through the provision of high-quality, cost-effective education, training and related services. It will extend opportunities for flexible learning in order to encourage wider participation and work with local partnerships to facilitate the development of a learning community.

RESPONSIVENESS AND RANGE OF PROVISION

9 The range of programmes includes courses such as GCE A level and General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), and vocational programmes leading to General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The allocation to the college of subject areas and courses when the college was under the control of the local authority has meant that in some vocational areas such as engineering, the provision is not as wide as it might be. Hairdressing and catering are not offered. The college has built on its established provision for performing arts. Vocational training is provided for musicians. This enhances their employment prospects as specialist music teachers.

10 The college is extending and consolidating its links with higher education providers to increase routes for students' progression. A member of the senior management team has a nominated role for higher education liaison. There are two franchised higher education programmes. One is with Nottingham Trent University and the other with the University of Derby. The college is represented on the Derbyshire Regional College Network policy group developing a common curricula and a credit framework between Derbyshire colleges and the University of Derby. Some Nottingham Trent University students assist in the delivery of college programmes by providing classroom support. There are close links with the North East Midlands Access Partnership, whose regional office is based on the college site at Long Eaton. The access to higher education 'sprinter' programme is accredited through the Open College Network.

11 The college has been successful in attracting adult students. The sprinter course prepares adults who do not have traditional entry qualifications for access to higher education. It lasts for one year by daytime attendance or two years by part-time attendance. Other programmes aimed at adult learners provide practical help with English, mathematics and wordprocessing. Flexi-skills centres are sited at Long Eaton, Ilkeston, and Alfreton. These centres provide opportunities for students to study wordprocessing, electronic typewriting, information technology, audio typewriting, shorthand, and computer literacy. Wherever possible courses aimed at adult returners are located in local centres. Enrolment onto courses at these centres increased by 159 per cent from September 1994 to September 1995.

12 The college is working increasingly closely with Derbyshire LEA community service. There are LEA area co-ordinators responsible for both the youth and adult provision for Erewash and Amber Valley. The college has appointed a member of staff to liaise with these co-ordinators in order to improve the collaborative arrangements. The stated aim of collaboration is to avoid duplication of provision between the college and the LEA which is responsible for the youth service and adult education. Although progress has been made, as yet, collaboration has not been entirely successful.

13 The college supports a range of community activities. The sports hall at Ilkeston is used mainly by the college during the teaching day. Two local schools also have access to the facility and it is available for community use during evenings and at weekends. Students are encouraged to take part in sports, leisure and recreational activities. Sports facilities are accessible at Sports Hall, Cavendish Road, Ilkeston at lunchtimes. Opportunities are available throughout the week for students to take part in organised activities as well as to organise their own. There is support for football, netball, basketball and canoeing. The hall is used for a range of activities undertaken by community clubs. Summer activities

are run in conjunction with Erewash Borough Council. The college also promotes arts in the community. It provides a rehearsal venue for the Studio Players. The South East Derbyshire symphony orchestra is run on an evening class basis. Students can also participate in a theatre group, an orchestra and other musical activities.

14 The college is developing its new mission in collaboration with local employers, the Amber Valley and Erewash Partnerships and the University of Derby. The University of Derby and the Erewash Partnership are represented on the governing body. The college is an active founder member of the Erewash Partnership. This is an innovative project for the formation of a partnership between industry, local organisations and educational bodies. It is a limited company but is not profit making. Its aim is to create employment opportunities in the Erewash Valley. The principal is on the board and is chairman of the learning community subgroup. A similar partnership is being established to cover Amber Valley.

15 The college has effective working relationships with local schools who send students to the college. This relationship would be further strengthened by providing information to the schools on the success of their former pupils. Traditionally local schools have been the college's major source of recruitment. Enrolment from some schools is falling as sixth forms are being reinstated. A team of seven guidance staff work with schools. Contact generally takes the form of support for careers or open evenings to help prospective students make choices about post-16 education. In one case college staff helped in a problem-solving week. The college has also used its video facilities to record pupil role-play exercises. There is a franchise agreement with one school for nursery nursing and childcare qualifications. There are agreements with two other schools to support delivery of GNVQs. The college also supports the education of a small number of 15-year-old pupils excluded from local schools.

16 An interesting and promising new development is Trak 14-20, a compact agreement between South East Derbyshire College, Nottingham Trent University, the University of Nottingham, the University of Derby and four local schools. When the compact is fully operational, it will offer increased opportunities for students who are disadvantaged by particular personal circumstances. The compact will enable such students to progress to South East Derbyshire College for advanced courses and then on to university. It is estimated that some 10 per cent of pupils of the appropriate age could qualify for participation in this scheme.

17 There is active involvement with the work of the Southern Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise. The college has training credit and training for work contracts which make it the largest local managing agency. The college has been successful in bidding for development funds. A teacher had a work placement at the Southern

Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce, Training and Enterprise headquarters. The college is part of the pilot programme offering more than 50 modern apprenticeships in electrical installation. The college has successfully contributed to the Derbyshire Information on Employment and Training survey. This is a collaborative project with the two Derbyshire Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). It collects and provides information about trading patterns, the number and type of employees, training requirements, skills shortages, and the use of computer technology.

18 Marketing is being targeted successfully at specific groups such as adults and school leavers. The college has a marketing manager and a full-time publicity assistant who helps to design and produce publicity material. Some leaflets duplicate each other. The promotional literature aimed at students with learning difficulties is neither pictorial nor written in a form that students with such difficulties would find easy to understand. The marketing unit also obtains information on pupil destinations from local schools. This is used to monitor student recruitment. There is a leaflet aimed specifically at hearing impaired students. An employer database has over 6,000 entries and is used to identify potential markets. There is an employer liaison officer but systematic links with employers are limited. Positive responses were received from a survey of employer perceptions which was sent to every employer sponsoring a student at the college. Full-cost course provision is underdeveloped.

19 There has been significant progress over the last three years towards achieving the college's strategic objective to add a European perspective to the curriculum. However, the number of students involved directly is small. Although the actual cost of some of the initiatives is heavily subsidised by income earned through some industrial links, cost is a deterrent for many students. The college timetable has been set up to enable individual students to access different elements in a learning programme. These include GNVQ language modules. The language element is often used by groups in preparation for visits abroad. Links have been made with colleges in Tenerife, Italy, France and Germany.

20 An equal opportunities policy has been developed and approved by the academic board and by governors. The implementation of the policy is monitored through codes of practice as an integral part of the college-wide quality review process. Student enrolments and staff appointments are monitored using data collected from application forms.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

21 The corporation decided in July 1995 to extend its membership by one independent member to a total of 14 comprising the principal, two co-opted members, two staff, one student and eight business members. Four new business governors were appointed in the summer of 1995. An open appointments procedure was used which involved placing an item in the local press, seeking nominations from other organisations and

recommendations from governors. Prospective governors were sent an introductory pack outlining the roles and responsibilities of governors. Potential members were interviewed by a panel of three governors who made recommendations for appointment to the corporation. This procedure has now been formalised within the college's quality manual. Currently four vacancies exist for a second co-opted governor, an elected staff governor, student governor and a nominee from the TEC, respectively. The governors have established three committees for finance and general purposes, audit and senior staff remuneration. Terms of reference and standing orders for the procedures of these committees have been approved and the board has undertaken to review the committee structure in the near future. The board has recognised the need to improve the effectiveness of the follow through of items from committee and board meetings and to set up a framework for the cycle of meetings.

22 The new board needs to consider the way it exercises its corporate responsibility for determining the educational character of the institution. Urgent consideration should be given to identifying the financial and other information which governors need to maintain satisfactorily the oversight of the college's activities. In their efforts to improve the effectiveness of their own procedures, the governors are being supported by the appointment of a new clerk who is employed only for this purpose. The responsibilities of governors and evaluation of board effectiveness were discussed at a two-day residential training event in January 1995. This initial interest has yet to be translated into action. Governors are conscious of their accountability for public money. The board has adopted a code of conduct and has begun a register of members' interests.

23 The planning cycle is clear and well understood. The process builds on reviews of the progress made in achieving the previous year's objectives. A college strategic planning group meets for two full days to consider the review, the needs analysis and new initiatives before producing a draft of a revised college plan. Governors are invited to attend these meetings. The plan passes to the academic board for comment and then to the senior management team for further consideration before being approved by the corporation. The college has 17 key objectives for the year which are taken to the college sections for more detailed consideration. Middle and senior managers work together to build up annual section plans which respond to the strategic objectives. Section plans vary in their quality. Financial implications are generally not given adequate consideration during the planning process.

24 Long-term strategic planning is poorly developed. The original strategic plan was written in response to a mission different from that currently in use. It is a detailed document which is of relatively little use as a guide to medium-term planning. It does not provide a clear framework for priorities to be identified and decisions taken. The accommodation strategy, in particular, lacks a clear direction and balanced appraisal of alternative courses of action.

25 The senior management team of eight comprises the principal, deputy principal, the directors of students, finance and planning and facilities and the three curriculum directors. The span of strategic and operational control amongst directors varies widely. In some cases it is too great, notably in areas with significant cross-college responsibilities. The senior management team meets weekly. It has a planned monthly cycle of routine items for discussion, including monitoring of the progress made in achieving the college's key objectives. Much meeting time is taken up with information exchange and operational debate. The team needs to consider its wider role and the way in which decision making may be delegated. Progress in some key areas of corporate activity has been slow. It has been hampered by a lack of management expertise in some areas, reluctance to take and implement decisive action and distraction of the attention of senior managers into procedural issues. The difficulties the senior management team has faced in taking the college forward were compounded by changes in personnel which meant that a full team was not working in post for the entire period between October 1993 and April 1995.

26 The line management structure within the college is clear and well understood. There is wide variation in the quality of curriculum management. In some cases, curriculum managers at section and course level are highly effective. In others, there is a poor grasp of the broader context of the college and its aims. Techniques of management such as delegation, monitoring, resourcing and the efficient running of meetings are not well understood. The communication of information both up and down the line-management structure through interlocking team briefings generally works effectively. This is supplemented by a weekly newsletter distributed to all staff. The line management structure has led to sections developing a strong sense of autonomy and their location on separate sites only serves to reinforce this. Effective co-ordination of cross-college matters is, consequently, difficult. The college needs to address this if more rapid progress is to be made in implementing change. There is a complex web of numerous cross-college committees. The senior management team is over represented on many of these committees. Whilst some of these groups have a defined remit and reporting structure, not all have retained a clear purpose and further consideration needs to be given to their function. The composition and purpose of the academic board has been reviewed. It is now a lively forum for the exchange of views across the college.

27 The college's average level of funding in 1995-96 is £18.75 per unit. The average level of funding for general further education and tertiary colleges in 1995-96 is £17.84 per unit. A unit efficiency model of resourcing has been constructed which will be used, following appropriate staff development, as a framework for the delegation of budgets to middle managers. This model links the teaching time applied, the number of students taught and their completion and success rates with units of activity

earned from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC). Currently budgets are allocated on a historic basis. The timeliness of budget allocation and provision of monitoring information to budget holders needs to be improved. A 15 per cent efficiency gain in curriculum delivery was achieved in 1994-95. This exercise raised awareness of the need for cost effectiveness amongst middle managers. It is intended that a balanced budget will be achieved for the next three years. It is not clear how this will meet the needs for the investment in accommodation and capital equipment that is required. The college's income and expenditure for the 12 months to July 1995 are shown in figures 5 and 6.

28 Target enrolment figures, against which FEFC grant was claimed, were not achieved in 1994-95. Full-time enrolments, in particular, did not meet the target figure. Full-time enrolments have remained static, which represents a fall of about 4.5 per cent as a proportion of total enrolments. The college is reasonably confident that it will achieve its overall target of FEFC-funded units in 1995-96. Dependency on the FEFC as a source of funding has increased since incorporation, as the proportion of the college's total income which comes from this source has risen.

29 The management information system is beginning to produce useful material to inform management decisions. The changeover period to new software for student information and the demands of external bodies, such as the FEFC, meant that 1994-95 was a year of considerable pressure for the information systems team and little benefit was perceived to accrue to the staff as a whole. Printouts from the central management information system for annual rates of attendance, retention and students' achievements were distributed for the first time in the summer of 1995. They include comparative figures to help curriculum teams make judgements about their performance. However, the use of such information as a management tool is at an early stage. Discussion of quantitative information is not a regular feature of management debate. The improvements in the system and their potential value are now becoming apparent to staff but there is some way to go before the negative view amongst staff about the accuracy and usefulness of centrally-provided data is overcome.

STUDENTS' RECRUITMENT, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

30 Students are provided with comprehensive information and guidance before and on entry to the college by the guidance team. A standard pack of selected material is sent out in response to telephone enquiries within a day. These enquiries are logged and systematically followed up by the central admissions unit. Figures of initial enquiries leading to eventual enrolments are analysed for marketing purposes. Subject specialists provide further guidance when a prospective student indicates more firmly the preferred area of study. If a student does not achieve the required qualifications for entry to a course they receive further guidance. The college operates a hotline in the summer when GCSE results are known.

31 The college has made significant progress in meeting its objective of increasing the recruitment of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Specialist support is provided sensitively and is effective. There is a limited strategy for the management of students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. More staff development across the whole college is needed to extend the good work being done in the recruitment of these students.

32 Some of the paperwork provided centrally to support enrolment is very helpful. Agreed procedures are maintained and essential information about students is recorded so that an individual student's progress can be followed. However, many of the documents are not particularly useful. In some instances, strict adherence to central guidelines and checklists unnecessarily prolongs each enrolment. Administrative and guidance functions need to be separated. There are long waiting times throughout the enrolment process and the queues which form are not dealt with. Better signposting and siting of rooms would help to make enrolment more efficient. Tutors pay little attention to students' national records of achievement at enrolment and induction. There is little assessment of students' prior learning and experience, except for some enrolments on NVQ programmes. Postal and late-entry enrolment arrangements are effective. There are plenty of leaflets available during enrolment about college courses, student services and opportunities for study and recreation.

33 The quality of induction is variable. To keep to the guidelines and checklists, tutors spend much of induction giving instructions and students spend most of their time filling in forms. The main function of induction is to introduce students to their personal tutors and to the services available to them. Tutors and service managers respond well to questions about courses, sources of financial support, careers and opportunities for progression to higher education. The freshers' fair, designed to give students an insight into the additional services available, lacked proper planning and sufficient resources. During induction, students received information about their rights and responsibilities. In programme areas which involve practical work, induction incorporates a substantial amount of assessed health and safety training. The procedure for students who wish to change to another course is smooth. Students who transfer are provided with help and support as are students who enrol late. They receive a planned programme of individual tutorials to catch up with missed work.

34 There is a tradition of involving students in the college's decision-making process. Students are represented on the academic board. The students' union president is a member of the corporation. The work of the students' union executive is supported by the welfare services manager who liaises between them and the college. A students' common room is maintained by the students' union.

35 The college is successful in providing pastoral support for students. The main emphasis of the support is in caring for the individual and in developing students' confidence to cope socially. The college provides a number of student services, such as counselling and students' welfare, through the admissions unit and student services centre. Although these services are managed in an integrated way, there is no central base where staff expertise can be accessible to students throughout the college day. The service of a professionally-qualified college counsellor is available for staff and students. This service is well established and well used but it is not appropriately located. The college provides assistance with childcare and transport. There are nursery facilities of a high standard for up to 26 children aged from six months to five years. These facilities are available only at Heanor. There are subsidised bus services throughout the college's main catchment area. Additionally, there is a free inter-site transport service to link Heanor to sites at Ilkeston.

36 The college has an established system for tutorial support. However, the quality of this support is not consistent across the college. All full-time and part-time students with substantial programmes are entitled to weekly tutorials and participate in college records of achievement and personal tutor reviews. Average attendance at tutorials is 8 per cent lower than average attendance at classes. Part-time students on short courses do not receive structured tutorials but they can participate in a more limited programme of self-appraisal during class time. Using a new college-wide framework, tutors maintain progress and assessment records for students. The first evaluation and review of the new framework is scheduled for the end of the autumn term. Student attendance is monitored and followed up through the tutorial system. Tutors make contact with an absentee on receipt of a cause for concern note from subject teachers. However, the rigour and effectiveness of this system is variable. For the three months from September to November 1995, attendance rates across programme areas varied considerably from the highest at 94 per cent to the lowest at 53 per cent.

37 Consideration needs to be given to the development of a coherent strategy for the provision of cross-college learner support across the institution. This is needed to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the development of core skills and to workshop and other methods of support. All full-time students and students on substantial part-time programmes take a screening test to identify weaknesses in numeracy and literacy. Learning centres for core skills development in numeracy, information technology and communications were established on the two main sites in September 1994. Workshop support is available in the learning centres on a drop-in basis at fixed times. Demand is limited. The centres are serviced by the mathematics, computer, and communications staff and co-ordinated by the head of library and learning resources. The relationship between this provision and the basic skills provision which is being developed is uneasy. Since September 1995, the college has

introduced a new system for the development of core skills through vocational programmes. Basic skills workers are allocated a caseload of students for whom they provide individual additional support related to the subject content of the vocational programme being followed by the student. However, attendance is voluntary and the basic skills element of learning programmes is not linked into a personal improvement plan and learner agreement. This new initiative will need to be carefully evaluated in order to decide how it should be developed and how it should link with other learning support provision.

38 Careers advice and education is provided through the well-established careers unit. The main unit is sited at Mundy Street, Heanor but a daily presence is also maintained at Field Road, Ilkeston. A member of the unit's staff is also a member of the admissions team and provides supplementary advice on careers, when required, during the pre-entry guidance process. The unit's work is linked with the tutorial system. Students seeking individual support and advice are referred by tutors or they can seek advice on their own initiative. The volume of interviews is logged but the substance of the meetings and the nature of client enquiries are not recorded. Students also have the opportunity of having interviews with an officer from the Derbyshire Careers Service, with whom the college has a service agreement. There is a comprehensive and well-developed programme of support for applications to higher education. Students on GCE A level programmes are offered a taught programme to prepare them for university and to explore vocational options. Students do not necessarily take advantage of the opportunity and attendance at these sessions during 1994-95 was low. The careers unit administers the collation and the processing of applications and records students' destinations. A taught programme, focusing on employment, is also available for inclusion in vocational programmes when requested by teaching staff. Officers from the Derbyshire Careers Service facilitate group activities with a specific vocational orientation and then provide for follow-up individual guidance interviews where required. There is scope for the careers unit to increase its vocational focus and to provide more on preparation for employment. Although there are quality standards for the unit, it does not review and evaluate its performance.

TEACHING AND THE PROMOTION OF LEARNING

39 Of the 276 sessions inspected over 65 per cent had strengths which outweighed the weaknesses. Weaknesses outweighed the strengths in 8 per cent of sessions. Average attendance was 83 per cent. The distribution of inspection grades is shown in the following table.

Teaching sessions: inspection grades by programme of study

Programmes	Grade	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
GCE AS/A level		13	40	19	6	0	78
GCSE		1	3	8	1	0	13
GNVQ		3	19	10	4	0	36
NVQ		7	17	16	1	0	41
Basic education		1	13	7	7	0	28
Other vocational		10	28	9	4	0	51
Access to higher education		10	9	4	0	0	23
Other		4	2	0	0	0	6
Total		49	131	73	23	0	276

40 In science and mathematics sessions, there are some examples of lively and competent question and answer techniques being used to good effect. Vocational science courses use assignments which engage students in developing practical and investigative skills. However, much teaching is unimaginative using a limited range of strategies which results in pedestrian sessions that do not stretch students intellectually. There were some examples of poor basic teaching practice such as illegible board work, poorly-focused overhead projector transparencies and poor-quality handouts. There is little integration of information technology in most courses.

41 On computing courses, practical activity is the major vehicle for learning. High-quality handouts are provided. Tutors are flexible in dealing with a wide range of previous experience amongst students but checks on students' understanding are limited.

42 Construction has well-structured schemes of work. Challenging practical exercises motivate students and help them to acquire appropriate skills. Real work examples are introduced as part of the teaching. Some sessions do not provide students with a sufficient variety of learning activities and rely too heavily on text and work book exercises so that students become bored.

43 There are coherent programmes across a range of engineering disciplines which ensure a balance of classroom and workshop-based learning. In the better classroom work, teachers promote a good dialogue with students and pass on their knowledge in a structured way. They reinforce learning by references to practical work and industrial practice. In some less-effective classes, teachers provided too few opportunities for students to participate. In some workshop activities, students develop their skills at a pace suited to their individual needs. Project briefs contain a clear outline of the requirements of the task and appropriate performance criteria are stated.

44 Business administration students receive good support and encouragement in building up individual portfolios for NVQ programmes. The importance of the core skills of communication, numeracy and information technology are stressed. There is a wide gulf between the best sessions which are well planned with a variety of challenging activities for the students, and a few sessions which are unimaginatively presented and fail to reinforce students' learning or test that it has occurred. In the sessions for adult students, markedly different approaches are adopted from those used in sessions for the 16-19 age group. Adult sessions are characterised by a sense of shared objectives; students are busy, involved and challenged by the work. In sessions for the younger age groups the work lacks pace and challenge and the outcomes are limited in quality and quantity. The flexi-skills and the training office environments provide opportunities for individuals to develop skills and practise work tasks. Business studies and management teachers have produced comprehensive schemes of work but these are not matched by lesson plans of comparable quality and detail. Relationships between staff and students promote learning but staff make insufficient checks to ensure that learning has taken place or that students' note taking is accurate. There is some poor classroom management of group work.

45 The leisure section manages the recently-built sports hall which is used by the community. This provides opportunities for students to gain work experience and practical NVQ work. There is good integration of the development of numeracy and literacy skills in the vocational curriculum and theory is related to practical work. A wide range of coaching awards are available for sports students. Tourism students do not have the same opportunities for additional qualifications. Staff lack a background in tourism.

46 Across the range of health, social care and childcare courses, the variety of activities results in some lively learning sessions. Teachers use questioning purposefully to ensure students' attention. Clear links are made to previous learning and students are encouraged to evaluate their performances. Teachers use appropriate support materials and set challenging tasks for students' revision. Time in sessions is usually well managed to allow for effective small group work and discussion. Students receive individual attention and encouragement through an effective tutorial system. In the poorer classes, the pace of the work is too slow. Insufficiently focused presentations result in lapses of concentration by the students.

47 In art and design, the majority of the work is in studio-based project work and there is a high proportion of one-to-one teaching. A common framework for assessment is used across the section and the criteria are published to students. The development of numeracy and literacy is incorporated in all courses. Overall, the standard of teaching is high. Staff prepare lessons well; they are good communicators and employ imaginative methods of presentation. A studious atmosphere is promoted

and students engage in self-assessment. Some small group sizes limit the opportunities for students' interaction. In a minority of sessions, participation in debate was not encouraged. In music, theatre and media there are coherent programmes of study which combine an appropriate blend of practical and theoretical work. In practical sessions, points of technique are demonstrated skilfully. Students are supported by a strong tutorial system. The marking of students' work is fair and constructive. Staff cross-mark work to achieve consistency.

48 English is taught by committed and well-qualified staff. There are clearly-constructed frameworks for the delivery of most courses. In GCE A level and GCSE English language, shared schemes of work have been developed to ensure consistency in teaching the curriculum across various groups. Staff have high expectations of students. They provide work which tests students capabilities to the full. However, the teaching varies in quality and effectiveness. In weaker sessions, students are predominantly passive and teachers make little attempt to check that they have successfully internalised the knowledge conveyed.

49 The teaching in modern languages is of consistently good quality and is carefully designed and planned. The foreign language is used as the medium of instruction and this effectively develops students' practical communication skills. Teachers deliver the varied activities with considerable flair. Learning is developed through topics which reflect the current social, cultural and business context of the country in which the language is spoken.

50 In geography and geology, teachers use a wide range of classroom activities matched to the objectives of sessions. Effective use is made of the local area in fieldwork. Visual aids and samples are used well. In a few classes, however, students are allowed to concentrate upon the less demanding parts of exercises at the expense of the more challenging tasks set. Students' participation, through discussion and oral presentations, is not always encouraged sufficiently. In classes for history, law and politics, teaching programmes are well organised. Staff are knowledgeable and lessons have well-structured plans with clear aims and objectives. However, teaching is uninspiring. Students are not encouraged to take any responsibility for their own learning. The better psychology and sociology classes are well planned. There are good-quality handouts and materials. Some challenging group exercises are set. Staff are clear about the standards required. In a minority of classes, where teacher exposition dominates, work is covered at too rapid a pace for students and points are not made clearly enough. In some classes where students are expected to make notes, there is no evidence that these notes are checked.

51 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are offered some worthwhile individual programmes with good support. Effective group work is being developed in adult basic education. Particular strengths in teaching sessions include good rapport between teachers and students,

thorough preparation, clear objectives and regular checks on students' learning. Some sessions are poorly planned and there is no variety in the approaches employed. There is often a lack of challenge in the work set and poor use of students' existing experience. Assessment is inconsistent and poor use is made of recording sheets.

52 The sprinter programme provides a route for adults who lack the qualifications normally required to gain access to higher education. Sessions follow the scheme of work and are well planned and organised. A good proportion are imaginatively taught and a great deal of learning and enjoyment of learning takes place. A few do not take sufficient account of students' experience. Assessments are well organised and give a good range of opportunities for students to show their potential. There is good rapport between teachers and students and between students in the different options. Some groups are too small for the full benefits of peer interaction to be realised.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

53 In 1995, 338 students aged 16-18 entered for GCE AS/A level examinations scored, on average, 4.4 points per entry (where A=10, E=2). This places the college in the top third of all further education sector colleges on this performance measure based on the tables published by the Department for Education and Employment. The points score per subject entry has fallen by 0.3 per cent for 16-18 year old students from 1994 to 1995. The absence of any college-wide data on the prior achievement in GCSE examinations of advanced level students means that little analysis and explanation can be given for this downward trend.

54 There is some variation, largely unexplained, between pass rates in subjects from year to year. In 1995, pass rates at grades A-E and the percentage of higher grades (A-C) achieved were well above the national average for further education sector colleges other than sixth form colleges in chemistry, physics, sports studies, geology, geography, history, law, English, sociology and psychology. Results in mathematics have shown considerable improvement since a modular course was introduced. There was a pass rate at grades A-E of 78 per cent in 1995 and a 53 per cent pass rate at grades A-C. This compares with provisional national percentage pass rates for all institutions of 86 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. Poorer results are evident in GCE A level human biology, computing, business studies and music. In some subjects, such as languages and art and design, pass rates fluctuate markedly over time, particularly where the numbers being entered are small.

55 The proportion of students gaining GCSE passes at grades A-C is generally low. In English language the pass rate at grades A-C was 41 per cent compared with a national figure of 46 per cent for students aged 16-18 in general further education colleges in 1994. Mathematics results in 1995 are low with only 30 per cent gaining grades A-C compared with a national average figure of 44.7 per cent for all institutions. Many GCSE

mathematics students, particularly adult students returning to study by evening attendance, enjoy a sense of success achieved in carrying out routine exercises. However, the suitability of GCSE as a qualification aim for some of these students is doubtful. There are some interesting differences in achievement between different cohorts of students taking GCSE courses. For example, the mainly adult students taking GCSE by evening attendance were markedly more successful than the younger daytime students, the former achieving 78 per cent passes at grades A-C, and the latter 35 per cent at grades A-C.

56 An increasing amount of the college's provision is aimed at preparing students for vocational qualifications. Eighty-six per cent of students, aged 16-18, in their final year of study on the vocational courses included in the Department for Education and Employment's 1995 performance tables were successful. This places the college in the top third of all further education sector colleges on this performance measure. However, this performance measure is limited to students, aged 16-18, who are following a limited range of qualifications. Only 166 of the college's students were in the reported category in 1995.

57 Generally, results obtained in 1995 across the broad range of vocational qualifications by students of all ages are above those found in the sector as a whole. Notable success in the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) national diploma course in science resulted in 100 per cent pass rates. All students went on to employment or higher education. Pass rates in the BTEC national and first diplomas in computing are high. During the 1994-95 session, 100 per cent of part-time construction students completed NVQs successfully. In the City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) 6000 series, pass rates in the different elements vary from 100 per cent for principles of construction to 50 per cent in building costs and measurement. The pass rates in engineering module examinations, largely C&G programmes, are above the national averages. For example, in electrical installation, students' achievements are above average with 85 per cent gaining C&G 2360 part 1 successfully and 71 per cent part 2. There have been creditable performances in intermediate and advanced GNVQ in business in 1994-95. Satisfactory completion in two years was achieved by 76 per cent of the advanced students who finished the course; satisfactory completion was achieved in one year by 94 per cent of those who finished the intermediate programme. There is a low rate of overall achievement among full-time NVQ business administration students on one-year programmes, but these students normally complete their qualification on a part-time basis in the following year. Examination results over the last three years show consistently high pass rates in the single subject secretarial examinations, with 100 per cent pass rates for wordprocessing, core text processing, typewriting and audio typewriting. Pass rates in other skills tests average 80 per cent, with many distinction grades recorded. The exception to this pattern is shorthand where pass rates average about 30 per cent. In sport and leisure, 95 per

cent of students gained their BTEC national diploma in leisure studies and 75 per cent of GNVQ intermediate leisure and tourism students completed the course successfully in 1994-95. Students' achievements in additional sports coaching awards are at the national average or above. Students' achievements in health and social care have improved after three years of results which were below the national averages. Over 90 per cent of students on all full-time advanced programmes were successful in 1994-95. All health studies students gained their BTEC national diploma successfully. A creditable pass rate of 81 per cent was achieved in the National Association of Maternal and Child Welfare diploma. Most of these successful students also gained first aid and basic food hygiene certificates. The pass rate in the BTEC national diploma in performing arts was disappointing in 1995 at 66 per cent.

58 Students on advanced courses generally demonstrate fluency and accuracy in written and oral communication. A few students who are struggling with the demands of advanced level work in a range of non-vocational and vocational courses are hampered by poor basic skills of communication and numeracy. Note taking skills vary even within the same teaching group; some students receive little help or monitoring of this aspect of their work. Work from students on intermediate courses in most curriculum areas displays weaknesses in spelling. Competence in basic information technology skills is not systematically developed in all students.

59 In all curriculum areas some project and assignment work is of the highest standard, but there is scope for further development of creativity and research skills if the most able students are to achieve their potential. Where students are unsure of theoretical concepts they frequently produce assignments which are largely copied from reference material. This is especially common in GNVQ assignments. In science, students' laboratory skills are of an appropriate standard and all students show distinct progress in developing their practical science abilities over the course. Students of science, construction, electronics and engineering are generally able to handle technical data, diagrammatic and graphical work at levels appropriate to their course. On construction programmes, students acquire a range of skills appropriate to local industry and the community. In construction there is a need to strengthen the application of knowledge to practical work. Engineering students have a good understanding of health and safety issues, particularly in workshop environments. Electrical installation students worked industriously in a practical workshop wiring an overhead lighting circuit. This was carried out competently and safely with students wearing overalls, safety shoes, and hard hats. Students' standards of drawing on part-time engineering courses is significantly better than those on full-time programmes. Traditional skills tasks in shorthand and typewriting/transcription are carried out to a high standard of neatness and accuracy, although speed is limited. Students of art and design have well-developed drawing skills. Art and design and performing

arts students have a good grasp of technical skills and apply them systematically in the expression of creative ideas. In practical sessions in the performing arts, students willingly participate in solo and group performance. Language students achieve high levels of communication skills. Trainees in an in-company business German class co-operate effectively in whole group activities, developing with an actual German partner levels of oral skills for business transactions in the context of their company's area of work. Students on advanced courses in humanities subjects are generally well motivated and produce appropriate levels of work. In some cases, oral presentation skills and the ability to argue points of view more deeply need to be better developed.

60 Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities entered a variety of accredited courses. Eighty per cent of the students entered for British Sign Language stage 1 were successful and most of these have progressed to stage 2. Although some good achievements are evident, students' achievements and progression in this programme area are not analysed and used to support further development. Adult learners on both access to education, training and work and access to higher education programmes develop an effective range of core skills. A significant number of students on these programmes achieve their learning goals. Eighty-eight per cent completed successfully the access to higher education programme and, of those, 74 per cent went on to higher education and a further 15 per cent went into nursing or deferred entry to higher education.

61 In 1994-95, the college's average retention rate was 91 per cent. The one-year full-time programmes, particularly those aimed at women returners, have a lower rate of 84 per cent. Retention during the second-year of full-time programmes is very high. For example, there were retention rates of 95 per cent on GCE A level and GNVQ programmes and 94 per cent on other vocational courses in 1994-95. However, progression from the first to the second year of two-year programmes is poor in some areas. There is considerable variation in attendance and retention figures across the college and these inconsistencies need to be examined.

62 Full-time student destinations are recorded by the college. These show an increase in the numbers progressing to education or training. The table below shows the known destinations in 1995 of 51 per cent of full-time students.

Known full-time student destinations, 1995

1995	Destinations					Percentage				
	Job	HE	FE	Other	Total	Job	HE	FE	Other	Total
Foundation	26		31	56	113	23	0	27	50	100
Intermediate	72		84	35	191	38	0	44	18	100
Advanced	168	344	30	77	619	27	56	5	12	100
Total	266	344	145	168	923	29	37	16	18	100

QUALITY ASSURANCE

63 The college's self-assessment report is based on the headings in Council Circular 93/28, *Assessing Achievement*. It was compiled by senior and middle managers in July 1995 as part of the college's quality assurance system. It is a review of action points arising from the college's strategic plan. It was approved by the academic board and the governors. The information is presented clearly. The report provides some analysis with reference to supporting documentation. The main strengths and weaknesses are identified but there are different degrees of emphasis to those identified by inspectors. The inspection team had much greater concerns about governance, management and accommodation. Insufficient consideration is given to the underpinning resource and strategic issues.

64 A quality assurance policy was agreed in July 1994 and a quality manager was appointed. A quality council comprising volunteers was established in January 1995. This quality council reports through the deputy principal to the senior management team and academic board. In January 1996 it will become a subcommittee of the academic board. Membership will then be based on a core of staff with relevant experience. The quality council considers reports from internal and external verifiers and assessors. Greater clarity is required about the role of the quality council if it is to be effective in the future. A great deal of work has been accomplished in documenting agreed procedures for the whole range of the college's activities in a quality manual. This process is not yet completed. Records, which form a fundamental part of the quality system, are not yet in place. When they are in place, these records and documented procedures will be checked as part of a comprehensive internal audit system. The first six auditors have completed their training. An audit programme has been devised and started. The system deals with functional aspects of the college but there is no provision to look at the quality of such aspects as decision making or the effectiveness of committees. The system does not have the capacity or procedural flexibility to address the college's objective of achieving continuous improvement.

65 The college has established systems of programme review and evaluation. These have become increasingly effective. The results from the programme review and evaluation system provide key evidence on feedback from students through questionnaires and consultative groups, retention and examination pass rates and destination data. Aggregated results are reported to the senior management team. Responses to course evaluation and review procedures are variable. This undermines their overall benefit to the college. It is not always clear that effective action has been taken in response to reviews nor that sufficient feedback has been given. The original plan for a termly report to governors on quality has been reduced to a report from the quality manager on a summary of complaints received.

66 Quality assurance targets set for 1994-95 were largely achieved. These included the implementation of a full programme review system, initiation of internal quality auditing, production of the quality manual and implementation of the revised staff-development policy. Agreement on quality standards for service areas is proceeding. Priorities for action for 1995-96 are the implementation of internal audit and quality assurance systems and the use of self-assessment reports. These objectives are appropriate. There is little experience or confidence amongst staff in self-assessment and some suspicion of the internal quality audit. There are inconsistencies in the operation of agreed systems which have not been addressed.

67 Student feedback is actively sought through student consultative groups and questionnaires. There is a need for some central control over student questionnaires to avoid saturation. The response to student consultation groups and questionnaires is mixed. Poor accommodation, the main concern in students' questionnaires, has not been addressed. In some areas, there have been improvements in the quality of the student experience. A sample of employers are asked to give their views about the college's provision of programmes and services, but they are not used in the quality assurance process. Employers stress that there is a lack of information from the college.

68 Performance indicators have been set by the information systems group but these were not discussed by the quality council. The use of quantitative performance measures and target setting is not well developed. Attendance is a major issue in many curriculum areas but no targets are set. There is scope for more rigorous and penetrating analysis of students' achievements. There is no added-value analysis to show how well students improve their qualifications as a result of their period as students of the college. The retrieval and presentation of performance data have improved significantly this year. Statistics on students' achievements are improving in reliability. Recording and monitoring of students' partial achievement of qualifications have yet to be addressed.

69 The college's charter was developed using an external consultant. Considerable consultation took place in the limited time available. If there was doubt about whether a standard could be achieved at that time, then it was left to be included at a later date. However, no further action has taken place. There has been a useful review of the language and format of the charter this year. Student questionnaires are used to monitor compliance with charter standards. A complaints procedure was also devised for the first time. The procedure requires all complaints to be logged and these are analysed termly.

70 The staff-development committee was revived in September 1995 and a revised policy was accepted in November 1995. There is a need for greater clarity about the role of this committee and greater consistency in the implementation of policies. A planned staff skills audit has not been

carried out except in business and professional studies. The staff-development budget is 1.2 per cent of gross staffing costs. The budget has been underspent. The staff-development budget was separated from a curriculum development budget this year. This latter budget is held by curriculum directors. It has provided time for staff to undertake developmental initiatives. Staff-development needs are identified through appraisal and programme review more strongly than through strategic plans. Staff development has been carried out to support the introduction of GNVQs. Appropriate staff development is in place for training assessors and verifiers. Attendance at staff-development events is voluntary and some key events have been poorly attended. An effective computer-based system has been developed to record staff development. There is a formal induction policy for all staff.

71 The college is committed to reaching the Investors in People standard. An implementation group is working towards a target date of July 1996. This group has also reviewed staff appraisal. Most full-time staff and some part-time staff have been appraised. The college could consider a more positive use of classroom observation as part of the appraisal process.

RESOURCES

Staffing

72 There are 122 full-time teaching staff and 144 part-time teaching staff, a total of 191 full-time equivalents. The part-time staff comprise 26 per cent of the teaching staff. The proportion of teaching carried out by part-time staff overall is approximately 25 per cent. Just over 80 per cent of the staff have degree level qualifications and a similar proportion are qualified teachers. The teaching staff are generally well supported by technical and other staff. Teaching and support staff are committed to both the students and the college. They are helpful and create a good working atmosphere.

73 Approximately 82 per cent of the full-time teachers are on new contracts. The college works closely with the recognised trade unions. It has developed personnel policies dealing with discipline, grievance, parental leave and redundancy. The senior management team has eight members, three of whom are women. There are 31 middle managers, 15 of whom are women.

Equipment/learning resources

74 The resources used in most teaching programmes are adequate. There are good resources for science, business, geography, geology and languages. The exploitation of the CAMPUS 2000 telecommunications link by the languages staff is a major asset. In engineering and construction some equipment does not reflect up-to-date industrial standards. Some worksheets are of poor quality.

75 Information technology resources include a satisfactory level of appropriate hardware and software. There are 274 personal computers available to students, one personal computer for 9.5 full-time equivalent students. This resource is well managed on a day-to-day basis. There is, however, no effective long-term plan for this provision. There are insufficient computing resources in many specialist sections. Only 15 of the computers are networked.

76 The library at Field Road is in the main building. It is functional, well managed and attractive. The library at Heanor is on the first floor of a two-storey building above the public library. It is situated adjacent to the Ilkeston Road and Mundy Street sites. It is appropriately laid out and provides a well-used facility for staff and students. It lacks access and toilet facilities for people with physical disabilities and becomes too hot during periods of sunshine. There are insufficient study spaces in both libraries. There are no computerised issue and catalogue systems. A daily inter library delivery service is used to transport books between libraries to meet requests. The library service is managed effectively. A comprehensive set of documented procedures ensures consistent practice between sites

Accommodation

77 The college's four main sites run from Long Eaton in the south of the Erewash Valley through Ilkeston and Heanor to Alfreton in the north of the Amber Valley. There is a variety of buildings including an 1890 listed building.

78 In Long Eaton, the Parklands building was originally a Victorian primary school. The external appearance of the buildings is unattractive. There is insufficient car parking. The main building includes four classrooms, one of which has been modernised. There is a pleasant sitting area. Access for wheelchair users is satisfactory. The swimming pool block, which includes two classrooms, is unfit for use as a further education centre. There is no access for students with restricted mobility, it has high ceilings, poor toilets and narrow stairways. The ground floor is dominated by an unused swimming pool which has been boarded over. No modernisation has taken place.

79 In Ilkeston, the Field Road site is situated close to the town centre. This is the main administration site. It comprises a large series of purpose-built buildings dating from the 1950s. There is insufficient space for car parking. There is no access for people with restricted mobility to the commerce building. Access to other areas is possible but can be inconvenient. The site has four acres of playing fields. Improvements to sports facilities have included a multi-gym and outdoor pursuits areas. Externally, most of the main buildings are well maintained but internally, the buildings are in a poor state of decoration and repair. One improvement project completed is the refectory area. The caretakers' building, which is used by performing arts students, is a single-skin outbuilding which has

concrete floors and bare walls and ceilings. It provides an unpleasant and inappropriate environment for both staff and students. The college is considering relocating this part of the performing arts provision to the Cavendish Centre, although no date has yet been fixed. The Cavendish Centre in Ilkeston is the site at which creative arts, media studies and some performing arts are based. The main block is an attractively modernised junior school building, built in the 1930s, which has the benefit of landscaped grounds and ample car parking space. There is also a modern sports hall and a hard play area. There is wheelchair access to all those parts of the main building which are used by students, but not to some staff offices. There are four modern temporary classrooms which are in good condition.

80 At Heanor, the Mundy Street site comprises a grade II listed former grammar school building from the 1890s, a 1950s' science building and a large outbuilding. There are plenty of car parking spaces. Entry to the car park and reception are through an unattractive side entrance. There is no access for people with restricted mobility to or within the main building. The interior of the main building is dominated by dark wooden panelling and is mostly in a poor state of decoration and repair. Some individual rooms have been redecorated by caretakers and the refectory has been improved. The building is basically unsuitable for current needs. The science block provides satisfactory purpose-built laboratory accommodation, although there is no access for wheelchair users to the upper floors. The Ilkeston Road site in Heanor has a large series of purpose-built buildings dating from the 1930s. A new information technology centre and electrical installation workshop have been added. There is also a modern purpose-built day nursery and there are purpose-built industrial buildings for engineering and construction. Construction students also make some use of an outbuilding which is unfit for teaching and learning. The college plans to withdraw teaching from this building before January 1996.

81 In Alfreton, the college has two industrial units on the Meadows industrial estate. One unit has been redecorated and has a good social area. Adaption is in progress to form two mezzanine teaching rooms but there will be no access for wheelchair users. The college also rents a staff room and a teaching room in Alfreton Hall, a building which is also used by the adult education service. There is no access for students with restricted mobility to the rooms used by the college.

82 The cleaning services are effective but the cleaning contract does not provide a sufficient frequency of cleaning in the areas most susceptible to litter. Vandalism from outside the college is a continuing problem. A reporting system has been devised with the aim of ensuring rapid rectification of damage. However, evidence of damage is visible in several places.

83 The condition of the buildings on incorporation was generally very poor. With the exception of the Cavendish Centre, the buildings remain in

a poor state of decoration and maintenance. A planned maintenance programme is not yet in operation but is in preparation. The college is planning a break-even budget for the current year and each of the next two financial years. Without an effective accommodation strategy, it is difficult to see how the college can make informed decisions about the priorities for expenditure on its estates when, and if, resources become available.

CONCLUSIONS AND ISSUES

84 The college has the following strengths:

- the care provided for the personal and social well-being of individual students
- well-qualified and committed staff
- a planning cycle which incorporates systematic monitoring
- the increasing effectiveness of the college system of review and evaluation
- the partnerships being established to support the college's mission
- success in attracting adult students
- the quality of the students' experience on the access to higher education programme
- examination pass rates which are above average, particularly on vocational courses.

85 Urgent consideration should be given to longer-term strategic issues of finance and accommodation. Other issues to be addressed are:

- consideration by the governing body of how best to fulfil its role
- improvements in decision making and the operation of committees
- developing quality assurance procedures to address the objective of continuous improvement
- the lack of a coherent provision of cross-college learner support
- the poor state of decoration and repair of most of the accommodation.

FIGURES

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- 1 Percentage enrolments by age (as at July 1995)

 - 2 Percentage enrolments by level of study (as at July 1995)

 - 3 Enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1995)

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

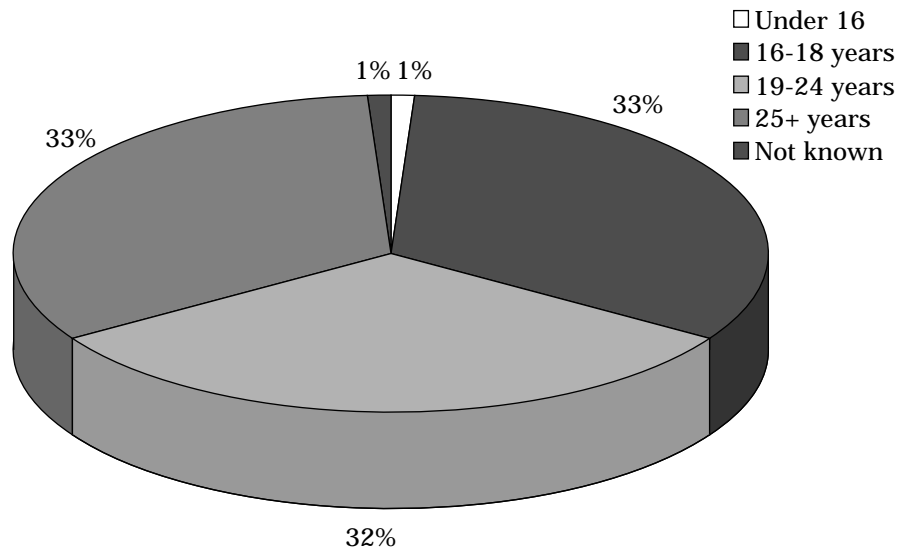
 - 5 Income (for 12 months to July 1995)

 - 6 Expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)

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

Figure 1

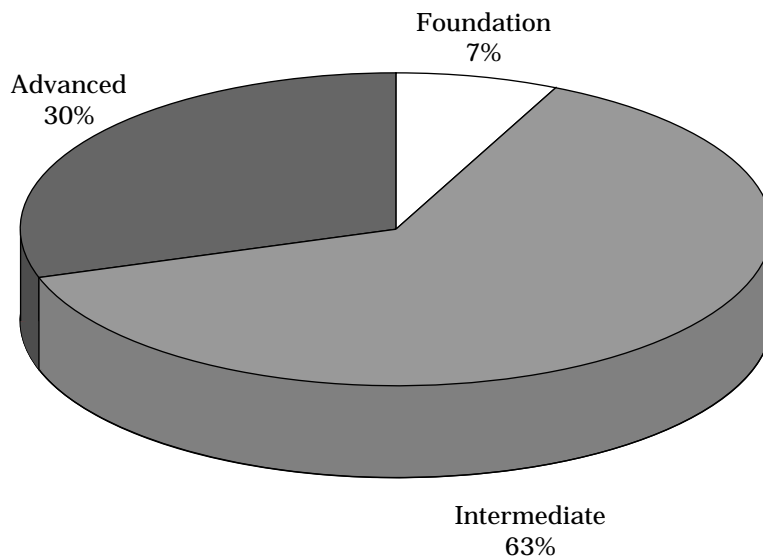
South East Derbyshire College: percentage enrolments by age (as at July 1995)



Enrolments: 6,933

Figure 2

South East Derbyshire College: percentage enrolments by level of study (as at July 1995)

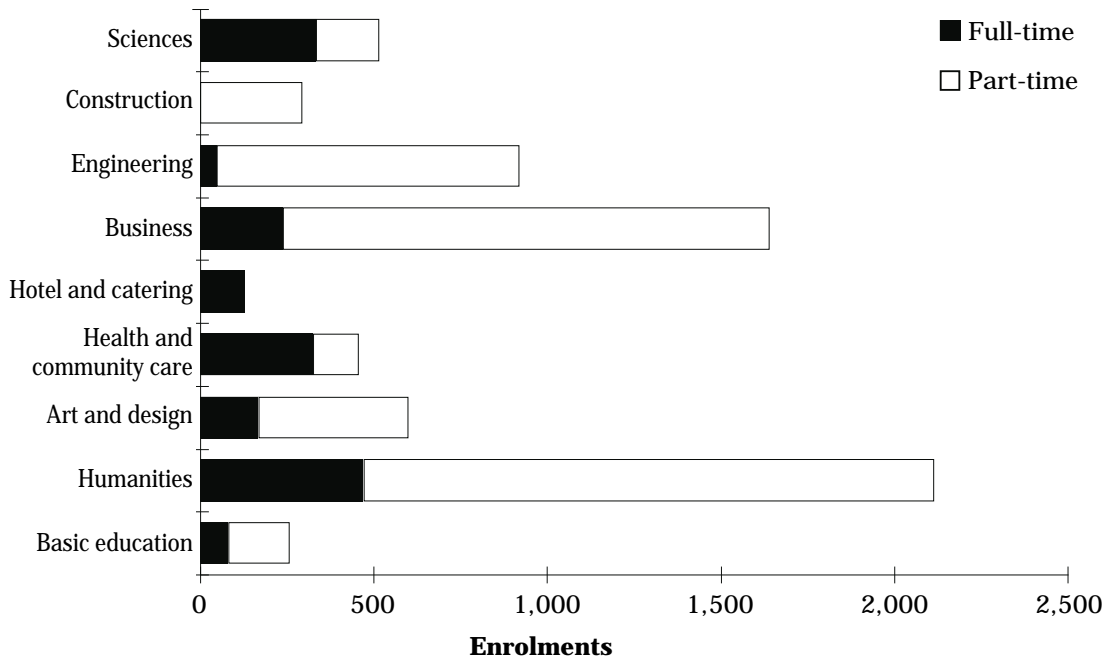


Enrolments: 6,933

Note: this chart excludes 27 higher education enrolments.

Figure 3

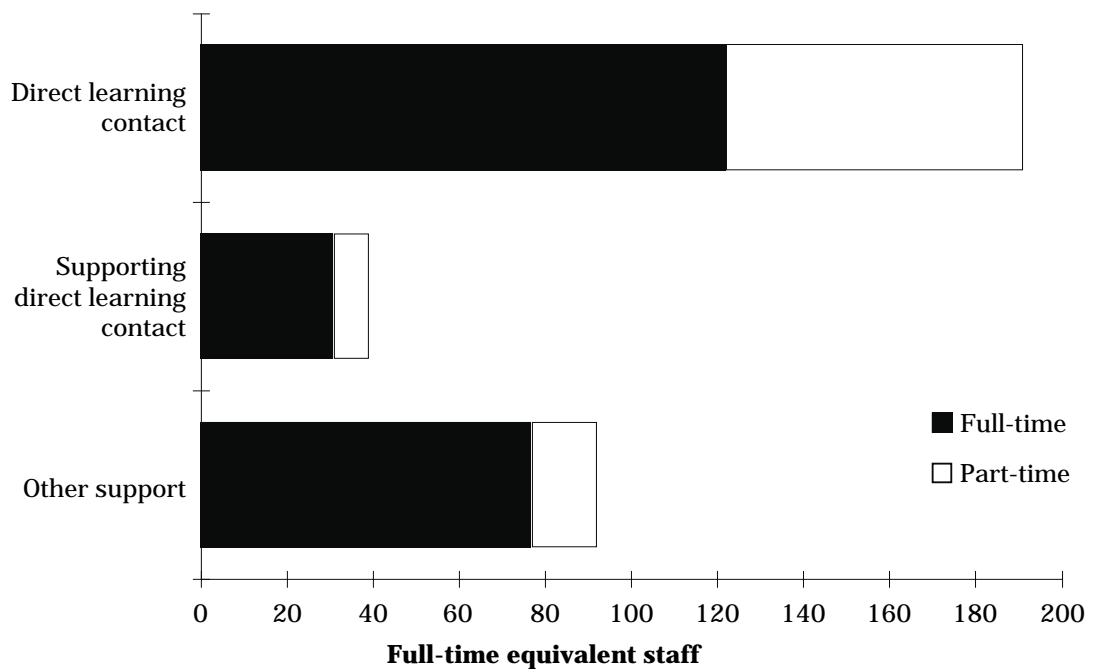
South East Derbyshire College: enrolments by mode of attendance and curriculum area (as at July 1995)



Enrolments: 6,933

Figure 4

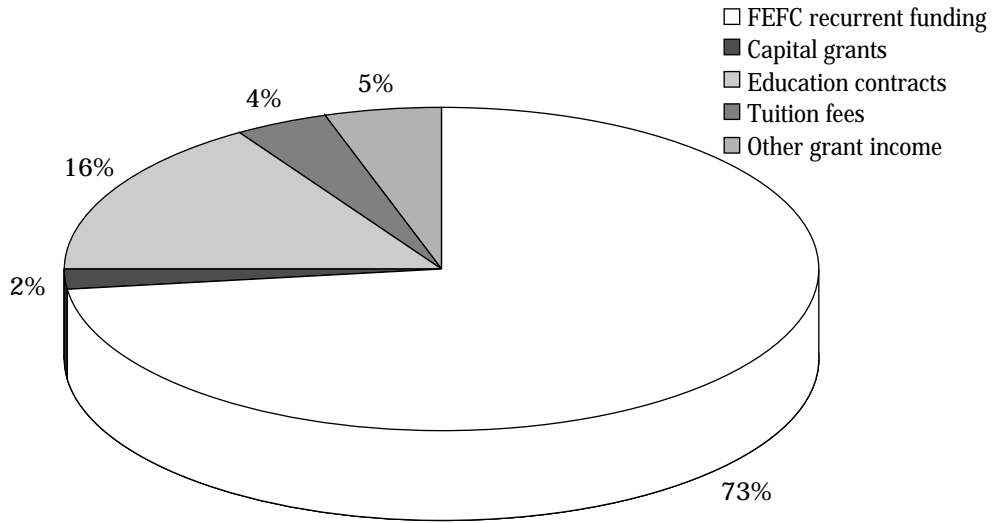
South East Derbyshire College: staff profile – staff expressed as full-time equivalents (as at July 1995)



Full-time equivalent staff: 322

Figure 5

South East Derbyshire College: income (for 12 months to July 1995)

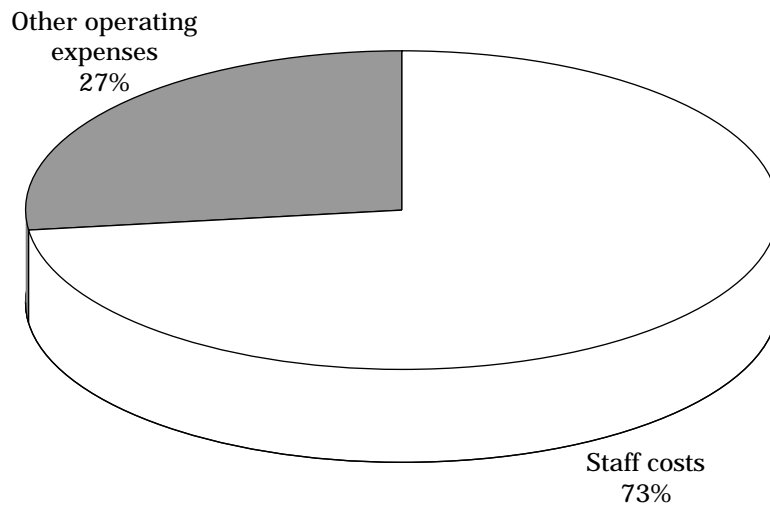


Income: £7,828,000

Note: this chart excludes £22,000 other income generating activities.

Figure 6

South East Derbyshire College: expenditure (for 12 months to July 1995)



Expenditure: £7,973,000

Note: this chart excludes £6,000 depreciation and £10,000 interest payable.

Published by the
Further Education Funding Council
March 1996